

MASTER PLAN



Town of Millville, MA

2018

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Planning for Growth

The Town of Millville is a community proud of its past. It has an industrial heritage that played a prominent role in the development of the Town. Millville grew around a succession of mills, with many neighborhoods remaining today that once provided housing for workers in the factories. The Blackstone River and Blackstone Canal were the focal points of the Town's early growth.

Entrepreneurs took advantage of the low-lying land along the River and harnessed its power for processing. In the 1800's, the Canal, and later the railroad, provided a ready means to transport manufactured goods. The establishment of industry along the Blackstone River and Canal and along the rail lines of the Providence and Worcester Railroad, and the creation of residences and institutions lead to Millville's establishment in 1916.

With the transfer of manufacturing to southern states, the Town's mills began to decline following World War II. Natural disasters also dealt devastating blows to industrial mills in Millville and the greater Blackstone Valley.

Now in the twenty-first century, local officials have realized that a blueprint for encouraging growth is essential. The character of the Town has changed over the last 40 years. A large amount of residential construction in the 1980's resulted in a loss of some cherished open space as well as the need to build a new elementary school to house an influx of new students. While new residential growth into the 1990's and early 2000's continued to increase the need for town services, there was no similar growth in the business or industrial sector to help offset the costs of residential development. With the "Great Recession" in 2008 costs have increased with the burden being placed on the residential homeowner.

It has become clear that action is needed to encourage economic development to diversify the tax base, while preserving the character of the Town. This document is intended to act as a guide for encouraging and planning for the orderly growth of the community.

The Planning Process

The Town of Millville's previous Master Plan was completed in 1996. The Plan was primarily funded by the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission, with Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) and the Town funding the remaining 50% of the cost of the plan.

The Master Plan Committee met on numerous occasions over a two (2) year period to consider a wide range of recommendations.

In 2013, the Millville Planning Board began its work on updating the 1996 Master Plan. Through various studies conducted by CMRPC, the Board sought to leverage work previously done to update the plan. In January 2014, the Board began a review of the 1996 Master Plan Goals and Objectives and found they were largely consistent with present day Millville. Goals and Objectives, presented in an implementation matrix, can be found in *Chapter 11: Implementation*.

Plan Elements

Under M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 81-D, each Planning Board is required to prepare a Master Plan for its community. Nine elements are outlined which, when completed, will "...provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality."

The 1996 Master Plan addressed the Land Use Element of the Master Plan. The Plan encouraged the Town to pursue other Master Plan elements (such as Open Space and Recreation, Traffic Circulation, Housing, etc.) as funding permitted. This 2018 Plan is the result of that objective.

This Plan shall address each of the nine Master Plan elements including: 1) Goals and Policy Statements, 2) Land Use Plan, 3) Housing Plan, 4) Economic Development, 5) Natural and Cultural Resources, 6) Open Space and Recreation, 7) Services and Facilities, 8) Transportation and Circulation, and 9) Implementation.

Planning Efforts Recent and Past

Since the 1996 Master Plan, the Town of Millville has undertaken various land use and planning studies and exercises to protect natural and historic resources, examine development potential, and identify environmental constraints. The following is a list of planning related efforts that have been incorporated into this plan.

2007 Millville Reconnaissance Report

Completed as part of the Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program, the report inventories Millville Historic Landscape and provides recommendations for preserving and enhancing Millville's historic resources. Elements of this report have been included as part of the Natural and Historic Resources chapter in this plan.

2011 181 Main Street Site Reuse Plan – CMRPC

Working with funding from the EPA's Brownfield's Assessment Program, CMRPC and Fuss & O'Neil conducted an assessment of the 181 Main Street parcel (former United Rubber facility) for possible contamination from asbestos and other hazardous materials. The Town chose to cease further pursuit of assessment activities after the Phase I was completed.

2012 Village Vision Project – CMRPC

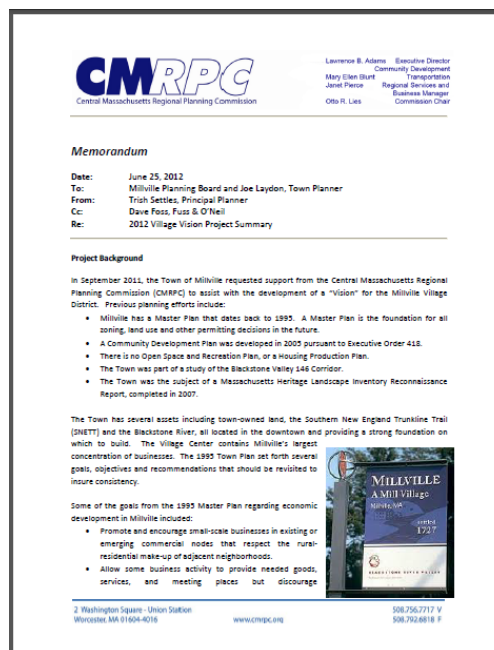
Conducted by CMRPC and the engineering company of Fuss & O'Neil, the purpose of the project was to evaluate existing bylaws and regulations, facilitate a visioning session for the village area, and provide recommendations for next steps.

2014 Green Communities Energy Reduction Plan

Prepared and submitted to achieve designation as a Green Community, the Energy Reduction Plan included goals and objectives for reducing costs and improving public facilities to maximize energy efficiency.

2015 DLTA Town Center Opportunities & Constraints Study

Commenced in later 2014, CMRPC through technical assistance grant has prepared a development opportunities and constraints plan for a selected part of the village area of Millville. The report provided a foundation for future land use policy development and looked at a number of specific properties for development opportunity.



2012 Village Vision Memo

Vision Statement

Visioning is an important part of the master plan process. By defining a community's vision, it becomes clearer what path needs to be taken to achieve the vision. Issues can be identified, goals and objectives developed, and action steps identified. The vision for the Town of Millville developed as a part of this project is as follows:

Whereas, the Town of Millville has a foothold in the past as a manufacturing village;

Whereas, Millville is centered on the Blackstone River and Canal with the natural, historic, and cultural assets that the river and canal bring to the community;

Whereas, Millville's connection to history is evident in its mill era villages, historic homes, churches, and municipal center;

Whereas, Millville is also rural community with forested open space that enhances its small town character;

Whereas, Millville is a short distance to Providence, Worcester, and the 495 Corridor making it well situated for future growth;

Whereas, Millville is a desirable community for those seeking to experience the past and to live in the present and future;

Now therefore, the citizens of Millville envision a Millville of the future that preserves and protects its natural, historic, and cultural assets while accommodating reasonable commercial and residential growth that fits in with the character of the town.

In order to accomplish the vision for the Town, ten (10) specific goals have been identified. A goal is an idea of the future or a desired result that the community envisions, plans for, and commits to achieve. Goals are broad, general statements that are made more specific through objectives and actions.

Goals

Land Use

Goal 1: To improve the management of future development in order to preserve Millville's rural character, to minimize impacts on residential properties, and to insure the highest environmental quality possible.

Goal 2: To develop the Millville Town Center as the focal point of the community. This can be accomplished by continuing to concentrate municipal functions in the Center, by enhancing the visual appearance of Main Street, by encouraging commercial development where appropriate, and by creating public open spaces for social interaction.

Population, Income, and Education

Goal 3: To reduce poverty rate through economic and workforce development actions.

Goal 4: To balance residential growth with commercial and industrial growth.

Goal 5: To connect local educational institutions and programs with economic development and workforce development activity.

Housing

Goal 6: To maintain and expand the Town's supply of affordable housing and to promote new housing growth that maintains the character and appearance of Millville as a rural, family-oriented community.

Economic Development

Goal 7: Promote new economic development opportunities for Millville in order to balance the tax burden on residential properties and to provide jobs in Millville for local residents.

Goal 8: Pursue workforce development opportunities to train and prepare the local workforce for jobs in Millville and beyond.

Goal 9: Provide residents and businesses of the town with services and facilities to meet expectations while remaining fiscally conservative.

Goal 10: Develop the Millville Town Center as the focal point of the community.

Natural and Historic Resources

Goal 11: To preserve the town's many outstanding historic resources which are critical components of the cultural fabric that make Millville a special place.

Goal 12: The Blackstone River is the Town's most important natural resource. Its water quality must not be further degraded but instead improved, and its flood storage capacity must be preserved. The River's importance to the town's historical development and the open space along its shores within the town offer valuable opportunities for promoting tourism, for providing recreational opportunities, and for educating both residents and visitors of the town's heritage and natural history.

Open Space

Goal 13: To preserve important natural resources from development and provide large tracts of usable open space for passive recreation activities by local residents.

Town Facilities and Services

Goal 14: To explore and implement potential solutions for extending water and sewer systems from adjacent communities or development of a municipal system serving properties serviced by the existing hydrant system and the development of a package treatment plant to serve the village center.

Goal 15: To provide residents and businesses of the town with services and facilities to meet expectations while remaining fiscally conservative.

Transportation

Goal 16: To maintain and preserve existing investment into the town's roadway infrastructure and to encourage transportation connectivity through alternative modes.

Introduction

Land use refers to the pattern of residential, commercial, industrial, and public development, as well as agriculture, forest, and other open land in a community. Land use forms the basis for master planning and determines, to a large extent, a Town's need for transportation infrastructure, public facilities, and environmental protection measures. This chapter provides an overview of Millville's existing land uses as well as an assessment of how land use is likely to change in the future under the Town's current zoning.

Existing Conditions

The University of Massachusetts at Amherst developed a statewide land use classification system based upon the careful interpretation of aerial photographs. Flights occurred in 1971, 1985, and most recently in 2005 which has made it possible to analyze land use trends in Millville during this period. Twenty-one land use and vegetative cover types are included in this classification system, with Millville showing acreage in sixteen categories. The number of acres in each land use category in 1971 and 1985, and the changes in each category during those years, are shown in Table 14 below.



In addition to interpreting the aerial photos and calculating land areas, this data has been captured in digital form for mapping purposes. Map 1 shows the extent of the various land use categories in Millville in 1985. While there has been considerable development since 1985, a current land use coverage based upon 1992 photography is not expected to be available until 1994 or 1995.

FIGURE 8.5 - 2005 LAND USE MAP 2018 MASTER PLAN

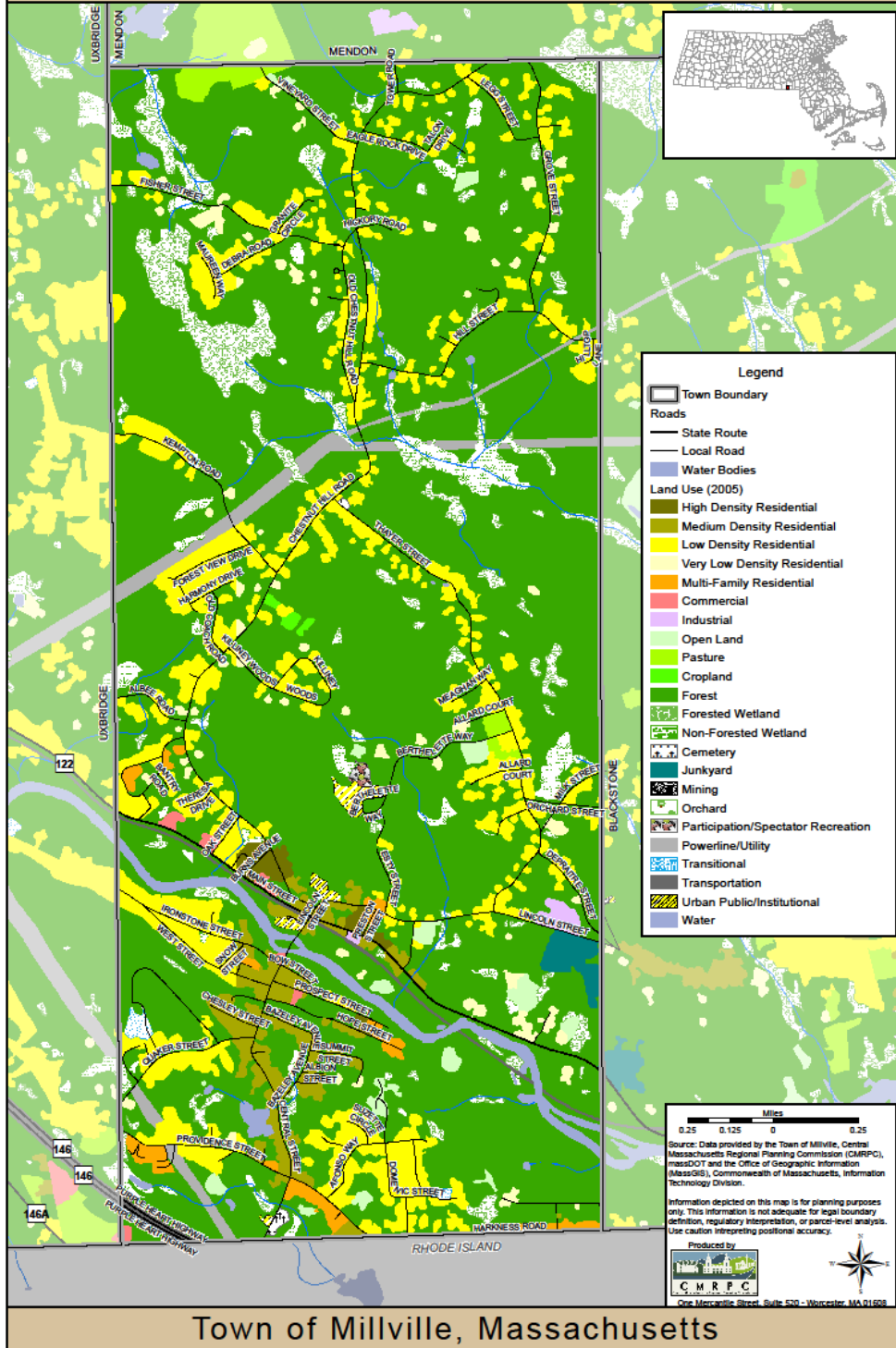


Table 3.1 – Land Use Change: 1971 – 2005

Type	1971	1985	2005	Change '71-'05
1 - CROPLAND	15.05	23.96	3.01	-80.00%
2 - PASTURE	97.51	89.81	18.00	-81.54%
3 - FORESTLAND	2339.82	2252.39	2187.05	-6.53%
4 - WETLAND	42.98	42.98	210.09	388.81%
5 - MINING	14.64	14.64	0.0	-100.00%
6 – OPEN LAND	186.15	169.69	27.69	-85.13%
7 - PARTICIPANT RECREATION	0.0	0.0	2.33	∞
8 - SPECTATOR RECREATION	3.68	3.68	0.0	-100.00%
9 - WATER BASED RECREATION	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10 - MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	0.0	0.0	28.04	∞
11 - RESIDENTIAL, < 1/4 ACRE LOTS	16.71	16.71	14.68	-12.15%
12 - RESIDENTIAL, 1/4 - 1/2 ACRE LOTS	144.77	145.96	76.14	-47.41%
13 - RESIDENTIAL, > 1/2 ACRE LOTS	244.75	325.77	423.95	73.22
14 – RESIDENTIAL, VERY LOW DENSITY	0.0	0.0	42.59	∞
15 - COMMERCIAL	1.82	5.27	7.13	291.76%
16 - INDUSTRIAL ¹	14.07	5.60	65.62	366.38%
17 - URBAN OPEN OR PUBLIC	8.79	19.43	10.71	10.64
18 - TRANSPORTATION	7.27	5.44	13.36	83.77%
19 - WASTE DISPOSAL	5.14	12.72	0.0	-100.00%
20 - WATER	35.11	35.11	41.43	18.00%
21 - WOODY PERENNIAL - ORCHARD	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0%
22 - TRANSITIONAL	0.0	0.0	4.78	∞
TOTAL	3,176.43	3,176.43	3,178.70	

Open space remains a significant land use in Millville. Forest land continues to be the largest land use category, comprising 2187 acres, or 69% of the town. Since 1971, forests have decreased by 6.5% or 153 acres, the largest decrease of any of the land use types. Land in agricultural production, nearly constant between 1971 and 1985, dropped precipitously between 1985 and 2005; cropland decreased by 12.04 acres since 1971 or 80%, while pasture declined by 79.5 acres. In 1985, these two categories accounted for about 4% of Millville's land area and by 2005 were less than 1%. Wetlands take up a very small percentage of the Town's land, but increased slightly likely due to changes in definition and classification.

¹ Includes junkyard, waste disposal, powerline, and utility

Open land (such as abandoned fields and buried utility lines) amounted to 169.7 acres in 1985, but decreased nearly 86% from 1971. Clearly the trend is away from land based economic activity such as agriculture and mining and more land us being used for the development of residential properties. Commercial, industrial, and transportation land uses also expanded significantly from 1971 to 2005 but only as a percentage of their former levels. Overall, commercial land use makes up only 1/5 of 1% of all land in town while industrial lands (see footnote 1 above) only make up slightly more than 2% of land area.

Table 3.3 – Land Use Distribution - 2005		
Land Use Classification	Acres	% Total Town Acres
Residential	585.40	18.42%
Commercial	7.13	0.22%
Industrial	65.62	2.06%
Public	10.71	0.34%
Agricultural	21.01	0.66%
Transportation	13.36	0.42%
Recreation and Open Space	30.02	0.94%
Wetlands and Water	241.52	7.60%
Forestlands	2,187.05	68.803%
Other	16.88	0.53%
TOTAL	3,178.70	100.00%

Developed land in town is almost entirely residential; the residential categories contain 585.4 acres, or 18.4% of the total land area of the Town. Large lot single-family homes (i.e. on lots greater than 1/2 acre) is the largest developed land category and increased the most of any residential category since 1971. Residential uses on lots less than 1/4 acre remained largely unchanged but multi-family housing became a new category and added nearly 30 acres. These two types are located predominantly in the older neighborhoods around the Town Center, which were built to provide housing for workers in the Rubber Shop.

Contrary to its origin as a mill community, very little land today is used for non-residential development. Commercial and industrial land uses together make up only about 72 acres, or 2.26% of the Town. Transportation uses (13.4 acres, principally Route 146 and the P & W Railroad) were a growing category likely due to the additional subdivision streets built over the last 20 years.

The Board of Assessors maintains an up-to-date database of property ownership and land use for tax purposes. This information provides a finer level of detail for land use classification, and when combined with the aerial photo interpretation, offers a well-rounded perspective of Millville's current state of development.

Existing Land Use Assessors Records

There is general agreement between the two methods concerning the types of development in Millville. Table 15 reveals that single-family residences dominate the landscape, with a total of 583. Condominiums, two-family, and multi-family structures are also prevalent, accounting for 277 such residences. Only four buildings are listed that contain between four and eight units. The Assessors also classify nine residential properties as mobile homes.

A total of 48 properties are classified as Commercial. The largest category of these is automotive uses with 18, followed by warehouses, small stores, and general office buildings with six each. All of these are small operations as there are no large business enterprises in Millville. Only three vacant properties are classified as developable for commercial use.

Table 3.4 – Assessors Coded Land Uses

USE CODE	USE CODE DESCRIPTION	Number of Lots	LOT SIZE (ACRES)	PERCENT
13	Mixed Use (Primarily Residential, some Commercial)	11	16.81	0.57%
14	Mixed Use (Primarily Residential, some Industrial)	1	2.17	0.07%
18	Mixed Use (Primarily Residential, some Recreation)	2	67.91	2.31%
31	Mixed Use (Primarily Commercial, some Residential)	1	0.14	0.00%
41	Mixed Use (Primarily Industrial, some Residential)	1	1.73	0.06%
49	Unknown	2	21.06	0.72%
63	Mixed Use (Primarily Forest, some Commercial)	1	108.75	3.71%
101	Single Family Residential	826	1391.61	47.41%
102	Residential Condominium	110	0.00	0.00%
103	Mobile Home (includes mobile home park land)	3	0.54	
104	Two-Family Residential	59	32.41	1.10%
105	Three-Family Residential	22	20.01	0.68%
106	Accessory Land with Improvement	13	32.21	1.10%
109	Multiple Houses on one parcel	2	8.17	0.28%
111	Apartments with Four to Eight Units	3	1.25	0.04%
130	Developable Residential Land	36	260.27	8.87%
131	Potentially Developable Residential Land	4	4.74	0.16%
132	Undevelopable Residential Land	135	314.28	10.71%
316	Other Storage, Warehouse, and Distribution facilities (see also usecode 401)	3	4.55	0.16%
325	Small Retail and Services stores (under 10,000 sq. ft.)	2	4.64	0.16%
326	Eating and Drinking Establishments - restaurants, diners, fast food establishments, bars, nightclubs	1	0.32	0.01%
331	Automotive Supplies Sales and Service	2	11.78	0.40%
332	Auto Repair Facilities	4	3.34	0.11%
334	Gasoline Service Stations - providing engine repair or	1	0.83	0.03%

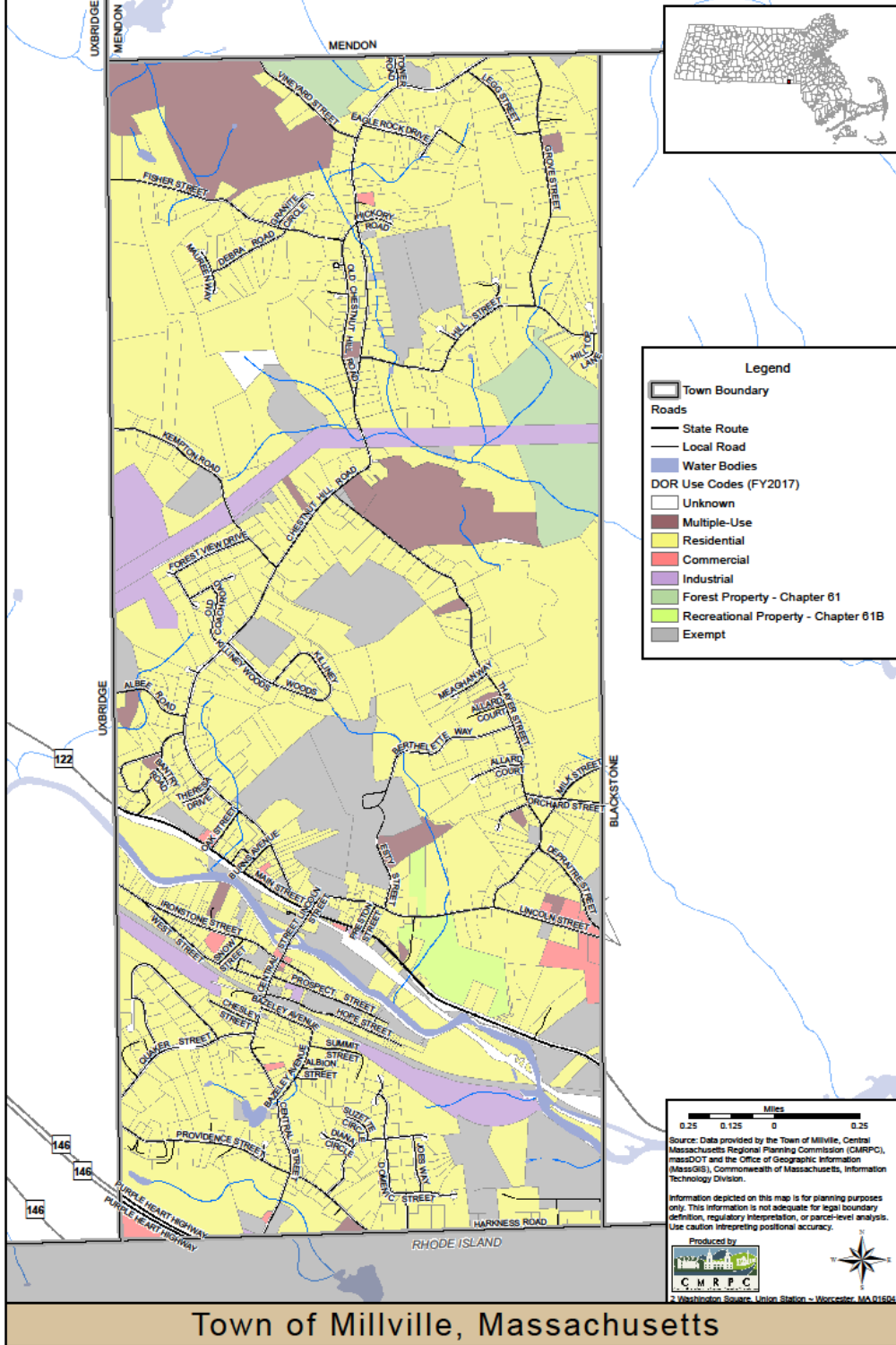
Table 3.4 – Assessors Coded Land Uses

USE CODE	USE CODE DESCRIPTION	Number of Lots	LOT SIZE (ACRES)	PERCENT
	maintenance services, and fuel products			
337	Parking Lots - a commercial open parking lot for motor vehicles	1	0.12	0.00%
340	General Office Buildings	1	0.68	0.02%
350	Property Used for Postal Services	1	0.23	0.00%
353	Fraternal Organizations	1	1.56	0.05%
390	Developable Commercial Land	1	0.29	0.01%
400	Buildings for manufacturing operations	1	0.68	0.02%
401	Warehouses for storage of manufactured products	1	0.43	0.02%
403	Land - integral part of manufacturing operation	1	0.34	0.01%
423	Electric Transmission Right-of-Way	9	128.43	4.38%
601	All land designated under Chapter 61 (not classified as Open Space)	3	95.11	3.24%
803	Nature Study - areas specifically for nature study or observation (Ch. 61B, not classified as Open Space)	2	34.31	1.17%
910	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Division of State Parks and Recreation	5	65.30	2.22%
930	Vacant, Selectmen or City Council (Municipal)	40	198.64	6.77%
931	Improved, Selectmen or City Council (Municipal)	6	29.51	1.00%
934	Improved, Education (Municipal or County)	1	47.80	1.63%
936	Vacant, Tax Title/Treasurer	2	4.65	0.16%
954	Function Halls, Community Centers, Fraternal Organizations (Charitable Org.)	3	6.38	0.22%
960	Church, Mosque, Synagogue, Temple, etc...	4	5.35	0.18%
961	Rectory or Parsonage	1	0.17	0.00%
962	Other (Religious Org.)	5	3.48	0.11%
970	Housing Authority	1	2.24	0.08%
	TOTALS →	1,335	2,935.22	100.00%

Of the properties classified as industrial, most are utility rights-of-way with only a little more than one acre dedicated to manufacturing or warehousing activities. Commercial properties include storage or warehousing; small retail or service stores; eating and drinking establishments; auto supply and service; auto repair; gas stations; parking lots; office buildings; postal use; fraternal organizations; and developable land. In all, only 28.34 acres of land is associated with a commercial use or less than 1% of total Millville land area. Subtracting parking lots, postal use, fraternal organizations, and developable land, only 0.9% of land in Millville is actively commercial in nature.

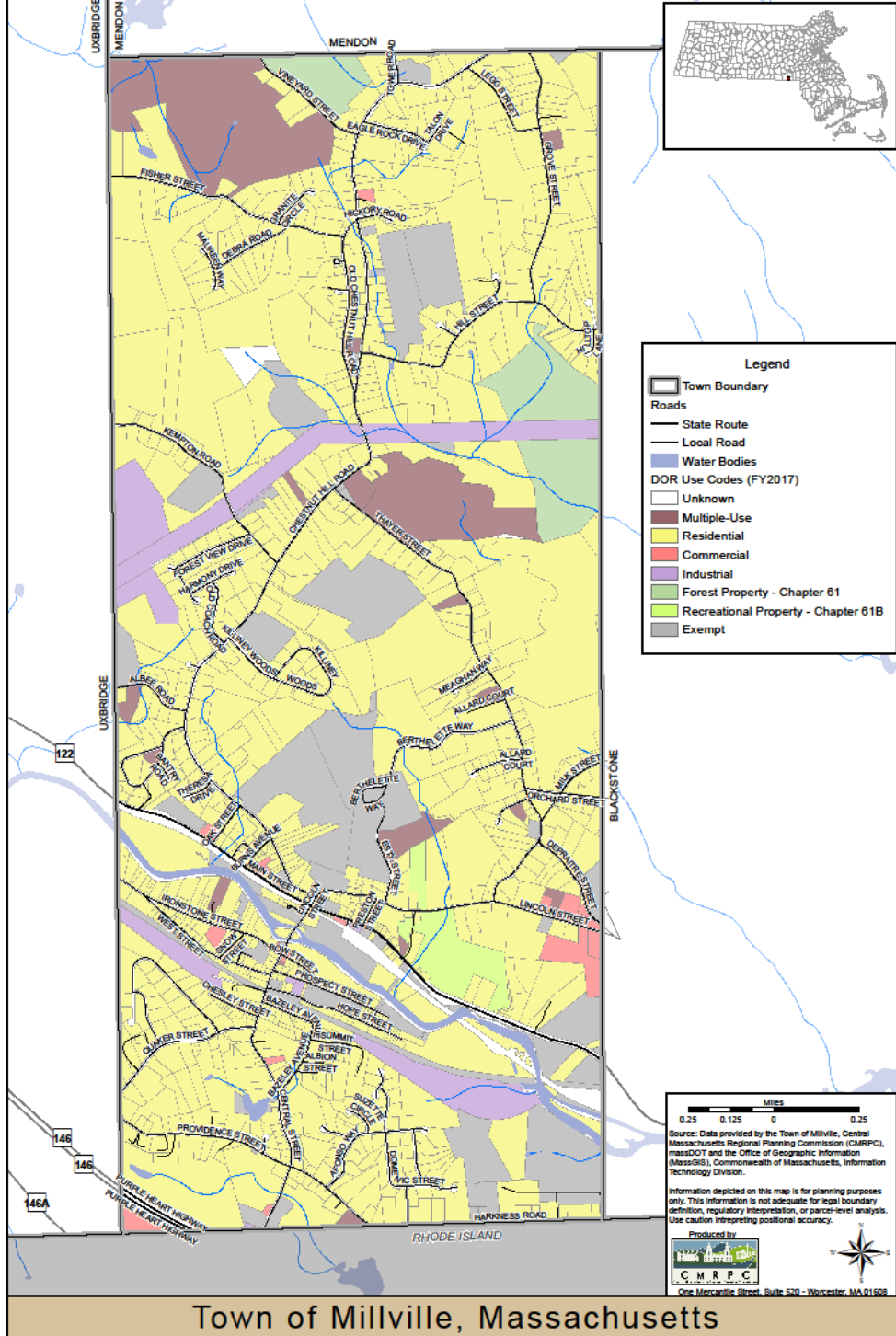
FIGURE 3.5 - DOR USE CODE MAP

2017 MASTER PLAN



Town of Millville, Massachusetts

FIGURE 3.5 - DOR USE CODE MAP 2018 MASTER PLAN



Finally, 68 properties are classified as tax exempt, with 47 municipal properties heading the list. The remainder are state lands (5), religious uses (9), property of the Housing Authority (1), Other (5), and one (1) day care center.

Six forest properties are classified under Chapter 61, where state law provides for a tax abatement to woodland owners who manage their property for wood production. In return for reduced taxes, landowners pledge to leave the land undeveloped. Penalties are imposed if the owner prematurely removes the property from the program. Lower taxes make it easier for the owners to leave the land in its natural state.

While much more fine grained, the Assessors data confirms the predominantly residential nature of Millville and how small the commercial and industrial sectors are. This should further focus local officials and finding some means to increase the non-residential tax base in future years.

Existing Land Use Bylaws and Regulations

Zoning and other land use laws constitute a community's "blueprint" for its future. Millville's residents and leaders can expect that the Town's existing land use will continue to look more and more like its zoning map over time until the Town is finally "built out." The Town adopted its first zoning bylaw in 1978. Since that time, the Town has revised and modified the bylaw many times. Millville's existing land use bylaws are described in this section.

District	Intended Use	Area (acres)	% of Town
Outlying Residential	Single family on lots 60,000 s.f.	1,321.68	41.6%
Village Residential	Single family on lots 40,000 s.f.	1,325.35	41.8%
Village Center	Single family on lots 20,000 s.f.	255.26	8.0%
Commercial Business	Residential & non-residential on lots 20k s.f.	272.14	8.6%
Renewable Energy Overlay	Overlay, large solar facilities, 250kW +	58.90	1.9% ²
	Total	3,174.43	100%

Millville has four base zoning districts and one overlay district. The base districts define the allowed uses and dimensional requirements, while the overlay districts provide for additional uses, restrictions and protection measures in specific areas of Town. The base districts are summarized in Table 3.6 and shown in Figure 3.7.

² Not counted toward percentage of total land area.

Millville is primarily low density residential with 83.4% of the town zoned at approximately one (1) acre minimum lot size. Within the Outlying Residential (OR) District, allowed uses include:

- Agricultural uses
- One- and two-family residential
- 503A home occupations
- Churches or schools
- Public recreation
- Water supply use

Uses requiring a special permit include the following:

- Basement dwellings
- Contracting businesses and storage yards
- Bed and Breakfast Inn
- Public buildings
- Public utilities
- 503B home occupations

The Village Residential (VR) District allows the following uses as-of-right:

- Agricultural uses
- One- and two-family dwellings
- Renting of rooms
- 503A home occupations
- Churches or schools

Special Permit uses in VR include:

- Basement dwellings
- Multi-family apartment or condominium
- Commercial, automotive, or industrial uses
- Public buildings
- Public utilities
- Nursing home
- 503B home occupations

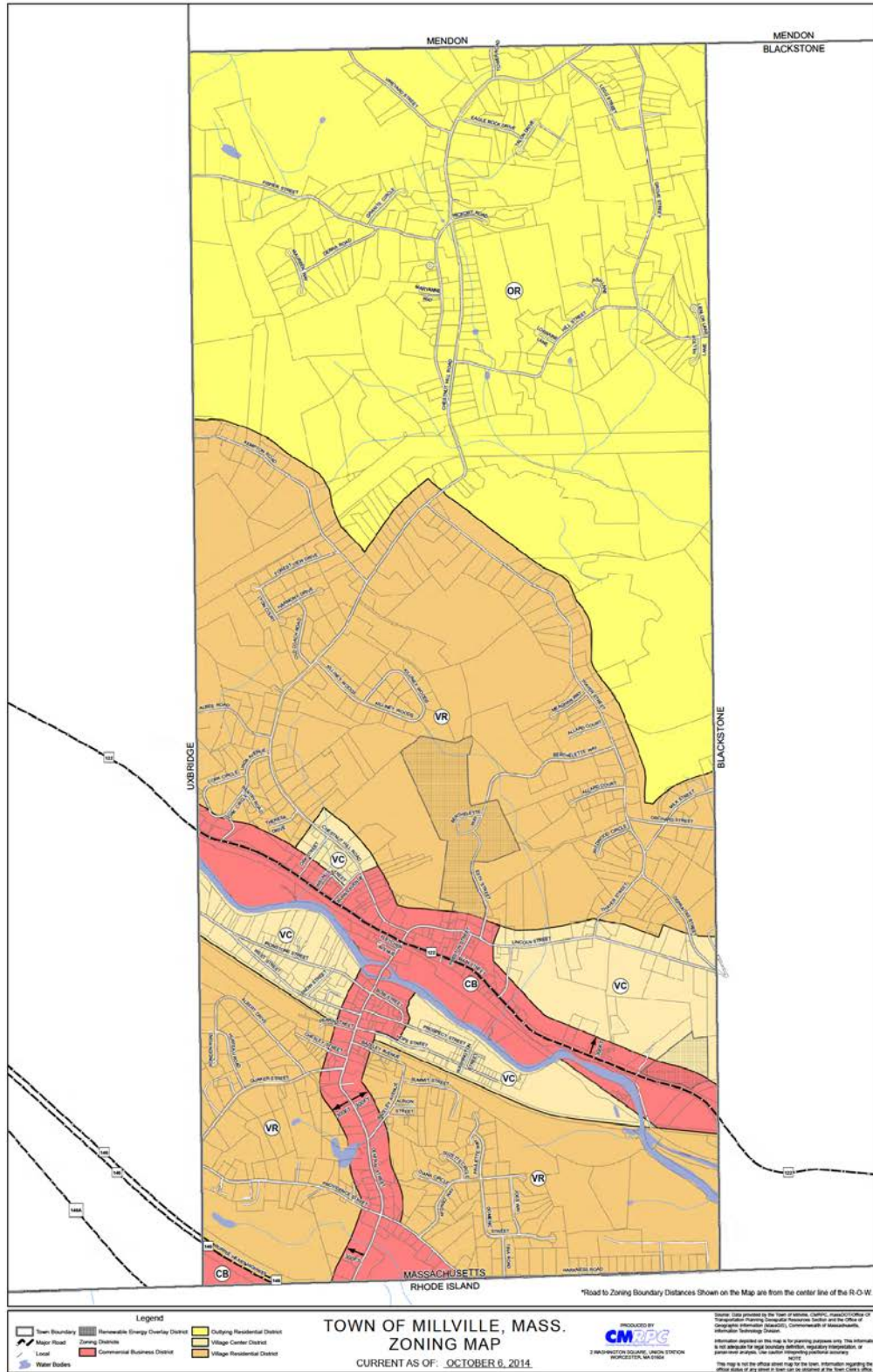
The Village Center (VC) District is primarily residential in nature, though additional uses are allowed through the issuance of a special permit. As-of-right uses include:

- Agricultural sales
- Single- and two-family dwellings
- Renting of rooms
- 503A home occupations
- Public recreation
- Water supply use
- Churches
- Schools

Uses allowed with a special permit include:

- All other uses except trailer, coach, mobile home;

Figure 3.7 – Town of Millville Zoning



In 2014, as the Board was starting work on the Master Plan, the Board, in conjunction with the Board of Selectmen, discussed moving forward with a recommendation to allow non-residential uses to be permitted by site plan review within the center of town. The resulting Commercial Business (CB) District was approved at a 2014 Fall Special Town Meeting. The District allows the following uses by site plan review:

- Retailing
- Service establishments
- Restaurant
- Funeral home
- Offices
- Financial institutions
- Public buildings
- Mixed-use

As-of-right uses are as follows (not requiring site plan review):

- Agricultural sales and backyard chickens
- Single- and two-family dwellings
- Basement dwellings
- Renting of rooms
- 503A home occupations
- Major residential development
- Church or school
- Public recreation
- Water supply use

The following uses are allowed by special permit:

- 503B home occupations
- Agricultural or livestock
- Accessory apartment
- Two-family dwelling
- Multifamily, apartment or condominium
- Hotel, motel
- Indoor recreation
- Contracting business or storage yard
- Bed and breakfast
- Registered marijuana dispensary
- Large scale solar facility
- Automotive sales and service
- Industrial uses
- Public utility
- Nursing home

Other Land Use Bylaws and Regulations

In 2012, the Planning Board submitted for Town Meeting's consideration an overlay district to permit the installation of solar photovoltaic facilities on two town owned parcels. With the approval of the district by Town Meeting, the district was amended to include two adjacent properties to the former landfill property. The Overlay District permits, through the issuance of site plan approval, the installation of solar facilities generating electricity over 250 kW.

Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Bylaw

Adopted in 2009, the OSRD Bylaw allows for the clustering of residential structures through the reduction of the lot size, setbacks, and frontage in exchange for the preservation of no less than 35% of the land area. The OSRD Bylaw enables the protection of Millville's natural resources while allowing for development in a manner that will be less burdensome to the town and reduce cost of services to the Town by reducing needed infrastructure to support residential development

Wireless Communications Overlay District (WCOD) Bylaw

Adopted in 2010, the WCOD establishes a special permitting process to site a wireless communication facility within the Town of Millville, while minimizing potential damage and adverse visual impacts of wireless communication facilities on adjacent properties, residential neighborhoods, and areas of historic or high scenic value; to allow the provision of necessary wireless communication services in an orderly way; and to promote shared use of existing facilities to reduce the need for new facilities. Priority siting is given to Town of Millville parcels to generate revenue.

Site Plan Review Bylaw

Adopted in 2013, the Site Plan Review Bylaw was originally adopted to create an expedited review process for solar facilities as required for designation as a Green Community. The Bylaw was later amended in the fall of 2013 to apply to the review all special permit use applications and again in the fall of 2014 to accommodate the creation of the CB District which included site plan only review processes.

Subdivision Regulations

The Planning Board's Subdivision Rules and Regulations regulate the creation of new lots and the construction of new roads. The Rules and Regulations also include filing requirements for frontage lots (also known as Approval Not Required or ANR lots). The regulations also give the Planning Board the authority to waive strict compliance with the established standards. This ability to waive or reduce standards can provide design flexibility; for example, to allow narrower streets where acceptable to the Planning Board once the ability to construct a fully compliant road. The Subdivision Rules and Regulations have been amended in 2009 and 2013 in order to address issues that arose during the construction of subdivisions under older regulations.

Stormwater and Erosion Control

In 2006, the Town adopted the Stormwater Management Bylaw. The purpose of the bylaw was to require practices to control the flow of stormwater runoff from sites undergoing new construction and redevelopment into Millville's storm drainage system in order to prevent flooding and erosion, and to protect the Town's groundwater and surface waters from degradation. The Planning Board is the body responsible for the issuance of Stormwater Management Permits. Regulations were adopted by the Board in 2009.

Board of Health Regulations

The Board of Health regulations contain provisions for on-site sewage treatment and hazardous material reporting. Septic systems must be designed to the requirements of the Massachusetts Title 5 regulations. The Board of Health is an important component of the municipal development review team.

Wetland and Water Resource Protection

The Conservation Commission administers the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act by providing additional pre-construction review and local control of activities that are likely to affect wetlands and their various functions. Conservation Commission should also be integrated into local development review processes.

Land Use Studies

Village Center Visual Preference Survey

As part of the 2012 Village Visioning Project, CMRPC conducted a visual preference survey to determine participants' reaction, positive through negative, for elements such as design, height, use, landscaping, design, amenities, and parking, of specific photographs depicting these elements and general design for the village center area. Findings of the survey included the following:

Setbacks: In general, a preference was indicated for zero or minimal setback from the street. There was a general sense that the lots sizes were too small to support setbacks including those needed for parking.

Building Height: One-story buildings were undesirable, unless they were an existing building. Preference was demonstrated for three and four story buildings. Larger five (5) story buildings were thought to be out of character with existing building. Note that multi-story buildings contain 2-4 times the floor area of single-story buildings and thus water and wastewater becomes more critical of an issue.

Landscaping: For the former mill site, participants appreciated the public open space and the connection to the riverfront, and also favor landscaping in parking areas where needed. Typically landscaping is also functional in that it helps controls stormwater runoff.

Architectural Design: Traditional New England design was preferred over more modern architecture in the village center.

Use: Mixed-use properties were favored. There was a sense that first floor retail should provide the base for upper level professional offices more than first floor commercial with residential uses above. This was almost universal throughout the survey. A common concern was that residential uses required more water and waste water infrastructure needed to support them. Industrial uses were seen as more appropriate to areas closer to Route 146. Given that wastewater issues may be address at some point in the future, upper floors could be designed flexibly to allow changes in use as the market and infrastructure allow.

Orientation: Participants preferred street oriented uses, but understood potential/possibilities that might take advantage of various lot configurations and parking schemes.

Amenities: Public open space that would support farmer's markets or small community gatherings were desired. Sidewalk furniture such as benches and planters were seen as positive as part of streetscaping upgrades.

Parking: While a minimal setback was preferred, there were concerns about parallel or angled street parking creating backing problems on to heavily traveled roads. If shared parking or public parking can be created with just one or two curb cuts, disruption to traffic flow from entering or exiting vehicles would be minimized. In addition to the survey, a few questions were asked to ascertain the characteristics, habits, and preferences of the participants in the room.

- Voting results demonstrated that most of those present (58%) had lived or owned property in Millville for more than 20 years.
- In addition, participants were asked about one thing they would like to see in the Millville Village Center. These included personal services (gym, salon, dry cleaners, etc.); coffee shop/bakery/restaurant/bar; professional/office; retail; and no change. In the discussion, participants felt strongly that all of these uses were desirable and everyone present wanted some change in Millville Village Center.
- Lastly, participants were asked how frequently they visit Millville Village Center. More than 50% said rarely or never.

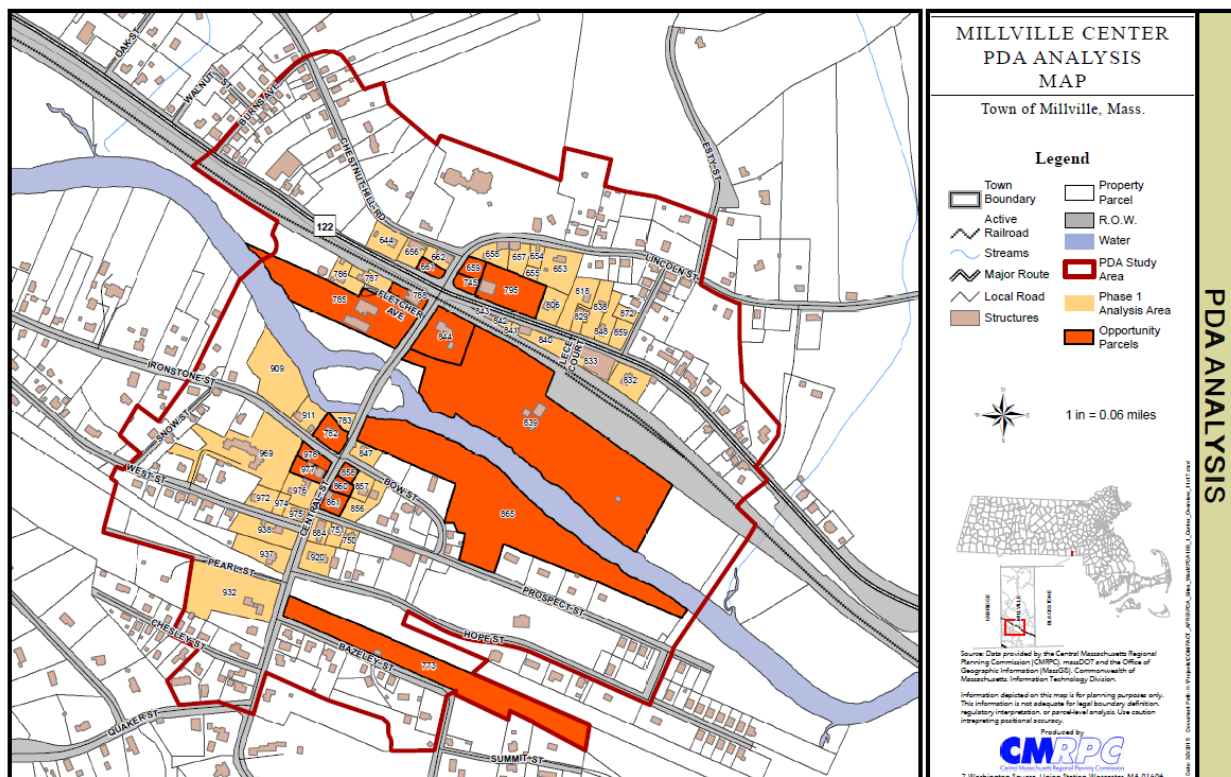
Town Center Opportunities and Constraints Study

CMRPC completed a Town Center Opportunities and Constraints Study in 2016 related to a Priority Development Area designated in the Blackstone Valley Prioritization Plan. The study area for this project was centered on the local priority area designated as 188-1. Priority development areas (PDAs) are areas within a town that have been identified as capable of supporting additional development or as candidates for redevelopment. These are areas on which a town is focusing its energy to promote thoughtful economic development that is closely tied to the community's goals.

In this study, CMRPC conducted an analysis on existing conditions and land use within the study area which notes a predominance of residential properties with 71% residential, 5% institutional, 4% commercial or mixes use, 1% industrial, and a fairly sizable vacant category at 16%.

Figure 3.8 below shows the opportunity parcels that were identified, along with any constraint factors, in the study. Each parcel is summarized below. Please refer to the full study for additional detail.

Figure 3.8 Millville PDA 188-1 Opportunity Parcels



204 Main Street

The 204 Main Street parcel is a prime commercial or mixed use development location located at a key intersection in the center of Millville. It currently contains a small parking lot and a single story garage structure. The property is very small and would be limited in terms of the type and configuration of structure that could be developed. It would require a zero setback two story structure with parking in the rear or rely on street parking. The parcel does possess constraints as follows:

Zoning: This is a conforming lot as the zoning (Commercial Business District) requires a 20,000 square foot minimum area and the lot is 6,534 square feet. Even if combined with adjacent lot 662 (9,148 s.f.), there would not be sufficient area for new development or redevelopment. Setbacks and required frontage would further constrain the site from being developed.

Infrastructure: Neither water nor sewer are available to the property. A well and septic tank would be required but the size of the lot suggests that it is unlikely to be feasible.

Constraints: There are no environmental constraints to the property and the topography is suitable for development.

Recommendation: This is an ideal village center location for development. Consider flexible development standards for a parcel of this type allowing a small mixed use two or three story building with parking to the rear and a built-to line at the ROW. Related to water and sewer, while the site may have some feasibility for a well and septic system, a shared system may be a better option and the Town should consider seeking a water and sewer feasibility study similar to that performed by the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission for the Town of Ashby, MA.

200 Main Street and 4 Lincoln

This vacant site currently serves as a de facto parking lot. These properties have valuable and visible frontage on both Main and Lincoln streets and if combined, could also provide an ideal location for street frontage development as noted for recommendation above—either commercial or mixed-use with the proper zoning. The General Business (GB) zone in which the site is currently situated does not permit the kind of town center storefront structure that would best fit this location and provide additional street character and functionality. The GB district does not appear to permit zero setback build-to lines that would allow this type of structure or even a replacement of an existing town center commercial building. The parcel does possess constraints as follows:

Zoning: These are both non-conforming lots as the zoning (Commercial Business District) requires a 20,000 square foot minimum area and even if both lots were combined (totaling 13,939 s.f.), there would not be sufficient area for new development or redevelopment. Setbacks and required frontage would further constrain the site from being developed.

Infrastructure: Neither water nor sewer are available to the property. A well and septic tank would be required but the size of the lot suggests that it is unlikely to be feasible.

Constraints: These two properties are partially included in Interim Wellhead Protection Areas but the topography is suitable for development.

Recommendation: CMRPC's recommendation would be, if the Town were interested in the opportunity, to consider facilitating a development opportunity similar to that exemplified in the following link: <http://www.ddd.org>

The Town may wish to consider a town center overlay district which would allow this form of development and by extension make legal the existing commercial buildings and sites in the town center. Millville may also wish to pair such an overlay with a set of specific design guidelines or requirements that would provide additional assurance that development of the site would be in keeping with the character of Millville town center and New England architecture generally.

196 Main Street

The 196 Main Street property includes a fire station and a public park with monuments. While this central location may be strategic from a fire protection perspective, this is another prime opportunity parcel in the town center and could be redeveloped for commercial or mixed use at the street ROW line and offer a suitable pedestrian scale improvement that could add vitality to Millville center. The Town may wish to consider exploring a combined public safety facility in another location and open this site up to development opportunity with recommendations similar to above. If the town wishes to maintain the park in this location, it could serve as an ideal septic field and well area. The parcel does possess constraints as follows:

Zoning: This is a conforming lot as the zoning (Commercial Business District) requires a 20,000 square foot minimum area and it contains 47,045 square feet. There would be sufficient area for new development or redevelopment. Setbacks and required frontage would need to be flexible for suitable development on the site.

Infrastructure: Neither water nor sewer are available to the property. A well and septic tank would be required but the size of the lot suggests that it is unlikely to be feasible.

Constraints: This site is fully included within an Interim Wellhead Protection Area but the topography is suitable for development.

Recommendation: CMRPC's recommendation would be to ignore this site if the fire station must remain in this location and/or the park is to remain. If there is flexibility in station location, the area where the station is located is an excellent area for commercial or mixed use redevelopment in the same zero setback storefront configuration with rear or side parking as recommended for the above sites. Should the station be moved, a strong alternative use would be to expand the site as a public park.

Unnumbered Main Street (note 196 Main Street associated with this parcel and the fire station)

This parcel contains a multi-family residence and the building is in only fair condition. Additionally there are lands with residential use to the rear of this structure. There may be an opportunity to consolidate these parcels and redevelop more intensely for multi-family use. This is a suitable location for multi-family in the village center and additional residential units can add to the market for new commercial uses in the area. The parcel does possess constraints as follows:

Zoning: This is a non-conforming lot as the zoning (Commercial Business District) requires a 20,000 square foot minimum area this lot is 0.22 acres. There would be sufficient area for new development or redevelopment if combined with two other parcels. Setbacks and required frontage would need to be flexible for suitable development on the site.

Infrastructure: Neither water nor sewer are available to the property. A well and septic tank would be required but the size of the lot suggests that it is unlikely to be feasible for the recommended development scenario.

Constraints: There are no relevant environmental constraints on the site and the topography is suitable for development. It is adjacent to the railroad ROW and this may create some market constraints.

Recommendation: CMRPC's recommendation would be to consider this site to be combined with the two adjacent sites to the west as a potential multi-family development site that if developed at 12 units per acre could result in 9-12 units containing studio or 1 bedroom units.

11 Central Street

Eleven Central Street is a historic residential structure located on a depressed site within a Riverfront Protection Act 100-200 foot zone plus within a IWPA zone. Its location in town center is excellent but it is separated from Main Street by the railroad ROW and may not be re-developable due to the aforementioned environmental constraints. However, should the town be interested in an additional density of development, this may be an interesting option although visibility is poor and it is isolated by the railroad and its low elevation. Another consideration for this site could be the development of a museum or cultural center, perhaps related to the Blackstone River or associated with the mill history of the town.

The parcel does possess constraints as follows:

Zoning: This is a conforming lot as the zoning (Commercial Business District) requires a 20,000 square foot minimum area and this lot is 1.02 acres.

Infrastructure: Neither water nor sewer are available to the property. A well and septic tank would be required but environmental constraints may make this difficult.

Constraints: The site has partial constraints as it is located within a wellhead protection zone and a River Protection Act 100-200 foot setback. It should be determined as to whether the structure is historic and if so if it is on the National Register of Historic Places. This may be an additional constraint or may be an opportunity to preserve a historic building in the town center.

Recommendation: CMRPC's recommendation would be to consider this site for market rate residential uses or cultural use. Should greater density of development be desired on this site and if the constraints are eliminated or reduced, multi-family residential or mixed use development could be feasible here.

32 Central Street

This property is currently a variety retail store and appears to be a successful business in the town center. However the site could be improved with the building reoriented and design guidelines applied to the façade. 32 Central Street possesses constraints as follows:

Zoning: This is a non-conforming lot as the zoning (Commercial Business District) requires a 20,000 square foot minimum area this lot is 14,375 s.f.

Infrastructure: Neither water nor sewer are available to the property. A well and septic tank would be required but lot size may make this difficult.

Constraints: The site has partial and absolute constraints as it is located within a wellhead protection zone and both a River Protection Act 100-200 foot setback and 0-100 foot setback. However, building reorientation to the street may provide an opportunity to move the structure further from the river and reduce impervious surface.

Recommendation: CMRPC's recommendation would be to consider this site for redevelopment for the same use or mixed use and facilitate through zoning changes the reorientation of the building to the street sides of the property at zero setback. Additional density may be permitted if the water and wastewater constraints are alleviated.

Other Development Opportunities

36 Central Street

This vacant lot offers an ideal infill site for a commercial building or mixed use building similar to that situated next door to the south (38 Central Street). This property is in a wellhead protection area, has no water or sewer service, and is non-conforming as to zoning. Recommendation is to develop zoning that allows the site to be developed as was the historical pattern for the area as recommended for several other sites in this analysis. Permit mixed use and full-site build out with a zero front setback and two to three stories.

38 Central Street

This mixed use building would be ideal to preserve and rehabilitate provided that it is in sufficiently good condition. The commercial storefront should be preserved and the residential uses above are also positive. This property is in a wellhead protection area, has no water or sewer service, and is non-conforming as to zoning. Recommendation is to develop zoning that allows the site to be preserved as was the historical pattern for the area as recommended for several other sites in this analysis.

6 West Street

This vacant lot offers an ideal infill site for a parking area for 44 Central Street. This property is barely in a wellhead protection area, has no water or sewer service, and is non-conforming as to zoning. Recommendation is to let market forces determine if the rehabilitation of 44 Central makes acquisition feasible and then to allow surface parking on the site. Alternatively, the town may wish to acquire this or other parcels to develop municipal parking in important commercial districts and also street parking where feasible.

44 Central Street

This existing multi-family residence should either remain and be well-maintained, or the first floor could be converted to commercial use providing an extension to the commercial district to this point on Central Street. This property is in a wellhead protection area, has no water or sewer service, and is non-conforming as to zoning. Recommendation is to develop zoning that allows the site to be maintained as was the historical pattern for the area as recommended for several other sites in this analysis. Permit mixed use on the site.

35 Central Street

This parking lot offers another well positioned development site for a commercial building or mixed use building similar to that situated at 44 Central or something more appropriate for a street corner. This property is in a wellhead protection area, has no water or sewer service, and is non-conforming as to zoning. Recommendation is to develop zoning that allows the site to be developed as was the historical pattern for the area as recommended for several other sites in this analysis. Permit mixed use and full-site build out with a zero front setback and two to three stories. If this parking area is critical for the public or 37 Central Street, a shared parking solution between 35 and 37 Central should be investigated or offsite parking serving these two lots could be found elsewhere. This is a critical visible site that should not be vacant or paved area.

37 Central Street

This vacant lot offers an ideal infill site for a commercial building or mixed use building similar to that situated next door to the south. This property is in a wellhead protection area, has no water or sewer service, and is non-conforming as to zoning. Recommendation is to develop zoning that allows the site to be developed as was the historical pattern for the area as recommended for several other sites in this analysis. Permit mixed use and full-site build out with a zero front setback and two to three stories.

39 Central Street

This is a residential property with a commercial basement opening out on to Central Street. This is a positive mixed use element and the Town may wish to consider allowing this and other properties to extend the commercial footprint out to the ROW line.

21 Bazeley Avenue

This vacant lot is located adjacent and to the south of the Midstate trail and offers an opportunity along with the parcel across Central Street south of Pearl Street for some commercial uses that directly complement, feed off of, or support the trail visitors.

This could include clothing, cycles, skateboards, roller skates, hiking or walking equipment, restaurants or deli, coffee or tea shop, pub, or any other use that may be market appropriate. CMRPC suggests providing for a zoning category that allows for a traditionally designed building like a train depot or colonial building that could allow multiple uses and include sufficient public parking for the commercial uses and trail access combined.

181 Main Street

This collection of parcels adjacent to the Blackstone River is currently owned by both private entities and the Town of Millville. These lands, much located in significantly constrained environmental lands, could be an ideal location for a regional park, perhaps associated with the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park and Heritage Corridor. Such a park could, alone or as a connection to the Midstate Trail, facilitate visitor traffic that would make Millville a tourist destination and fuel into new commercial development in the town center.

181 Main Street

This vacant lot and adjacent railroad ROW to the east (uncertain but potential to be included) offer the potential for industrial development or other appropriate use that could make use of freight rail access. Potential constraints could include any historical contamination, partial environmental constraints on the private parcel including being in the wellhead area, the 500 year flood zone, and the 100 year flood zone for the railroad property. Currently zoned Commercial Business. For further guidance, see the CMRPC report entitled: *“Blackstone Valley Freight Rail Study & Feasibility Analysis Management System Community Profiles: Grafton-Millbury-Millville-Sutton-Uxbridge.”*

The PDA study further concluded that water and sewer were the primary obstacles to any further development or redevelopment of the study area and that zoning needed to be amended to allow different densities, lot configurations and siting, and mixed uses.

Issues and Opportunities

Two factors exist in Millville’s land use historical trajectory. First, there is a very small and limited supply of commercial and industrial land use which cannot be significantly increased due to infrastructure constraints (largely lack of public water and wastewater). Second, residential growth has been slow but steady and Millville is well situated related to both the Providence and Worcester real estate markets to serve as a bedroom community for both. It is also one of the more affordable markets for housing in the region. For this reason, it should be expected that such residential development will continue in Millville.

As a result of these two factors, the property tax burden will become more pronounced on residential owners and services will likely be even more dependent on this one land use category. The Town is acutely aware that non-residential development is necessary to offset this increasing tax burden. However, the current and future anticipated burden has not been quantified.

Thus, this Master Plan recommends that as part of the Land Use Recommendations (below), Millville undertake the following special studies in order to clarify the burden and highlight different options for remediation:

- 1. Buildout Analysis Update:** A buildout analysis was first conducted for Millville in 2000. While little has likely changed related to the buildout numbers since that time, the likelihood of the buildout scenario occurring is much more probable due to the trends noted above. Therefore, CMRPC recommends that an updated buildout analysis be conducted with two separate scenarios: current infrastructure versus adding water and sewer to specific areas in town. A redevelopment component for the CB district should also be a part of the analysis. This study should clearly show how many additional residential units may be added under the current zoning. The alternative scenario would add units and non-residential floor area. Both scenarios would estimate additional population, schoolchildren, electrical use, water use, wastewater generation, and solid waste generation.
- 2. Fiscal Impact Analysis:** A valuable follow-up to a buildout analysis is a fiscal impact analysis which takes the anticipated growth projected in the prior analysis and assesses a range of municipal service and facility impacts. Fiscal impact analyses can be conducted on one or more scenarios to exemplify how different growth scenarios might impact fiscal health of the community. For example, current trends extended might show how additional residential development without any measurable non-residential development might impact services like schools and town administrative services. An alternative scenario where an investment is made in water and wastewater infrastructure facilitating commercial growth might show different numbers.

Goals and Recommendations

Goals

As stated within Chapter 2, the following are the Plan's Land Use Goals:

- 1.** To improve the management of future development in order to preserve Millville's rural character, to minimize impacts on residential properties, and to insure the highest environmental quality possible..

2. To develop the Millville Town Center as the focal point of the community. This can be accomplished by continuing to concentrate municipal functions in the Center, by enhancing the visual appearance of Main Street, by encouraging commercial development where appropriate, and by creating public open spaces for social interaction.

Recommendations

To support and implement the Town's Land Use Goals, the following actions are recommended to achieve the goal:

- A. *Develop a Village Center Overlay District to allow greater control of density, design, and dimensional standards for structures within the village center that encourage development/ redevelopment in keeping with historic development patterns.*
- B. *Develop "Millville Village Center Design Guidelines and Preferences" to encourage development that reflects the historic character of the Town and establishes standards for landscaping and amenities.*
- C. *Review bylaws and revise to promote the preferred uses, heights, setback, and other conditions favored in the visual preference survey.*
- D. *Exploration and discussion of the town's goals with respect to the redevelopment of the 181 Main Street site should be continued. Other opportunity parcels in the 2016 PDA Study should be evaluated for development or redevelopment as well.*
- E. *Maintain Municipal presence in the Village Center through renovation of town hall or construction of a new town hall within the village center.*
- F. *Pursue a municipal package sewer system plan to serve the village center to encourage increased densities and mixed use development or explore other options to provide sufficient water and wastewater infrastructure in order to facilitate additional growth opportunities.*
- G. *Conduct an updated buildout analysis and a fiscal impact analysis to quantify anticipated growth scenarios and understand how these scenarios will impact the fiscal health of the Town.*

Chapter 4 Population, Income, Education

Introduction

Millville has not experienced the significant increase in population that has affected other Blackstone Valley communities. In 1940, Millville had a population of 1,742 people. By 1990, the Town's population had grown to only 2,236, which is an increase of 494 people over a 50 year period, or less than ten people per year.

The Town's population actually declined between 1940 and 1960, and between 1970 and 1980. By 2000 the Town's population began to increase, reaching 2,724 in 2000 and 3,199 in 2010. See Table 4.1.



The trends in population from 1940 through 1980 were likely tied to the decline in manufacturing as jobs left the valley. However, the 1980's showed a significant reversal of this trend, as the Town grew by 543 people, or 32.1%. This increase does not seem to be tied to the creation of jobs within the community as Millville's employment base remained relatively stable during the 1980's. (See Table 4.2) Most of this growth can therefore be attributed to new residents being attracted to Millville for other reasons and finding employment in other communities.

The previous thirty years represent a period of significant growth for the Blackstone Valley and many of its towns (see Table 4.2). While the State as a whole only grew 14.1% since 1980, Worcester County's population growth exceeded that of the State, growing 23.5%. The Blackstone Valley grew at a rate twice that of the County and three times that of the State. Many communities experienced explosive development pressure.

Since 1980, Millville's population has grown by 88.4%. While this increase of 1,497 residents represents a higher percentage of growth, it still only represents 4.1% of the total growth the Blackstone Valley experienced.

Table 4.1 - Population Change in Millville – 1940 to 2010

	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	1,742	1,692	1,567	1,764	1,693	2,236	2,724	3,190
Change from Previous	x	-50	-125	197	-71	543	488	466
% Growth	x	-2.9%	-7.4%	12.6%	-4.0%	32.1%	21.8%	17.1%

Table 4.2 – Regional Growth - 1980 through 2010

	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change 1980-2010	Percent Change 1980-2010
Blackstone	6,570	8,023	8,804	9,026	2,456	37.4%
Douglas	3,730	5,438	7,045	8,471	4,741	127.1%
Grafton	11,238	13,035	14,894	17,765	6,527	58.1%
Hopedale	3,905	5,666	5,907	5,911	2,006	51.4%
Mendon	3,108	4,010	5,286	5,839	2,731	87.9%
Millbury	11,808	12,228	12,784	13,261	1,453	12.3%
Millville	1,693	2,236	2,724	3,190	1,497	88.4%
Northbridge	12,246	13,371	13,182	15,707	3,461	28.3%
Sutton	5,855	6,824	8,250	8,963	3,108	53.1%
Upton	3,886	4,677	5,642	7,542	3,656	94.1%
Uxbridge	8,374	10,415	11,156	13,457	5,083	60.7%
Blackstone Valley	72,413	85,923	95,674	109,132	36,719	50.7%
Worcester County	646,352	709,705	749,973	798,552	152,200	23.5%
Massachusetts	5,737,037	6,016,425	6,349,097	6,547,629	810,592	14.1%

Age Distribution

In Millville, most of this growth occurred in the 25-34 and 35-44 year age brackets (see Table 4.3). These two groups alone doubled in population growth during the 1980's. Children under 5 years of age also gained 81 individuals, a reflection of the growth of young adults 25-44 years old since these are the prime child-bearing years. As the population continued to age, the distribution shifted, therefore by the year 2000 the number of 45-54 years olds doubled from the total for the age group in 1980. By 2010, this population cohort shifted to the 55-64 year old age bracket, more than doubling in number compared to 1980. Between 1980 and 2010, the 35-44 group, the 45-54 group, and the 55-64 group has increased by 228.7%, 213.2%, and 116.7%, respectively. This trend can be expected to result in a doubling or tripling of the 65 to 74 age bracket when compared to 1980 and the potential doubling of this age group compared to 2010. Analysis of trends in median

age³ also indicates this demographic bubble of an aging population. The 2000 median age was 33.6, the 2010 median age rose to 37.8, and the 2016 estimate was 41.5.

Since 1980, the growth in school age children has been modest compared to the other age categories with a recent sharp increase in the 5-17 age cohort. This likely resulted in more children at the elementary school through high school levels. The large inventory of vacant land approved for single family homes will also cause a further increase in households with children who will enter the public school system. The under 5 cohort flattened out in 2010 which may indicate a longer term slowing of growth in schoolchildren.

	< 5	5-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
1980	123	433	201	242	178	174	156	101	85
1990	204	402	205	524	344	195	169	119	74
2000	222	263	165	425	586	324	154	126	95
2010	223	616	255	336	585	545	338	141	120
Change 1980 to 2010	100	183	54	94	407	371	182	40	35
% Change 1980 to 2010	81.3%	42.3%	26.9%	38.8%	228.7%	213.2%	116.7%	39.6%	41.2%

Income

Table 4.4 displays the median income of residents in the Blackstone Valley, Worcester County, and Massachusetts. Millville's household income (\$82,083) and family income (\$89,702) ranks them 8th out of the 11 Blackstone Valley towns. Per capita income (\$29,546) was the lowest in the Blackstone Valley.

	Household		Family		Per Capita	
	\$	Rank	\$	Rank	\$	Rank
Blackstone	74,294	9	87,175	9	32,488	8
Douglas	83,253	7	97,459	6	36,525	6
Grafton	87,077	5	109,515	4	39,887	4
Hopedale	89,408	4	108,125	5	38,747	5
Mendon	105,389	3	115,946	3	41,740	3

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2010, and 2016.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau 1980-2010

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau 2010

Millbury	71,681	10	84,455	11	32,361	9
Millville	82,083	8	89,702	8	29,546	11
Northbridge	66,541	11	86,597	10	32,055	10
Sutton	110,362	1	118,092	2	42,293	2
Upton	10,5729	2	13,3190	1	42,745	1
Uxbridge	84,909	6	96,083	7	34,910	7
Worcester County	64,152	x	79,121	x	30,557	x
Massachusetts	68,331	x	86,584	x	36,551	x

Table 4.5 – Income By Type			
Income Type	Actual Census	Estimates	
	2000	2010	2016 Est.
Median Household Income	\$57,000	\$77,250	\$91,250
Median Family Income	\$61,513	\$83,125	\$106,591
Per Capita Income	\$20,497	\$29,951	\$34,255
Persons Below Poverty Level	5.8%	3.2%	7.0%
Source: U.S. Census 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2016			

Adjusted for inflation, Millville has seen real gains in income measures (see Table 4.5 above). However, rates of poverty for individuals are higher compared to most other towns in the Blackstone Valley region. This could suggest that newcomers to Millville, population gained through new subdivisions approved, have raised income levels, while the underlying historical poverty remains. Economic development should consider targeting this latter sub-population.

Education

Table 4.6 demonstrates that Millville residents are typically as well-educated as the state average. The majority (90%) of Massachusetts residents have a high school degree or higher and 89% of Millville residents are also at this level of education. Since 2000, the percentage of high school graduates or higher has increased from 86% to 89% and the percentage with a Bachelor’s degree or higher has increased from 20% to 27%. The state has also experienced an average increase in educational attainment rates.

Millville consistently has a higher rate of high school graduates than the Massachusetts average, while the state has higher averages of graduates with higher education degrees. Despite having averages lower than the state of residents with higher education degrees, Millville has shown a consistent increase in percentages of residents with Associate’s, Bachelor’s, and graduate or professional

degrees. Only 5% of Millville residents had less than a 9th grade education, which is on par with the state level.

Table 4.6 – Educational Attainment⁶

Education (Population 25+ years of age)	2000			2010			2016		
	#	%	State %	#	%	State %	#	%	State %
% High school graduate or higher	x	86%	85%	x	84%	89%	x	89%	90%
% Bachelor's degree or higher	x	20%	33%	x	28%	38%	x	27%	41%
Less than 9 th grade	51	3%	6%	97	5%	5%	100	5%	5%
9 th to 12 th grade	195	11%	9%	226	11%	6%	136	6%	5%
High school grad or equivalency	639	37%	27%	673	33%	27%	665	31%	25%
Some college, no degree	354	21%	17%	305	15%	16%	467	22%	16%
Associate's degree	123	7%	7%	160	8%	8%	208	10%	8%
Bachelor's degree	264	15%	20%	368	18%	22%	415	19%	23%
Graduate or professional degree	86	5%	14%	194	10%	16%	179	8%	18%

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau 2000-2010; American Community Survey 2012-2016

Table 4.7 – Race and Ethnicity 2000 - 2010⁷

	2000				2010			
	#	%	% County	% State	#	%	% County	% State
Non-Hispanic White	2,649	97.25%	86.45%	81.88%	3073	96.3%	80.68%	76.13%
Non-Hispanic Black	21	0.77%	2.43%	5.01%	13	0.41%	3.64%	5.98%
Non-Hispanic Native American	1	0.04%	0.2%	0.18%	7	0.22%	0.16%	0.16%
Non-Hispanic Asian	5	0.18%	2.6%	3.73%	29	0.91%	3.96%	5.31%
Non-Hispanic Pacific Islander	0	0%	0.03%	0.03%	0	0%	0.02%	0.02%
Non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander	5	0.18%	2.63%	3.76%	29	0.91%	3.98%	5.33%
Non-Hispanic Other One Race	5	0.18%	0.22%	0.69%	0	0%	0.46%	0.94%
Non-Hispanic Multi-race	26	0.95%	1.29%	1.74%	27	0.85%	1.63%	1.87%
Hispanic/ Latino	17	0.95%	6.77%	6.75%	41	1.29%	9.44%	9.59%
Total	2,724				3,190			

Race, Ethnicity, and Language Spoken at Home

Table 4.6 shows that residents in the Town of Millville are predominantly non-Hispanic white (96.3% in 2010). While Worcester County and Massachusetts also have populations that are primarily non-Hispanic white, the average in Millville is significantly higher than that of the county (80.68%) and the state (76.13%). In descending order of percentage in 2010, the other races/ethnicities that make up Millville’s population are Hispanic Latino (1.29%), non-Hispanic multi-race (0.85%), non-Hispanic Asian/ Pacific Islander (0.91%), non-Hispanic Asian (0.91%), non-Hispanic Black (0.41%), and non-Hispanic Native American (0.22%). The town has not experienced significant changes in its racial and ethnic make-up in past decades. Since 2000, the non-Hispanic white population has decreased by 0.95%, the non-Hispanic Black population has decreased by 0.36%, and the non-Hispanic multi-race population has decreased marginally by 0.1%. The greatest increase occurred among the non-Hispanic Asian and non-Hispanic Asian/ Pacific Islander populations which rose by 0.73% from 2000 to 2010. 5.6% of the Millville population speaks a language other than English at home, according to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, including Spanish, Asian and Pacific Island languages, and Indo-European languages.

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau 2000-2010

Goals and Recommendations

Goals

As stated within Chapter 2, the following is the Plan's Population, Income, and Education goals:

- 1. Reduce poverty rate through economic and workforce development actions*
- 2. Balance residential growth with commercial and industrial growth*
- 3. Connect local educational institutions and programs with economic development and workforce development activity*

Recommendations

- A. Take steps noted in economic development chapter to grow and diversify the local economy.*
- B. Take steps noted in economic development chapter to engage in workforce development activities locally. Seek partnerships with academia, non-profits, and regional and state agencies that are active in workforce development.*

Existing Conditions

Growth in Housing

Despite the fluctuations in population in Millville over the last 60 years, there has been a steady increase in the town's housing supply. Table 5-1 displays the change in housing units and household size for the past 30 years. Historically, during the 1960's and 1970's there was a modest increase of 40 and 64 units respectively per decade, averaging 5.2 units per year. During the 1980's, 235 units were added, increasing the housing stock in the Town by 39.4%, and averaging 23.5 units per year. The 1980's were a period of unusually robust housing construction due to a vibrant economy and high demand. Housing construction continued into the 1990's and into the new century with an increase of 91 in 2000 and 239 in 2010, a nearly 26% increase in supply. However, with the recession which began in 2008, the number of new units has decreased from past rates. Note that household size at 2.91, while decreasing modestly, is still rather high comparatively.



Table 5.1 – Millville Housing Units and Household Size⁸

	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
Housing Units	597	832	923	1,162	25.89%
Average Household Size	2.84	2.69	2.95	2.91	-1.36

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 –2010

Table 5.2 – Regional Housing⁹						
	Number of Units 1980 - 2010					
	1980	1990	2000	2010	Numerical Change 1980 to 2010	Percent Change 1980 to 2010
Blackstone	2,294	2,979	3,235	3,403	1,109	48.30%
Douglas	1,595	2,191	2,476	3,000	1,405	88.10%
Grafton	4,010	5,035	5,694	6,892	2,882	71.90%
Hopedale	1,370	2,060	2,240	2,194	824	60.10%
Mendon	1,118	1,454	1,815	2,022	904	80.90%
Millbury	4,102	4,758	4,927	5,294	1,192	29.10%
Millville	597	832	923	1,094	497	83.20%
Northbridge	4,365	5,013	4,800	5,896	1,531	35.10%
Sutton	2,053	2,517	2,811	3,213	1,160	56.50%
Upton	1,447	1,895	2,042	2,733	1,286	88.90%
Uxbridge	3,060	3,963	3,988	5,056	1,996	65.20%
Blackstone Valley	26,011	32,697	34,951	40,797	14,786	56.80%

Note that the number of persons per household has been decreasing throughout this period, from 3.38 in 1960 to 2.91 in 2010. As a result, even though the Town has been gaining steadily in new housing units, the population growth has been somewhat lower, as evidenced in the decline in household size across all housing units. This decrease reflects national trends as families have had fewer children than in the post-war era, the elderly population has steadily increased, and there are more single-person and single-parent households than in past decades.

It is interesting to compare Millville's housing growth with that of other Blackstone Valley communities. Table 5.2 shows that Millville's 83.2% growth in housing units was exceeded only by Upton's 88.9% and Douglas' 88.1%, and the Town's rate was much higher than the Valley's 56.8% increase. However, Millville's 497 units represent only 3.4% of the 14,786 units that were built in the Valley since 1980.

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau 1980 -- 2010

Table 5.3 – Housing Supply ¹⁰				
	2000		2010	
	#	%	#	%
Total Units	958	100%	1162	100%
Owner-Occupied	739	77.14%	909	78.22%
Renter-Occupied	184	19.21%	185	15.92%
Total Occupied	923	96.35%	1094	94.14%
Vacant	35	3.65%	68	5.85%
Average Household Size - Owner	3.10	-	3.03	-
Average Household Size - Renter	2.36	-	2.37	-

Table 5.4 - Percentage of Housing Units by Type ¹¹	
Total housing units 2010: 1,162	
	% of Total
Owner-occupied housing units:	78.23%
1, detached	59.72%
1, attached	4.30%
2	5.16%
3 or 4	0.60%
5 to 9	0.43%
10 to 19	0.00%
20 to 49	0.00%
50 or more	0.00%
Mobile home	0.00%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.00%
Renter-occupied housing units:	15.92%
1, detached	1.46%
1, attached	1.89%
2	5.25%
3 or 4	6.45%
5 to 9	2.24%
10 to 19	0.60%
20 to 49	0.00%
50 or more	0.00%
Mobile home	0.69%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.00%

Taking a closer look at housing units in Millville, the division of occupancy types provides information on the variety of housing opportunities available within the town. According to the Census figures, the total number of units increased from 958 in 2000 to 1,162 in 2010 (see Table 5.3). The number of owner-occupied units increased from 739 to 909 from 2000 to 2010 while the number of renter occupied

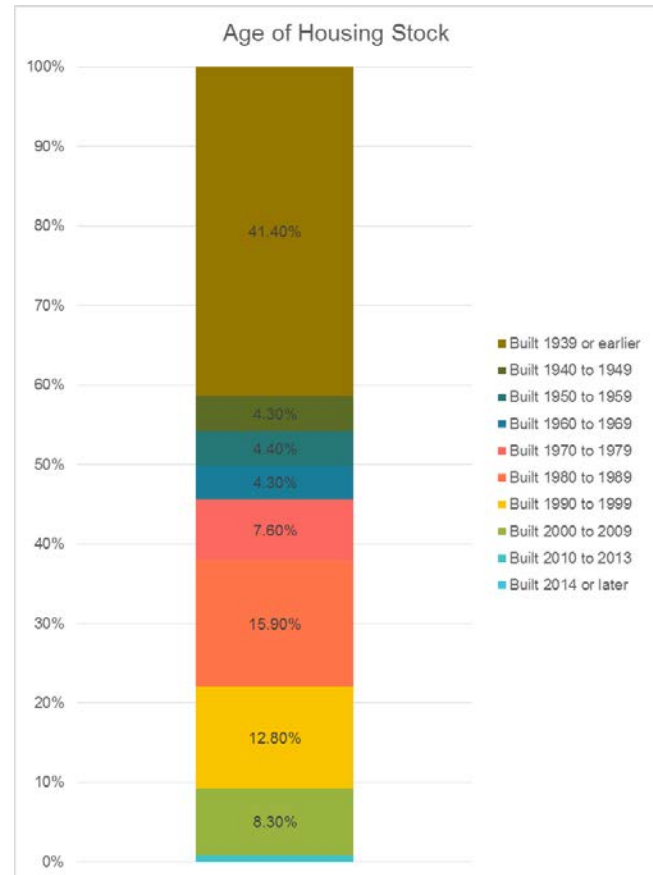
¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau 2000-2010

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

units increased by one unit in the same 10 year span. The number of vacant units increased from 35 units in 2000 to 68 units in 2010. Of the vacant units, 19 were ownership units and 17 were rentals. The increase in ownership units and unchanged number of rental units reflects a condition where rental units are not being created by the market and available units are being absorbed.

According to the Census figures, owner-occupied, single-family detached units, structures containing 2-4 units, and structures containing 5 or more units comprise an estimated 70% of the Town's housing stock. The Town's supply of structures containing 2-4 units decreased dramatically between 2000 and 2010. The 2000 Census reported 2-4 unit structures as comprising up to 23% of the total housing stock. Alternatively, the 2010 ACS estimated that same structures comprise less than 6% of the total stock. This is alarming in light of the building permit figures shown in Table 1 where 64 units in duplexes were reportedly built during the 1980s.

According to the 2015 ACS estimates, 37% of the housing units in Millville were built after 1980 (see Table 5.4). The majority of those units were built between 1980 and 1989. The ACS also estimates that 104 units have been built since 2000. This implies that more than half the housing stock in Millville is more than 50 years old. Housing of this age burdens, such as lead abatement and structural deficiencies that can increase the costs of ownership and depress the real value to homeowners.



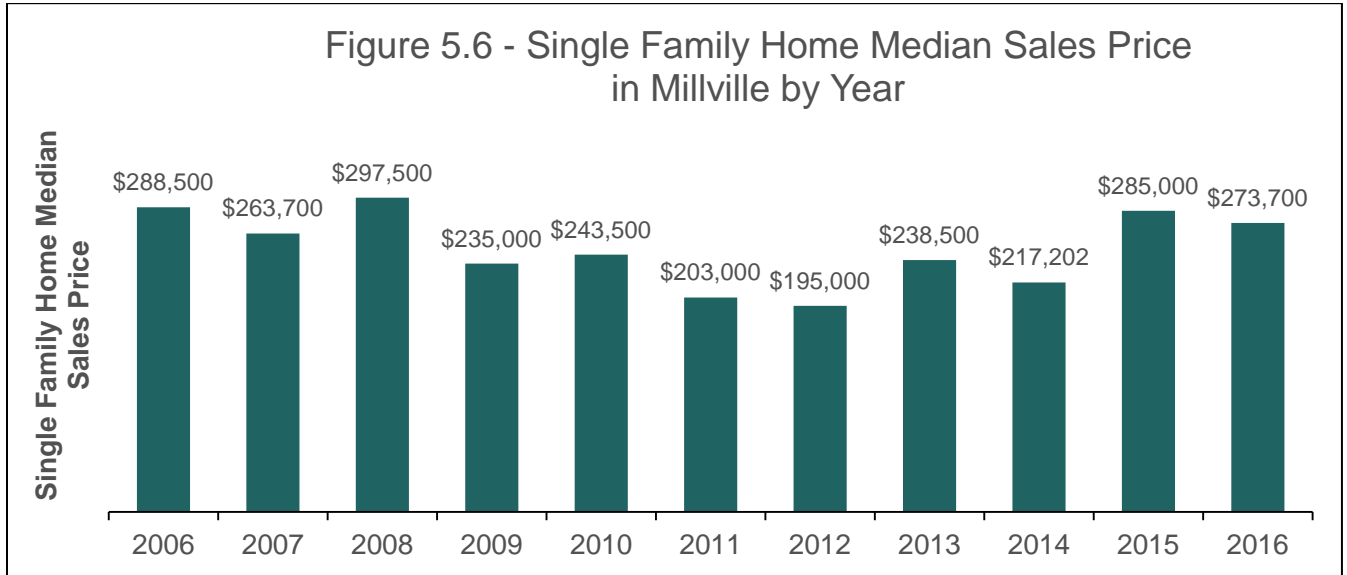
more than half the housing stock in Millville is more than 50 years old. Housing of this age can carry with it additional maintenance

Figure 5.5 Showing Age of Houses in Stock

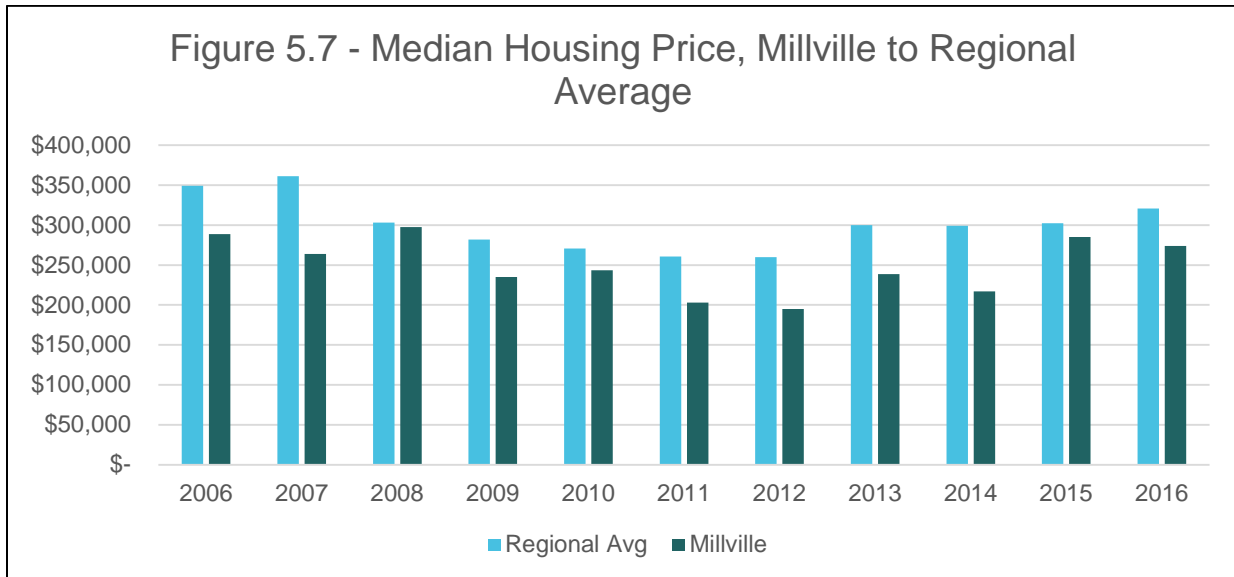
Housing Cost

The median price of housing in Millville in 2006 was \$288,500. Compared to other Blackstone Valley communities, Millville averaged about 17% lower value than the surrounding communities between 2006 and 2016. This relatively low cost may be one reason that Millville attracted a significant number of new households over the past three decades. Alternatively, it could also mean that the Town's older housing

stock is generally in worse condition than in other communities, thereby lowering the median cost from that which might be expected from having a large number of newer housing units constructed (15.9% of all units were built during the 1980's). Relatively low land costs and lack of public water and sewer services are potentially other factors leading to this result. Whatever the reason, the (comparatively) low cost of housing in the Town will likely spur additional housing construction, especially among first time home buyers and those of modest incomes.



12



¹² Warren Group 2006-2016

A fairly surprising result is the high cost of rental housing in Millville. The Town had the second highest median rent of all 11 communities in the Blackstone Valley: \$498. This high rent is unexpected, given the age and condition of the rental housing stock near the town center. One possible explanation is that many of the new single family attached units built in the 1980's are actually used for rental purposes and rent for a higher cost than is typical of most rental properties in the Valley.

The housing stock that has been created in Town has been primary single-family dwelling units. Since 2000, few multi-family units have been created and only one additional rental unit was created between 2000 and 2010.

While the types of dwelling units are varied, the units that are affordable or available for rent were typically built as affordable housing for the mill workers and are concentrated near the Town Center. Local officials may wish to further assess the condition of the remaining units. If conditions are generally found to be worsening, it may be necessary to apply for state housing. The Town should also assess the housing needs of the elderly.

As shown in Chapter 4, the town is experiencing a large increase in the number of seniors residing in town. Housing options for these residents should be considered in addition to examining programs for allowing older residents to stay in their homes. Very limited housing stock suitable for young adults, as well as seniors, has been built and available housing may be older and in need of repairs.

Goals and Recommendations

Goals

As stated within Chapter 2, the following is the Plan's Housing Goal:

- 1. To maintain and expand the Town's supply of affordable housing and to promote new housing growth, targeted to current and anticipated demand sectors, that maintains the character and appearance of Millville as a rural, family-oriented community.*

Recommendations

To support and implement the Town's Housing Goal, the following objectives are recommended to achieve the goal:

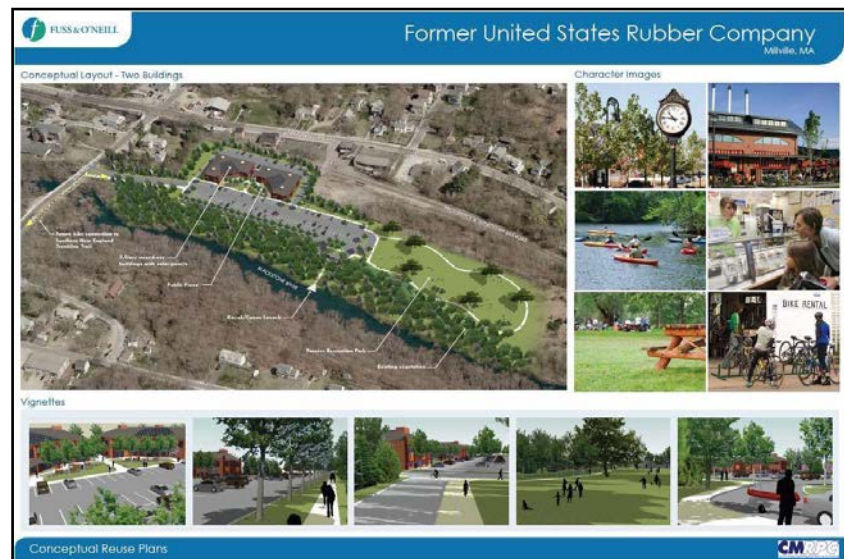
- A. Examine utilizing CDBG funds to renovate and rehab existing vacant housing stock for affordable housing.*

- B. Conduct a needs assessment of elderly and disabled residents to identify housing opportunities that are needed.*
- C. Consider adoption of an inclusionary zoning bylaw that requires the construction of an affordable unit as part of a market rate development. Payment in lieu of construction can go towards a housing trust or similar body to promote affordable housing.*
- D. Examine town owned parcels for potential development utilizing 40B in order to address housing needs while maintaining control of municipal cost of services.*

Introduction

Economic Development can be defined in a number of different ways. For the purpose of this Master Plan, we define economic development as “efforts that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community by creating and/or retaining jobs and supporting or growing incomes and the tax base.”¹³ From its location within the historic Blackstone Valley to its good schools and quality of life, Millville contains many economic assets.

Economic development strategies that leverage and support these existing resources have the potential to help the Town meet a number of objectives identified by residents and outlined in this Master Plan, including:



- Promote new economic development opportunities for Millville in order to balance the tax burden on residential properties and to provide jobs in Millville for local residents.
- Pursue workforce development opportunities to train and prepare the local workforce for jobs in Millville and beyond.
- Provide residents and businesses of the town with services and facilities to meet expectations while remaining fiscally conservative.
- Develop the Millville Town Center as the focal point of the community.

¹³ Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Center (<http://www.svbic.com/node/24>)

The following section will orient the reader to the Town’s economy, provide a baseline from which to measure the success of future economic development strategies, and establish a context for issues and opportunities relating to development strategies.

Existing Conditions

Income and Employment

Income and employment are both a goal and indicator of economic development. How many people a town employs, what fields people work in, and how much workers earn can provide important insights into a Town’s economy.

Most employment indicators in Millville show positive but modest growth. In 2015, the Town contained 1,681 workers over the age of 16, up nearly nineteen (19) percent from 1,413 workers in 2000. Incomes in Millville also increased between 2000, 2010, and 2015. In 2000, the Town’s median family income was \$57,000. In 2010, this figure rose to \$77,250. In 2015, Millville’s families earned a median income of \$81,438. Per capita income experienced strong growth between 2000 and 2010, followed by modest growth from 2010 to 2015.

The Town’s largest employers are Millville Elementary School (50-99 employees), Millville Fire Department (20-49 emp.), Century Discount Liquors (10-19 emp.), Millville Police Department (10-19 emp.), St. Augustine’s Catholic Church (10-19 emp.), and St. Augustine’s religious Education (10-19 emp.).

	2000	2010	2015
Median household income	\$57,000	\$77,250	\$81,438
Per capita income	\$20,497	\$29,951	\$31,863

Tax Base

In 2017, Millville’s tax rate was \$16.11 per \$1,000 of assessed value for all property types. As shown in Table 6.2, this tax rate is relatively consistent with those of neighboring communities; however, it is in the bottom third of all communities region-wide, where commercial tax rates range from \$11.94 to \$32.93.

¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau 2000, 2010

¹⁵ American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2011-2015

Municipality	R	C	I	PP
Northbridge	13.53	13.53	13.53	13.53
Millville	16.11	16.11	16.11	16.11
Douglas	16.72	16.72	16.72	16.72
Uxbridge	16.96	16.96	16.96	16.96
Mendon	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75
Hopedale	17.29	27.87	27.87	27.87
Key: R = Residential, C = Commercial, I = Industrial, P = Personal Property				

Despite a relatively low tax rate, the assessed value of all Millville property totaled nearly \$295 million in FY18. Of this total, residential properties comprise ninety-seven (97) percent of receipts. Commercial and Industrial properties comprised just 1.8 and 0.8 percent of the property tax base, respectively. Of the Region’s forty (40) communities, Millville ranks 39th in tax ratio health (although, as shown in Table 6.3, it is again relatively consistent with its neighboring municipalities). In order to increase tax assessment without further burdening homeowners, Millville must, at minimum, increase commercial and industrial activity as a percentage of its tax base.

Rank	Municipality	% Residential	% Commercial	% Industrial
14	Uxbridge	88.00%	5.70%	6.30%
16	Northbridge	89.45%	8.44%	2.12%
18	Hopedale	90.26%	5.54%	4.20%
23	Mendon	92.56%	7.00%	0.44%
24	Blackstone	93.35%	3.40%	3.25%
32	Douglas	95.85%	2.24%	1.91%
39	Millville	97.45%	1.77%	0.78%

¹⁶ Municipal Databank. Massachusetts Department of Revenue. 2016.

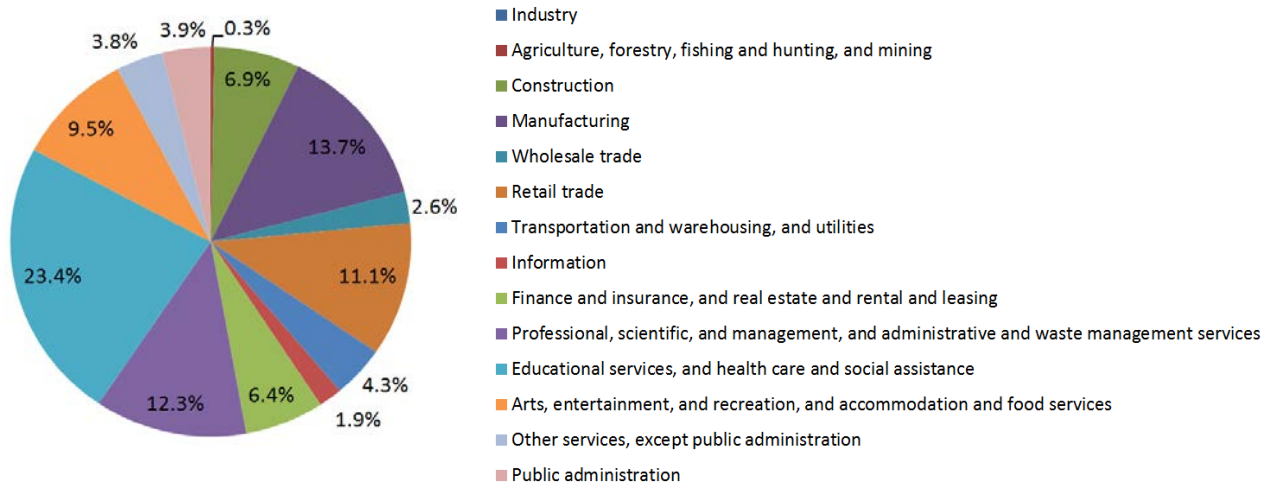
¹⁷ Municipal Databank. Massachusetts Department of Revenue. 2016.

Commerce and Industry

Millville’s economy is comprised of a variety of industries and commercial enterprises. According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2012 Survey of Business owners, the Town contains 237 companies. As shown in Table 6.4, this number of companies is far lower than that of the town’s bordering communities that each have more substantial land area and commercially zoned land.

Municipality	Number of Companies
Millville	237
Uxbridge	1,313
Mendon	440
Blackstone	719
North Smithfield, RI	921

Figure 6.5 – Employment by Industry¹⁹



This low number of companies may underrepresent small businesses and extended proprietorships (businesses that are not the primary occupation of the owner) which may also be in-home occupations, as do the figures shown for nearby communities. However, viewed in conjunction with other datasets it provides important insights into the Town’s economy and industry trends.

¹⁸ US Census Bureau 2012 Survey of Business Owners

¹⁹ American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2011-2015

Currently, the educational services, healthcare, and social assistance sector employs the largest number of workers. This industry represents 23% of all jobs in Millville. The manufacturing; professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services; and retail sectors also employ a significant number of workers at 13.7, 12.3, and 11.1 percent respectively. Importantly, although manufacturing represents an important component of the economy, the number of jobs in this industry declined seventeen (17) percent between 2000 and 2015. By contrast, employment in the *professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services* grew by sixty-eight (68) percent within the same period. These changes are part of a larger structural change in Millville.

A large decrease in the number of blue collar workers occurred from 1980 to 1990, particularly for machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors. Overall, there have been consistent increases in professional and service oriented occupations, and decreases in semi-skilled factory workers. These trends may be a reflection of the influx of new residents with primarily white collar occupations and the gradual decline of manufacturing industries in the Region and the State as a whole.

Table 6.6 – Number of Jobs by Occupation, 2000 and 2015^{20 21}

Occupation	Number of Jobs		
	2000	2015	Change in Jobs
Manufacturing	278	230	-48
Wholesale trade	66	44	-22
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	7	5	-2
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	109	107	-2
Construction	117	116	-1
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	61	72	11
Information	17	32	15
Public administration	40	66	16

²⁰ U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census 2000

²¹ American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2011-2015

Other services, except public administration	45	64	19
Retail trade	159	186	27
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	111	160	49
Professional, scientific, and mgmt., and administrative and waste mgmt. services	122	206	84
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	281	393	112

Goals and Recommendations

With a tax base that is ninety-seven (97) percent residential, public services serving as largest employers, and far fewer businesses than elsewhere in the subregion, Millville has become a bedroom community. While this reality affects commute times and, potentially, the ability of residents to stay in Millville throughout all stages of their lives, the lack of employment opportunities in town has not discouraged new housing growth. The increase of new residents with professional credentials is an indicator that Millville is attracting such growth by a combination of other factors, which likely includes well-performing schools, small-town character, low housing and land costs, and a location within reasonable commuting distance to major employment centers.

Goals

As stated within Chapter 2, the following is the Plan's Economic Development Goal:

1. *Promote new economic development opportunities for Millville in order to balance the tax burden on residential properties and to provide jobs in Millville for local residents.*
2. *Pursue workforce development opportunities to train and prepare the local workforce for jobs in Millville and beyond.*
3. *Provide residents and businesses of the town with services and facilities to meet expectations while remaining fiscally conservative.*
4. *Develop the Millville Town Center as the focal point of the community.*

Recommendations

To support and implement the Town's Economic Development Goals, the following objectives are recommended to achieve the goal:

A. *Better develop local economic development assets:*

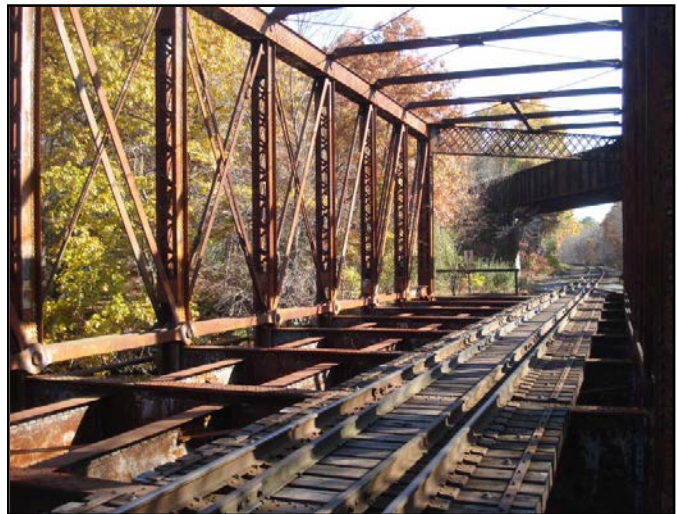
- 1. Examine the creation of an Economic Development Committee to encourage local businesses and to participate on regional economic development initiatives.*
- 2. Consider a shared economic development professional staffer for the Town.*
- 3. Develop a stronger relationship with the Blackstone Regional Chamber of Commerce*
- 4. Encourage the creation of a Millville Business Owners Association for work on marketing and promotion, cross-promotion, events and festivals, and other business issues.*

B. *Promote Millville as a designation on the Blackstone River Bikeway.*

C. *Engage the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce to promote the Bikeway and to develop signage programs advertising local businesses.*

D. *Examine use of Town owned parcels for wireless and/or solar facilities. Public and Request for Proposals to determine interest in town parcels.*

E. *Examine the feasibility of a package wastewater treatment system to serve the village center. A small scale treatment plant would permit higher density mixed use developments within the village center.*



- F. Investigate the use of MassDEP's brownfields program incentives for the cleanup and redevelopment of 181 Main Street and other potentially contaminated properties along Main Street and Central Street.*
- G. Work with local secondary and post-secondary schools, non-profits and community development corporations, and state and regional economic development entities such as CMRPC, MassDevelopment, and WBDC in order to establish a workforce development framework that fits the community to the greater regional economy.*

Chapter 7 Natural and Cultural Resources

Introduction

The town of Millville is situated on the Rhode Island border, in Worcester County. To the west lies Uxbridge, to the north Mendon, and to the east Blackstone. The town is a long, five square mile rectangle with the Blackstone River dividing the southern third of the town from the north. The soil, mainly Gloucester sandy loam, is suitable for the cultivation of hay and grains, as well as for market gardens and orchards. There is one small pond, Mansfield Pond, in the central part of town, and several streams including Angelica Brook, Spring Brook, and Hood's Brook, which drain into the Blackstone.

Existing Conditions

Settlement

Millville's natural resources offered good seasonal hunting and fishing and later also provided good fields, meadows and pasture to Native Americans and colonial settlers. Early Native American trails likely included what are now Chestnut Hill Road and Central Street, which generally run north-south from the Worcester area into Rhode Island. Millville was an outlying settlement of the Mendon Grant of 1667. A century later the area that would become Millville was established as Mendon's Third Parish, and the Chestnut Hill Meeting House was built in 1769. The north-centrally located meetinghouse became the focus of early settlement and farming.



Settlement increased between 1775 and 1830 with small mills located along the Blackstone, while the northern sections of town engaged in agriculture. In 1814 the first woolen mill began operation at the falls in Millville, followed by a scythe manufacturing mill in 1825. The completion of the Blackstone Canal in 1828 improved Millville's ability to reach markets in the valley as distribution of raw materials and manufactured goods increased. Growing industry and commerce along the Blackstone led to the area separating from Mendon to create the town of Blackstone in 1845.

Growth of Millville Village and Industrial Beginnings

In 1847, the Worcester Railroad surpassed the Blackstone Canal as the means of transport for goods and services. The failure of the canal, which operated for less than 20 years, actually increased mill capacity as sections of the canal could now be sued to power larger factories. In the late 1800s, two companies, the Lawrence Felting Co. and the Woonsocket Rubber Co built large factories in Millville. Both companies merged with the U.S. Rubber Company, which would become the dominant industry in town. Once home to smaller textile companies, rubber boots and wool/felt boot linings would soon become the principle product manufactured in Millville. Life in Millville centered around the mill, leading to increased workers' housing, schools, and churches in Millville. Streetcar service was established around this period as well, linking Millville with Blackstone and Woonsocket along Main Street.

The Decline of Industry

With the rise of U.S. Rubber Company, Millville was incorporated as an independent town in 1916. However, with the Great Depression, U.S. Rubber plant was closed and a flood destroyed the felting mill. The Town's population shrunk by half and the lack of employment in town caused residents to look outside of town for income. While there were attempts to revise business at the mill, two fires, one in 1976 and another in 1977 destroyed the remaining mill complexes. Remnants of the mills are now on land owned by the Town at 181 Main Street.

The growth of mills along the Blackstone brought with it mill villages that house employees of the mills. Banigan City, located on the south side of the Blackstone River on Hope Street and Prospect Street, is Millville's largest cluster of Mill Housing. The 1994 Millville Historic Resources Survey identified this neighborhood as eligible for consideration as a National Register District due to the easily recognizable examples of late 19th century corporate housing.

Remains of the Banigan City School can be found between Banigan City and the Senior Center. Closed in 1944 and later torn down, the foundation, granite retaining walls, and steps are visible and are a visual reminder of Millville's past.

Banigan City included a cross street, Washington Street, which lead downhill from Hope Street, across Prospect Street, over the Blackstone Canal, then across the river via a covered bridge to the baseball field and the rubber company plant, over the railroad tracks, and out to Main Street. The portion connecting Hope and Prospect Streets is the only section remaining. Banigan City is named after the president of the U.S. Rubber Company, an Irish-American immigrant who reflected the American "rags to riches" dream.

Other Historic Sites

The Oval - Off Main Street

While in operation, the U.S. Rubber Co. formed an employee baseball team. The Oval was the name of the baseball field that was used by the U.S. Rubber team to encourage teamwork and provide recreation prior to World War 1 and later in the 1920's for "industrial leagues" in the Valley. Underwritten by manufacturing companies, the industrial leagues began to disappear in the Great Depression in the 1930's and the Blackstone Valley League was officially disbanded in 1952. While overgrown, remnants of the Oval are still visible.

181 Main Street - Woonsocket Rubber Co. Office

This structure is one of the last standing buildings of the U.S. Rubber Co. mill complex. Currently closed off by a chain link fence, the building could be salvaged. Constructed in 1882, the building is a two story brick, gable roofed classic-style industrial building with stone silled windows. Possible industrial contamination on the site threatens the preservation of the building.

Edward S. Hall House - 5 Central Street

Dating back between 1838 and 1854, the exact date is unknown, the Hall House is one of the most prominent homes in Millville. The Greek Revival style house at the intersection of Main Street and Central Street was once imposing as it looked over the mill and the river. However with the railroad and the raising of the bridge over the rail road, the prominence of property has been negatively impacted and due to lack of maintenance, the building is in need to significant improvement.

Udor Tower - Central Street

A dominant feature of Millville located in front of the Longfellow Municipal Center, it is a 25-foot tall water tower. Recent efforts to preserve the tower were successful with a new roof installed in 2014.

Longfellow Municipal Center - Central Street

Constructed in 1850 as a school, the Town Hall is three stories tall including a partially occupied basement, first floor, second floor, and unoccupied attic. A new elevator tower was added to the building in the early 2000s. In 2014, an assessment of the building was conducted in order to identify structural issues with the building. A study committee was created in 2015 in order to examine the results of the assessment and identify a plan for preservation of the building and construction of a new town hall.

Recommendations for preserving Millville's industrial history and mill villages identified in a 2002 Reconnaissance Report are included and incorporated into this plan.

Blackstone River and Canal

The Blackstone River flows approximately 1.5 miles across Millville from west to east. It has only one significant fall over that length, which is marked by the Central Street bridge crossing and historic archaeological sites associated with Millville's industries. The Blackstone Canal parallels the river along its south bank. Its trenched canal no longer carries water in most sections; dumping has occurred along the bank and much of it is overgrown, but the berm is in good condition and is used by residents as a recreational walking path. The towpath remains on the south side of the canal away from the river. The Canal and its notable engineered features are included in a National Register Historic District, and the well-preserved Millville Lock #21, located downstream from the town's center, is a featured site of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. Lock #21 is the best-preserved lock of the entire length of canal.

The Blackstone is designated a Class B river, an indicator that canoeing and kayaking, as well as catch-and-release fishing, are appropriate recreational activities. Swimming is discouraged. Millville's section of river is of somewhat better quality than upstream reaches, due to the inflow of cleaner water from the Mumford and other tributaries. It is host to an array of warm-water river fish species including yellow perch, largemouth bass, and pickerel. Both the stretch of river upstream from the island at Central Street and downstream to the Triad Bridge and beyond are considered highly scenic and have substantial woodlands and undeveloped parcels lining the banks.

Federal, State, and local efforts to improve the quality of the Blackstone River have improved water quality over the last few decades. Increased standards for wastewater treatment plans up river have reduced pollution and nitrogen levels. However, non-point pollution from yards, roadways, and parking lots continue to impair the River.

Goals and Recommendations

Goals

As stated within Chapter 2, the following is the Plan's Natural and Cultural Resources Goal:

1. *To preserve the Town's many outstanding historic resources that are critical components of the cultural fabric that makes Millville a special place.*

2. *The Blackstone River is the Town's most important natural resource. Its water quality must not be further degraded but instead improved, and its flood storage capacity must be preserved. The River's importance to the town's historical development and the open space along its shores within the town offer valuable opportunities for promoting tourism, for providing recreational opportunities, and for educating both residents and visitors of the town's heritage and natural history.*

Recommendations

To support and implement the Town's Natural and Cultural Resources Goal, the following objectives are recommended to achieve the goal:

- A. *To continue the Historic Properties Survey and Planning Document with funds provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.*
- B. *To develop educational materials on Millville's past for local school children and visitors to the Town's historic sites.*
- C. *To create local historic districts in order to preserve clusters of historically significant buildings by encouraging sensitive renovations.*
- D. *To encourage adaptive reuse and renovation of historic structures to promote the revitalization of an area.*

Introduction

Open space helps protect the Town's water supply, manage flood waters, provide wildlife habitat, and offer opportunities for various recreational activities. Open space lands also help identify the Town as a rural community and provide a window into Millville's agrarian past. As vacant land continues to be developed, the remaining open lands become even more important to preserving Millville's scenic and natural landscapes. During the 1996 Master Plan process, Millville residents



identified open space and recreation lands as a critical aspect of the Town's landscape and a key contributor to quality of life in Town. While the Town values its open space and rural character outside of the Village Center, the Town has not actively sought to permanently protect open space from development. Likewise, the Town has not prepared an Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). Writing an OSRP would give the Town access to State funding to acquire or protect open space lands. Open space and recreation planning is critical to help preserve open space while allowing development to occur that is consistent with the unique character of the Town. Central to the development of this chapter is protecting the Town's open space lands and resources while enhancing recreational opportunities and experiences for the community. The following section provides a general outline for open space planning and describes the current open space network in Town.

Existing Conditions

Open Space Lands in Millville

More than just an area of cleared land, "open space" in the context of open space and recreation planning refers to conservation land, recreation and park land, agricultural land, cemeteries, and any undeveloped land with conservation or recreation value.

Open space can serve a variety of purposes, including passive recreation, active recreation, wildlife habitat, and protection of wetlands or water resources. Lands or areas with scenic or historic value are also essential components of a community's public spaces because they serve as local treasures and offer visitors a unique recreational experience. Based on these working definitions, approximately 13% of total land or 438 acres in the Town of Millville can be considered "open space." Of those, 172 acres are considered public open space compared to 266 acres of privately-owned open space. Nearly 89 acres of land in Millville are protected in perpetuity as some form of open space, which is approximately 2% of all land in town. Table 8.4 on page 65 summarizes all open space lands in town by ownership type. Figure 8.5, Open Space Inventory Map, depicts the town's existing open space inventory, including the degree of protection for lands of conservation and recreation interest. Both the map and the table figures rely on data from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Office of Geographic Information Systems (MassGIS). The following section describes each category of open space.

Public Open Space

Public lands owned by the State include small parcels of the Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park. As shown in Table 8.1 below, the Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Parks and Recreation owns roughly 50 acres of permanently-protected open space across 4 parcels in Millville. These parcels vary in size, ranging from 0.16 acres to 47 acres. The Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park is one of the most popular open space and recreation destinations in Millville. Serving as the Town's most important natural resource, the Blackstone River stretches approximately 1.5 miles through town just below the town center and adjacent to the Southern New England Trunkline Trail. The Blackstone River features 1,000 acres of natural park, including numerous trails and historical sites. The park also has biking, horseback riding, canoe access, fishing, hunting, picnic areas and more.



Table 8.1 – State-Owned Lands

Location	Owner	Parcel Size	Protection
Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park	DCR - Parks and Recreation	0.16	Perpetuity
Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park	DCR - Parks and Recreation	0.64	Perpetuity
Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park	DCR - Parks and Recreation	47.53	Perpetuity
Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park	DCR - Parks and Recreation	2.60	Perpetuity
Total		50.93	

The Town of Millville owns 36 acres in 3 parcels of permanently protected land ranging in size from 2 acres to 20 acres (see Table 8.2). The Millville Conservation Commission manages approximately 36 acres of open space land, which includes the Millville Town Forest, Alvin W Irons Memorial Park and Wildlife Sanctuary, and Tucker Cove Conservation Area. These lands are legally protected in perpetuity and recorded as such in a deed or other official document. Land is considered protected in perpetuity if it is owned by the Town’s Conservation Commission or, sometimes, by the water department; if a town has a conservation restriction on the property in perpetuity; if it is owned by one of the state’s conservation agencies (thereby covered by Article 97); if it is owned by a non-profit land trust; or if the Town received federal or state assistance for the purchase or improvement of the property. Many permanently protected lands are protected by Article 97 of the State Constitution, which provides permanent protection for certain lands acquired for natural resources purposes.



The Old Town Hall Park and the Millville Elementary School (MES) are two locations in town that contain play equipment. The Town Hall location is in the rear of the building adjacent to the Police Station and parking lot and contains basic slides, swings, and equipment suitable to children under 8 years old. The Millville Elementary School Playground is the largest-sized property of all Town-owned

lands, spanning across 41 acres. The play equipment at MES is primarily used by kindergarten level age groups. The athletic fields and pavement areas are used at the school for recess when weather is appropriate. Located along the southern wall of the school, the playground is not very visible from the main driveway because it is obstructed by a portion of the school.

According to the Millville Elementary School Parents Association, there is an identified need for expanded playground equipment and play area at the school. One of the issues with locating a larger playground at the school is that it is located at the end of a long road with little traffic except associated with school hours. The location is also not easily reached by walking, and distance to public safety responders as well as lack of visibility are items of concern. The town may be better served by a centrally located playground near the village center to enable residents to walk to the playground and access local shops and the bike path.



Table 8.2 – Town-Owned Lands

Location	Owner	Parcel Size	Protection
Millville Town Forest	Town of Millville ConCom	20.37	Perpetuity
Alvin W Irons Memorial Park and Wildlife Sanctuary	Town of Millville ConCom	13.87	Perpetuity
Tucker Cove Conservation Area	Town of Millville ConCom	2.67	Perpetuity
Millville Elementary School Playground	Town of Millville	41.75	Limited
Old Town Hall Park	Town of Millville	0.21	Unknown
King Conservation Area	Town of Millville	40.64	Unknown
Memorial Park	Town of Millville	0.77	Unknown
Udor Tower Park	Town of Millville	0.62	Unknown
Millville Tot Lot	Town of Millville	0.18	Unknown
Total		121.09	

According to the inventory data, there are also five (5) open space parcels with unknown protection levels, which are considered unprotected. These sites amount to 42 acres and include the Old Town Hall Park, King Conservation Area, Memorial Park, Udor Tower Park, and the Millville Tot Lot. It is recommended that the Town contact MassGIS and the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) to clarify

the protection statuses of these key sites, especially if any are in fact permanently protected.

Private Open Space

Private entities own a significant amount of the open space lands in Millville. As previously stated, there are 266 acres of privately-owned open space in seven (7) parcels compared to 172 acres that are considered public open space. There is one parcel of private for-profit open space in town located within the Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park. The parcel is a right-of-way that connects two segments of the State-owned Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park parcel along the southeastern corner of town. Roughly 0.8 acres in size, the property is permanently protected, has limited public access, and is designated for recreation and conservation. Although the site is privately-owned, the DCR holds a legal interest on the right-of-way.

There is one parcel of non-profit open space located at 189 Central Street, the Saint John Cemetery. Nearly 2 acres in size, the Saint John Cemetery is positioned on the southern end of town along the Massachusetts-Rhode Island border. The cemetery has limited protections and the property is designated for historic/cultural purposes. The cemetery has limited protections and is privately owned by the Saint John Episcopal Church, located less than one mile away.

Designated for historic/cultural purposes, the Saint John Cemetery is located within the boundaries of the Central Street Historic District. The Central Street Historic District is significant as a distinctive architectural and archeological area that represents the development of the industrial community from when the first grist mill was built on the Blackstone River in the early 18th century, to the era of the town's recovery from the closure of its mills in the mid-20th century.

Privately-owned parcels also include land with Conservation Restrictions (CR) or Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR), Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B land, and lands with no protections but of open space or conservation interest. Private land is considered protected if it has a deed restriction in perpetuity, if an APR or CR has been placed on the property.

Conservation Restriction

A conservation restriction (CR) is a permanent deed restriction, recorded with the Registry of Deeds that binds all current and future owners of the property placed under a CR. The conservation restriction (or easement) is a restriction to particular specified uses or from development. The restriction runs with the land and is recorded in a deed instrument. Conservation Restrictions can be placed on a parcel of land for a specified number of years or in perpetuity. This restriction identifies the property's important ecological features and the public benefit derived from preserving the natural condition of the land. This tool aims to retain the property in

its natural state or in agricultural, farming, or forest use; to permit public recreation; or to restrict development activities.

The property owner retains ownership of the land and may sell or pass on the preserved land with all restrictions in place. Any title search of a property will reveal the existence of a CR and all future owners will be bound by it. Conservation restrictions, sometimes called development restrictions, must be granted voluntarily, however, the Conservation Commission and/or Planning Board can encourage this mechanism as a way of maintaining privately owned land in a natural state. When a landowner places a property under a CR, he or she has permanently protected that property and ensured that the CR last forever, legally known as "in perpetuity."

The restrictions placed on the property through the CR allow the landowner to determine how the property will be used into the future. The CR allows the property owner to retain title, pass the property on to heirs or even sell the property. A landowner can determine which part(s) of their property would be restricted in the future by the easement. It is quite possible or even common, to withhold some land (i.e. 1-2 building lots for children from the easement, and yet protect the remainder of the property from development (this is an example of conservation-based development). The details of what rights are restricted and what are permitted, and where these restrictions will apply, are worked out between the landowner and the holder of the easement when drafting the CR.

In addition to knowing the property will remain protected against development, the owner can derive tax benefits from the CR. These can include reduction of federal income taxes (if the CR is donated), reduction of estate or inheritance taxes, and possible deduction in real estate taxes.

Agricultural Preservation Restriction

The Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program allows for farmland to be protected from future development. An APR is a specific type of Conservation Restriction that is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resource. The APR program pays farmers the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of their farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction, which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability.

Established by the Legislature in 1977, this program is the cornerstone of the Commonwealth's farmland Protection efforts. This voluntary program is intended to offer a non-development alternative to farmland owners of "prime" and "state important" agricultural land who are faced with a decision regarding future use and disposition of their farms. To this end, the program offers to pay farmland owners the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of their farms in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability. The main

objective of the APR program is to protect productive farmland through the purchase of deed restrictions and revitalize the agricultural industry by making land more affordable to farmers and their operations more financially secure.

The Town of Millville currently does not have lands with APR or CR holdings.

Chapters 61, 61A, and 61B Lands

Land in active and passive use is eligible for a reduced tax rate under Chapters 61, 61A, and 61B of the Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.), which are designations for land that is used for forestry, agriculture, conservation or recreation, respectively. These lands include those legally protected for less than perpetuity (e.g. short term conservation restriction or Chapter 61 lands), or temporarily protected through an existing functional use. For example, some chapter lands may only be temporarily protected through their forestry use, while residential is their primary use. These lands could be developed for other uses at the end of their temporary protection or when their functional use is no longer necessary. These lands might be protected by a requirement of a majority municipal vote for any change in status. This designation also includes lands that are likely to remain open space for other reasons (e.g. cemeteries and municipal golf courses).

M.G.L. Chapter 61 is designed to keep forested land under productive forest management. Owners with more than 10 acres of forest are eligible for enrollment. They must submit a DCR-approved forest management plan and a management certificate to the Town assessor before a new tax classification can begin. The assessed value of land classified under Chapter 61 is reduced by 95%. Chapter 61 classifications run for ten-year periods.

M.G.L. Chapter 61A is most commonly applied to agricultural or horticultural land but can be used for the forested portions of a farm, provided a forest management plan is approved by DCR. To qualify for Chapter 61A, a farm owner must have five or more contiguous acres being used for agricultural or horticultural purposes. Property under Chapter 61A is assessed at rates that vary for different agricultural uses. Generally, classification will result in an 80% reduction in assessed value.

M.G.L. Chapter 61B is similar to 61A, but applies to lands designated for recreational use and containing at least five contiguous acres. The land must be retained in a natural state to preserve wildlife and natural resources, must be devoted primarily to recreational use, and must provide a public benefit. Recreational uses may include golfing, hiking, camping, nature study, shooting/target practice, hunting, and skiing. The assessed valuation of Chapter 61B land is reduced by approximately 75%.

If Chapter land is placed on the market, the Town has the “right of first refusal” for purchase of the land within 120 days of notification by the property owners of the pending sale. This right may also be assigned to a nonprofit conservation

organization such as a land trust. Towns often have trouble taking advantage of the right of first refusal because of the rapid timeframe within which the Town must find the money and approve the purchase.

Millville currently has five (5) parcels of land in the Chapter 61 program, totaling approximately 262 acres (see Table 8.3). Three (3) sites are designated for forestry and the remaining two (2) parcels are Mixed Use Chapter Lands (forestry and recreational). Millville currently has no land classified under Chapter 61A. Mixed Use refers to the parcel having part of land (at least 5 acres) designated Chapter 61, 61A OR 61B as well as having a residential, commercial or industrial use. Compared to the publicly-owned sites in town, these Chapter Land tracts are relatively larger in size, ranging between 22 acres to 108 acres.

As shown on Map 8.5, these parcels are concentrated in certain sections of town. The two (2) properties located on Vineyard Street are adjacent to Southwick's Zoo in Mendon along the town boundaries. The properties located on Hill Street and Chestnut Hill Road are located along the Blackstone town boundaries. The majority of Chapter Land owners in town are non-residents excluding the owners of 320 Chestnut Hill Road, which is a Mixed Use Chapter 61B (recreational) property that is about 60 acres in size, located across street from the Lyons Preserve.

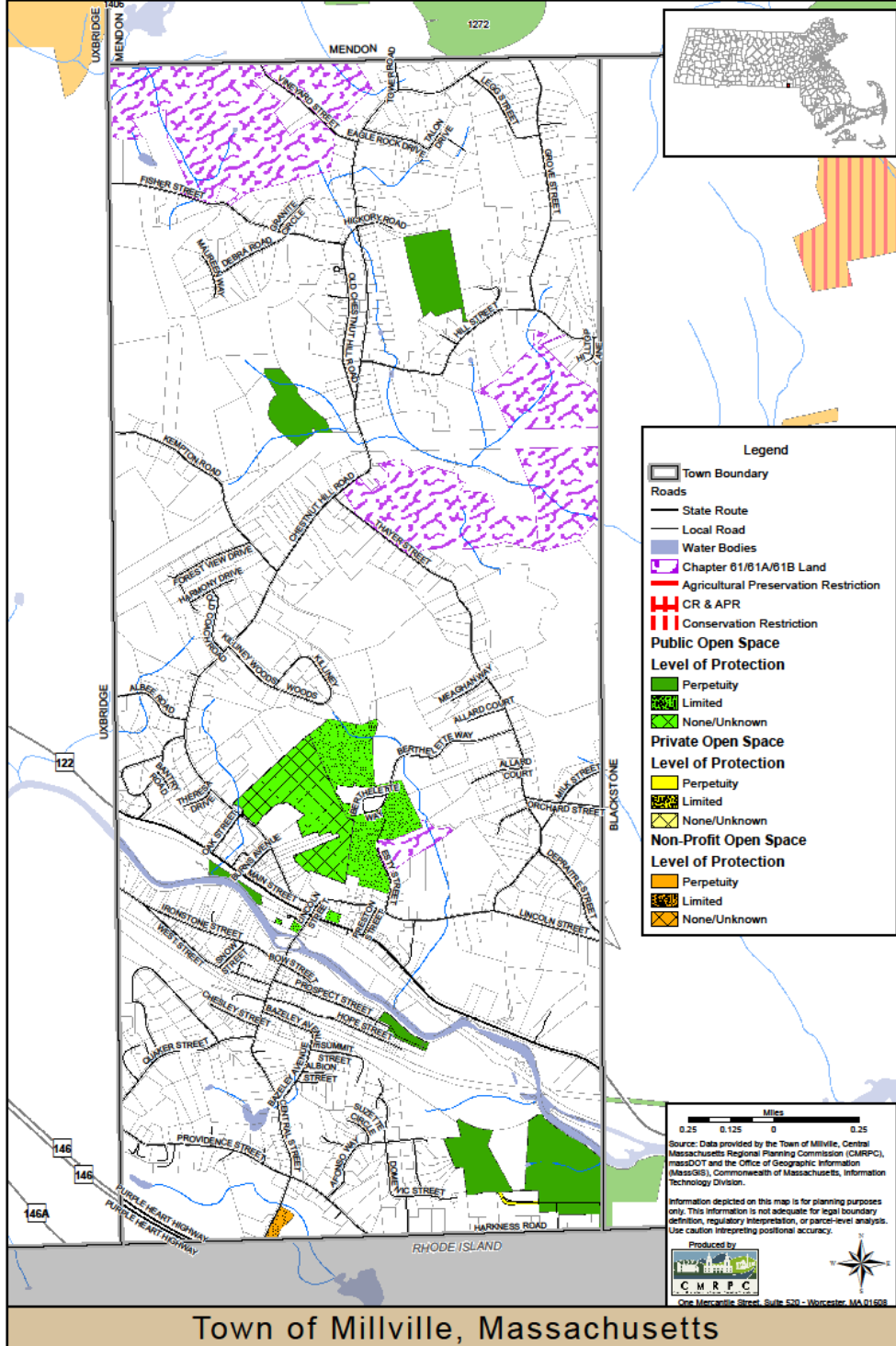
Table 8.3 – Chapter Lands				
Location	Owner	Site Purpose	Parcel Size	Protection
22 VINEYARD ST	BREWER FAMILY REALTY, LLC	Chapter 61 - Forestry	22.92	Limited
132 HILL ST	S. WAYNE	Chapter 61 - Forestry	36.3	Limited
350 CHESTNUT HILL RD	S. WAYNE	Chapter 61 - Forestry	35.89	Limited
47 VINEYARD ST	BREWER FAMILY REALTY, LLC	Mixed-Use/Chapt. 61 Forestry	108.75	Limited
320 CHESTNUT HILL RD	BENTSEN, J/B	Mixed-Use/Chapt. 61B Recreational	59.03	Limited
Total			262.89	

Table 8.4 – Millville Open Space Lands by Ownership Type ²²

Owner	Level of Protection	Acres	Notes
State			
DCR - Division of State Parks and Recreation	Perpetuity	50.93	Includes four (4) Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park parcels
Total State		50.93	
Municipal			
Town of Millville Conservation Commission	Perpetuity	36.92	Includes Tucker Cove Conservation Area, Town Forest, and Memorial Park Wildlife Sanctuary
Town of Millville	Limited	41.75	Includes Millville Elementary School Playground
Town of Millville	Unknown	42.42	Includes King Conservation Area, Old Town Hall Park, Memorial Park, Udor Tower Park, and Millville Tot Lot
Total Municipal		121.09	
Private			
Under Conservation Restriction (CR)	Perpetuity	0	Millville currently has no land with CR holdings
Under Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR)	Perpetuity	0	Millville currently has no land with APR holdings
Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park	Perpetuity	0.81	DCR holds legal interest on ROW
Cemetery	Limited	2.35	Saint John Cemetery
Chapter 61 (Forestry)	Limited	203.86	Millville currently has no land classified under Chapter 61A. Acreage provided by the Town of West Millville Assessor's Office and NOT based on GIS calculations.
Chapter 61A (Agricultural/Horticultural)	Limited	0	
Chapter 61B (Recreational Property)	Limited	59.03	
Total Chapter Lands		262.89	
Total Private		3.16	
Total Acres Protected in Perpetuity		88.66	
Total Acres with Limited Protection		247.95	
Total Acres with Unknown Protection		42.42	
Total Acres of all Open Space Types		438.07	

²² Ownership Types based on MassGIS Protected and Recreational Open Space data layer. (02/2017)

FIGURE 3.2 - OPEN SPACE INVENTORY MAP 2018 MASTER PLAN



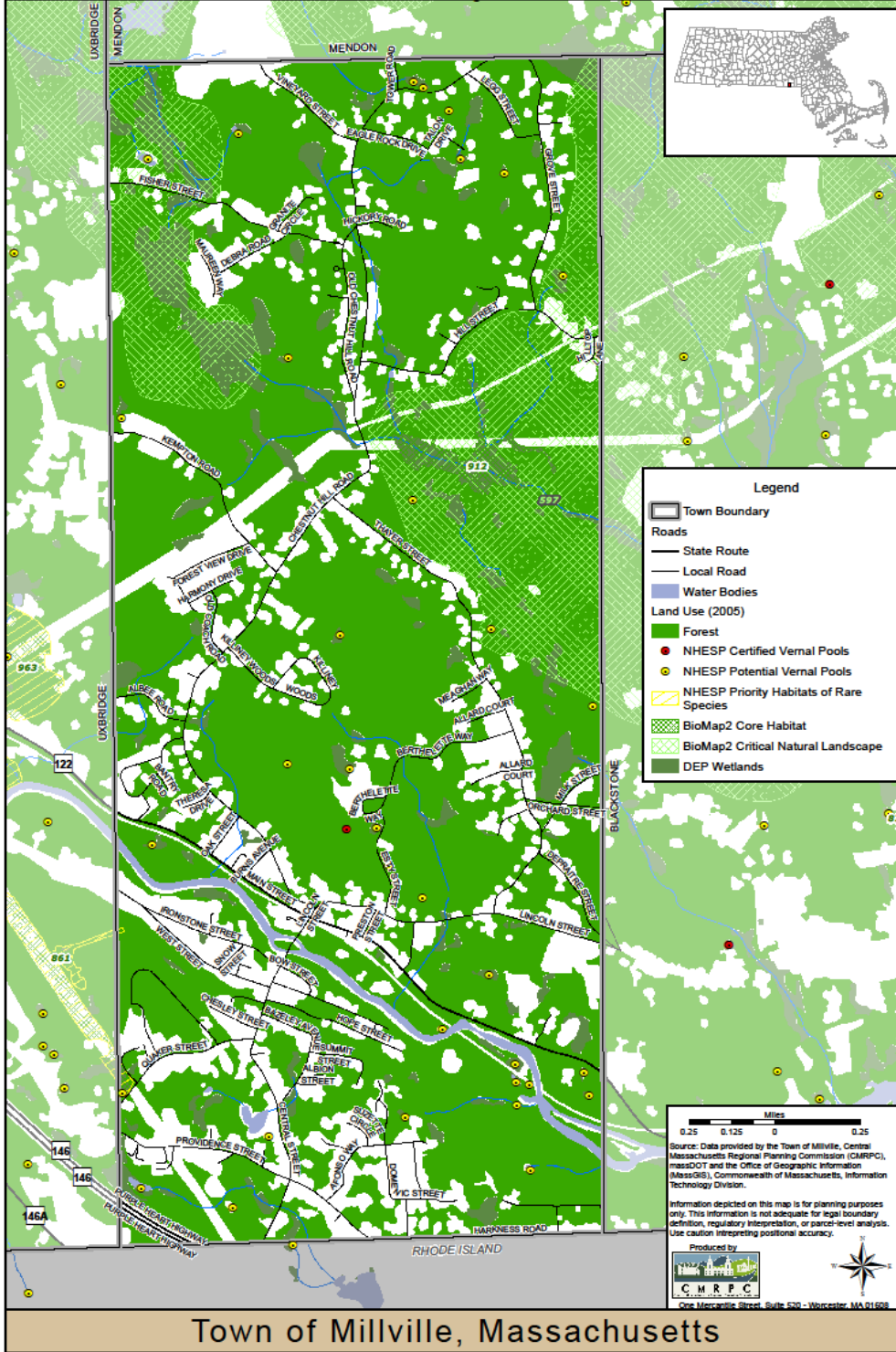
Natural Landscapes

In 2010, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (“MassWildlife”) through the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) and The Nature Conservancy’s Massachusetts Program developed *BioMap2* as a planning tool to assist municipalities with conservation efforts and protection of biodiversity. BioMap2 includes a combination of reports, documented community findings, and spatial data related to wildlife species and habitats. Figure 8.6: 2005 Habitat Map depicts Millville’s core habitats, vernal pools, rare species, and wetlands. BioMap2 also identifies Critical Natural Landscapes, which are those with unique, more resistant landscapes with the ability to support ecological processes and/or disturbances, and a wide array of species and habitats over long periods of time.

As shown on Figure 8.6, Millville is mostly forested with small pockets of wetlands scattered throughout town. Critical Natural Landscapes are located in the north section of town along the Blackstone and Uxbridge town boundaries, and they overlap large parcels of wetlands. Wetlands provide necessary water storage capabilities, prevent rapid runoff during storms, and provide valuable wildlife habitat and scenic beauty.

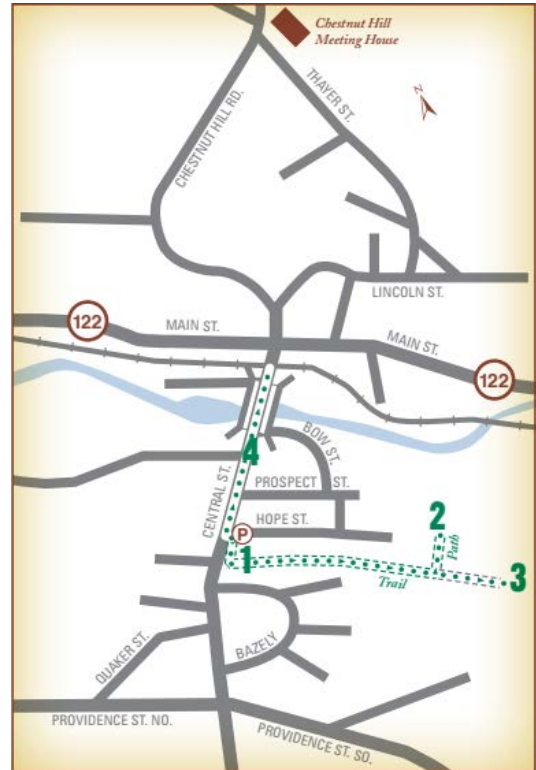
Vernal pools are small, seasonal wetlands that provide unique wildlife habitat, primarily amphibians and invertebrate animals that use them to breed. BioMap2 reported one (1) NHESP certified vernal pool near the town center, located off Etsy Street. This is compared to approximately 34 NHESP certified potential vernal pools located throughout town. According to MassWildlife, a targeted approach towards vernal pool clusters is more effective than targeting individual pools because it maximizes the resistance and resilience of vernal pool habitats and their resident species in the context of climate change.

FIGURE 8.6 - 2005 HABITAT MAP
2018 MASTER PLAN



Active and Passive Recreation

The terms recreational open space or recreation refer to "land used for active recreational purposes, such as the Southern New England Trunkline Trail, athletic fields, or golf courses. Land used for active recreation does not qualify technically as open space because, for example, these parcels are often covered with paved surfaces such as that for tennis courts, basketball courts and parking lots." Active recreation includes those sports and activities that require the construction of specific recreation facilities such as soccer, baseball, basketball, tennis, hockey, and swimming (in a pool). Passive recreation encompasses those activities that can be done in a natural setting with little or no facility development. These activities include hiking, biking, boating, swimming in a lake or pond, walking, and bird watching. For example, the Blackstone Heritage Corridor offers a walking tour of Millville where visitors can learn about the role that the Town of Millville played in the Blackstone River Valley during the Industrial Revolution. Visitors have the opportunity to explore the stone ruins of mill foundations, pieces of the old canal and lock structures, and sections of unused railroads and bridges in town. The following describes the town's recreational destinations.



The Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) is a 22-mile long rail trail which parallels the Blackstone River on the south, with endpoints in Bellingham and Douglas. This rail trail follows the old railroad bed of the Boston and Hartford Railroad easterly to the Blackstone River from the parking area on the corner of Central and Hope Streets. This stretch was recently paved and currently functions as part of the newly opened Blackstone River Greenway Bike Path. The trail passes through Millville for about 2 miles and is designated for use by pedestrians, equestrians, or non-motorized vehicles.

The Millville Lock #21 is the most preserved lock of 48 locks along the meandering Blackstone River. Located just downstream from the town's center, the Millville Lock is a featured site of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. The large stones that make the Lock were put in place when the Blackstone Canal was being built during the late 1820's. The Lock served as a point where water levels could be controlled for the passage of barges along the canal. The site is owned by the Commonwealth and managed by DCR.

There have been discussions to develop the site into a park and trail but currently there is no access except via a small pedestrian walkway.

The Triad Bridge is the three-tier railroad crossing of the Blackstone River. The bridge is an attraction, itself representing one of the few examples of a triple crossing of railroad bridges ever contemplated. During the late 1800s, conceptual plans were made so that while boats were passing below, three railroad lines, the Providence & Worcester, the Boston & Hartford, and the Grand Trunk, would intersect and form a tri-level bridge. While currently unpassable, the bridge is structurally sound and requires re-decking and some minor repairs. If rehabilitated, the bridge would serve multi-use purposes and recreational opportunities associated with the SNETT trail and nearby protected open space properties.

Conclusion

Funding and availability of personnel are the top two needs relative to open space and recreation management in Millville. Maintenance costs of park equipment should also be taken into consideration. While school budgets may be able to absorb regular maintenance of a playground, it would require constructing the playground on school property. Construction of a new playground or expansion of the existing playground would require municipal budget support and/or fundraising efforts. Depending on whether Town Hall is renovated or a new facility is constructed, there may be an opportunity to construct a larger municipal playground closer to the street that is more visible and is a center piece for the community. Additionally, the Town Planner is currently employed on a part-time basis. Like many smaller towns, the Town of Millville would benefit from more residents getting involved on a local board or committee or committing to a local initiative.

Goals and Recommendations

Goals

There is certainly plenty of room left to develop in Millville. The Town has choices to make concerning the kind of development that will occur over the next two decades. The limited available farmland and non-existent public water and sewer system presents unique challenges to conservation planning in town. In addition, there is an obvious need to promote new economic development opportunities to lessen reliance upon the residential sector. But since most of the development that will probably occur will be residential, the Town needs to give serious consideration to the type of housing it should promote if it wishes to retain the rural character that attracts new residents.

Scenic value and natural resource protection can be achieved through residential development which requires open space and allows for a flexible arrangement of house lots. Key parcels and areas that contribute to the overall character of the town are also not currently protected.

As stated within Chapter 2, the following is the Open Space and Recreation Goal:

1. *To preserve important natural resources from development and provide large tracts of usable open space for passive recreation activities by local residents.*

Recommendations

The following objectives are recommended in order to support and implement the goal:

- A. *Increase administrative capacity to support the Town's existing open space and recreation resources/facilities and to facilitate the protection of additional key parcels.*

The Town should create a permanent standing Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee to steer the development of the Town's first Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). The employment of a full-time planner would also help maintain day-to-day operations and communications, facilitate agreements with developers to preserve open space, and promote the efficient management of open space resources. The additional staff support could also assist with actively pursuing funding through grants, state matching funds, or other programs for land purchase, resource preservation, and rehabilitation of existing facilities.

- B. *Prepare an Open Space and Recreation Plan.*

The Town should prepare an Open Space and Recreation Plan that meet the state's planning requirements in order to be eligible for matching funds for land acquisition and park development. The Plan should identify the Town's most important natural resources and remaining open spaces, and set forth an action plan that can be followed to safeguard these resources. The findings and recommendations provided in this chapter serve as a baseline analysis for the town to use as a general outline for open space planning.

- C. *Identify public lands of conservation and recreation interest with unknown or no protection levels and facilitate permanent or temporary protection of these properties.*

As discussed earlier, there are 42 acres in five (5) open space parcels with unknown protection levels. These are considered unprotected and include the Old Town Hall Park, King Conservation Area, Memorial Park, Udor Tower Park, and the Millville Tot Lot. It is recommended that the Town contact MassGIS and the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) to clarify the protection statuses of these key sites, especially if any are in fact permanently protected.

D. *Develop and maintain an open space “wish list” of priority open space parcels for permanent protection and/or future acquisition*

In order to establish a wider, more connected open space network the Town should create a listing of all properties and facilities in town with conservation, forestry, agricultural, or recreational interests that have vulnerable protection levels (unprotected or temporarily). In addition, the wish list should also identify key privately-owned open space parcels (including those with limited public access) and seek a change in ownership to allow for increased recreational opportunities for residents. Finally, the listing should identify key priority recreation areas or facilities in need of upgrade, repair, or maintenance.

E. *Preserve Millville's scenic vistas and roads through careful development design and adoption of protection strategies for key parcels.*

The Town should identify priority scenic corridors and explore designation of the Scenic Roads Act as a means to preserve and protect the scenic character and unique, historical charm of designated roadways. The designated “Scenic Roads” are a tool that provide for additional review and protections that impact tree removal along, or improvements to, the Town's scenic roads. Stonewalls and trees, which define many of the roads in town, can be protected and preserved through the adoption of a Scenic Roads Bylaw, while not impacting a property owner's right to access their property.

F. *Engage Agencies and Land Trust Organizations to assist in land acquisition and preservation.*

Large non-profit conservation organizations, such as the Massachusetts Audubon Society and the Trustees of Reservations, are often willing to purchase high value lands when public resources are limited. State agencies obtain funds to expand public land holdings from the issuance of state open space bonds. At a smaller scale, local non-profit land trusts can accept donations of land from residents, and they can act quickly to purchase lands threatened by development. The Metacomet Land Trust is a tax-exempt conservation organization which preserves natural resources in south-central Massachusetts and includes Millville in its sphere of activities.

The Metacomet Land Trust presently owns 386 acres of Conservation Land and holds conservation restrictions on privately-owned land and on town-owned land, spanning across 343 acres. Properties conserved by Metacomet are located in Bellingham, Blackstone, Franklin, Mendon, Millbury, Norfolk, Sutton, Upton, Uxbridge, and Wrentham. Metacomet is available to assist town officials and private landowners with land acquisition and preservation activities through collecting, soliciting, and managing private donations that can be applied to specific projects within the community or to larger projects across town boundaries. For example, Metacomet was instrumental in the acquisition of the Blackstone Gorge. When working with private owners, Metacomet is available to provide information about the property's natural resources and work with the owner to choose the most appropriate protective measure.

G. *Consider adopting Community Preservation Act.*

The Community Preservation Act, which has been in place since 2002, allows for the town to levy a surcharge on surcharge of not more than 3% of the tax levy against real property and must be adopted by ballot referendum. The money is also matched by the state, though in recent years, the match has been reduced to between 15% and 20% of the money raised by the municipality. Money must be spend on open space/ recreation, historic preservation, and affordable housing. The CPA can be used to acquire open space and for recreation purposes and can be bonded against future receipts.

H. *Increase educational awareness and understanding of open space and conservation planning, as well as State-aid programs, amongst community members.*

Part of the reason for the limited action on open space planning in town is due to the lack of understanding of available resources and opportunities. It is recommended that the Conservation Commission coordinate with the Planning Department and Town Administrator's office to develop an education campaign or program to build awareness of the Chapter Lands program and the Community Preservation Act in regards to land acquisition through tax title takings, in addition to other tax incentives such as the APR or CR programs. Because there are no formally designated scenic roads in town, the public may benefit from a community-wide discussion on scenic roads bylaw and the environmental impacts on local open space resources the overall program, including formal processes and potential areas for designation. Organizations such as the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) and Mass Audubon are available to assist with promoting educational awareness.

Chapter 9 Town Facilities and Services

Introduction

Town facilities and services are the most visible representation of any local government, and arguably the most important. The Town of Millville provides a wide range of municipal services to its residents and businesses. These range from public safety services provided by the Police and Fire Departments to roadway maintenance, a firefighting water system, and waste disposal.

Millville is part of the Blackstone-Millville Regional School District and has the Millville Elementary School within its borders. Millville Elementary provides Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 5 education in its facility.

The Town has a Public Library and Senior Center. The Town also offers many athletic and recreational programs at local playing fields, playgrounds, and the school gymnasium. All of these municipal services and government functions must be staffed and have adequate and well-maintained public buildings and facilities from which to operate. However, due to budget constraints, services have been reduced and building maintenance is sometimes deferred.



Facilities

Table 9.1 – Millville Facilities

Facility	Address	Year Built	Assessed Value (\$)
Town Hall (fmr. American Legion Hall)	290 Main Street	1966	N/A
Longfellow Municipal Center	8 Central Street	N/A	354,700
Old Town Hall (currently disused)	"	1850	N/A
Police Department	"	ca. 1950	N/A
Playground	"	ca. 1939	N/A
Udor Tower	"	ca. 1880	N/A
Fire Department & Memorial Park	196 Main Street	1971	187,700
Free Public Library	169 Main Street	1960	199,200
Senior Center	40 Prospect Street	2007	195,300
Highway Department & Salt Shed	30 Main Street	1995	101,300
Elementary School & Playground	122 Berthelette Way	1992	7,463,400
Mansfield Pond Fire Control Pump Station	122 Central Street	N/A	N/A
Fire Control Water Tank	122 Berthelette Way	N/A	N/A

Millville's municipal buildings are in a state of transition. Age and deferred maintenance have rendered the old Town Hall at the Longfellow Municipal Center unusable, and in 2016 the Town's administrative functions were temporarily relocated to the Police Department's garage. After a trying year in this interim location, in 2017 a modern office space was created at the former American Legion Hall, providing the Town offices with a new home for the next several years or more. The question of what to do with the old Town Hall remains. With two exceptions, Millville's other facilities appear to be adequate for the foreseeable future in function, scope, condition, and efficiency for a community of Millville's size and budget. Solutions will need to be found for the Highway Department and the Police Department in the relatively near term.

Town Hall (former American Legion Hall)

The new Town Hall space is being rented from the American Legion on a ten-year lease (a three-year base term plus three two-year options). This 4,000 SF space is intended to be a one-stop shop with all Town administrative staff based there or able to work there as needed at flexible work stations. In its current configuration there are two meeting spaces, one for public events (Selectmen's meetings, etc.) and one for small groups.

The building is largely ADA accessible and final access improvements to one exit vestibule are expected shortly. In preparation for its occupancy by Town offices,

renovations included new energy-efficient lighting, a new backup generator, new carpets, a new roof, new paint and windows, conversion of a porch into indoor space, and new building systems. Students from the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical School were of great assistance with many of these improvements, helping to defray costs. Limitations include relatively little storage space, a bland exterior façade that does not evoke a New England town hall, and an aging septic system that will need replacement in the fairly near term. There is sufficient room on the 4-acre parcel for expansion of the building or addition of a separate Town facility – perhaps a public safety or public works building – should the Town be able to acquire the property. However, there is some concern that part of the property was formerly used as a tire dump. Due diligence will have to be conducted to determine if any hazardous waste cleanup is required.

Longfellow Municipal Center

The Municipal Center is centered on the former Longfellow School, built in the 1850s and converted to Town Hall use sometime after Millville's separation from Blackstone in 1916. With almost 10,000 SF of space, the historic school building easily accommodated Town administrative operations and public events for many decades. In 2014 the Town commissioned a study to review options for renovation or replacement of the Town Hall. Troubling structural and environmental (mold) conditions were found. Based on the findings of this report and follow-up inspections, in 2016 the building was ordered closed pending substantial structural and environmental renovations. Faced with a daunting price tag – at least \$2.5 million – the Town elected to move into the adjacent Police Station before finding a more affordable new home at the former American Legion. Currently the old Town Hall is being decommissioned and winterized to preserve the structure and reduce maintenance costs until a reuse is found. The Town is reviewing options for issuing a request for proposals to interested developers to convert the structure to residential or mixed use. The old Town Hall is located just above the Blackstone River's 100-year flood zone and parts of the basement flood regularly.

The Millville Police Station is immediately adjacent to the old Town Hall. Built around 1950 and originally a kindergarten or daycare, the building was converted to police use in the 1960s. An attached two-bay garage was added around that time. While the building is in decent shape structurally, it is block construction laid directly on a concrete slab, allowing mold to infiltrate through the floor and making insulation very difficult. Limited weatherization and lighting improvements were made using Green Communities funds in 2015-16, but in general the building systems are aging and inefficient. The building is not configured for efficient police operations. Its size is marginal for a police force of Millville's size and level of activity – 6 full-time and 6 part-time officers, and 12,000 calls (all types) per year. It has one very small office, a small meeting room, a locker area for men only (the MPD does not currently have any female officers), and three holding cells. Parking is inadequate for the four cruisers and administration vehicle, forcing several to be

stored outdoors. Dispatch is regionalized with the Town of Mendon, though there are concerns that not all parts of Millville can reliably communicate by radio with the dispatch center. The Police Station is located just above the 100-year flood zone associated with the Blackstone River and is subject to flooding during sustained rain events. The station has a backup power generator.

Two other facilities are located on the Municipal Center's grounds. The historic Udor Tower, built around 1880 as a cistern for a wealthy resident's home, is one of Millville's notable landmarks. There is a small playground next to the Police Station that was added around 1939 by the Works Progress Administration.

Fire Department & Veterans Memorial Park

Constructed in 1971, the Fire Station is the Fire Department's lone facility following the 2015 closure of the privately-owned Station #2 garage on Chestnut Hill Road. The 3,500 SF station is in fair to good condition, having a recently-reinsulated roof funded through a \$56,000 Green Communities grant. A 2014 energy audit also recommended replacement of the heating system and correction of a structural flaw to gain additional energy cost savings. The station has a small office, a kitchen, and a meeting space. It has three parking bays which occupy most of the building. Parking capacity is inadequate for the current vehicle fleet consisting of a quint dual-purpose apparatus, a pumper apparatus, a forestry truck (in need of replacement), an administration vehicle, and two ATVs. Vehicles are sometimes stored at the old Town Hall lot as a result. The Fire Department is currently staffed by two full-time and eighteen on-call firefighters. The Department responds to more than 100 fire-related calls per year (126 in 2016). It achieved a ranking of 4/4X in its 2016 ISO Public Protection Classification report, a solid showing for a rural, mostly on-call department. This classification, based on training, facilities, water supply and other factors, is often used by insurance companies to set rates for property owners in a community. As with the police, dispatch is shared with the Town of Mendon. The Fire Station serves as Millville's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) following the closure of the old Town Hall. The station has a backup power generator.

The MFD also operates Millville's emergency medical services (EMS). All firefighters are trained to the EMT Basic level, and at least two firefighters are always on call or on duty in the EMS role. Roughly 200 EMS calls are fielded yearly (219 in 2016). The Town currently has one ambulance. While the MFD would like to train some or all of its EMTs to the more advanced paramedic level, the required training is considered cost-prohibitive for a very small department.

Millville maintains a limited fire-control water system and hydrant network. The system is discussed separately below.

The Veterans Memorial Park is located on the same property as the Fire Station. A number of annual and special events are held in the park, including celebrations of Millville's centennial in 2016.

Free Public Library

The Millville Free Public Library building was constructed in 1960 as a funeral home before being converted to library use in 1986. Purchase of the property was supported mainly by donations, and much of the labor of converting the 3,500 SF structure was completed by students from the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical School. In the 1990s, a new entryway and air conditioning were added, and general interior updates were made in 2000. The one-level facility is substantially ADA compliant. Weatherization and lighting upgrades funded through Green Communities have been made over the past two years to reduce energy costs. The library's collection currently numbers around 13,000 volumes and 1,100 DVDs. The facility is generally in good condition and adequate for its purpose; staff would appreciate more book storage and an additional meeting room to host community groups and other events. Programming includes seasonal story times for kids, a science program, holiday events (Halloween, Christmas, etc...) sometimes funded by the Millville Cultural Council, adult programs (Book-and-Bake), and a mystery book club. The Library is open 15 hours per week and is staffed by a head librarian (13 hours/week), two part-time librarians (4 hours/week each), and a custodian (two hours/week). The Library is part of Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (CWMARS), a library consortium dedicated to efficient resource sharing and information access. A portion of the library property is located within the Blackstone River's 500-year flood zone. The building itself is just above the flood zone.

Senior Center

Completed in 2007, the Senior Center is Millville's most recent new-build facility. The 3,200 SF building is in good condition and has a great deal of programming flexibility through space dividers. It contains a large meeting space, a commercial kitchen, and limited office space. While relatively new, the Center's basic maintenance needs (new paint, etc.) are growing as it completes its first decade in service. Upgrades were recently made to exterior lighting. Services to the town's seniors include crafts, exercise classes, line dancing, chorus, card games, and weekly lunches. Monthly services include bingo, a club luncheon, and SHINE health insurance services. Van service is available for transportation to the Center and other locations (medical appointments, etc.). The Center is used quite heavily, with almost 180 unduplicated seniors participating in programs during FY 2016, and another 30-50 non-seniors served through social service programs and informal assistance. During FY16 total attendance was nearly 4,400 visits and volunteers devoted more than 1,300 hours of their time. The Senior Center is open three days per week for six hours a day, with a full-time director, three part-time van drivers,

a part-time custodian and a number of desk volunteers. Although the facility is generally well-regarded, there is some concern about the lack of private counseling space. Likewise, as the senior demographic continues to grow, there is some fear that the limited staffing and hours of operation will be an impediment to provision of services.

Highway Department & Salt Shed

Charged with maintaining Millville's roads, sidewalks and storm drains, the Highway Department is based in multiple locations around town. Its primary space is at the capped former Town landfill on Main Street, near the Blackstone line. Facilities there include a large shed for salt storage and a 9x9-foot concrete block utility shed for equipment storage. The salt shed (built around 1995) is in good condition and received a new roof after a 2011 storm; the utility shed is in decent condition. There is no indoor parking or maintenance area for the Department's two pickup trucks or for personal vehicles that are used at times for work. The site is muddy and flood prone and there are no restrooms for staff, which include the elected part-time highway surveyor, one full-time crewman, one part-time crewman, and seasonal part-timers. Additional equipment storage is available in trailer bodies behind the Elementary School. However, there is no power or lighting available there after school hours. Flexible office space for the surveyor is now available at the new Town Hall, and some storage space may become available there as renovations to the facility and grounds are completed. Despite this addition, the Highway Department's staff considers its scattered facilities to be inadequate in size, configuration and location in relation to the scope of its duties.

Millville Elementary School

Millville Elementary School (MES), which is part of the Blackstone-Millville Regional School District, is the community's only public school. Completed in 1992, the school educates children from Pre-kindergarten (PK) through grade 5. PK is open to all students in the district, while kindergarten through grade 5 serve predominantly Millville children. Located on 48 acres of Town-owned land, the 52,000 SF school is a major hub of community activity. Town Meeting is held in the auditorium and various recreational activities use the indoor gym and outdoor ballfields. Because MES is located near Estey Hill, a forested, non-residential area distant from the town center, nearly all students are dropped off or are bused to school on one of four routes. In recent years there has been some discussion of fully regionalizing the school, which would result in a larger enrollment and require transportation changes.

The school is generally in good condition. However, MES is now 25 years old and many systems are nearing the end of their designed lifetimes. The HVAC system, windows, and security system are all in need of replacement shortly. Following snow damage in 2011 the roof was replaced using \$1.5 million in Mass. School

Building Authority (MSBA) and local funds. The two-story school has an elevator and is fully ADA compliant, having recently upgraded railings in the auditorium. A variety of weatherization and lighting improvements have been made or are planned using Green Communities funds, resulting in substantial energy savings. Other concerns include difficulties with the boiler's fuel distribution system and occasional minor leaks in the water tank that provides water for the school's sprinkler system (a well provides a backup water supply). The school district recently completed a capital plan to address facilities issues and is working with the MSBA to arrange funding for construction. The school is equipped with a backup generator and is the Town's primary designated emergency shelter.

Enrollment at MES has dropped from 340 to 280 in the past decade, with a rebound to 290 expected for the school year starting in fall 2017. Administrators expect the enrollment to increase gradually to about 320 over the next two years as a number of small single-family residential construction projects are completed in town. To date, school choice has had a limited impact on enrollment with only a handful of students opting into the school each year (opt-outs are unknown). Design capacity of the school is 400 students. Staffing at the school is roughly 40 full-time equivalents, split evenly between teachers and other staff (administration, specialists, nutrition, and facilities management). Millville Elementary is a Level 1 school, indicating that its students are largely meeting gap-narrowing and cumulative progress and performance goals. The student to teacher ratio at MES is 14:1, compared to 13.2:1 for all Massachusetts schools.

The school's grounds include two ballfields as well as a playground intended for PK-age children. Starting in 2012, the Millville Elementary School Parents Association (MESPA) led a push to provide an additional playground for older children, MES then being one of the only elementary schools in the region without such a facility. The Town formed a committee to guide the playground effort, which culminated in construction of the first phase in September of 2017, using mainly volunteer labor and donated equipment. The new playground is located on Town land adjacent to the school.

Fire Control Water System

Millville does not have municipal drinking water or sewer service. The Fire Department operates a limited fire-control water system sourced from Mansfield Pond to provide fire suppression service to the developed south-central part of town. Pond water is pumped from a small pump house at 122 Central Street through a network of mains in the town center area (both north and south of the Blackstone River) serving hydrants along mostly major roadways.

The system is kept pressurized at all times. In the event of a fire, the pump station is turned on or a fire engine is connected to the system to allow flow to the hydrants. The pump is powered by a 1970s-era generator lacking autostart technology, requiring a firefighter to manually start the system in the event of a

fire. While the existing water system is considerably better than nothing, it is considered awkward to operate. It is also vulnerable to pump equipment failures and to seasonal drought conditions, given the shallow water source at Mansfield Pond. The Fire Department is in the process of mapping the water system to improve its ability to plan for system maintenance and upgrades. A water tank is maintained by the MFD at the Elementary School to serve the school's sprinkler system.

Aside from the Town's water system, some newer subdivisions have their own standpipes and cisterns for fire suppression.

Services

Table 9.2 – Millville Departments

Staffed Departments	Posted Office Hours /week	FY16 Local Budget, as Adopted, incl. Expenses (\$)
Animal Control	On call	\$8,200
Board of Assessors	18	\$54,746
Board of Health (incl. trash collection)	16	\$256,860
Building & Inspections	18	\$19,540
Executive Secretary (now Town Administrator)	18	\$68,000
Fire Department	On call	\$212,250
Highway Department	On call	\$210,360
Planning Board	8.5	\$14,688
Police Department	On call	\$389,593
Public Library	15	\$31,145
Schools (Blackstone-Millville RSD)	Varies	\$3,322,200
Senior Center	18	\$40,760
Town Clerk	18	\$39,475
Town Accountant	N/A	\$40,040
Town Hall Custodial/Clerical	N/A	\$113,000
Treasurer/Collector	18	\$71,253
Veterans Agent	2	\$24,500

Millville offers a typical array of public services for a Central Massachusetts community of its size and budget. Whether or not they are required by state law, most town government services are understood by residents and businesses to be essential or at least desirable. Millville does not have to provide a library, recreational programming, or a senior center, but over the decades its townspeople have chosen to offer these services to enhance local quality of life and to help

establish and maintain community identity. The departments and positions listed in Table 9.2 provide direct services to the public.

Although Millville provides a wide array of public services, the level of service and hours of operation sometimes suffer due to relatively low municipal revenues and expenditures. For example, the Senior Center is open only 18 hours per week, the Library is limited to 15 hours, and the Veterans Agent is available only two hours. Town Hall is open four days per week.

The Town has partnered to provide a number of shared or regional services. These include the Blackstone-Millville Regional School District, shared public safety dispatch with the Town of Mendon (operated from Mendon), and a shared accountant with the Town of Uxbridge (using Uxbridge's accountant). While shared services have helped bridge gaps in local staffing and capabilities, they should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the Town is continuing to benefit.

One atypical service provided in Millville is curbside trash and recycling collection. As of 2006, the Mass. Department of Environmental Protection found that 166 cities and towns averaging 30,000 in population offered home trash collection. Of the 150 communities where residential trash is disposed at drop-off centers only, the average population was just over 7,000. Numbers were similar for towns providing home recycling pickup. With a population of about 3,200, Millville is an outlier among smaller towns in the state in providing this service.

Beyond its staffed departments, Millville maintains some two dozen elected and appointed boards, committees, and commissions that oversee or help implement Town policies. This number is roughly average for the area; Uxbridge has nearly 40, Mendon has 28, and Blackstone has 18.

Table 9.3 – Millville Boards and Commissions

Board/Commission/Committee	Number of Members	Elected or Appointed	Core Purpose(s)
Blackstone-Millville Regional School Committee	4	Elected	Provides oversight of operations and policy of Regional School District; 4 members from Millville
Board of Assessors	3	Appointed	Values property annually at full and fair cash value as per MGL Chapter 59, for use in local taxation
Board of Health	3	Elected	Regulates food safety, septic systems, and other topics; conducts various public health activities
Board of Registrars	4	Appointed	Maintains the voter registration database and annual street listing
Board of Selectmen	5	Elected	Executive branch of the Town government; appoints many other officials; assisted in day-to-day activities by Town Administrator
Cable Access Committee	5	Appointed	Provides oversight of operations and policies at the local access cable TV station

Capital Program Committee	4	Appointed	Provides guidance for 5-year capital budgeting for all Town departments
Centennial Celebration Committee	11	Appointed	Oversees preparations and operations for Town's centennial celebrations (completed 2016)
Conservation Commission	3	Appointed	Regulates protection of natural resources with particular emphasis on wetlands and other open spaces
Council on Aging	8	Appointed	Advocates for and provides services for local seniors; provides oversight of operations and policy at the Senior Center
Cultural Council	5	Appointed	Promotes arts and humanities activities; distributes grants from Mass. Cultural Coalition
Earth Removal Board	5	Appointed	Administers earth removal by-laws
Finance Committee	4	Appointed	Reviews Town expenditures and other issues of interest to the Town; submits budget at Town Meeting
Green Community Committee	4	Appointed	Oversees energy-efficiency projects and funding through the Mass. Green Communities program
Historical Commission	5	Appointed	Advocates preservation, promotion and development of local historical assets
Library Trustees	6	Elected	Provides oversight of Millville Free Public Library operations and policies
Memorial Day Parade Committee	11	Appointed	Oversees preparations and operations for Town's annual Memorial Day parade
MES Playground Committee	5	Appointed	Advocates and organizes for creation of a new or expanded playground at MES (dissolved 2017 following start of construction)
Municipal Building Relocation Committee	6	Appointed	Studies and recommends interim solutions to the Town Hall problem
Parks and Recreation Commission	4	Appointed	Oversees parks and recreational facilities and related programming
Planning Board	5	Elected	Regulates land use; reviews site plans and subdivision requests; periodically reviews zoning and oversees long-range plans
Town Hall Study Committee	3	Appointed	Studies and recommends long-term solutions to the Town Hall problem
Trustees of Veterans Memorial Park	5	Appointed	Oversees maintenance and usage of the park
Zoning Board of Appeals	3	Appointed	Acts on discretionary zoning-related permits, including special permits and variances

Millville's primary executive is its Board of Selectmen, a body composed of five elected members who serve as the main policymakers for the local government. Supported by a Town Administrator (a position created in 2016), the Selectmen are responsible for hiring most Town administrative staff, appointing members to unelected boards and commissions, and executing contracts, among many other tasks. Other elected boards such as the Planning Board and Board of Health are charged with setting and/or regulating specific policies per state statute or local by-law independent of the Board of Selectmen.

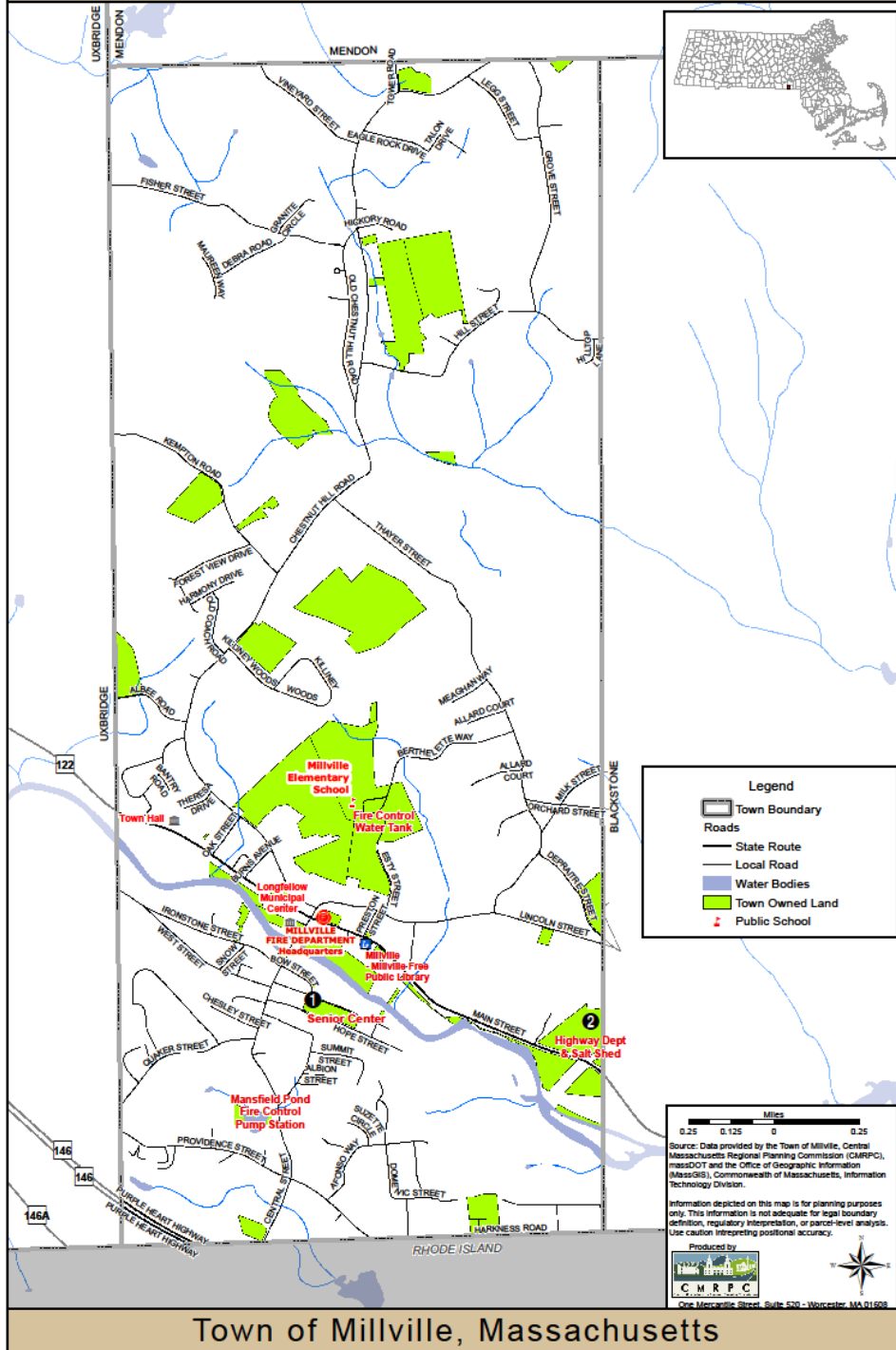
Appointed boards often (but not always) serve in more advisory roles. Millville operates under the Open Town Meeting form of government where any voter is permitted to attend and vote on by-laws, budgets and other matters.

Millville participates in the Commonwealth's Community Compact program with goals established for the improvement of infrastructure, financial policies, and capital planning. A recent report by the Mass. Department of Revenue (2016) funded through the Community Compact program recommended a limited consolidation and professionalization of town staff (including transitioning the elected Town Clerk and Highway Surveyor to appointed status) under the Town Administrator.

Staffing changes that are already being implemented include the recent hiring of a code enforcement officer shared among the Board of Health, Conservation Commission, and Building & Inspections to help improve code compliance. The Police and Highway departments were each increased by one full-time staff member in the past year. Per recommendation of the 2016 Department of Revenue report, the Town is also adding to its information technology capabilities through implementation of an electronic permitting system, a geographic information system (GIS), new accounts payable and payroll software, and redesign of the Town's website. Another recommendation of the report is to continue improvements to property tax assessment practices.

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FIGURE 9.4 - TOWN LAND INVENTORY MAP
2018 MASTER PLAN



Shared Planner Assessment

As part of the Community Compact Cabinet grant that allowed this Master Plan to be completed, the Town of Millville, along with the Town of Uxbridge, sought an assessment of whether a shared town planner position could be established either with these two municipalities or in another combination.

Many smaller towns throughout Massachusetts do not have a town planner, either part-time or full-time. Town planners typically function either as largely an administrative component to the Planning Board (in smaller communities without a full-time Planning Board Secretary) or some combination of administrative or technical based on the presence of the full- or part-time Board Secretary. Larger communities may have the Town Planner serve as a department head supervising other development-related staffers such as a Conservation Agent, Building Official, Economic Development Coordinator, or the like.

Town Planner functions generally include:

- Customer service related to questions about the Zoning Bylaw, site plan review, subdivisions, ANRs, master planning, and similar domains.
- Reviewing and commenting on submitted plans; coordinating other reviews on said plans; and preparing reviews and recommendations for the Planning Board.
- Serving as technical expert to the Planning Board by having a thorough knowledge of local and state development laws, bylaws, and regulations.
- Coordinating the master plan process, bylaw amendment process, and zoning map amendment process.
- Often providing economic development, community development, energy, environmental, housing, and other planning areas.

The permitting process in smaller towns without a planner typically functions with a patchwork of existing staff, such as Town Clerk or Building Inspector, and volunteer Board members. The ability for those existing staff and volunteers to undertake essential planning activities, or to implement changes in process to increase efficiency, can be challenging without a municipal employee devoted to undertaking these tasks. That municipal employee is a Town Planner.

While we did not conduct a comprehensive review or inventory of the number of towns throughout the state who employ a part-time, full-time, or shared planner position, CMRPC did conduct some research for the Barre-Rutland Shared Planner

project. There is no comprehensive list of which of the 351 Massachusetts towns and cities employ a town planner position although this list would be a valuable resource to better understand the characteristics of towns with and without a planner position.

The research began with information sought on the Mass-Planners Listserv and resulted in several phone interviews with planners in the Central Massachusetts region who provided or had experience with providing shared planner services. However, very few examples of formalized shared municipal planner arrangements were identified.

The following sources were reviewed to prepare a preliminary assessment of how prevalent, or not, town planners are in the state:

CMRPC Inventory of Member Communities

The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission has maintained a list of its member communities and whether they have a town planner position. Of the 40 communities in our region, 19 communities maintain a full-time planner position. One town has a part-time planner and one has a housing planner.

Therefore, in the CMRPC region, 21 out of 40 municipalities do not employ any town planner position. Three of these communities have a population between 5,000-7,000 people. The remaining 18 communities have a population of 3,000 people or less. There appears to be a direct correlation between the population of a community and whether or not they are likely to maintain a town planner position. Anecdotally, it is these very communities that may actually yield the largest value by creating even a part-time or shared planner position.

An additional source of information considered in this research was a 2010 survey prepared by the University of Massachusetts of 111 communities in Massachusetts. The primary activity of the survey was aimed at "assessing the information and training needs, organizational structure, levels of administrative support, and decision-making approaches of Conservation Commissions, Planning Boards, and Zoning Boards of Appeal in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts".

The responses were variable among Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Appeals with more professional support generally provided to Planning Boards. While 62% of planning boards maintained a town planner, only 43% of ZBA's benefited from a town planner.

Basic Salary Assessment of a Town Planner

When considering the creation of a shared planner, part-time planner, or full-time planner, an initial task is to determine a salary appropriate for the location, local

budget, or a combination thereof. In addition to a salary, identification of fringe benefits costs must also be determined. While in some cases permit application fees and grants can cover some portions of a planners salary, neither is typically enough to support the costs of even a part-time position. As noted below, securing funding for a new planner position will likely be the most challenging aspect of the process.

While municipal officials are well aware that the actual cost of an employee exceeds a base compensation rate after factoring in health care costs and other indirect benefits; not all Town Meeting members or members of the public understand or consider these additional costs. The costs associated with creating a town planner position in a municipality should be accompanied by clear explanations and examples of the value added to a town. This is outlined in the later section for “building support”.

It is important to identify that there are several part-time planners throughout the state. However, by in large, in order to attract and maintain a talented and experienced candidate, the position should be full-time with a salary that is competitive with other communities with a full-time planner.

Timeline to Create a Position

This element will vary significantly depending on certain characteristics of the community such as the amount of attention paid to planning related activities and Town Meeting schedules and processes. Particularly in smaller towns, but certainly in most towns, the budgetary process to add new employee positions, even part-time positions, can be long and enduring; even for critical services such as police and fire. The creation of a municipal planner position will require a significant amount of time, effort, the commitment of a “champion”, and public support.

Typically, once it is determined that a full- or part-time planner position is to be created, steps include development of a job description, targeting a salary range, determination if benefits are to be paid, and other administrative matters. Once the position has been defined, the necessary due diligence to “sell” the position to the public and the variety of boards, committees, and other groups that may have an interest in local planning, government, or taxes and finance. Each town must make the determination of how much outreach is necessary to pass a warrant article at Town Meeting creating such a position. Therefore, it may require more than one Town Meeting cycle to connect with sufficient interested citizens and groups in order to pass the legislation.

During the Town Meeting process (and throughout), it is critical to have a combination of volunteer board members (Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals) and a town staff person(s) such as a town administrator, Board of Selectman member, or one of each as a “champion” of and for the creation of a

part-time or full-time planning position.. As mentioned below, it is important to build a clear, concise, and effective argument in support of a planner position.

Basic Shared Municipal Planner Options

There are three primary options available to initiate a shared planner position:

1. Intermunicipal Agreement
2. Regional Planning Agency Model
3. Grant Funded

Intermunicipal Agreement

Intermunicipal agreements and shared municipal services are not uncommon. Some of the examples include shared Inspectional Services, shared sanitarians, Information Technology, and animal control (this last example is a program currently under development by CMRPC). However, across the Commonwealth there are no well documented examples of shared planner positions to describe successes and/or challenges.

Under an Intermunicipal Agreement, two or three towns (or more) prepare and sign a written contract for a specified service, for specified durations, and with a funding agreement. The model identified herein would be the equivalent of a full-time position shared equally amongst two municipalities. Typically, reaching agreement on scope of services, duration, and other logistics are not the challenge; the challenge is funding.

Especially in smaller towns, the concept, need for, and benefits of considering a shared planner position would allow for greater efficiency, delivery of services to residents, and opportunities for economic growth. The 2013 Massachusetts Shared Planner Services Manual prepared by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) is an important guide on considering and preparing for the technical requirements of establishing shared services.

To view the Massachusetts Shared Services Manual (A Toolkit of Regionalization Best Practices For City and Town Officials), see www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2013-shared-permit-manual-web.pdf

Regional Planning Agency Model

The Regional Planning Agency (RPA) model offers a range of important projects created by professional planners for the benefit of a community. These projects can often be used to illustrate the types of projects that can be initiated and completed by a planner.

Planning Board Assistance (PBA)

Many of the RPA's maintain active Planning Board Assistance Programs. These programs are paid for directly by the town to an RPA. The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) has provided "on-site" Planning Board Assistance to the towns of Dudley, Webster, and Millbury in 2016, Millbury and Rutland in 2017, and currently provides the service in Rutland and Millville. The services include a professional planner attending planning board and zoning board meetings to provide technical assistance on current applications, customer service, research, revising forms and applications, and other planning-related duties. Also in 2016, CMRPC offered "as-needed" remote review of project proposals or written advice or recommendations. In both cases, the Planning Board Assistance allowed the town access to a planner for review of project plans and proposals for boards and to provide office hours for other applicants.

For larger projects, municipalities may contract directly with regional planning agencies under MGL 30B, the Uniform Procurement Act. This allows towns to initiate more complex projects without the need to prepare and enter the request for proposal (RFP) process. These types of projects could include updating open space plans, creating or updating master plans, or conducting other studies.

Local Technical Assistance (LTA)

For smaller, very short-term projects many small and mid-size towns have successfully used Local Technical Assistance (LTA) hours which are typically made available to communities from assessment funds collected by RPAs annually. LTA hours are generated by a town's participation in the regional planning association. Generally, these limited hours could be used for various smaller projects, incremental work over multiple years, or for professional planners to review an ongoing project or proposal.

Grant Funded

Community Compact Cabinet (CCC)

Programs such as the Commonwealth's Community Compact Cabinet program create an important opportunity for towns to create short-term projects, set tangible goals, and provide examples of the value of a planner position in a community. Such a program can help create a foundation of planning-related activities to assist in building public support and awareness of the potential value of a part-time or full-time Town Planner.

Continued interest in this program from small- and mid-sized towns will help to build public support for, awareness of, and examples of projects initiated and

completed by a part-time planner. In these instances, where a professional planner provides short-term services, it is important to create appropriately sized projects that can be started and finished within the project length and projects that can be used by the municipality to illustrate or demonstrate to other Town officials or Town Meeting members the value of a town planner.

District Technical Local Assistance (DLTA)

Other programs, such as the State's District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program, have for years provided Town's across the state with ready access to essential funds for professional planners to work on critical planning-related projects. Continuation of this program can help illustrate the types of activities and projects that a municipality can undertake with the assistance of a planner.

The ability for a municipality to access these funds each year is essential. It allows Planning Boards, town officials, and others to identify a need or concern and to seek funding to initiate and complete research, analysis, or to set the stage for additional actions.

Other Shared Planner Examples

No comprehensive evaluation of the extent to which the 351 communities in Massachusetts maintain a professional planner position was conducted for this analysis. It is our finding that such research should be undertaken and would be useful in providing a full evaluation of where, when, and how a shared planner program may be beneficial to a set of communities to initiate the process of building public support and awareness for the value of a Town Planner.

Our cursory research provided several more recent examples of shared planner agreements, situations, or similar shared examples as follows:

- In 2015, the Towns of Spencer and Leicester entered into an Inter-Municipal Agreement for a planner to provide 25 hours per week in Leicester and 15 hours per week in Spencer. Ultimately, the project resulted in the hiring of a full-time planner in Leicester in 2015 and the hiring of a full-time planner in Spencer in September 2016.
- In 2016, Planning Board Assistance offered by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Agency included Dudley, Webster, Millbury, Upton, and Oxford. These projects provided a wide range of town planner services to each town, including attendance and guidance at Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings and hearings, housing related issues, mapping, and assistance with zoning amendments.

- In 2017, under a Community Compact Cabinet Efficiency and Regionalization grant, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) created a Rural Economic Development Planner position to be shared amongst six communities. The Hilltown Collaborative, a representative body of the Gateway Hilltown Region, is seeking a professional Rural Economic Development Coordinator to serve as a full-time staff person and provide economic development services to the six-town gateway region of Blandford, Chester, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, and Russell.
- In 2017, The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) initiated a Shared Economic Development Planner for the towns of Hinsdale, Great Barrington, Clarksburg, and Lanesborough. The effort is paid in part by portions of each Towns budget and the BRPC will be seeking funding through the Community Compact Cabinet program to expand the program.
- In 2017, the Towns of Millville and Uxbridge were awarded a grant through the Community Compact Cabinet program to create a second temporary shared planner program through the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.

Building Support

Introduction

What is the value of having a Town Planner? Volunteer board members are the key component to implement a community's zoning bylaw. However, opportunities exist to educate stakeholders as to the importance of the position of town planner. A town planner can enhance and elevate the presence and activities of a local Planning Board, or, to make a local Zoning Board of Appeals process clearer and more predictable through the work of a professional planner. Regular office hours, coordinated application processes, access to broader community planning projects, and, consistency and fairness in public processes and customer service can all be gained with the assistance of a part-time or full-time planner.

Consider the question of what does a Town Planner do from a Town Meeting or Finance Committee member perspective. For most small towns, adding a new full-time staff person will involve significant debate at Town Meeting. In some towns, the hiring of a new fire fighter or police officer may create a significant budget discussion even where there are many great and tangible reasons to support this type of new position, place a value on them, and justify a new expenditure.

Securing the funding for a new Town Planner position will require municipal support, and, will require that Town Meeting members have an understanding of what a part-time or full-time planner “can do” for a town.

Provide Assistance to Residents Through the Permitting Process

To most residents in a community, the value of having a professional planner may not be clearly understood. In fact, some residents may have never had the occasion or need to attend a local Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. To some, the issue of zoning and land use regulation generally may have little to no relevance or importance to them. When residents attend their first Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals meeting it is usually to learn about a neighbor’s project, or when a larger development is proposed.

They have been drawn out of the comfort of their homes, into a Town Hall for a Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, and observe a totally novel process. In other cases, it is a homeowner seeking a project for their own property that may require a Special Permit or other approvals. A homeowner navigating a local land use permit process on their own could help illustrate how the assistance of a part-time professional planner can clarify and simplify the process and thus positively impact the community and its residents.

As many professional planners understand, the steps for the typical resident to obtain a Special Permit may be daunting, costly, and can require a significant time investment. Unfortunately, many homeowners only learn about permitting piecemeal, or learn of permitting requirements well into a project such as installing a fence, or creating an in-law unit. Most residents do not know what is involved in this type of permitting process and a town planner can be of great assistance for them and other applicants.

In communities without a town planner, many applicants will encounter the process by gathering bits and pieces from various employees in Town Hall, such as a Town Clerk, Building Inspector, or similar, without ever being told of the legal framework or technical requirements involved in a Planning Board or Zoning Board granting a land use permit.

Many residents may end up attending their very first public hearing, in front of a Board whose role and responsibility was never clearly understood to them prior to their project. That type of unguided process can be difficult for some to understand. They may come out of the process with a negative reaction to “town government”.

A Town Planner is the municipal position that would guide homeowners and others through the local permitting process by clarifying and simplifying processes,

procedures, and bylaw requirements. In many cases, planners can make projects better through their understanding of development best practices.

Provide “Long Range” Planning Services

In many smaller communities, the existence of a current Master Plan is possible, but unlikely. The existence of a more recent Open Space and Recreation Plan is more common, but these are often in need of an update at five-year intervals. Zoning amendments to remove unnecessary permitting requirements, incorporating common new provisions such as solar, wireless communication, and addressing medical marijuana are often known issues, but never get started or completed because most of these processes take significant time, consistent effort, and, in many cases professional guidance.

Even in mid-size towns, this type of long-range planning work is often wanted and desired by various town officials. Many of those officials or even volunteers take on the projects on their own initiative, with assistance from a range of existing staff resources. This is commendable; and this awareness and effort can form the foundation for understanding and elevating the value added by creating a part-time or full-time planner position. Other mid-sized towns are very financially resourceful and are successful in securing funding for consultant based work; which is a positive step. However, one of the greatest challenges in some of those situations is maintaining the interest and effort once the consultant has completed their work. These larger projects require continued effort, follow up, and support to implement. In some cases, these well-meaning efforts can sometimes stall as other more pressing matters become a higher priority.

A Town Planner can, in some cases, provide the necessary “follow through” to achieve implementation of larger, broader, and more community-based planning efforts such as pursuing economic development opportunities, undertake the actions necessary to secure grant funding, and, create and/or update master plans.

Provide Information Online

In many smaller communities, the ability to provide a normal and “expected” level of information online is often limited. While in some cases, homeowner applicants or local developers will access forms and information directly at Town Hall, the need for, and expectation that, a wide range of information will be available online is growing. The need for transparency, even in small towns, will increase. Particularly in small towns where staff resources are limited and not always technically sophisticated, a robust online planning and permitting set of resources may be the most valuable tool of all to help navigate the process.

The amount of time and effort necessary to maintain a municipal webpage is more than most may think; but the information is expected to be available and can be

crucial to understanding the steps that are required and the regulations that need to be adhered to. Most existing Town officials, department heads, or employees will not be able to easily take on the task of creating, updating, and maintaining planning board and zoning board information online.

This type of website activity often becomes an accessory, default activity of a Town Planner. However, it is part of the cornerstone of creating and helping gather public support and relationship with community members.

A Town Planner can assist with public outreach, website maintenance, and, can make the permitting and planning process more accessible and transparent to residents and other applicants; something that is becoming normal and expected.

Provide Professional Support to Boards and Committees

In smaller, more rural communities, many Planning Boards rely solely on volunteer board members. These volunteers put in extensive time and effort to further the goals of their communities. Many members have served on Planning Boards or various other boards for years. With some board training available once per year throughout the state, most act on past practices and operate with the best of intentions. In some cases, Planning Boards may operate with the benefit of part-time administrative assistance. This can relieve a Planning Board Chair or Clerk of some of the ministerial tasks such as filing hearing notices, posting agendas, and taking minutes.

However, the complex nature of Massachusetts Zoning Laws, Chapter 40A, and the growing challenges associated with approving and tracking subdivisions, properly supporting special permit decisions, and understanding complex site plans, all justify the need for a town to consider how to hire and maintain a part-time, professional planner.

A Town Planner can provide a wide range of opportunities to explore future bylaw amendments, to aid a permitting board to ensure the permitting process is clear, consistent, and predictable, and, to aid in complying with the Open Meeting Law requirements.

Provide Municipal Coordination, Consistency, and Efficiencies

A part-time or full-time planner can create an opportunity to allow better municipal efficiency and coordination. A planner position can be extremely helpful to bridge gaps between other town officials and departments. In ideal conditions, a planner can streamline permitting processes for applicants by creating a mechanism to share information or to literally discuss aspects of projects with various

departments who, in some cases, are likely understaffed and unable to extend efforts beyond normal requirements.

In some cases, without a town planner, discussions with other town officials, approvals by Boards, or identification of the necessary process can either be delayed or never properly communicated. In the best conditions, a town planner can coordinate meetings to review more complex projects prior to filing of an application and beginning a project. In these cases, the efficiency gained is not only for the applicant but for Town officials who can identify necessary changes to plans up-front and early on thus reducing confusion that can occur when town departments are identify additional project requirements after a permitting board has completed its process.

A Town Planner can be instrumental in laying out the full permitting process for more complex projects at the beginning and making developers aware of all the important steps that come after a land use process.

The Potential Challenges

Establishing and maintaining a shared planner position will not come without potential challenges. Some of these challenges may also apply to scenarios associated with establishing and maintaining a part-time planner. The purpose of identifying these potential challenges is to better position municipalities to prepare for or respond to these issues early and often in considering creating a new position. These include but are not limited to:

- Supervision, direction and coordination between Planning Board and Town Administrator (where applicable)
- Integration into a community and municipal infrastructure that hasn't experienced a planner
- Conducting outreach to establish community presence and awareness
- Interacting and coordinating with any existing administrative staff
- Developing an administrative infrastructure (application forms, process, etc)
- Board member training

An initial challenge facing municipalities seeking to share a town planner (other than securing funding) would occur before a person is hired. It relates to identifying the preliminary goals and expectations for the position. This would need to occur separately in both towns, and, will then require intermunicipal coordination, discussion, and mutual understanding prior to creating a job

description, interviewing, and prior to hiring. In each town, this exercise may require the input and deliberation amongst various town officials as well as associated volunteer board members. It may also take several iterations for town officials from both sharing communities to reach agreement on the contents and arrangement of a Memorandum of Understanding or scope of work.

A secondary challenge may be finding the right candidate (i.e. person) to accept the novel nature of working in two towns. The right candidate would be one with a fair to significant amount of municipal experience and who is adaptive and charismatic enough to become integrated into two communities; understanding two sets of community dynamics; understanding the functions and quirks of two sets of volunteers and town officials.

An ideal scenario would be one where a shared planner would be paired with an existing Administrative Assistant in each community. This symbiotic relationship would increase efficiency. Once this type of position is created, keeping the employee for as long a duration as possible is essential to provide consistency and strength overtime. Staff turnover over in this type of shared position will be detrimental to overall progress in each town. Once established, gaps in having the position will significantly slow progress in demonstrating the importance of the planner position in general. Once the initial and secondary challenges are overcome, the remaining challenge may be centered on balancing work load demands/expectations with the time needed to complete the desired tasks.

While sharing the costs of paying for a full-time salary is clearly part of the benefit to communities, splitting an employee's workable hours amongst two communities will essentially result in the creation of a part-time position and will reduce the amount of work products and tasks that can be accomplished; it may also extend the time needed to accomplish certain tasks. The same challenge would exist in communities who may be tempted to skip the sharing component and hire a part-time planner. However, one of the true benefits of a shared planner relates to creating a full-time benefitted position. A full-time benefitted position will enable towns to draw from a more qualified talent pool. It will allow or entice candidates from existing planning positions who may be looking for something different, or new. The ability to draw a candidate from another position, or to draw a candidate from another area of the state, will hinge, at least in part, on the salary and benefits. The number of qualified planners who would be willing to accept a part-time, unbenefited position will be minimal, or, will change the number and type of person who may apply.

Conclusion

Significant opportunities exist for municipalities to provide more efficient and effective customer service and professionalism through the creation of a shared planner position. The smaller, more rural towns, often do not have any planner

position and are often communities that could most benefit from the added assistance and coordination.

We argue that the vast array of potential benefits from establishing a part-time or full-time town planner significantly justifies the investment. These include, but are not limited to:

- Provides guidance to homeowners and others through the local permitting process.
- Provide the necessary “follow through” to achieve implementation of larger, broader, and more community based planning efforts such as pursuing economic development opportunities, and, create and/or update master plans.
- Coordinates and engages in important economic development initiatives, and assists with other municipal regulations and processes across other departments.
- Assist with public outreach, website maintenance, and, can make the permitting and planning process more accessible to residents; something that is becoming normal and expected.
- Provide a wide range of opportunities to explore future bylaw amendments, and to aid a permitting board to ensure the permitting process is clear, consistent, and predictable.
- Provide coordination and sharing of information amongst town officials and developers to increase efficiency amongst departments and to make the permitting process clearer and predictable.

Many of the potential challenges to creating a shared planner, such as lack of public knowledge of what a Town Planner does, reaching an inter-municipal agreement, and drawing in a good pool of candidates, can be overcome. However, funding is one of the single most challenging constraints. A key finding of our research is that additional public support and understanding of what a Town Planner does and the value added to a community is needed. To increase awareness and “publicity”, the initiation of smaller grant funded (such as through DLTA), or small fee-for-service contracts can help complete projects or create value-added examples for use by Town officials. Finally, the existence of a person (s), or a group to “champion” the need and help explain the value is important. The gauntlet leading to Town Meeting will require one or more town officials who believe in the importance of creating a Town Planner position.

All Towns deserve the services of a Town Planner. The concept of a shared planner is one important opportunity to establish a part-time position with a long-term goal of establishing a full-time position. The increased need for transparency in the public process, combined with the complexity of State and local zoning, and the desire for communities to grow stronger and more vibrant – all would be easier to accomplish with a part-time or full-time town planner.

Goals and Recommendations

Goals

As stated in Chapter 2, the following is the Plan's Public Facilities and Infrastructure Goal:

- 1. To provide residents and businesses of the Town with services and facilities to meet expectations while remaining fiscally conservative.*
- 2. To explore and implement potential solutions for extending water and sewer systems from adjacent communities or development of a municipal system serving properties serviced by the existing hydrant system and the development of a package treatment plant to serve the village center.*

Recommendations

To support and implement this goal, the following strategies are recommended:

Facilities - Buildings

- A.** Complete a Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and state regulations
- B.** Continue ongoing energy-efficiency improvements at Town facilities per the local Energy Reduction Plan (2014), using Green Communities funds where possible
- C.** The Regional School District should continue working with the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA) to maintain and upgrade the Millville Elementary School
- D.** Complete a comprehensive facilities master plan to inform decision-making. Topics should, at a minimum, include the following issues:
 - a.** Develop a reuse strategy for the old Town Hall pursuant to its eventual sale for redevelopment, potentially as housing or mixed housing/retail/office

- b. Prior to triggering any lease extension options, develop a long-term plan for the new Town Hall site (the American Legion property) to assess its viability for acquisition and/or expansion for additional municipal uses, perhaps including a public safety/public works complex
- c. In conjunction with planning for the new Town Hall site, develop a plan for construction of new homes for the Highway Department, the Police Department and potentially the Fire Department; consider other sites as well as the possibility of shared or regional facilities
- d. Develop a plan for funding facilities maintenance and upgrades appropriately

Facilities – Infrastructure

- A. Explore and implement (if feasible) long-term regional solutions for extending water and sewer systems from adjacent communities; provision of these services would improve public safety, economic development, and environmental protection and, in the long run, would likely be less expensive than well and septic systems for most property owners
- B. Explore and implement short-term solutions to improve the current fire-control water system; examine options such as installation of a new generator and control system at the Mansfield Pond pump house, and installation of an additional draw point at a more reliable location such as the Blackstone River
- C. Continue to utilize available resources such as Chapter 90, Complete Streets and MassWorks to maintain and improve the roadway, sidewalk and bikeway network

Services

- A. Review existing shared and regional services and explore opportunities to share other services and/or staffing, where appropriate; work with CMRPC to identify options
- B. Continue to review and implement the recommendations of the 2016 Department of Revenue study, including IT improvements, property assessment process improvements, and conversion of certain elected staff/boards to appointed status
- C. Improve participation in local government through renewed communication with residents and among Town boards, committees, departments, and staff

- D. Identify means to increase Town revenues to support sustainable provision of adequate services
- E. Support a part-time, shared, or full-time planner, possibly including economic development and grant-seeking responsibilities as an investment for the future.

Introduction

Transportation is a critical factor for defining how a community provides its residents with access to essential services, housing, employment, and other amenities. As Millville plans for economic development opportunities and residential growth, it must also plan for an effective transportation network. Whether by car, bicycling and walking on and off-road, or by public transportation, a community can enhance its overall character, and improve the quality of life for those the transportation system serves through planning and maintaining a multi-modal, safe, and efficient transportation network.

This chapter is an evaluation of Millville’s transportation network including an inventory of existing roadway conditions, commuting patterns, safety, public transportation, and alternative forms of transportation. As outlined in Chapter 2 ‘Vision and Goals’, the objective of the Transportation chapter is to provide goals and recommendations in efforts *“to maintain and preserve existing investment into the town’s roadway infrastructure and to encourage transportation connectivity through alternative modes.”*

Regional Setting

Millville is located in southeastern Central Massachusetts, along the Rhode Island border. Neighboring communities include; Blackstone, MA to the east, Mendon, MA to the north, and Uxbridge, MA to the west, and North Smithfield, Rhode Island to the south. Millville is served by two regional roadways: Massachusetts State Route 122 (Main Street), and State Route 146. Route 122 runs in a north-south direction but provides a northwest-southeast connection through Millville, roughly parallel to the Blackstone River from the Uxbridge to Blackstone town lines. Route 146 runs in a north-south direction from the Rhode Island state line to the Uxbridge town line, though not accessible within Millville’s borders. Direct access is provided through interchanges in either Uxbridge or North Smithfield.



Millville street signs are branded with the Town seal.

Another regional roadway that does not operate through Millville but is essential to town, is State Route 146A. Route 146A grants the only access point to a small portion of Millville’s Commercial Business District (CB) zoning. Route 146A runs alongside Route 146, but in Massachusetts, through Uxbridge before continuing into Rhode Island.

Existing Conditions

Road and Street System

Functional Classification: Functional classification refers to defining the part of any particular road or street in how traffic flows through the roadway network. Roadways are delineated by the type of services that the road or street is intended to provide. Roadways are divided into three general functional classifications: arterial (principal, and minor), collector (major, and minor), and local roads²³. All roadways are grouped into one of the functional classes, depending on the amount of traffic and the extent of the land access they allow. Centerline mile refers to the length of the road from its start to end point, not factoring in the number of lanes or roadway width. Figure 10.1 below summarizes roadway mileage in Millville by functional classification. Figure 10.2 is a map of Millville’s roadways by functional classification.

Functional Class	Mileage	% of Total Roadways
Arterial – Principal and Minor	7.05	31.2%
Collector – Major and Minor	0	0%
Local	15.53	68.8%
Total	22.58 miles	100%

Arterial roadways provide the highest level of service at the greatest speed, for longer uninterrupted distances. Principal arterials are often in the form of interstates, which connect cities, regions, and bordering states. In Millville, the only principal arterial roadway is State Route 146 which travels in a north-south direction, about a half mile in total.

Minor arterials provide a lower level of service, mainly for shorter distance travel – administering the connection between principal arterials and collector roadways. In many communities, minor arterials often serve as the ‘main street’ to provide access to major destinations within a community; such as shopping centers,

²³ [MassDOT Definition of Functional Classification](#)

²⁴ [MassDOT Roadway Inventory Year-end Report 2016](#)

residential developments, and town centers. Millville's minor arterial roadways are Central Street, Chestnut Hill Road, Lincoln Street, and Main Street (State Route 122). Together, these roadways constitute nearly a quarter of the total roadway mileage within the town.

- Central Street travels in a north-south direction between Main Street and the North Smithfield, Rhode Island border, just over a mile in total length. This two-lane roadway provides access to many essential services in town; Police Department, former Town Hall, Post Office, convenience store, and Blackstone River Greenway.
- Chestnut Hill Road is a two-lane roadway that runs in a north-south direction between Lincoln Street to the Mendon town line and is over three miles in length. The road is mainly residential dwellings, with a higher density towards the town center, and becomes increasingly rural as the road travels northbound. The road provides access to many local residential streets and is the main connection for visitors to Southwick's Zoo in Mendon.



The intersection of Lincoln St. and Chestnut Hill Rd.

- Lincoln Street travels in an east-west direction between Main Street and the Blackstone town line, about a mile in total length. Similar to Chestnut Hill Road, the road features higher residential densities towards the town center – and is narrow with curves in this section. The road provides access to few local residential streets, but serves as the essential link from points south to Millville Elementary School, and continues into Blackstone towards the regional middle and high schools.
- Main Street (Route 122) is a north-south roadway that travels in a northwest-southeast direction through Millville, essentially dividing the town into two sections. As a vital regional link, Main Street serves as the focal point of town and runs from the Uxbridge town line to the Blackstone town line, about 1.7 miles in total length. The road provides access to essential services including the Fire Department, Library, and other industries.

The remainder of the Town's roadways are classified as local roads, accommodating trips with few or no through movements. There are approximately 16 miles of local centerline roadway in Millville, about 70 percent of the total roadway centerline mileage within town.

Unaccepted roadways, also considered private ways, are generally categorized as such because the street may not satisfy local design standards for roadway construction. There is nearly one centerline mile of unaccepted roadways in Millville, about five percent of the total local roadway mileage within town.

Table 10.3 below serves as the entire roadway list for Millville, organized alphabetically by functional classification type, as according to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Roadway Inventory file (RIF).



The majority of local roadways in Millville are narrow, with light residential density - such as Thayer Street.

FIGURE 10.2 - ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION 2018 MASTER PLAN

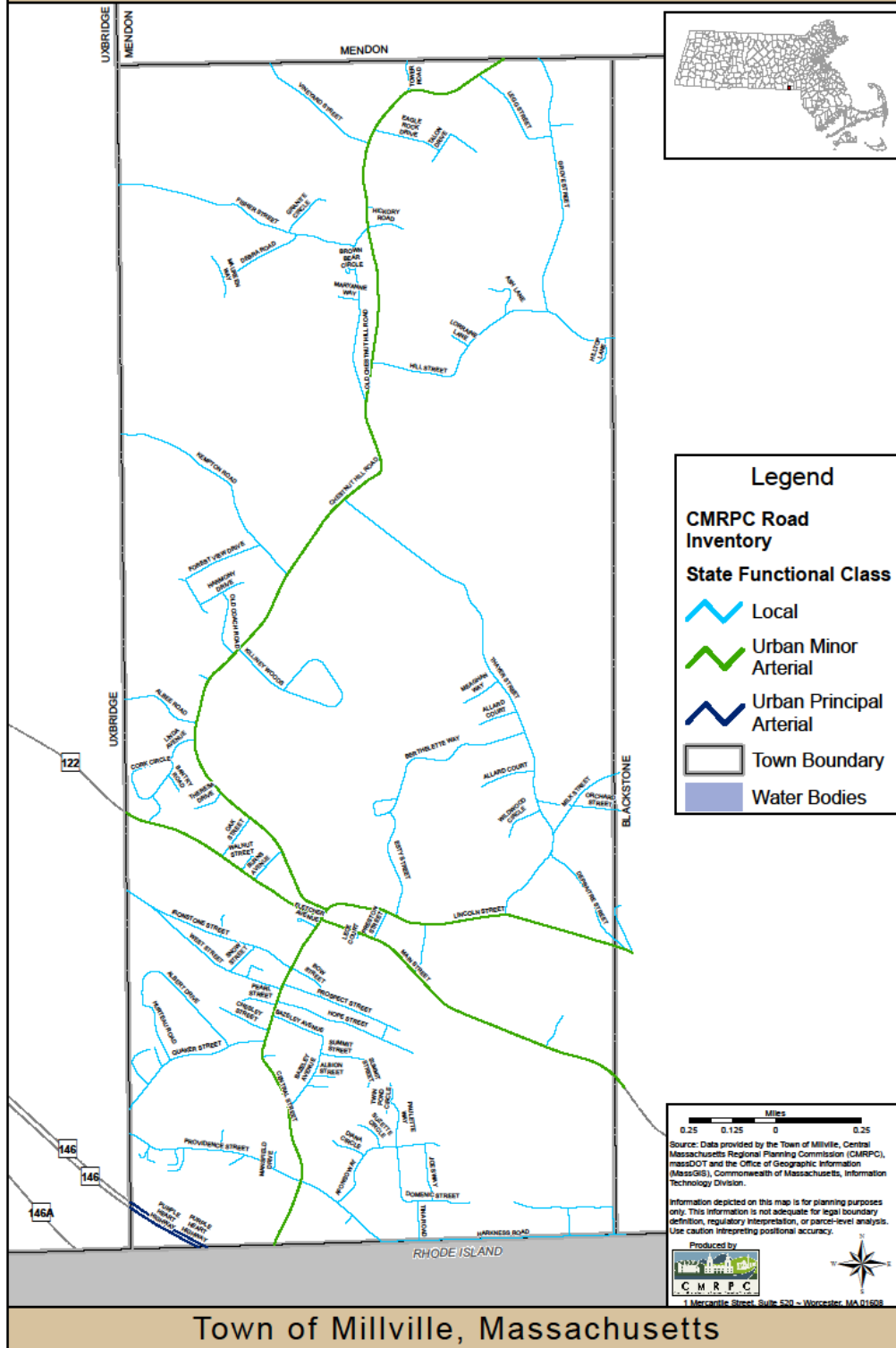


Table 10.3 – Millville Roadways Listed by Functional Classification

Roadway Name	Functional Classification	From Street	To Street
Worcester-Providence Turnpike (Route 146)	Principal Arterial	Uxbridge Town Line	Rhode Island State Line
Central Street	Minor Arterial	Main Street	Rhode Island State Line
Chestnut Hill Road	Minor Arterial	Lincoln Street	Mendon Town Line
Lincoln Street	Minor Arterial	Main Street	Blackstone Town Line
Main Street	Minor Arterial	Uxbridge Town Line	Blackstone Town Line
Afonso Way	Local	Providence Street	Dead End
Albee Road	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Uxbridge Town Line
Albion Street	Local	Bazeley Avenue	Dead End
Allard Court	Local	Thayer Street	Dead End
Bantry Road	Local	Cork Circle	Dead End
Bazeley Avenue	Local	Central Street	Central Street
Berthelette Way	Local	Thayer Street	Thayer Street
Boulder Court	Local	Eagle Rock Drive	Dead End
Bow Street	Local	Prospect Street	Central Street
Burns Avenue	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Main Street
Chesley Street	Local	Central Street	Dead End
Debra Road	Local	Fisher Street	Maureen Way
Deparitre Street	Local	Lincoln Street	Thayer Street
Diana Circle	Local	Afonso Way	Cul-de-sac
Domenic Street	Local	Afonso Way	Cul-de-sac
Eagle Rock Drive	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Boulder Court
Esty Street	Local	Lincoln Street	Dead End
Fisher Street	Local	Old Chestnut Hill Road	Uxbridge Town Line
Fletcher Avenue	Local	Central Street	Cul-de-sac
Forest View Drive	Local	Kempton Road	Cul-de-sac
Granite Circle	Local	Fisher Street	Cul-de-sac
Grove Street	Local	Hill Street	Mendon Town Line
Harkness Road	Local	Providence Street	Blackstone Town Line
Harmony Drive	Local	Lyon Court	Cul-de-sac
Hickory Road	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Cul-de-sac
Hill Street	Local	Blackstone Town	Chestnut Hill

		Line	Road
Hilltop Lane	Local	Hill Street	Cul-de-sac
Hope Street	Local	Central Street	Dead End
Ironstone Street	Local	Central Street	Uxbridge Town Line
Joes Way	Local	Afonso Way	Domenic Street
Kempton Road	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Uxbridge Town Line
Killiney Woods	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Cul-de-sac
Legg Street	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Killiney Woods
Lyon Court	Local	Forest View Drive	Cul-de-sac
Maureen Way	Local	Debra Road	Cul-de-sac
Meaghan Way	Local	Thayer Street	Dead End
Milk Street	Local	Thayer Street	Blackstone Town Line
Miller Street	Local	Bazeley Avenue	Dead End
Oak Street	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Main Street
Old Chestnut Hill Road	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Chestnut Hill Road
Old Coach Road	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Harmony Drive
Orchard Street	Local	Thayer Street	Blackstone Town Line
Preston Street	Local	Main Street	Lincoln Street
Prospect Street	Local	Central Street	Dead End
Providence Street	Local	Rhode Island State Line	Uxbridge Town Line
Quaker Street	Local	Uxbridge Town Line	Central Street
Snow Street	Local	Ironstone Street	West Street
Summit Street	Local	Bazeley Avenue	Dead End
Suzette Circle	Local	Afonso Way	Cul-de-sac
Talon Drive	Local	Eagle Rock Drive	Dead End
Thayer Street	Local	Lincoln Street	Chestnut Hill Road
Theresa Drive	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Cul-de-sac
Tina Road	Local	Domenic Street	Harkness Road
Tower Road	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Mendon Town Line
Vineyard Street	Local	Chestnut Hill Road	Mendon Town Line
Walnut Street	Local	Main Street	Burns Avenue
Washington Street	Local	Hope Street	Prospect Street
West Street	Local	Ironstone Street	Central Street

Albert Street	Unaccepted	Quaker Street	Dead End
Allard Court	Unaccepted	Thayer Street	Cul-de-sac
Ash Lane	Unaccepted	Hill Street	Cul-de-sac
Brown Bear Circle	Unaccepted	Old Chestnut Hill Road	Cul-de-sac
Cork Circle	Unaccepted	Linda Avenue	Linda Avenue
Desjardins Way	Unaccepted	Chestnut Hill Road	Cul-de-sac
Esty Street	Unaccepted	Lincoln Street	Berthelette Way
Granite Circle	Unaccepted	Fisher Street	Cul-de-sac
Hurteau Road	Unaccepted	Quaker Street	Albert Drive
Lece Court	Unaccepted	Main Street	Dead End
Linda Avenue	Unaccepted	Chestnut Hill Road	Cul-de-sac
Lorraine Lane	Unaccepted	Hill Street	Cul-de-sac
Mansfield Drive	Unaccepted	Providence Street	Dead End
Maryanne Way	Unaccepted	Old Chestnut Hill Road	Dead End
Paulette Way	Unaccepted	Afonso Way	Twin Pond Circle
Pearl Street	Unaccepted	Central Street	Dead End
Summit Street	Unaccepted	Bazeley Avenue	Dead End
Twin Pond Circle	Unaccepted	Paulette Way	Dead End
Wildwood Circle	Unaccepted	Thayer Street	Cul-de-sac

Roadway Jurisdiction and Maintenance: Roadway jurisdiction identifies the proper authority for maintaining and developing roadway projects within Millville. The town is the sole owner of the majority of roadways within Millville. Of the nearly 23 centerline miles of roadway in Millville, 88%, or 19.81 miles are Town-accepted streets and are under the authority of the Millville Highway Department. The Highway Department is responsible for maintenance and/or replacement of roadways, storm drains, sidewalks, bridges, guardrails, administration of snow plowing and sanding, and compliance with storm water management rules and regulations²⁵.

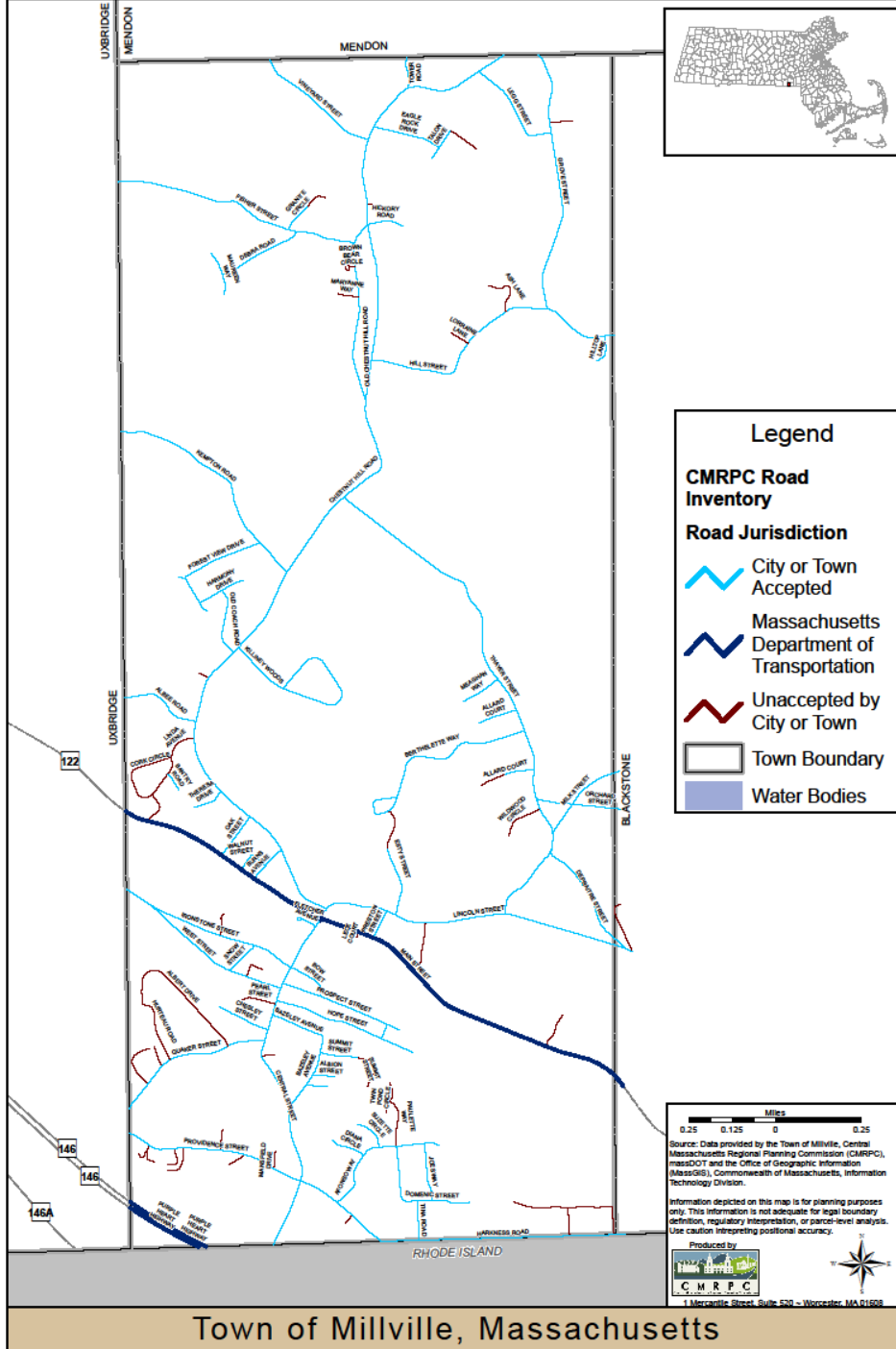
In Table 10.4 below, only 1.96 roadway centerline miles in Millville are under the purview of MassDOT. These roadways include Main Street (from the Uxbridge town line to the Blackstone town line), Route 146 (from the Rhode Island state line to the Uxbridge town line), and Central Street (from Main Street to Fletcher Avenue). Figure 10.5 on the next page displays the town’s roadways by jurisdiction.

Table 10.4 – Roadway Centerline Miles by Jurisdiction²⁶		
Maintenance Authority	Total Mileage	% of Total Roadways
MassDOT	1.96	8.7%
Town of Millville – Accepted	19.81	87.7%
Unaccepted Roadways	0.81	3.6%
Total	22.58 miles	100%

²⁵ [Town of Millville Highway Department](#)

²⁶ [MassDOT Roadway Inventory Year-end Report 2016](#)

**FIGURE 10.5 - ROADWAY JURISDICTION
2018 MASTER PLAN**



The Chapter 90 Program is a State funding program directed by MassDOT that provides funds to municipalities for approved roadway improvement projects. Funding for the Chapter 90 Program is administered through the Transportation Bond Bill, and project guidelines are included in the Chapter 90 Law. Examples of how Chapter 90 funds are utilized include: resurfacing, preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, sidewalks, street lighting, and other related work²⁷.

Table 10.6 – Chapter 90 Funds by Fiscal Year²⁸

Fiscal Year	Roadway Mileage	Town Population	Employed in Millville	Funds Apportioned
2018	20	3,190	331	\$102,422
2017	20	3,190	321	\$103,010
2016	20	3,190	306	\$102,420
2015	20	3,190	302	\$153,775*
2014	20	3,190	306	\$102,774

Chapter 90 funds are allocated annually and are based on a formula that factors the amount of local roadway mileage, population, and employment within a municipality. Figure 10.5 shows the Chapter 90 funds apportioned to Millville over the past five fiscal years. Outside of a statewide allotment increase in FY 2015 (*\$300 million vs. \$200 million), the amount of Chapter 90 funding Millville receives varies minimally.

Pavement and Sidewalk Management

CMRPC staff surveyed the condition of Federal-aid eligible roadways in Millville in 2016 as part of its regional pavement management program. The windshield survey includes data related to pavement, sidewalks, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramp conditions. Data collected from the regional pavement management program is used as part of the project selection process for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and other transportation planning related work.

Data gathered through the regional pavement management program is processed using specialized software that calculates the Overall Condition Index (OCI) – as well as to estimate future roadway conditions and associated repair costs. Each roadway segment is scored on a 0 to 100 scale. Millville’s total OCI in 2016 was 54.36, indicating that Federal-aid eligible roadways are in fair condition.

²⁷ [MassDOT: Local Aid Programs – Chapter 90 Program](#)

²⁸ [MassDOT: Chapter 90 Program – Apportionment by City/Town](#)

The estimated backlog of Federal-aid eligible roadway repair is approximately \$1.7 million – to bring the roadways surveyed from fair to excellent condition²⁹. Figure 10.7 on the following page is a map of the pavement condition of Federal-aid eligible roadways surveyed in 2016.

Sidewalks and ADA ramp condition data is collected in tandem with pavement data. The sidewalk data serves as an inventory of the location, width, type of material, and general condition. Sidewalk condition data is qualitative and categorized into a similar structure as pavement condition data (excellent, good, fair, and poor). ADA ramp condition data serves as an inventory of ramp type (compliant, historic, non-compliant, and no ramp). Figure 10.8 contains a map of both the sidewalk condition and ADA ramp inventory data along Federal-aid roadways surveyed in 2016.

Bridges

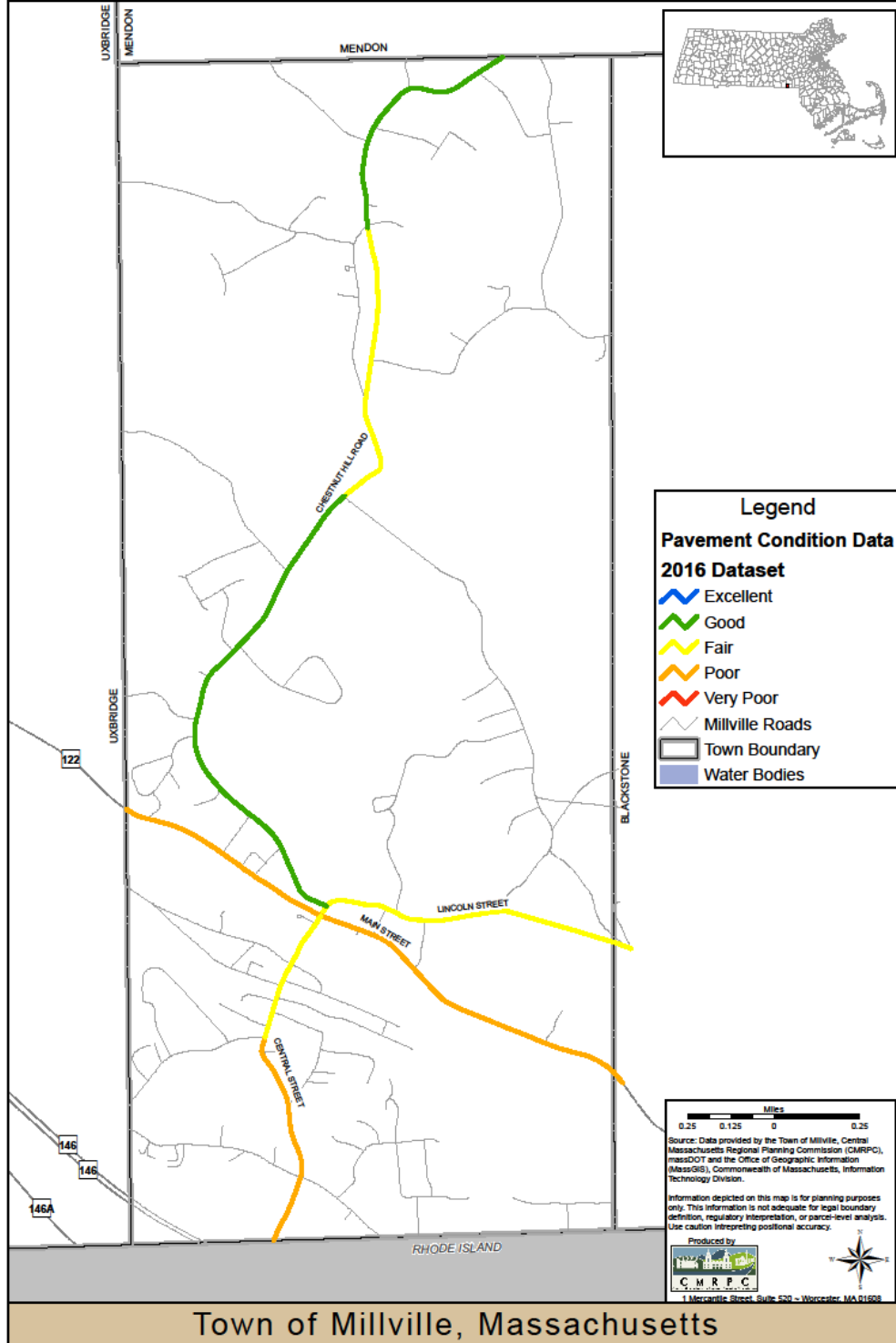
The MassDOT Bridge Inspection Management System (BIMS) bridge database features information of MassDOT and municipality-owned bridges which span more than 20 feet. Inspections are completed bi-annually. Information on MassDOT and municipality-owned bridges with spans between 10 and 20 feet, and culverts with spans of four to 10 feet are not available at this time, but data collection efforts are underway.

There are five bridges included in the MassDOT BIMS database in Millville, all located on Central Street over the Blackstone River, and over the railroad tracks. Two of the five are owned by MassDOT, and the remaining three are municipally owned. The five bridges were replaced between 2006 and 2008, and none are rated 'functionally obsolete' or 'structurally deficient'³⁰.

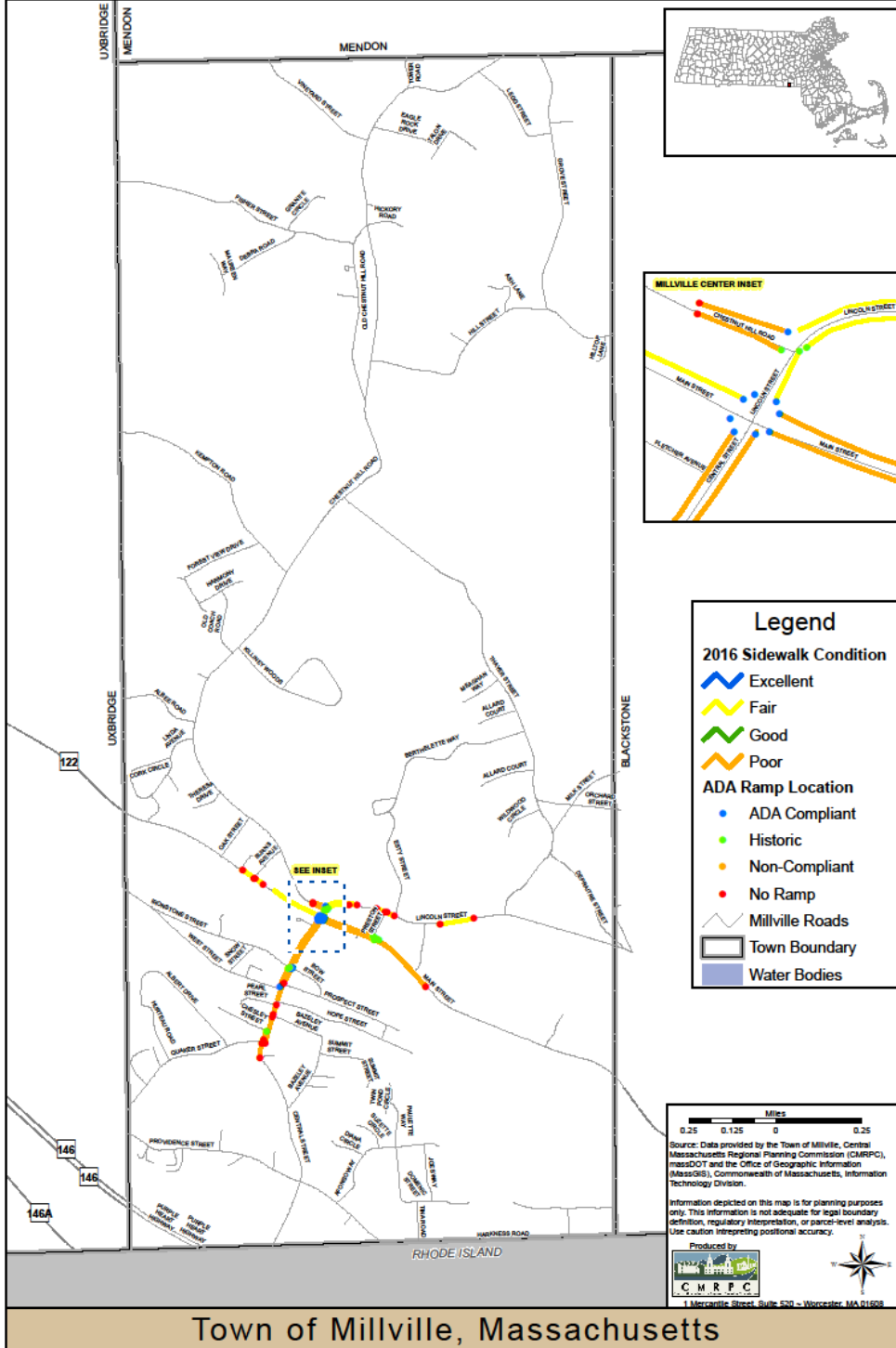
²⁹ [CMRPC Regional Pavement Management Program](#)

³⁰ [MassDOT Bridge Inspection Management System database](#)

**FIGURE 10.7 - ROADWAY PAVEMENT CONDITION
2018 MASTER PLAN**



**FIGURE 10.8 - SIDEWALK CONDITION & RAMP LOCATIONS
2018 MASTER PLAN**



Traffic Generators and Key Commuter Routes

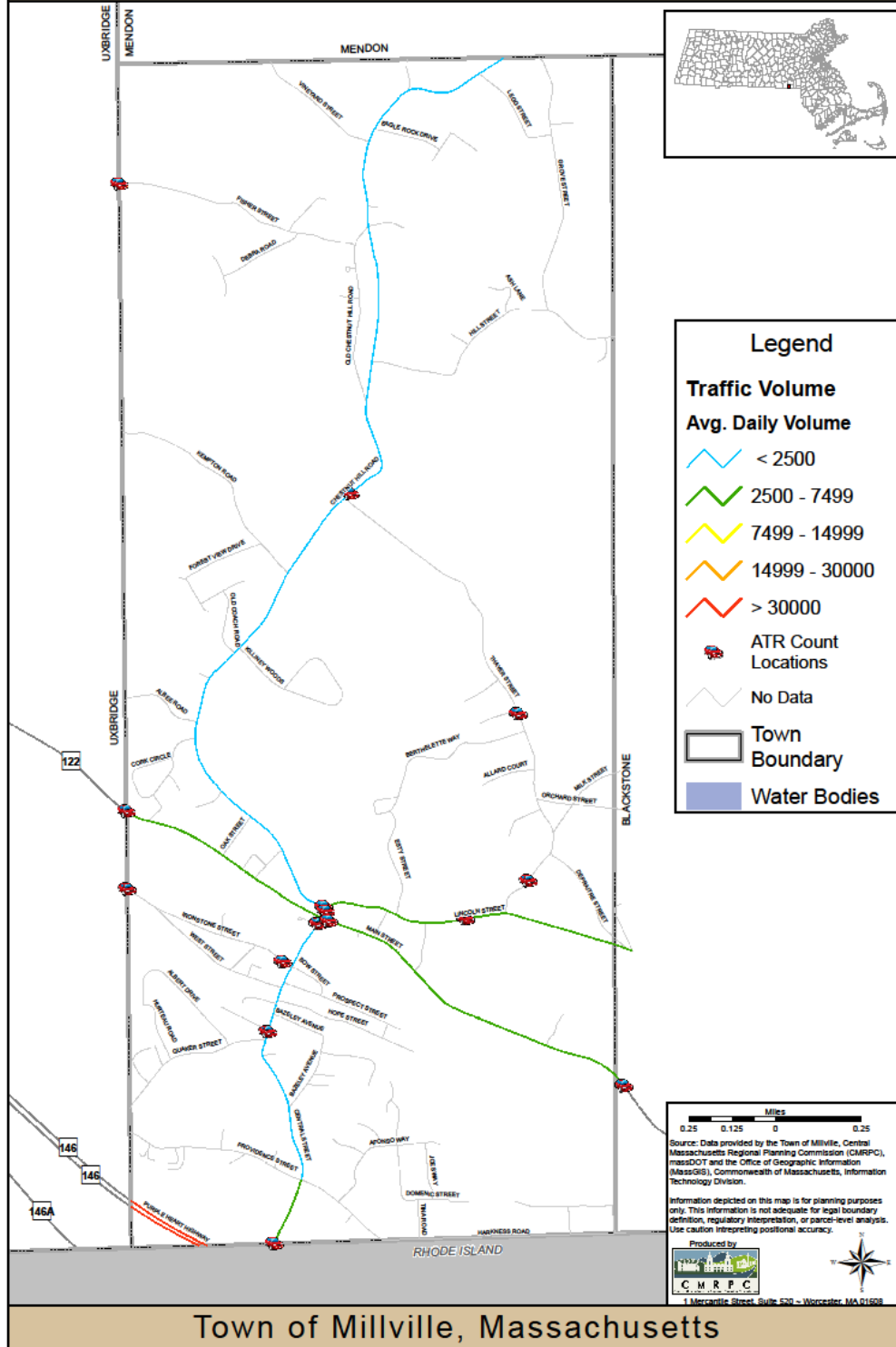
Traffic Volumes

CMRPC staff conduct Automatic Traffic Recorder (ATR) daily volume counts through its Regional Traffic Counting program. The annual count program rotates throughout the planning region on a three year cycle, and data is collected between June and November. In addition to traffic volumes, axle classification data is collected that provides information of heavy vehicle flows on the regions roadways. Table 10.9 below provides the traffic count locations and the average daily traffic (ADT) volumes in Millville, as recorded by CMRPC over the past fifteen years. The average growth rate (AGR) is applied to count locations with three or more data sets. This Table shows that the traffic average growth rate in Millville is increasing along Central Street, Main Street, and Lincoln Street, but decreasing slightly at one location on Chestnut Hill Road. Figure 10.10 on the following page is a map that shows the ATR locations and the ADT volumes (Federal-aid eligible roads only) associated with each location.

Table 10.9 – Average Daily Traffic Volumes ³¹											
ATR Location	2002	2004	2005	2007	2008	2010	2011	2013	2014	2016	AGR
Central Street @ RI State Line	2,562		2,491		2,760		3,090		2,739		0.5%
Central Street S. of Main St. (Rt. 122)	5,122		4,276		5,675		5,719		6,153		1.3%
Chestnut Hill Road @ Mendon TL							2,085				
Chestnut Hill Road N. of Lincoln St.					2,407		2,176		2,164		- 1.3%
Chestnut Hill Road N. of Thayer St.					2,424						
Fisher Street @ Uxbridge TL	258										
Hill Street @ Blackstone TL	202										
Ironstone Street W. of Central St.	1,476								1,909		
Lincoln Street @ Blackstone TL			2,288						2,779		
Lincoln Street W. of Thayer St.		2,764		2,470		2,911		2,784		3,457	1.7%
Main Street @ Blackstone TL	2,253				3,578				3,365		2.9%
Main Street @ Uxbridge TL	2,369		2,976		2,662		2,874		2,661		0.8%

³¹ CMRPC Traffic Count Book: December 2016

**FIGURE 10.10 - TRAFFIC COUNT LOCATIONS + VOLUMES
2018 MASTER PLAN**



Turning Movement Counts

CMRPC staff conduct Turning Movement Counts (TMC) through its regional Congestion Management Process (CMP). TMCs record the number of vehicles entering each approach of an intersection and the specific turning, or through, movement of each vehicle. Specialized software assigns a letter grade to each intersection for the level of service based on the average seconds of delay for AM and PM time periods.

Since 2000, only one TMC has been completed by CMRPC staff at the intersection of Main Street, Central Street, and Lincoln Street – conducted in 2015. The AM peak hour delay was 10.2 seconds with a ‘B’ level of service. The PM peak hour delay was 9.5 seconds with an ‘A’ level of service. The total peak hour delay of the intersection ranked 200 out of 295 intersections within the CMRPC region³².

To measure congestion of roadways, travel time and delay studies have been completed in order to identify congested segments of roadways and the length of the encountered delays. CMRPC staff conducted a travel time and delay study of Route 122 from the Northbridge town line to the intersection of Main and Central Streets in Millville in 2013. There was no congestion recorded in Millville as the average travel speed during the AM and PM peak hours was between 30 and 39 mph³³.

Key Commuter Routes

Principal commuting trips in Millville are made using Central Street and secondary commuting trips are made using Lincoln Street or Main Street (Route 122). From the data in Figure 10.9, the area of highest average daily traffic is Central Street from Main Street to points south (6,153 ADT in 2014), and the area with the second highest average daily traffic is Lincoln Street from Main Street to points west of Thayer Street (3,457 ADT in 2016).

As referenced earlier, Central Street provides access to many essential services in town and continues into North Smithfield, Rhode Island to connect with Route 146, Route 146A, and other regional roadways. Figure 10.10 illustrates that 6,153 ADT travels from Main Street to Providence Street, but only 2,739 ADT from Providence Street south to the Rhode Island state line. Cars traveling on Central Street may utilize roadways in this area for multiple reasons, including: Ironstone Street or Providence Street towards destinations in Uxbridge, Providence Street towards Route 146A in North Smithfield, or numerous local streets accessible only from Central Street.

³² CMRPC Congestion Management Process Report 2015

³³ CMRPC Congestion Management Process Report 2013

Secondary commuter routes include Lincoln Street and Main Street. Lincoln Street provides the main access from points south of Main Street to Millville Elementary School, located on Berthelette Way (off of Thayer Street). With 3,457 ADT recorded in September 2016, traffic volumes are higher on Lincoln Street during the school year versus the 2,784 ADT recorded at the same location in August 2013. From points east of Thayer Street, vehicles traveling on Lincoln Street continue into Blackstone (2,779 ADT in October 2014) towards Blackstone-Millville Regional High School, or other destinations.

Main Street (Route 122) traffic volumes differ between the direction of travel from the intersection of Main, Lincoln, and Central Streets. With 3,365 ADT in 2014, Main Street from points east (Rt. 122 south) of the Town Center intersection towards Blackstone is greater than the 2,661 ADT in 2014 on Main Street from points west (Rt. 122 north) of the Town Center intersection towards Uxbridge. Main Street east towards Blackstone features main destinations in town, including the Fire Department, Public Library, a pub, and a local waste disposal facility. This direction of travel also provides faster access to retailers, a grocery store, and other establishments in Blackstone versus Main Street northwest towards Uxbridge

Journey to Work

Journey to Work commuting data is collected by the United States Census Bureau through the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an ongoing survey that gathers important information over various topics and data is released in 1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates. Journey to Work data reports the communities in which people live, where people work, transportation mode in which they get to work, and how long it takes to arrive to work.

The most recent commuting flow data available is the 5-year ACS estimates for 2009 to 2013³⁴. Table 10.11 below reflects the communities in which Millville residents' work, the estimated number of workers traveling to the destination communities, and the estimated drive time it takes to complete the commute from their residence to work. Not all destination municipalities are included, only those with ten or more employees were selected. The estimated drive times are based on residents commuting to work between 7:00 and 8:00 AM on a weekday.

³⁴ United States Census Bureau: 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey Commuting Flows

Table 10.11 – Millville Residents to Workplace Municipality Commuting Flows

Destination Municipality	Estimated Workers in Commuting Flow	Estimated Drive Time from Millville
Total Workers in Commuting Flow (16 years and over): 1,616		
Bellingham	74	20 min
Blackstone	87	6 min
Boston	14	113 min
Burrillville, RI	18	16 min
Cumberland, RI	13	30 min
Foxborough	20	43 min
Framingham	58	60 min
Franklin	121	33 min
Hopkinton	42	38 min
Lincoln, RI	69	20 min
Marlborough	16	50 min
Mendon	48	14 min
Milford	150	23 min
Millville	85	N/A
Norfolk	17	40 min
North Smithfield, RI	20	7 min
Northbridge	32	16 min
Norwood	15	58 min
Plainville	13	34 min
Providence, RI	68	34 min
Uxbridge	112	8 min
Walpole	15	48 min
Westborough	37	40 min
Woonsocket, RI	75	10 min
Worcester	42	37 min
Mean Travel Time to Work: 27.9 minutes		

Table 10.12 – Means of Transportation to Work

Commuting Method	Estimated Workers in Commuting Flow	% of Total
Workers 16 years and over	1,660	100%
Drove Alone	1,483	89.3%
Carpooled	87	5.2%
Public Transportation	5	0.3%
Walked	1	0.1%

Other Means	30	1.8%
Worked at Home	54	3.3%

Approximately 93% of Millville residents work outside of the community, and about 7% work in Millville. Due to the limited amount of employment opportunities within the community, residents look to neighboring communities or locations within an hour’s estimated drive time for work. The mean travel time to work for residents commuting outside of Millville is an estimated 28 minutes, in line with the 28.3 minutes estimate for Worcester County.

Table 10.12 shows the transportation modes that Millville residents use to complete their ‘Journey to Work’. The estimated data included is from the 5-year ACS Means of Transportation to Work for 2011 to 2015.³⁵

Millville residents rely almost exclusively on automobiles for day-to-day activities and to commute to their places of employment. An estimated 90% of residents commute to work by automobile and drive alone while doing so, while 5% commute by carpool, and other modes including public transportation, bicycling, and walking, an estimated 2%.

Transportation Safety

MassDOT compiles crash data from local police department reports that are collected by the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) Crash Records section. CMRPC obtains crash data from MassDOT and utilizes Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to analyze accident locations and group the locations into automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian crash clusters.

MassDOT utilizes two criteria to compare crashes: Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO) and Crash Clusters. EPDO is an index that scores a crash location based on the end result of the crash using a point system (property damage = 1, injury = 5, fatality = 10). Crash clusters are a result of consolidating nearby crash locations and creating an imaginary buffer of 25 meter radius around the crashes.³⁶ MassDOT produces a list of the top 200 crash clusters in the State, based on the most recent three-year data set. There are no intersections in Millville on the Statewide Top 200 Crash Clusters list.

Table 10.13 below lists the location of automobile crash clusters in Millville between 2012 through 2014. Only those locations with more than one accident and an EPDO rating greater than five in the three-year span are listed.

³⁵ United States Census Bureau: 2011-2015 5-Year American Community Survey Means of Transportation to Work

³⁶ CMRPC Regional Safety Report 2009-2011, October 2014

Table 10.13 – Automobile Crash Clusters (2012-2014) w/EPDO >5

Total Crashes	EPDO	Street 1	Street 2	Intersection Control
8	12	Central Street	Ironstone Street	Stop Sign
5	9	Chestnut Hill Road	Tower Road	Stop Sign
4	12	Main Street	Central Street	Traffic Signal
3	7	Central Street	Providence Street	Stop Sign
2	6	Central Street	Hope Street	Stop Sign
2	6	Chestnut Hill Road	650' S. of Hickory Road	N/A
2	6	Central Street	Quaker Street	Stop Sign
2	6	Main Street	50' W. of Oak Street	N/A

Table 10.14 below summarizes automobile accidents in Millville from 2008 to 2014. Between 2012 and 2014, of the 69 automobile crashes reported with available results, 56 (81%) were property damage only crashes, and 13 (19%) involved persons with injuries. There were no automobile crashes with fatalities.

Table 10.14: Automobile Crash Summary (2008-2014)³⁷

Year	Total Crashes	Property Damage Only Crashes	Crashes with Injuries	Fatal Crashes
2008	28 (27 reported)	18	9	0
2009	26 (2 results N/A)	20	4	0
2010	25 (21 reported)	16	5	0
2011	23 (2 results N/A)	17	3	1
2012	14 (13 reported)	9	4	0
2013	38 (1 result n/a)	31	6	0
2014	21 (19 reported)	16	3	0

Between 2008 and 2011, of the 93 automobile crashes reported with available results, 71 (76%) were property damage only crashes, 21 (23%) involved persons with injuries, and 1 (1%) involved a fatality.

³⁷ Sources: Mass RMV, MassDOT, CMRPC

Over the past seven years, Millville averages 25 automobile crashes per year, about two accidents per month.

There was a variation in the amount of automobile crashes between 2012 and 2013, with a high of 38 automobile accidents in 2013, and a low of 14 automobile accidents in 2012 – but 16 of the 38 accidents in 2013 occurred between January and March, during periods of excessive snowfall.

Regarding bicycle and pedestrian safety, there has been one reported bicycle crash, and one reported pedestrian crash in Millville since 2011. CMRPC bicycle and pedestrian crash location databases contain information from 2005 to 2014.

Public Transportation

In Massachusetts, there are fifteen Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) that provide public transportation services to its member communities. Unlike most communities in Massachusetts, Millville is not a member community of any Regional Transit Authority. Though not a member of an RTA, Millville does offer specialized transportation assistance to residents through its Senior Center van service, and is within close proximity to neighboring communities with access to public transportation.



Millville Senior Center Van

The Millville Senior Center operates a twelve passenger, handicapped accessible van service for senior residents. The primary use of the van service is to transport Millville seniors to and from medical appointments, mainly to medical offices and facilities in Milford, or Franklin. Grocery trips are provided on alternating weeks to Uxbridge, or Northbridge, but medical appointments are the first priority and can bump other scheduled trips to grocery stores, retailers, or recreational activities.

The van service provides about 25 to 30 passenger trips per month, and provided nearly 750 passenger trips in Fiscal Year 2016. Passenger fares are a suggested donation with local trips starting at \$3, trips to Milford or Franklin costing \$5, and trips to Worcester or Providence costing between \$10 and \$15³⁸.

³⁸ Source: Millville Senior Center

Passenger fares are deposited into a separate account through the Senior Center. Fuel is provided through an account card with the Town, and vehicle maintenance is provided through a local auto garage. The van is a 2014 model with about 9,000 miles – and only routine maintenance services have been completed at this time. The vehicle was purchased using State Mobility Assistance Program (MAP) funds through MassDOT in Fiscal Year 2014.

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) operates an express fixed-route service (Route 59X) from neighboring North Smithfield to destinations within downtown Providence. The starting point of the route begins at Slatersville Plaza in North Smithfield, at the intersection of Rhode Island Routes 5/102/146A; slightly over two miles from Millville Center, and about one mile from the Millville and North Smithfield border. There are three Park and Ride locations in North Smithfield along Rhode Island Route 146A, which provides Millville residents that may work in Providence the opportunity to utilize express public transportation service directly into the core urban area.

MBTA commuter rail service to and from Boston via the Franklin Line is available at the Forge Park/Interstate 495 commuter rail station in Franklin, about 11 miles from Millville Center. As the Forge Park/Interstate 495 commuter rail station serves as the terminus of the Franklin Line, there is a parking lot with over 700 parking spaces with an average weekday availability greater than 44%³⁹. The Franklin Line serves commuter rail stations in Norwood, Dedham, and multiple stations in Boston – ending at South Station.

Private inter-city bus and rail transportation providers such as Peter Pan, Greyhound, and Amtrak, are not available directly in Millville. The closest access to such services are either in Worcester, or Providence. The Boston Surface Railroad Company, a private operator based in Woonsocket, had plans to institute commuter rail service from Worcester to Providence in the future. No planning has been undertaken in the last year, as far as public information goes. The planned route would traverse the former Providence and Worcester railroad tracks and provide service to the Woonsocket Depot, a former rail station in downtown Woonsocket, about four miles from Millville Center⁴⁰.

Freight Rail and Trucking

The Providence and Worcester Railroad Company (acquired by Genesee and Wyoming Inc. in 2016) is a regional freight railroad line that operates in southern New England. P&W



View of the railroad tracks from Central Street

³⁹ [MBTA Forge Park/495 Stop Information](#)

⁴⁰ [Boston Surface Railroad Company](#)

transported a variety of commodities including construction materials and debris, lumber, coal, ethanol, and others. The railroad line traverses through Millville south of Main Street, adjacent to the Blackstone River and Blackstone River Greenway.

There are no known trucking facilities in Millville. As part of the 2016 CMRPC Regional Traffic Counting program, axle classification data is collected which indicates the amount of heavy vehicle flows on the regions roadways. The sole location of trucking activity in Millville was observed on Lincoln Street west of Thayer Street, about 8% of the total recorded traffic volumes (over 300 vehicles) were considered 'heavy vehicles'.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations/Facilities

As noted in previous sections, Millville residents essentially rely on their automobiles for transportation. Sidewalk availability is limited along the main roadways, and bicycle accommodations on roadways are non-existent. Figure 10.8 identifies where sidewalks are present, and their condition along Federal-aid eligible roadways. Primarily, sidewalks are located within the Town Center, and are in either fair or poor condition.



Poor sidewalk conditions are found on most sidewalks in Millville, including Lincoln Street

Complete Streets

In many communities, the Complete Streets planning approach has succeeded in improving bicycling and pedestrian accommodations as well as encouraging mobility options for those who may not drive, or those who may drive, but choose to bike or walk instead. Complete Streets aims to design and improve streets that provide safer, comfortable, and more accessible means of transportation for everyone.

MassDOT created the Complete Streets Funding Program in February 2016 as a mechanism to provide technical assistance and project funding to communities to incorporate the Complete Streets approach into local roadways. Through the program, communities are eligible for technical assistance once a Complete Streets policy is adopted by the municipality (Tier 1), then the community must complete a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan (Tier 2) in order to be eligible for project construction funding (Tier 3).

The Millville Board of Selectmen endorsed the Town's Complete Streets Policy in December 2016, with an effective date of January 1, 2017. The policy was approved by MassDOT in January 2017. As of August 2017, Millville has completed the Complete Streets Project Prioritization Plan (Tier 2) in the funding program. The full list of needs and projects prioritized in the plan is available through the MassDOT Complete Streets web portal. The first five projects (listed by ranking) from the project prioritization plan include:



Safety enhancements at Central Street notify trail users and automobiles of the crossing

- Central Street Improvements (MassWorks project) from Ironstone Street to Providence Street
- Central Street Sidewalk Connection from Providence Street to Rhode Island border
- Ironstone Street and West Street Intersection Improvements including sidewalk connection and reconstruction
- Providence Street and West Harkness Road Sidewalk Connection from Tina Road to Central Street
- Ironstone Street Sidewalk from Central Street to West Street



Newly constructed sidewalk on Ironstone Street

SNETT/Blackstone River Greenway

The Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT)

is a recreational trail that runs along a former railroad corridor that travels through Franklin, Bellingham, Blackstone, Millville, Uxbridge, and Douglas. The trail is owned by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and is approximately 22 miles in length. Nearly four miles of the SNETT in Blackstone, Millville, and Uxbridge, was improved by DCR in 2016 as a paved multi-use trail. This segment of the SNETT operates in part as the Blackstone River Greenway.

The Blackstone River Greenway is planned as an off-road, paved, multi-use path following the Blackstone River between Worcester, and Providence. In Massachusetts, the project is being planned, designed, and constructed in seven segments from Rhode Island to Worcester. Segment 1 of the Blackstone River

Greenway is the completed section of the SNETT that is currently operating in Blackstone, Millville, and Uxbridge.

In Millville, the Blackstone River Greenway travels about 1.5 miles in an east-west direction, south of the Blackstone River, along the former rail bed. This section of the Greenway is the site of the former Millville Lock, and trail users cross the Blackstone River via the historic Triad Bridge, which was rehabilitated as part of the trail improvements completed by DCR. Parking is available in a lot at the corner of Central and Hope Streets. Safety enhancements at the Central Street crossing were completed as part of the overall trail improvements project.



Bicycle racks and benches are available along the trail, adjacent to the parking lot.

Apart from the Blackstone River Greenway, there are no additional bicycle or pedestrian facilities that connect various areas within Millville or adjacent communities. Sidewalks are present in the vicinity of the Town Center, and do provide access to destinations between the Library, Police and Fire departments, and Central Street. But outside of the Town Center, sidewalk availability is limited, and pedestrians in outlying areas of town would be forced to walk on roadways mixed with traffic, creating safety hazards for both pedestrians and vehicles.

Past Plans and Studies

Central Street Rhodeworks

As of summer 2017, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) has closed Central Street south of the intersection of Providence Street in Millville to the intersection of Central Street and Route 146A in North Smithfield, to perform a bridge replacement project for the Central Street Bridge over Route 146. The structurally deficient bridge will be replaced with a new structure, and final completion of the project is anticipated for early 2018. Local traffic is detoured using identified routes in Uxbridge, Millville (primarily Providence Street), and North Smithfield.⁴¹

Central Street facing south towards the North Smithfield, RI border. Detour signs are posted throughout Millville, Uxbridge, and North Smithfield to notify travelers of the road closure.

⁴¹ [RI.gov Press Release: Central Street Bridge Replacement Project](#)

The bridge replacement project has impacted local streets in Millville, which are handling increased traffic volumes. The lead detour route directs traffic to Providence Street, as traffic can still access Route 146 or Route 146A in Uxbridge or North Smithfield, as if Central Street were not closed.



Central Street facing south towards the North Smithfield, RI border. Detour signs are posted throughout Millville, Uxbridge, and North Smithfield to notify travelers of the road closure.

Central Street Massworks

The MassWorks Infrastructure Program, a state sponsored funding program, provides opportunities for communities seeking public infrastructure grant funding for projects related to economic development. In 2016, Millville was awarded \$1,000,000 for the Central Street Transportation Improvement Project. The project will reconstruct Central Street, provide stormwater improvements, and include a Complete Streets design approach that will construct bicycle and pedestrian accommodations to the town center⁴².



Overview of the Central Street Transportation Improvement Project. The Project will reconstruct Central Street, include intersection improvements with Providence Street, Bazeley Avenue, Quaker Street, and conclude at Ironstone Street. The project will feature stormwater upgrades and pedestrian and bicycle accommodations.

massworks infrastructure program

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a Federally-required planning document that lists all highway, bridge, transit, and intermodal projects in the Central Massachusetts region. The TIP is under the umbrella of the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO), and projects listed on the TIP are programmed to receive Federal-aid funding. Projects on the TIP are financially constrained within funding targets provided to CMMPO staff by MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning. TIP project listings are updated on an annual basis, though the document is prepared in five-year bands.



Intersection of Central, Lincoln, and Main Streets that was reconstructed and five replacement bridges on Central Street over the Blackstone River and railroad tracks. These improvements

Listed below are past projects that were completed in Millville, funded through the TIP process;

- Replacement of five bridges and roadway reconstruction on Central Street and roadway reconstruction of Main Street, Lincoln Street, and Central Street.
- Roadway resurfacing of Route 146 from the Rhode Island border to north of the Chocolog Road interchange in Uxbridge (Exit 2).

Below are proposed projects in Millville that are on the TIP supplementary listing, which are projects not yet programmed but are recognized by the CMMPO and listed on the TIP for informational purposes;

- Roadway resurfacing and related work on Route 122 (Main Street) from the Uxbridge town line to the Blackstone town line. The proposed project would repave and reconstruct the roadway and sidewalks, excluding the Central Street intersection.



The proposed Route 122 Improvements project that would improve pavement and sidewalk conditions in need of repair

Long Range Transportation Plan (Mobility 2040)

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a planning document, prepared by CMMPO staff, that describes the region's current transportation system and how it should be maintained and modified over the next 20 years, and was last updated in 2016. The LRTP covers each major transportation mode within the region and provides an inventory of the modes, identifies challenges and needs, and provides recommendations. Project-specific, and major transportation improvements need to be included in the LRTP, in order to be eligible for Federal-aid funding through the TIP.

There is no project specific information related to Millville in the recent version of the LRTP, but references to the community are present. Millville is discussed in the Introduction and Background chapter, regarding current and projected population and employment figures, and in the Summary and Needs analysis chapter, regarding proposed freight bridge improvements.

Blackstone Valley Regional Freight Rail Study

In 2016, CMRPC completed the Blackstone Valley Regional Freight Rail Planning Study and Feasibility Analysis, a plan that examined opportunities and constraints to freight based economic development in five Blackstone Valley communities – including Millville. The plan identified a series of town-specific recommendations. The findings for Millville included potential zoning amendments, installation of freight safety equipment, and planning for access involving Central Street⁴³.

Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project: In 2012 and 2013, CMRPC completed the Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project, a regional planning process study of thirteen communities in the Blackstone Valley – including Millville. The document focuses on local and regional priorities for areas of development, areas for preservation, and recommendations for significant infrastructure investments. Below is a list of the Millville identified priority areas included in the project⁴⁴:

⁴³ CMRPC Blackstone Valley Regional Freight Rail Planning Study and Feasibility Analysis 2016

⁴⁴ CMRPC Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project 2012-2013

- Main Street Downtown Priority Development Area (PDA) – Development
- 181 Main Street (Former US Rubber Co.) Brownfield – Development
- Blackstone Canal – Preservation
- Southwick Wild Animal Zoo – Preservation
- Blackstone Valley Greenway – Significant Transportation Investment Corridor
- Southern New England Trunkline Trail – Significant Transportation Investment Corridor
- Fire protection water service to town – Significant Infrastructure Investment

Millville Land Use Plan (1995)

While this plan largely focused on existing land use conditions and management of future development, generic references were made to Transportation in the Goals and Recommendations chapter. One of the goals was to develop the Town Center as the focal point of the community, including aesthetic enhancements, and pedestrian improvements in order to encourage walking⁴⁵.

Goals and Recommendations

As Millville has grown over the past two decades and modest growth is projected over the next two decades, use of the existing transportation network will likely increase. Millville’s accessibility to Routes 122, 146, and 146A; projected population growth, and commuting activity will likely increase vehicular traffic along Millville’s roadways.

Planning for alternative transportation modes should be a priority; improving bicycle and pedestrian accessibility, investigating the feasibility of park and ride facilities and/or promoting carpooling, and researching into joining a regional transit authority.

As outlined earlier, the objective of the Transportation chapter is to provide goals and recommendations in efforts *“to maintain and preserve existing investment into the town’s roadway infrastructure and to encourage transportation connectivity through alternative modes”*. The following goals and recommendations have been developed considering existing and future conditions, issues, and the overall objective of this Transportation chapter.

⁴⁵ Town of Millville Land Use Plan, June 1995

Goals

1. *To maintain and preserve existing investment into the town's roadway infrastructure and to encourage transportation connectivity through alternative modes.*

Recommendations

- A. *Work with MassDOT District #3 offices to revive Route 122 resurfacing project (currently on CMMPO TIP Supplemental list)*
- B. *Include pavement rehabilitation, reconstruct sidewalks, provide on-road bicycle accommodations, and re-stripe existing crosswalks.*
- C. *Continue efforts to seek Tier 3 funding of the MassDOT Complete Streets funding program in order to complete projects from the Tier 2 project prioritization plan.*
- D. *Research into constructing a pathway on town-owned property behind Chestnut Hill Road and Lincoln Street to allow bicycle and pedestrian connectivity directly onto Millville Elementary School property.*
- E. *Improve bicycle and pedestrian options on local residential roadways (sidewalks, sharrows, etc.)*
- F. *Explore connections to the Blackstone River Greenway from residential areas off Chestnut Hill Road and Lincoln Street.*
- G. *Research into the feasibility of joining a regional transit authority.*
- H. *Discuss with neighboring communities (Mendon, Blackstone, and Uxbridge) about sharing Council on Aging transportation services, where appropriate.*
- I. *Research development of a volunteer driver program.*
- J. *Request marketing materials from RIPTA regarding the Commuter Resource Rhode Island Program and information regarding Park and Ride facilities in North Smithfield.*
- K. *Research into developing a Pavement Management System for local roadways.*
- L. *Consider forming a Roadway Advisory Committee, or establish a similar function within an existing Board or Commission.*

Strategies

- A. *Enhance Main Street (Route 122) to serve as the focal point of the community*
- B. *Improve bicycle and pedestrian network through access and amenities*
- C. *Support existing local transit services, especially for elders and persons with disabilities*
- D. *Develop a Pavement Management System*

Strategy #1: Enhance Main Street (Route 122) to serve as the focal point of the community.

Recommendations:

- Work with MassDOT District #3 offices to revive Route 122 resurfacing project (currently on CMMPO TIP Supplemental list)
- Include pavement rehabilitation, reconstruct sidewalks, provide on-road bicycle accommodations, and re-stripe existing crosswalks.

Potential Issues:

- Project funding: design costs (Town), construction costs (State)
- Backlog of current State roadway projects and priorities

Opportunities:

- Chance to work with MassDOT District #3 on overall streetscape aesthetics, traffic calming measures, and improve alternative transportation modes.
- A rehabilitated roadway would promote the Town Center (and any potential economic development opportunities) as the focal point of the Town.

Strategy #2: Improve bicycle and pedestrian network through access and amenities.

Recommendations:

- Continue efforts to seek Tier 3 funding of the MassDOT Complete Streets funding program in order to complete projects from the Tier 2 project prioritization plan.
- Research into constructing a pathway on town-owned property behind Chestnut Hill Road and Lincoln Street to allow bicycle and pedestrian connectivity directly onto Millville Elementary School property.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian options on local residential roadways (sidewalks, sharrows, etc.)
- Explore connections to the Blackstone River Greenway from residential areas off Chestnut Hill Road and Lincoln Street.

Potential Issues:

- Project funding: minimal Chapter 90 funds are available to the community. Portions of Chapter 90 money could be set aside each year, or projects could be incorporated into the Town's budget allocation (or Capital Plan).
- Interruption of open space land.

Opportunities:

- Provides a more safe, and bikeable/walkable environment within the community.
- Presents choice options for those who may want to walk or bike to destinations within the community versus automobile.
- Creates safe options for children and parents to get to school.
- Millville Elementary School could be a partner school in the MassDOT's Safe Routes to School program.
- Seek funding through CMMPO and MassDOT either through the Complete Streets funding program, or Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

Strategy #3: Support existing local transit services, especially for elders and persons with disabilities.**Recommendations:**

- Research into the feasibility of joining a regional transit authority.
- Discuss with neighboring communities (Mendon, Blackstone, and Uxbridge) about sharing Council on Aging transportation services, where appropriate.
- Research development of a volunteer driver program.
- Request marketing materials from RIPTA regarding the Commuter Resource Rhode Island Program and information regarding Park and Ride facilities in North Smithfield.

Potential Issues:

- Financial resources for assessments with a regional transit authority.
- Maintaining local control over transportation services (if Town becomes a regional transit authority member).
- Resistance to pool together resources in neighboring communities.
- Liability, insurance, and training for a volunteer driver program.

Opportunities:

- Alleviate scheduling and availability issues of Council on Aging van.
- Provide access to essential services to those who may not have access to an automobile.
- Educate residents of available transit options that may not have marketed to residents.
- Presents options to commuters out of Millville to shift away from single-occupancy automobile trips and towards carpooling and express public transportation services.

Strategy #4: Develop a Pavement Management System.**Recommendations:**

- Research into developing a Pavement Management System for local roadways.
- Consider forming a Roadway Advisory Committee, or establish a similar function within an existing Board or Commission.

Potential Issues:

- Financial resources needed to complete strategies and plan.
- Limited Chapter 90 funding available to the community.

Opportunities:

- Preserves existing investments in Millville's roadways.
- Prioritizes which roadways should be repaired.
- Counteract financial implications of deferring/delaying pavement repair.

Introduction

The development of a Master Plan takes a great deal of time and requires input from a number of local sectors such as town staff, elected and appointed officials and volunteers, citizens, the business community, and a variety of other stakeholders. This input and participation is essential in developing a plan that has “buy-in” and support from these sectors and is a foundational requirement for successful implementation. The Millville Plan was successful at reaching and getting input from a wide variety of local stakeholders.

Next, an implementable plan requires an achievable set of goals and action items. Producing a plan with a number of actions that are more of a wish list rather than a concrete set of actions that have a reasonable chance of being accomplished has little chance of success. This Millville Master Plan is grounded in reasonable and achievable goals and actions.

Finally, the successful Plan requires stewardship once adopted. These stewards will be charged with taking the responsibility for initiating actions or serving as liaison to those who will. They will track progress and measure success. This Plan recommends the following to serve as stewards for the Millville Plan.

Implementation Committee

In order to ensure follow-through on the recommendations of this plan and provide some “accountability” for plan implementation, the Town should consider some mechanism for reporting on progress on a regular basis. This mechanism should be a body that regularly assesses Plan progress and helps facilitate the initiation and follow through on actions. This body could then determine if adjustments or changes should be made to the plan on a more dynamic schedule than merely every decade. It is therefore recommended that a Master Plan Implementation Committee be established in order to carry out these important implementation tasks.

It is important to make sure that the Town makes progress toward implementing the Plan and highlighting accomplishments over time. This reporting should include updates on progress and achievements, but should also address barriers to implementation that have been identified and how they may be overcome. Some communities provide this information in annual reports to the Board of Selectmen or Town Meeting.

Others have developed a follow-up evaluation form that specifically lists each action item and asks for responses. There is a high level of activity on these issues, based upon the input received during the planning process.

Planning Board and Town Staff

All planning elements are expected to be initiated by the Planning Board or Town Planner. The Board of Selectmen and other Town Boards, Commissions and Committees with the assistance of the Town staff should use this Master Plan as a guidance and policy document for the period of 2017 to 2037. It is important to note that planning is a dynamic process and priorities can shift over time. Additionally, the Town's capacity to implement the Plan may shift over time due to changes in staffing and board membership, for example. A consistent review process allows for these issues to be acknowledged while keeping each specific recommendation on the table unless a situation dictates that it be reconsidered. A regular evaluation or follow-up procedure will at least indicate how a particular action item was ultimately addressed, or it calls out those that still need attention.

Implementation Mechanisms

1. *Land Use Regulations*
2. *Zoning*
3. *Subdivision Regulations*
4. *Code Enforcement*
5. *Design Guidelines*
6. *Energy Saving Programs*
7. *Economic Development Initiatives*

Table 11.3 below summarizes the specific goals and action items found at the end of each of the plan's elements. The timing for implementing the plan's recommendations are assigned on an immediate, short-, medium-, and long-term basis to assist in determining the timeframe in which each item is to be considered. Some recommendations do not necessarily fall into an immediate, short-, medium-, or long-term designation and are noted in each column to reflect that they are ongoing in nature. It is important to note that when a recommendation falls into a long-term category, it should not imply a lesser degree of importance or a lower priority. Some recommendations simply require time for financing or design, but would still be considered a high priority. The responsible parties are also listed. If more than one entity could be charged with implementing a particular strategy or recommendation, the "lead agency" is listed first in bold.

The following Table 11.1 identifies the acronyms used for responsible parties and potential funding sources in the table:

Table 11.1 – Responsible Parties in Implementation Plan

Code	Responsible Party
BI	Building & Inspections
BOH	Board of Health
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
CMRPC	Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
CPC	Capital Program Committee
COA	Council on Aging
CUC	Cultural Council
DCS	MA Division of Conservation Services
HW	Highway Department
EDC	Economic Development Commission
EOHED	Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
FC	Finance Committee
FD	Fire Department
GCC	Green Community Committee
HA	Housing Authority
HC	Historical Commission
LIB	Public Library
DEP	MassDEP/Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
DOT	MassDOT/Massachusetts Department of Transportation
MHC	Massachusetts Historical Commission
PB	Planning Board
PD	Police Department
PRC	Parks and Recreation Commission
SC	Senior Center
SD	School Department
TA	Town Administrator
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers

Table 11.2 – Potential Funding Sources

Code	Funding Source
0	Not Applicable
1	General Fund
2	Capital Budget
3	Grant, Federal
4	Grant, State
5	Grant, Regional
6	Regional Planning Agency Technical Assistance
7	Revenue Bond
8	General Obligation Bond
9	Special Assessment or Tax
10	Loan
11	Service Charge or User Fee
12	Other/TBD

Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
LAND USE GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS								
Goal 1: <i>To improve the management of future development in order to preserve Millville's rural character, to minimize impacts on residential properties, and to insure the highest environmental quality possible.</i>								
L1	Develop a Village Center Overlay District to allow greater control of density, design, and dimensional standards for structures within the village center that encourage development/redevelopment in keeping with historic development patterns.						PB, CMRPC	5
L2	Develop "Millville Village Center Design Guidelines and Preferences" to encourage development that reflects the historic character of the Town and establishes standards for landscaping and amenities.						PB, CMRPC	5
L3	Review bylaws and revise to promote the preferred uses, heights, setback, and other conditions favored in the visual preference survey.						PB	1
L4	Exploration and discussion of the town's goals with respect to the redevelopment of the 181 Main Street site should be continued. Other opportunity parcels in the 2016 PDA Study should be evaluated for development or redevelopment as well.						PB, Other	1
Goal 2: <i>To develop the Millville Town Center as the focal point of the community. This can be accomplished by continuing to concentrate municipal functions here, by enhancing the visual appearance of Main Street, by encouraging commercial development where appropriate, and by creating public open spaces for social interaction.</i>								

Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
L5	Maintain Municipal presence in the Village Center through renovation of town hall or construction of a new town hall within the village center.						BOS	12
L6	Pursue a municipal package sewer system plan to serve the village center to encourage increased densities and mixed use development or explore other options to provide sufficient water and wastewater infrastructure in order to facilitate additional growth opportunities.						BOS, DEP, CPC, HW, Other	7, Other
L7	Conduct an updated buildout analysis and a fiscal impact analysis to quantify anticipated growth scenarios and understand how these scenarios will impact the fiscal health of the Town.						PB, CMRPC	5

POPULATION, INCOME, AND EDUCATION GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 3:

P1	Take steps noted in economic development chapter to grow and diversify the local economy.						Other	12
P2	Take steps noted in economic development chapter to engage in workforce development activities locally. Seek partnerships with academia, non-profits, and regional and state agencies that are active in workforce development.						Other	12

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Goal 4: <i>To promote new economic development opportunities for Millville in order to balance the tax burden on residential properties and to provide jobs in Millville for local residents.</i>								
E1	Examine the creation of an Economic Development Committee to encourage local businesses and to participate on regional economic development initiatives.						BOS	1,11,12
E2	Promote Millville as a designation on the Blackstone River Bikeway.						Blackstone Chamber, Local Realtors, and ED Position	12
E3	Engage the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce to promote the Bikeway and to develop signage programs advertising local businesses.						Blackstone Chamber, Local Realtors, and ED Position	12
E4	Examine use of Town owned parcels for wireless and/or solar facilities. Public and Request for Proposals to determine interest in town parcels.						PB	1
E5	Examine the feasibility of a package wastewater treatment system to serve the village center. A small scale treatment plant would permit higher density mixed use developments within the village center.						BOS, DEP, CPC, HW, Other	7, Other
E6	Investigate the use of MassDEP's brownfields program incentives for the cleanup and redevelopment of 181 Main Street and other potentially contaminated properties along Main Street and Central Street.						PB, CMRPC	3

HOUSING GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Goal 5: <i>To maintain and expand the Town's supply of affordable housing and to promote new housing growth that maintains the character and appearance of Millville as a rural, family-oriented community.</i>								
H1	Examine utilizing CDBG funds to renovate and rehab existing vacant housing stock for affordable housing.						PB, CMRPC	5
H2	Conduct a needs assessment of elderly and disabled residents to identify housing opportunities that are needed						PB, CMRPC	5
H3	Consider adoption of an inclusionary zoning bylaw that requires the construction of an affordable unit as part of a market rate development. Payment in lieu of construction can go towards a housing trust or similar body to promote affordable housing.						PB, CMRPC	5
H4	Examine town owned parcels for potential development utilizing 40B in order to address housing needs while maintaining control of municipal cost of services.						PB, CMRPC	5
NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS								
Goal 6: <i>To preserve the Town's many outstanding historic resources that are critical components of the cultural fabric that makes Millville a special place.</i>								
NHR1	To continue the Historic Properties Survey and Planning Document with funds provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.						HC	1, 12
NHR2	To develop educational materials on Millville's past for local school children and visitors to the Town's historic sites.						Other	12

Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Goal 7: <i>The Blackstone River is the Town's most important natural resource. Its water quality must not be further degraded, and its flood storage capacity must be preserved. The River's importance to the town's historical development and the open space along its shores within the town offer valuable opportunities for promoting tourism, for providing recreational opportunities, and for educating both residents and visitors of the Town's heritage and natural history.</i>								
NHR3	To create local historic districts in order to preserve clusters of historically significant buildings by encouraging sensitive renovations.						PB, HC	1
NHR4	To encourage adaptive reuse and renovation of historic structures to promote the revitalization of an area.						HC, BI, Other	12
OPEN SPACE & RECREATION GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS								
Goal 8: <i>To preserve important natural resources from development and provide large tracts of usable open space for passive recreation activities by local residents.</i>								
OSR1	Increase administrative capacity to support the Town's existing open space and recreation resources/facilities and to facilitate the protection of additional key parcels.						BOS, TA, CC	1
OSR2	Prepare an Open Space and Recreation Plan.						PB, CMRPC	1
OSR3	Identify public lands of conservation and recreation interest with unknown or no protection levels and facilitate permanent or temporary protection of these properties.						PB, CMRPC	1
OSR4	Develop and maintain an open space "wish list" of priority open space parcels for permanent protection and/or future acquisition						PB,CC	1

Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
OSR5	Preserve Millville's scenic vistas and roads through careful development design and adoption of protection strategies for key parcels.						PB, CMRPC	1
OSR6	Engage Agencies and Land Trust Organizations to assist in land acquisition and preservation.						PB, CC	1
OSR7	Consider adopting Community Preservation Act.						PB, CC, HC, BOS	1
OSR8	Increase educational awareness and understanding of open space and conservation planning, as well as State-aid programs, amongst community members.						Other	12

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 9: *Explore and implement (if feasible) solutions for extending water and sewer systems from adjacent communities or a municipal system serving properties serviced by the existing hydrant system and the development of a package treatment plant to serve the village center.*

PFS1	Complete a Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and state regulations						BI or Other	12
PFS2	Continue ongoing energy-efficiency improvements at Town facilities per the local Energy Reduction Plan (2014), using Green Communities funds where possible						PB	1, 4

Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
PFS3	The Regional School District should continue working with the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA) to maintain and upgrade the Millville Elementary School							
PFS4	Complete a comprehensive facilities master plan to inform decision-making							
PFS5	Explore and implement (if feasible) long-term regional solutions for extending water and sewer systems from adjacent communities; provision of these services would improve public safety, economic development, and environmental protection and, in the long run, would likely be less expensive than well and septic systems for most property owners							
PFS6	Explore and implement short-term solutions to improve the current fire-control water system; examine options such as installation of a new generator and control system at the Mansfield Pond pump house, and installation of an additional draw point at a more reliable location such as the Blackstone River							
PFS7	Continue to utilize available resources such as Chapter 90, Complete Streets and MassWorks to maintain and improve the roadway, sidewalk and bikeway network							

Goal 10: *To provide residents and businesses of the town with services and facilities to meet expectations while remaining fiscally conservative.*

Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
PFS3	Review existing shared and regional services and explore opportunities to share other services and/or staffing, where appropriate; work with CMRPC to identify options						TA, CMRPC	1, 12
PFS4	Continue to review and implement the recommendations of the 2016 Department of Revenue study, including IT improvements, property assessment process improvements, and conversion of certain elected staff/boards to appointed status						TA, CMRPC	1, 12
PFS5	Improve participation in local government through renewed communication with residents and among Town boards, committees, departments, and staff						TA, BOS	1, 12
PFS6	Identify means to increase Town revenues to support sustainable provision of adequate services						TA, BOS, FC, Other	1

TRANSPORTATION GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 11: *To maintain and preserve existing investment into the town's roadway infrastructure and to encourage transportation connectivity through alternative modes.*

T1	Work with MassDOT District #3 offices to revive Route 122 resurfacing project (currently on CMMPO TIP Supplemental list)						HW, DOT, TA, CMRPC	0
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Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
T2	Include pavement rehabilitation, reconstruct sidewalks, provide on-road bicycle accommodations, and re-stripe existing crosswalks.						HW	2,3,4
T3	Continue efforts to seek Tier 3 funding of the MassDOT Complete Streets funding program in order to complete projects from the Tier 2 project prioritization plan.						TA, HW	2,4
T4	Research into constructing a pathway on town-owned property behind Chestnut Hill Road and Lincoln Street to allow bicycle and pedestrian connectivity directly onto Millville Elementary School property.						BOS, CC, PB, TA	12
T5	Improve bicycle and pedestrian options on local residential roadways (sidewalks, sharrows, etc.)						HW	2,3,4
T6	Explore connections to the Blackstone River Greenway from residential areas off Chestnut Hill Road and Lincoln Street.						HW, BOS, GG	12
T7	Research into the feasibility of joining a regional transit authority.						BOS, PB, COA	12
T8	Discuss with neighboring communities (Mendon, Blackstone, and Uxbridge) about sharing Council on Aging transportation services, where appropriate.						BOS, TA, COA	12
T9	Research development of a volunteer driver program.						COA, BOS, TA	12
T10	Request marketing						COA, PB, TA	0

Table 11.3 Implementation		Immediate Actions (0-6 mo.)	Short-Term Actions (6-12 Mo.)	Medium-Term Actions (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 yrs.)	Ongoing Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Source
	materials from RIPTA regarding the Commuter Resource Rhode Island Program and information regarding Park and Ride facilities in North Smithfield.							
T11	Research into developing a Pavement Management System for local roadways.						HW, Other	12
T12	Consider forming a Roadway Advisory Committee, or establish a similar function within an existing Board or Commission.						BOS	1