



**2009 PLAN OF CONSERVATION &
DEVELOPMENT**

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Marlborough POCD 2009 Update

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POCD Introduction

The purpose of a Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is to provide a guiding master plan document for the development of Marlborough over the next ten (10) year period and beyond. In particular the POCD addresses the future land use policies, community facility needs, infrastructure needs, and population needs. The POCD defines the future land use goals and policies of the community that the Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Conservation Commission will enact through the development of regulations and utilize the POCD findings as apart of the basis for decisions on individual land use applications.

In addition to the land use Commissions the POCD provides a road map for future capital expenditures for the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance through the identification of major future capital projects that may be necessary and/or desirable over the next ten (10) years. The identification of these major capital projects allows the Boards to work together to develop a financial plan for developing funding plans for these projects over the next ten (10) year period.

Connecticut General Statute 8-23 requires municipalities to update their Plan of Conservation & Development every ten (10) years. Further, the Statute requires local POCD to be consistent with both the Regional POCD (Capital Region Council of Government Regional POCD) and the State Plan of Conservation & Development.

The Marlborough Planning Commission first adopted a POCD in 1962, and has updated the POCD in 1976, and in 1995. The Marlborough Planning Commission has been working on the current Plan of Conservation & Development since 2003. In particular since 2003, the Planning Commission has: reviewed the 1995 POCD, hired a consultant to develop the 2004 Marlborough Open Space and Cultural Resource Plan, worked with the Community Development Advisory Commission to hold the 2004 – 2005 Public Forums on the community's needs, and to develop the 2005 Town Wide Survey, develop the GIS mapping for the POCD, hired consultants to develop the 2007 Village Land Use and Economic Enhancement Plan, and hired consultants in 2008 to develop the Marlborough Business Park Plan .

This document represents the culmination of the Planning Commission's POCD update process. It contains goals and policies recommendations regarding various elements of the community's needs over the next ten (10) years.

POCD OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

Marlborough is at a point in its history where major change is on the doorstep. The shift in the regional population that has occurred over the past thirty (30) years and the introduction of sanitary sewers and public water into the commercial center of Town in the next two (2) to five (5) years will have an impact on the growth potential of the community. The Planning Commission in response to the public input received during the last four (4) years and studies performed has developed policies and goals to guide future development in Marlborough in order to preserve the small town character of the community through encouraging and implementing responsible smart growth.

The plan calls for the continued protection of the Town's vital assets such as hilltops, river/stream corridors, and other natural resources (contiguous forest tree cover, rock formation, vistas, etc.) to insure the quality of life of the community and its environmental and visual character are maintained. Additionally, the plan calls for the development of trail systems throughout the Town to provide access to some of the communities abundant open space land and natural resources for passive and recreational enjoyment and to make people more aware of Marlborough's natural environment.

As a part of protecting the community's character the POCD calls for the continued protection of key open space parcels through public acquisition and private stewardship as well as promoting the use of the existing open space land available in Town.

Further, the plan calls for responsible economic development expansion utilizing smart growth initiatives of clustering the expansion area around public infrastructure and existing major transportation infrastructure within the center of Marlborough. Through the implementation of the Village Land Use and Economic Enhancement Plan and development of Marlborough Business Park Plan (on land the Town purchased and a butting private property) Marlborough has chosen to take the initiative of guiding its future economic development.

Additionally, the POCD calls for an examination of all existing Town Facilities and roads and calls for the development of an expansion and maintenance plan for the existing facilities and identification of land for future Town facilities.

Existing Land Use & Zoning

Marlborough consists of 23.4 square miles that is equivalent to 14,976 acres of land in Marlborough, that land is being utilized as follows;

Residential

Single Family	6,631 acres
Multifamily	66 acres

Commercial/Industrial

General Commercial	197 acres
Design Commercial	38 acres
Industrial	66 acres

Design Recreational (Not Open Space)

91 acres

Institutional

School	20 acres
Town	60 acres
Fire Department	0.33 acres
Churches	12 acres
Cemeteries	5 acres
Total	97.33 acres

Open Space

State Forest	2704.4 acres
Town	532.5 acres
Private	116 acres

Roads

Town	363 acres
Private	35 acres
State	272 acres

Vacant

Residential	3541.12 acres
Multifamily	50 acres
Commercial/Industrial	12.7 acres
Design Recreational	358.6 acres
Institutional	0 acres
Waterbodies	279 acres

HOUSING & POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Household Units

Today there are approximately twenty four hundred (2400) household units in Marlborough an increase of approximately twenty-eight (28%) percent since 1995. This increase equates to an additional five hundred and nineteen (519) household units since 1995.

Total Number of Household Units

1970	889	household units
1980	1,514	household units
1990	1,869	household units
1995	1,881	household units
2000	2,057	household units
2008	2,400	household units

Consistent with past census information the 2000 Census data indicates the housing stock ratio of the community remains predominately single family households, while, the housing stock ratio remained steady the homeowners occupation of all household units has risen from eighty-eight (88%) percent to approximately ninety-one (91%) percent since 1995.

Housing Stock Ratio

2262 Single family units (94%)/138 Multifamily units (6%)

Housing Diversity

The lack of a diverse housing stock outside the State urban cores and first ring suburban communities is one of the biggest challenges facing the State and its municipalities today. There is a real need for the creation of a diversified and affordable housing stock that will permit opportunities for a diverse population within our communities across the State. Creation of an affordable housing stock will simultaneously allow young adults and retirees an opportunity to live in any community of the State, including the one they grew-up in such as Marlborough.

The majority of Marlborough housing stock value well exceeds the State definition of affordable as is the case in the majority of the State's suburban and rural communities. As can be seen on the Residential Value Map a majority of the values of the housing stock in Marlborough is in the three to five hundred thousand dollar range, compared to the State affordable which is value hundreds of thousand dollars less.

A direct result of the lack of a diverse housing stock outside the urban core population areas of the State is that a majority of the State's outer ring suburban and rural communities, such as Marlborough, are lacking sufficient work force and affordable housing stock to provide housing opportunities for the young adults and families, and older adults within the majority of the State's communities. This lack of housing diversity within communities leads to a less diverse population not just along age groups, but, economic and social spectrums as well which directly impacts communities in several ways. These impacts include not having a base population that can serve as volunteer emergency response personal such as ambulance and fire services, teachers, police, and tradesmen cannot afford to live in Town that they services.

As defined by CGS 8-30g, currently only thirty-six (36) or one and three quarter (1.75%) percent of the total number of household units in Marlborough are designated affordable housing units by the State. The units which are designated affordable are twenty-four (24) senior housing units at M.A.S.H., and twelve (12) CHFA qualifying individual home mortgages. The State affordable housing goal is to have state-wide community housing stock profiles containing an affordable housing stock component minimum of ten (10%) percent of the total community households units as affordable.

There are a limited number of rental units available in Marlborough today. Rental units account for approximately nine (9%) of the total number of household units which equates to two hundred and ten (210) household units available for rent throughout the community. This availability of rental units reflects an increase of twelve (12%) percent or twenty-three (23) units since 1990, while, four hundred and ninety six (496) non-rental units were constructed during the same time period.

New Housing Construction

Listed below is a summary of new construction starts since 1970 by decade.

1970 to 1979 592 permits
 1980 to 1989 404 permits
 1990 to 1999 188 permits
 2000 to 2008 295 permits

Building permits 1995 -2008

1996	32	2002	46	2008	8
1997	35	2003	44		
1998	35	2004	33		
1999	38	2005	33		
2000	35	2006	29		
2001	55	2007	12	Total	435 Units

Recommendations:

Encourage attractive neighborhood design through the development of flexible Subdivision and Zoning Regulations that allows the development fit the land.

Broaden the regulations to provide opportunities for the development of a range of housing types to foster the development of a diverse housing stock within Marlborough with an emphasis on creating affordable and workforce housing opportunities.

Examine the use of Transfer of Development Rights for residential development to promote a housing diversity, village center development, and open space preservation.

Identify areas for affordable housing and workforce housing and develop affordable housing regulations.

Population

Marlborough continues to grow at steady rate. The population increase between the 1990 and 2000 census was 3.1% the total population went from 5,535 to 5,709. From 2000 to 2008 the estimate is the population has grown approximately 9.7% to 6,267.

Decade	Total Population	% Increase
1970	2,991	52.5%
1980	4,746	58.6%
1990	5,535	16.6%
2000	5,709	3.1%
2008	6,267	9.7%

Population Composition

Marlborough population continues to age as does most of the country.

Age	Pop %	Change 1990 - 2000
0 – 19	29.2%	-1.5%
20 – 44	32.7%	-9.0%
45 – 64	29.9%	+9.5%
65+	8.2%	+0.9%

Household Size

Household sizes continue to decline in Marlborough for the fourth consecutive census period;

1970 3.52 persons
1980 3.12 persons
1990 3.00 persons
2000 2.79 persons

Median Age

Median age of the population in Marlborough continues to rise as is the national trend.

1980 30.5
1990 34.6
2000 39
2008 41

Median Household Income

Median household incomes have risen dramatically in Marlborough since 1990 far above the State and Regional levels as shown below.

1970 \$12,278
1980 \$27,846
1990 \$60,635
1995 \$67,500
2000 \$80,265
2009 \$101,917

From 1995 to 2007 the median household incomes increased \$34,417 from \$67,500 to \$101,917, while, at the same time the income divide within the community experienced a shift in a parallel direction. In comparing the Household Income Distribution from 1990 to 2007 the following changes have taken place:

\$34,999 and under decreased from 19.9% to 15.2% - 4.7%
\$35,000 to \$49,999 decreased from 16.4% to 10.5% - 4.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999 decreased from 34.9% to 18.3% -16.6%
\$75,000 and above increased from 29.2% to 56.1% + 26.9%

Population Growth Regional Context

Population Change 1970 -2008

	Marlborough	Colchester	E. Hampton	Hebron	Glastonbury
1970	2,991	6,603	7,078	3,815	20,651
1980	4,746	7,761	8,572	5,453	24,327
1990	5,535	10,980	10,428	7,079	27,901
2000	5,709	14,551	13,352	8,610	31,876
2008	6,267	14,803	14,311	9,629	33,006
% Change	109%	124%	102%	152%	59.8%

Median Household Sizes

	Marlborough	Colchester	E. Hampton	Hebron	Glastonbury
1980	3.12	2.94	2.88	3.21	2.88
1990	3.00	2.76	2.70	3.03	2.62
2000	2.79	2.75	2.63	2.88	2.57

Median Household Income

Household incomes continue to rise dramatically in Marlborough.

	Marlborough	Colchester	E. Hampton	Hebron	Glastonbury
1970	\$12,278				
1980	\$27,846				
1990	\$60,635	\$46,389	\$48,000	\$56,093	\$57,464
2000	\$80,265	\$64,807	\$66,326	\$75,138	\$80,660
2008	\$101,917	\$82,662	\$83,468	\$95,963	\$103,058

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

As Marlborough continues to grow and the community demands change over time the Town needs to plan accordingly for the future of its facilities in order to continue to meet communities service demands and desires. To that end the Planning Commission has undertaken an examination of the current state of community facilities and has made its recommendations for the next ten (10) years.

TOWN HALL

The current Town Hall was renovated from the Mary Hall School to the current Town Hall in 1985, and at this time the building is in need of renovation to address the need for additional office space, ADA accessibility, and possibly public meeting space. Results of the Community Survey and Capital Improvement Public Forums indicated that residents favored retaining Town Hall in its current location versus relocating the Town Hall to a School Drive location at this time either as a free standing facility or a combined facility with the Richmond Memorial Library. However, residents were open to considering selling the current Town Hall property in the future for commercial development and relocating Town Hall to a School Drive or other suitable location within the Town Center Area.

In order for Town Hall to remain in its current location and provide the necessary services to the community interior building renovations as well as some building expansion are necessary within the next five (5) years, so that the facility can adequately provide services for the next ten (10) to twenty (20) year period.

As a part of the planning for the retention of Town Hall at its current location the following recommendations are made;

Building improvements over the next ten (10) years should be limited in scope so to make the building functional to provide the necessary services.

Additional recommendations:

The Town should keep open its options concerning selling the Town Hall property for commercial/professional uses most desirable for expanding the medical services currently located on the adjoining property on Jones Hollow Road and other areas within the Town Center.

The Town should consider the purchase or obtaining rights for first refusal for properties within the Town Center Area that could house a future Town Hall or other municipal facilities.

FIRE PROTECTION

The outcome of the Capital Improvement Public Forums, Community Survey, and discussions with the Marlborough Fire Department are that the current two (2) fire house department arrangement with Station #1 located on Hebron Road and Station #2 located on West Road are adequate facilities to serve the communities fire protection needs at this time. Additionally, the Capital Improvement Public Forums and the Community Survey indicate that the Fire Department Station # 1 should remain its current location on Hebron Road versus relocating into a large emergency management center sometime in the future at another location within the Town Center Area.

As residential development increases in the southeast area of Town over the next five (5) to ten (10) years there may be a need to develop a southern satellite fire house to provide adequate fire protection services to this area of Town.

Recommendations:

Perform a future facilities needs assessment of both Fire Department Stations at their current locations. This study should be undertaken in the next five (5) to ten (10) years.

Develop a fire suppression water supply plan. A fire suppression water plan will locate existing water resources available for fire suppression, identify areas for future fire suppression water supply development, examine the future equipment needs, and location of future fire suppression water tanks. Develop recommendations concerning fire suppression priorities, funding needs, and specifications.

Any public water supply system developed for the Town Center Area and/or the Business Park needs to include sufficient capacity for a fire hydrant system.

One of the primary fire safety issues that will face the Town over the next ten (10) years will be the ability to maintain an all volunteer Fire Department as currently operated. The Town needs to plan accordingly for the possible change to a combination paid/volunteer fire department.

The Town should examine available benefits/incentives for residents who volunteer their services on the Marlborough Fire Department in order to help maintain and recruit volunteer firefighters.

Maintain the existing mutual aid compacts with the surrounding communities and examine how to enhance and expand mutual aid relationships.

LIBRARY

The Richmond Memorial Library is a Town owned building with a private non-profit corporation that operates the Library services. The Town contributes annually to the operation budget and maintains the building and grounds. The current Library building was built in 1987 with 5,000 square feet and an unfinished second floor area of approximately 2,000 square feet.

Over these approximately twenty (20) years of operation the Library collection has tripled and borrowing has increased four- fold which has resulted in the Richmond Memorial Library being recognized as one of the most highly utilized Library in the Greater Hartford Region. The growth in the Library services over the past twenty (20) years has resulted in the conversion of quiet space into active Library area and there is a need to expand the building to provide for the larger Library collection, technology stations, and quiet space.

The Capital Improvement Forums and the Community Survey results indicate that the Library should remain in its current location versus moving to another School Drive location or other location within the Town Center as a stand - alone facility or as a combined facility with Town Hall. Additionally, there is community support for some type of expansion of the library over the next five (5) to ten (10) years.

The Library Board of Directors in 2007, brought forth an expansion plan to increase the Library Building by approximately 10,000 square feet to service the needs of the community for the next ten (10) to twenty (20) years. The voters rejected the expansion plan in March of 2007.

As technology advances and the demands on library services change there is a need to re-organize the Library that is a part of the need to expand the facility as well as the tremendous growth in utilization of the services offered by the Library. This expansion plan would include a large meeting room facility that would be utilized for Town meetings as well as Library services.

Recommendations:

Develop multiple options for expansion of the facility.

Develop a phased construction plan for the expansion of the facility if the large expansion is not financially possible.

Encourage the use of the facility for art and cultural functions.

Foster the development of programs that will link together the Library, Senior Center and School.

SENIOR CENTER

The Marlborough Senior Center built in 1997 is a 3500 square foot facility that services the needs of the senior population and also is utilized for larger Town meetings. Expansion of the facility is not foreseen over the next five (5) years. Once the installation of the sanitary sewer line and the water line are complete there will be an opportunity to plan for some future building and/or parking expansion on the site.

Recommendations:

Examine expansion of the facility in the next five (5) to ten (10) years

As a part of any expansion plan for this facility accommodating emergency shelter functions should be taken into consideration.

SCHOOLS

Elementary School

The Elmer T Thienes/Mary Hall Elementary School has just completed a substantial renovation and building expansion project that should provide adequate space for the next ten (10) to fifteen (15) years. The recently completed renovation project was constructed as to allow for expansion in the future to the rear of the building when the need arises. The State Department of Education school enrollment projections for the next ten (10) years show a relatively level school population for Marlborough.

Middle/High School

The Region 8 facilities have been substantially upgraded. The middle school was renovated and a new high school was constructed. These facilities upgrades should provide adequate space for the next ten (10) years. The Region 8 agreement between the three (3) Towns does allow for the host community to dissolve the district with a ten (10) year notice of intent to dissolve this does not appear to be a likely event for this planning period.

Recommendations:

Marlborough should in the next five (5) to ten (10) years examine the ability to expand Elmer T. Thienes/Mary Hall School to expand to a K-8 facility.

Marlborough should maintain enrollment in the Region 8 District for the next ten (10) years and at no point should Marlborough consider an independent Middle or High School facility.

PARK & RECREATION

Parks, open space, athletic fields, and recreation programs are an important component to creation of a healthy and vibrant community. The Town athletic and recreation opportunities are provided by the Park & Recreation Department, Marlborough Youth Athletic League (Baseball/Basketball) and the Marlborough Soccer Club. The Park & Recreation Department works in concert with these two community organizations to meet the community's recreational needs.

The Community Survey and Capital Improvement Forums results indicated that there is a need for some additional recreational facilities particularly walking/hiking trails and additional athletic fields. The Town has pursued grants from the State for the construction of two (2) initial trails one at the Elmer T Thienes/Mary Hall Elementary School and the other at Blackledge Soccer Field.

Currently the Town has the following recreation facilities;

Blackledge Field – A non- regulation soccer field

Blish Park – Beach & swimming area, tennis courts, playscape, and a sixty (60) foot baseball diamond.

Elmer T Thienes/ Mary Hall School – Sixty (60) foot baseball diamond and a non-regulation size soccer field

Farley Field – A regulation size soccer field

Moose Lodge – A non regulation soccer field and a seventy (70) foot baseball diamond

Ridgewood Road – tennis court

West Road Memorial Field – A ninety (90) foot baseball diamond, sixty/seventy (60/70) foot baseball diamond, and a non –regulation soccer field.

The Town owns all these facilities with the exception of the Moose Lodge fields that are leased by the Town.

Recommendations:

Pursue construction of multipurpose trails within the existing open space system and continue to file for grants funds and budget funds for the construction of trails.

Work with the State to develop multipurpose trails within the State Forest land in Marlborough to develop linkage between Town open space and State/Abutting Towns open space systems.

Pursue with the State, Colchester, and East Hampton the creation of a trail connection into the Airline Trail.

Develop a master plan for improvements to Blish Park that includes upgrading existing facilities and the construction of new facilities.

Develop a management plan for Town owned open space.

Identify and pursue land for the development of additional athletic fields.

Utilize the athletic/recreational facilities at RHAM

TRANSPORTATION

State Highways

CT Rte 2 (Limited Access Highway) bisects Marlborough in a North/South direction and CT Rte 66 bisects Marlborough in an East/West direction and they intersect at the Town Center. CT Rte 2 corridor is experiencing rapid growth between East Hartford and Norwich and Marlborough is the midpoint of the corridor and has the major cross roads into eastern Connecticut. Over the next ten (10) years the forecast is for continued growth within the Rte 2 corridor.

Recommendations:

Work with Connecticut DOT to make safety improvements along Rte 66 including better signage, minimize curb cuts, and other measures to insure public safety.

Work with Connecticut DOT to improve CT Rte 2 exit ramps and approaches to exits 12 and 13.

Work with Connecticut DOT to improve the drainage system along Rte 2 and Rte 66 to minimize the migration of sediment into the Blackledge River, Dickinson Creek, and Lyman Brook.

Work with Connecticut DOT to develop an emergency access road along CT Rte 2 between Exit 11 (Glastonbury) and Exit 12 (Marlborough)

Continue to work with Connecticut DOT to coordinate the flow of traffic through the Town Center area including the introduction of additional traffic light signalization along Rte 66.

Public Transportation

Currently Connecticut Transit provides limited bus service in Marlborough to and from Hartford for the morning commute, a midday run, and evening commute. At this time there are three (3) commuter parking lots located at CT Rte 2 Exit 12 on West Road with bus stops.

Recommendations:

The Town should approach Connecticut Transit concerning expanding or changing the current bus service to serve the Marlborough Commons and the Town Business Park area as they develop as new employment areas and develop commuter parking lots at the Marlborough Commons or Town Business Park property for bus commuting in the future.

Work with Connecticut DOT to develop and implement a landscaping plan for the existing commuter parking lots on West Road.

Work with Connecticut Transit and Connecticut DOT to develop a full lane bus pull-over landing on North Main Street and to connect the adjacent commuter parking lots by a sidewalk.

Town Roads

The Capital Improvement Forums and the Community Survey results indicate that maintaining good road conditions is the number one priority concern of Town residents. The survey results clearly demonstrated that residents are willing to fund road improvements prior to any other capital improvement expenditure. Currently, the Town maintains sixty-three (63) miles of roads.

Streets are classified as arterial, collector, and local as depicted on the Road Classification Map.

As a result of the growth in Marlborough and the surrounding communities over the past ten (10) year period peak commuting traffic volumes have significantly increased on the Towns major roads. In particular Chapman Road, Finley Hill Road, Flood Road, Jones Hollow Road, North Main Street, Ogden Lord Road, Portland Road, South Main Street, South Road and West Road traffic volumes have significantly increased due to growth in Colchester, East Glastonbury, East Hampton, and Hebron in the vicinity of the Marlborough Town line with these communities. This increase in traffic volumes on these roads and other Town roads needs to be taken into consideration in developing the long term capital plan for roads.

The Town utilizes pavement management software that evaluates the condition of each road and produces a priority list for maintenance actions for the entire road network. It is essential that the Town systematically maintains the road network as recommended to avoid future large capital expenditures for emergency repairs and replacements.

Recommendations:

The Board of Selectmen needs to maintain the long term capital plan for the maintenance and repair of the Towns roadways and associated drainage systems.

The Board of Selectmen needs to develop and the Board of Finance needs to recommend funding of a yearly maintenance budget to extend and preserve the life span of existing Town roads.

The Town should examine the adoption of a Scenic Road Ordinance to preserve stone walls, tree canopies, and other visual characteristics of the communities rural past.

Examine traffic calming implementation on North Main Street and South Main Street.

Examine all intersections and develop and implement an intersection safety improvement plan.

Public Works Department needs to evaluate road signage throughout Town to improve public safety.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The Town needs to evaluate the current demands for social services and current delivery system and design a program to meet the growing demand for these services for the next (10) years. In order to meet these growing needs consideration for dedicated space within a Town facility and staffing needs must be a part of any evaluation.

Recommendations:

Board of Selectmen, Commission on Aging, AHM, School Officials, interfaith groups and other appropriate community groups need to convene a summit to discuss the social service needs of the community as a whole.

Develop an action plan to meet the social services needs of the community. Such plan should examine the opportunities to address social service needs through joint services with surrounding communities and food sharing.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

The land use patterns of a community are largely influenced by the land's natural resources and environmental characteristics, property owner's values, as well as the regulatory land use scheme in place. Marlborough's natural resources and environmental features are essential elements in the overall identifying visual image of the community to both its residents and non-residents as they travel throughout the community. Beyond the physical imagery Marlborough's natural resources and environmental features present to the eye they are one of the key community assets that contribute to the overall quality of life enjoyed by Marlborough residents.

Marlborough has, since the inception of land use regulations in 1954, and continues to rank the retention of its natural environment as a high priority. This commitment to retaining the natural environment and resources is evident as one examines the open space maps and plans, and the land use regulations of the community from 1954 to the present. Therefore, over the next ten (10) years with the introduction of sewers and public water, land use policies and regulations need to assure the continuance of the preservation of the communities' natural resources and environmental resources.

Topography

Marlborough is located on the western edge of the of Connecticut's Eastern Uplands, an area that covers roughly one-third of the State. The Eastern Uplands area is characterized by north-south running hills, numerous river/stream systems, and soils with a stony quality.

The topography of Marlborough is indicative of the Eastern Uplands with hills running in north/south fashion with numerous watercourses in between the hills such as Blackledge River and Dickinson Creek. There are relatively few natural level areas within Marlborough. Much of the terrain is moderately to severely sloping land. Marlborough topographic elevation ranges from 850 feet above sea level along the Marlborough/Glastonbury Town line to 160 feet above sea level at the Marlborough/Colchester Town line along the Blackledge River.

Steep slopes over fifteen (15%) percent are areas of concern for development. These areas have less stable soils once they have been disturbed and these sites present a potential for adverse environmental impacts. To avoid these adverse impacts all Best Management Practices need to be adhered to during and after development takes place in these areas.

Inland Wetlands

In Connecticut wetland soils are designated as poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial and flood plain soils. Wetlands serve a variety of functions that are essential in maintaining a diverse and healthy flora and fauna population, adequate flood storage, as well as protection of surface and ground water quality.

Inland/Wetlands in Marlborough are regulated by the Marlborough Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission has established regulations that review activities within wetlands and within one hundred and fifty (150) feet of wetlands and two hundred (200) feet from major watercourses and their associated wetlands.

Watercourses

Marlborough has numerous watercourses throughout the Town that provide excellent wildlife habitat, active and passive recreational opportunities, and scenic beauty. There are several significant watercourses and their major tributaries that flow through Marlborough that are the head waters to the Salmon River. These include the Blackledge River with its tributaries Fawn Brook, Flat Brook, Foot Sawmill Brook, Lyman Brook, and the Dickinson Creek with its tributaries, Fawn Hill Brook, Dark Entry Brook and Lake Terramuggus. Most of these watercourses are classified by the State as Class A and AA watercourses that indicate clean surface water quality.

Lake Terramuggus is an 83 acre natural spring fed lake is located in the center of Marlborough and provides recreational benefits to all of Marlborough residents. Since 1994, the Town has been monitoring the water quality of Lake Terramuggus yearly from May – October. Lake Terramuggus water quality is classified as oligotrophic to mesotrophic condition.

In order to preserve the Lakes water quality the Town has designed and begun implementation of storm water improvements that will reduce the introduction of heavy metals and particles into the Lake. Additionally, the Town has designed and will be constructing a sanitary sewer system around the Lake to protect the lake from the unnecessary influx of elements such as phosphorus, nitrates, and other elements that can impact the long term water quality of Lake Terramuggus from failing septic systems.

Floodplains

Floodplains are low lands along watercourses that are subject to periodic flooding throughout the year. The Town FEMA maps were last updated September 2008. It is essential, to preserve property values and uses, that the Town diligently apply the Flood Plain Regulations.

Groundwater Resources

All of the potable water used in Marlborough is derived from individual ground water wells. There are five (5) community water systems that service limited neighborhoods within the community that depend on bedrock wells for their potable water supply as well. Ownership of these community water systems is a mix of neighborhood property owners association and public utility company ownership. Many of these systems were built between 1950 and 1970 and are approaching the end of their useful lifespan over the next ten (10) years and will require major capital investment. These system repairs and upgrades will be born by the user's. The State Department of Public Health provides a revolving low interest loan program as well as there are some limited Federal programs available.

There are several areas of known ground water contamination throughout the Town Center area. To address this contamination problem the Town is working with a water utility company to develop a public water system that will service the Marlborough Town Center area as well as the Marlborough Business Park area with the potential to service the Lake Terramuggus neighborhoods.

Forests

The landscape of Marlborough is dominated by forest land. Out of the 14,976 acres that makes up Marlborough, 5,090 acres is protected forest land which equates to thirty-three (33%) percent of the Town. There is twenty six hundred (2,600) acres of State Forest between the Meshomasic State Forest and Salmon River State Forest, as well as, there is an area containing approximately sixteen (1600) hundred acres of private land under conservation easements maintained by the Connecticut River Watershed Council in the southeast area of Town. Additionally, the East Glastonbury Fish & Game Club owns four hundred and fifty (450) acres of land adjacent to Rte 2 along the Glastonbury Town line and the Town owns an additional four hundred and forty (440) acres of forest land.

Beyond the above forest holdings these forests land holdings above there is another seven hundred and sixty (760) acres classified as forest land by the Tax Assessor's office in the State's Public Act 490 Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

Preserve forested hill tops and steep slopes to preserve the visual aesthetic of the community, to prevent erosion of steep slopes, to protect and preserve the water quality of all watercourses, and to protect and preserve the quality of ground water, and protect and preserve the functions of inland wetlands and flood plain areas.

Preserve the indigenous plant and wildlife communities and provide significant wildlife corridors along all watercourses and maintain contiguous preserved open space corridors that will provide long term sustainable wildlife corridors.

Preserve stream bank and lake shoreline vegetative buffers and the abutting significant upland buffers through the development of buffer and setbacks areas along these critical environmentally sensitive areas.

Preserve contiguous forested areas and promote forest best management practices and develop a strategic plan for acquisition for the future expansion of the forested areas.

Preserve and enhance the water quality of all watercourses through the utilization of public educational outreach and regulatory best management practices.

Preserve farmland and areas of prime agricultural soils.

Continue the Lake Terramuggus water testing program, and diligently monitor the results and implement necessary best management practices to preserve the water quality of Lake Terramuggus as necessary.

Adopt policy and regulatory guidelines based on best management practices for storm water management and provide public education outreach.

The Town should utilize particle separators at all outfalls to prevent the migration of sediment and other harmful elements from discharging into surface waters.

Implement best management practices for winter road maintenance.

Examine the addition of the "Open Space" classification to the existing "Agricultural" and "Forestry" classifications currently permitted in Marlborough through Public Act 490 program administered by the Tax Assessor.

Maintain the Flood Plain areas from development that will adversely impact upstream and downstream property owners and preserve their vital diverse functions.

Constantly update the land use regulations and policies to keep pace with the erosion and sediment control best management practices.

Adopt land use regulations and policies that prohibit the use of invasive plant species.

Encourage the use of green design in all Town projects and private projects in the future.

Encourage the acquisition of land along major watercourses for preservation of natural resources and to permit public access to these natural resources.

Encourage the formation and designation of Greenways along the major watercourse corridors.

FUTURE LAND USE

Modifications to existing land use designation and policies are necessary due to the changes in demographics, economics, policy decisions, and land use development within Marlborough and the surrounding area that has occurred over these past fourteen (14) years since the last update to the Marlborough POCD. After closely reviewing the existing zoning classification and other pertinent data relating to Marlborough and the surrounding area the Planning Commission is recommending the following actions be taken to ensure the orderly growth of Marlborough in order to meet the community's needs for the next ten (10) years while retaining the small town character of Marlborough for generations to come.

Residential

At this time within Marlborough there are approximately five thousand three hundred (5300) acres of partially developed and vacant land that's current zoning designation is R – Residential that has a minimum lot size of eighty thousand (80,000) square feet, meaning thirty-five (35%) percent of Marlborough is available for future residential development. Much of this available developable residential acreage has within it critical habitat areas, key open space parcels, steep slopes, and valuable cultural and natural resources that require protection through the regulatory scheme.

The potential future development of these five thousand and three hundred (5300) acres under the current land use regulations could result in approximately an additional one thousand two hundred (1200) to one thousand four hundred (1400) dwelling units being built. There are approximately two thousand four hundred (2400) existing dwelling units in Marlborough today, therefore, under current land use regulations the potential to increase the total number of dwelling units to thirty-six hundred (3600) to thirty-eight hundred (3800) an increase of fifty (50) to fifty – eight (58) percent exists under current zoning.

Utilizing the 2000 Census household size of 2.79 persons per household, this possible future increase of one thousand two hundred (1200) to one thousand four hundred (1400) dwelling units has the potential to increase Marlborough by approximately three thousand three hundred and fifty (3350) to four thousand one hundred (4100) people. This potential build-out scenario under current land use regulation has a potential to increase the total population of Marlborough to nine thousand five hundred and fifty (9550) to ten thousand three hundred (10,300) people from the current 2008 population estimate of six thousand three hundred and twenty – one (6,321) people a potential increase between fifty (50) to sixty – five (65) percent.

As the submission of development proposals continue, the Planning Commission and Zoning Commission need to continue to apply the O.S.C.A.R. Subdivision standards in order to protect and preserve the character of the community and its cultural and natural resources through the subdivision approval process. Additionally, the Conservation Commission, Planning Commission and the Zoning Commission need to keep pace with the changes in environmental protection measures and engineering practices in order to ensure that current best management practices are a part of the Inland Wetland & Watercourse Regulations, Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Regulations.

One of the major future housing needs in Marlborough is for the development of affordable housing and work force housing whether homeownership or rental units. The Town needs to plan for locations that they feel are appropriate for affordable housing and work force housing development and develop regulations that will encourage the development of affordable housing units. In order to facilitate this process, the Planning Commission is designating several parcels throughout Town on the Future Land Use Map that should be given consideration for designation as an affordable housing and/or work force housing district.

As a means to help meet the need for affordable housing, workforce housing, commercial space, and preserving vital natural resources the Land Use Commissions will examine the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). TDR allows for the shifting the location of housing from a sending zone location to a receiving zone location. For example a sending zone parcel that contains fifty (50) acres has the ability to have twenty-five (25) houses, and a receiving zone parcel that contains fifty (50) acres has the ability to have twenty-five (25) houses, under a TDR scenario the receiving zone parcel could have fifty (50) units and the sending zone parcel would become open space. As a result of the utilizing TDR there is no net increase in overall housing units, just the relocation to an appropriate area where higher density is appropriate.

Recommendations:

The Planning Commission and Zoning Commission need to review the standards of the O.S.C.A.R. Subdivision Regulations bi-annually in order to keep pace with the changes in environmental and engineering standards.

The Planning Commission should consider applying the O.S.C.A.R. Subdivision Regulation to all subdivision application regardless of the number of lots being sought by the application.

The Zoning Commission should review the uses permitted in Residential Zoning Districts and make the appropriate changes to preserve the character of the community and permit use of residential property so as not to diminish the enjoyment of surrounding property owners.

The Zoning Commission should consider the reclassification of the residential zoning districts within the watershed to Lake Terramuggus to develop a new Lake District. This examination should consider reducing the non-conforming status of lot sizes by developing sub-districts within the Lake District and to develop appropriate bulk standards that will permit the reasonable use of the property and develop environmental standards that will maintain the water quality of Lake Terramuggus.

The Planning Commission needs to work on identifying areas that are suitable for affordable and work force housing and then work with the Zoning Commission to develop affordable and workforce housing regulations for both the Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Regulations.

The Planning Commission and Zoning Commission need to consider the use of the transfer of development rights as a tool to promote housing diversity and economic development opportunities, while, still protecting valuable open space. For example the receiving zone could be within the sewer district boundaries or other appropriate locations and the sending zone could be parcels shown as potential desirable future open space parcels.

The Planning Commission and Zoning Commission should study whether or not to consider rezoning portions of Town to a three (3) acre or four (4) acre zoning classification due to environmental sensitivity of certain areas of Town.

The Planning Commission and Zoning Commission should study whether or not to consider rezoning some of the land owned by the East Glastonbury Fish & Game Club from residential to DRE to better fit the use of the land for recreational purposes today, and save it from residential development.

The Planning Commission and Zoning Commission should study what areas of Town would be appropriate for multi-family housing.

The Planning Commission and Board of Selectmen need to consider participation in the Home Connecticut Legislation to develop work force housing.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Town Center Area

With the pending introduction of sanitary sewers and public water in the center of Marlborough over the next ten (10) years, development opportunities that did not exist prior to the installation of this infrastructure will be possible. In order to prepare for these changes in development opportunities, the Town retained consultants to work with various Town Boards and Commissions, business owners, property owners, and citizenry to develop the Village Land Use and Economic Enhancement Plan. The goals and objectives of the Village Land Use and Economic Enhancement Plan are to improve the economic vitality of the Town Center, maintain and enhance an area where local services are available to Marlborough residents, provide opportunities for employment, provide for a variety of housing types, maintain safe and efficient traffic movement, and to guide future development as to maintain the small town character of the Marlborough Town Center Area.

Changes to the current Zoning Map and Regulations governing the Town Center properties from the General Commercial District and Residential designation of the Town Center Area will be necessary to implement the goals and objectives of this Plan. New zoning districts establishing greater flexibility in design with a residential/commercial mixed use in order to shape the creation of a vital village center setting with a pedestrian friendly element is necessary.

In particular, the regulatory changes necessary include the reduction of setbacks, reduction of parking requirements, increases in building coverage, introduction of building and landscaping design standards, and changes to other bulk zoning standards. As a result of making these regulatory changes, flexible design standards will permit buildings to move forward to the street-line, parking areas to be predominately on the side and to the rear of buildings, and appropriate landscaping, lighting, and signage schemes, and promote the interconnection of adjoining properties through walkways and parking areas.

Additionally, to the changes noted above in design flexibility, the Zoning Regulations will need to implement the creation of sub-districts within the Town Center area that will allow certain uses within the districts distinct from one another to promote diversity in the economic base of the area and promote a livable vibrant Town Center.

Recommendations:

Implement the recommendations of the Village Land Use and Economic Enhancement Plan.

- Higher concentrations of commercial activity designed to meet the retail and office needs of Marlborough
- Higher densities of residential development that will offer a variety of housing opportunities including affordable housing
- A pedestrian-friendly environment that will promote a sense of community and personal health/safety
- Development controls that will foster a unified design having a scale of a New England village
- Sensitivity to the natural resource systems and the introduction of low impact development techniques

Continue to work closely with the property owners and the Marlborough Business Association during the development of the new regulatory scheme for the Town Center.

That the Board of Selectmen continue to work with CT DOT on the design elements of the Town Center Plan necessary to implement the improvements that will be within the State Highway Right of Way, and to ensure that CT DOT future use thereof will not adversely impact the goals and policies of the Town Center Plan.

Other Existing Commercial Zones

There are five (5) existing General Commercial Zoning Districts (GC) outside the Town Center Area. Two (2) of these GC districts are located on East Hampton Road and within the sewer service district, while, the other three (3) districts are not located in the sewer district. These five (5) GC Districts are situated such that they either directly abut or are in very close proximity to residentially developed land.

Due to the relationship of the surrounding residential land use to these five (5) outlying districts and the introduction of the sewer line to two (2) of these areas an examination of the allowable uses, bulk standards, and design standards for these five (5) areas is necessary.

Recommendations:

Examine the West Road Commercial area between Planeta Lane and Sarah Lane to see if rezoning some of the area to residential is appropriate.

Examine the land on the north side of West Road and Planeta Lane including the land abutting Rte 2 to see if rezoning the area to non-residential use is appropriate.

Adopt appropriate Building, Landscaping, and Streetscape Standards to promote continuity of buildings and landscaping designs within each of the existing sub-districts.

Examine the uses allowed in each of the districts and make the appropriate regulatory changes. In particular, the regulatory changes necessary include the reduction of setbacks, reduction of parking requirements, increases in building coverage, introduction of building and landscaping design standards, and changes to other bulk zoning standards. Through making these regulatory changes, flexible design standards will permit buildings to move forward to the street-line, parking areas to be predominately on the side and to the rear of buildings, appropriate landscaping, lighting, and signage schemes, and promote the interconnection of adjoining properties through walkways and parking areas.

Design Commercial

The Marlborough Commons thirty –eight (38) acres are the only Design Commercial District property left in Marlborough. This property is within the sewer service area and directly abuts the seventy-six (76) acres the Town has purchased for the development of the Marlborough Business Park. With the development of a public water supply along with the sanitary sewer the ability to utilize this property for significant larger commercial development will be possible.

The Planning Commission and Zoning Commission need to examine the permitted uses and bulk standards to assure that the future development of this property is compatible and in harmony with the character of the community and is complimentary to the Town Center Area. Additionally, the Town needs to plan for an interconnection between the Marlborough Commons property and the Town Business Park property to provide efficient use of each parcel and a through road connection between Jones Hollow Road and Rte 66.

Recommendations:

Examine the uses allowed in the district and make the appropriate regulatory changes. In particular, the regulatory changes necessary include the reduction of setbacks, reduction of parking requirements, increases in building coverage, introduction of building and landscaping design standards, and changes to other bulk zoning standards. Through making these regulatory changes, flexible design standards will permit buildings to move forward to the street-line, parking areas to be predominately on the side and to the rear of buildings, appropriate landscaping, lighting, and signage schemes, and promote the interconnection of adjoining properties through walkways and parking areas.

The Planning Commission and the Zoning Commission should consider rezoning a portion of the East Glastonbury Fish & Game property off of Planeta Lane that has direct frontage to Rte 2 to permit a future change to a commercial or business use zoning district.

Town Business Park Property

The Town has purchased to date seventy-six (76) acres of land off Hebron Road (Rte 66) for the purpose of the development of a business park. The Town is attempting to purchase some additional land that could add between two (2) to five (5) additional acres. The land is currently zoned residential and rezoning the land to a business park zoning district is the necessary next step.

Currently, the Town has retained a consultant team to develop a draft set of zoning regulations, market analysis, and a conceptual master development plan. The study area consists of the Town's seventy-six (76) acres, thirty-eight (38) acres of the Marlborough Commons, and the twenty-two (22) acres of Marlborough Associates. The goal of the study is to promote the economic development of this area as to aid in decreasing the reliance on resident tax base and to provide opportunities for employment within Marlborough.

The development of a flexible base set of regulations that guide development around the environmental sensitive areas of the site and achieves the development goal to broaden the non-residential tax base of the community is necessary. The development plan should include a provision for a through road connection from Jones Hollow Road to Hebron Road (Rte 66).

In order to develop the property to its fullest potential that benefits the community both sewer and water need to be brought to the site. The Town Center/Lake Terramuggus Sewer Project design includes bringing the sewer line to the property with a pump station located on the abutting Marlborough Commons property, however, due to funding constraints for the first construction phase of the sewer project the business park property has not been included.

Once phase one construction is near completion the Marlborough Water Pollution Control Authority will seek funding options to construct the sewer line to the property. If there is excess funding available upon the completion of the phase I construction of the sewer project, the WPCA may be able to extend the sewer main to the east side of the Jones Hollow Road Bridge at the doorstep to the business park property.

Recommendations:

Develop a flexible zoning regulations for the business park that promotes the expansion of the non - residential tax base, while, guiding economic development in a direction that is compatible with the community character.

Work with the abutting property owner of the Marlborough Commons to assure there is an interconnection between the properties both on a physical level and complimentary land uses.

Explore the funding options available to bring sewer and water to the property.

Secure a right of way for a future through road connection from Jones Hollow Road to Hebron Road (Rte 66).

Study marketing options for the property once the zoning change has been completed.

Target compatible land uses.

If public water is not brought into the Town Center in the next three (3) to five (5) years then exploration of developing a water source on the business park property should be undertaken by the Town.

General Industrial

There are three (3) districts that total sixty – six (66) acres, of these sixty six (66) acres twelve (12) acres are wetlands. Presently there are two (2) vacant, two (2) acre lots and three (3) lots that are utilized for residential purposes within the existing GI Districts.

The districts are located as follows;

There are two (2) adjoining districts on North Main Street.

There are three (3) district areas on South Main Street, two adjoining districts and a stand-alone two (2) acre parcel area.

Recommendation:

Examine the uses allowed in each of the districts and make the appropriate regulatory changes. In particular, the regulatory changes necessary include the reduction of setbacks, reduction of parking requirements, increases in building coverage, introduction of building and landscaping design standards, and changes to other bulk zoning standards. Through making these regulatory changes, flexible design standards will permit buildings to move forward to the street-line, parking areas to be predominately on the side and to the rear of buildings, appropriate landscaping, lighting, and signage schemes, and promote the interconnection of adjoining properties through walkways and parking areas.

Design Recreational Districts

There are approximately twenty-six hundred and fifty (2,650) acres of land currently zoned DRE, the second largest classification of land after the Residential District. A majority of the DRE land is State and Town open space land acquired prior to 1992. Since 1992 the open space land acquired by both the State and the Town has retained the Residential Zoning District Designation.

Recommendation

Rezone the existing open space parcels acquired since 1992 to today and going forward as DRE.

Consider developing an Open Space Zoning Classification and rezone a majority of the DRE land to this new classification that will limit the uses from those allowed by the DRE.

The Planning Commission and Zoning Commission should examine rezoning a portion of the current East Glastonbury Fish & Game property off of Planeta Lane and the two parcels located in the south west corner of Marlborough only accessible through East Hampton to DRE.

POCD - OPEN SPACE/RECREATION

Just as we need places to live, work and shop, also we need open space and recreational lands to balance our basic needs. Open Space/Recreational land has many different functions, such as: protection and conservation of natural resources; enhancement of outdoor recreational opportunities; screening and buffering of residents from other land developments; preservation of scenic vistas and natural landscaped gateway areas that shape the community character and image; and preservation of archaeological, historical and cultural resources.

Additionally, these open space areas preserve the quantity and quality of Marlborough water supply, provide wildlife habitat, protect our homes from flooding, and provide opportunities for healthy outdoor activities. Within Marlborough one can currently utilize three thousand (3,000+) acres of public open space for activities that include the use of rivers, streams, and Lake Terramuggus for water recreation and sport, use of the forest land for bicycle, hiking, and walking on the existing trails and woods roads, and active recreation on the athletic fields.

Since the 1995 POCD Update the Town has examined the open space and recreational needs of the community through the development of the 2004 Open Space & Cultural Resource Strategy Plan, 2007 Open Space & Land Acquisition Plan, and the 2007 Recreational Trail Master Plan. These documents are important appendices to this 2008 POCD Update and are guiding documents for the future of open space and recreational strategies of the community.

These appendices plans are vital resource tools and guides for Marlborough's Town Boards and Commissions, as well as its citizens concerning the development of Marlborough's recreational assets. It is intended to aid in the development and implementation of an ongoing, comprehensive program for the acquisition and preservation of open space lands, in order to protect the natural landscape and to provide recreational opportunities. With the development pressures facing Marlborough today and in the future, failure to implement such a Plan will result in the loss of vital natural and recreational resources and will impair the character of the community and the quality of life of its residents.

Marlborough is a community with a diverse and varied natural landscape, including significant water bodies and watercourses such as Lake Terramuggus, the Blackledge River, Dickinson Creek, Strong Pond and hilltop vistas such as Fuller Hill and Carter Hill. These are integral components of the vitality and small town New England character of this community. In addition to their natural beauty, these natural resources provide a variety of passive and active recreational opportunities. These contribute not only to the character of the community, but also to the quality of life enjoyed by its residents.

GOALS

- To preserve the small town New England characteristics of Marlborough by acquiring and enhancing areas such as gateways and vistas. Consideration will be given to providing buffer areas between differing land usages and unifying open space into a community-wide network.
- To provide areas for active and passive recreation.
- To preserve and protect varied natural communities and to support existing diversity of species, with an emphasis on areas containing endangered or declining populations of wildlife. Priority will be given to assembling contiguous areas of greenbelt corridors for the unhindered movement of wildlife.
- To identify and provide for future water supply areas.
- To establish annual funding allocations from Marlborough's budget process and from grants.
- Make a trail connection to the Airline Trail.

Elements of these Open Space Plans include: identification of existing and desired open space land; creation of open space corridors and large areas of contiguous open space land; and the development of funding strategies for the acquisition of open space land for preservation and recreational use by the Town of Marlborough.

CATEGORIES OF OPEN SPACE LAND

Currently, Marlborough has some significant open space areas in the form of state forest land and municipal open space land. Additionally, the Town is fortunate to have park land such as Blackledge Field, Blish Park, Farley Field and the West Road Memorial Ball Fields, which provide active recreational opportunities. Therefore, this Plan will identify properties as desirable for incorporation into a comprehensive open space system that will meet the recreational needs of the community and preserve its significant natural resource assets.

For the purpose of this Plan, open space land will be divided into three categories: greenway corridors, community parkland, and forest preserve areas. The main distinction among these categories is that the land for greenway corridors is located along the streambelts and will be used primarily for passive recreation and natural resource protection. Community parklands will be used primarily for active recreation and community gathering areas. Forest preserve

areas will be large contiguous areas, not along streambelts, that will provide for passive recreation and natural resource protection.

More often than not, these three categories will provide multiple open space land functions, such as wildlife migration and foraging areas, watershed protection, and aesthetic preservation. Certain properties will have the ability to support open space functions as well as other municipal functions such as is the case today on West Road with the Fire Department Company #2, Blackledge Soccer Field and natural area all on one parcel.

The State of Connecticut and Town of Marlborough have several tools available to acquire rights to properties for various open space purposes. These acquisition tools include fee simple purchase, private and public conservation easements, gifts, and use of the regulatory process. The method of acquisition utilized shall be based on the nature of the property, the open space goal, and the opportunity for acquisition. It is possible that several acquisition methods may be used in combination in order to acquire open space land. Therefore, this Plan will identify properties as desirable for incorporation into a comprehensive open space system that will meet the recreational needs of the community and preserve its significant natural resource assets.

OPEN SPACE GREENWAY CORRIDORS

A key component of the cultural, historical and natural resources of Marlborough is its major streambelts. These include historic mill sites that defined Marlborough's early development and present diverse ecological communities, all of which provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation. Both the State and the Town have long recognized the importance of these major streambelts, as can be seen by the current open space properties directly abutting these watercourses. These greenway corridors will provide opportunities for a public trail system and for the preservation of natural resources. They will also contribute to maintaining the quality of life enjoyed in Marlborough.

Blackledge River Greenway

The Blackledge River flows from the Glastonbury/Marlborough town line south to its confluence with Fawn Brook, forming the headwaters for the Salmon River along the Colchester/Marlborough town line. The Blackledge River greenway corridor contains significant community assets, including cultural, historical and natural resources that contribute to the character of the community. These assets include historic mill sites that lend themselves to archeological and cultural exploration. Additionally, the river corridor provides opportunities for both active and passive recreation and is home to a diverse natural community of native plant and wildlife species. Also, this greenway can create linkages to both

the Fawn Brook greenway and the Lyman Brook greenway along South Main Street.

Dickinson Creek Greenway

Dickinson Creek flows from the Glastonbury/Marlborough town line south to the Colchester/Marlborough town line for a distance of approximately 32,000 linear feet. The land use along the length of Dickinson Creek is diverse, unlike that of the other greenway corridors. The majority of the northern section of the creek flows through developed properties, except for the northernmost reaches of the creek east of Connecticut Route 2. A majority of the southern section of the creek flows through the state forest.

Fawn Brook Greenway

The Fawn Brook greenway corridor contains many community assets, such as historic mill sites and diverse plant and wildlife communities. It also provides opportunities for both active and passive recreation. Additionally, this greenway will provide linkage to the Blackledge River greenway corridor and to the Hebron Fawn Brook greenway. There are approximately 2,500 acres of undeveloped land in Marlborough and Hebron within the watershed areas of the Fawn Brook branches.

Fawn Brook is divided into eastern and western branches that flow through Hebron and Marlborough until they converge in southeast Marlborough to form one brook. There is approximately 14,000 linear feet of the Fawn Brook's branches and main stem flows through Marlborough prior to the convergence with the Blackledge River. The western branch acts as the Hebron/Marlborough town boundary line, extending 3,500 hundred feet south from the abandoned Holcombe Road to the abandoned portion of Paper Mill Road. Fawn Brook then flows to its confluence with the Blackledge River at the intersection of South Main Street with Kellog Road.

Fawn Hill Brook and Strong Pond Greenway

The Fawn Hill Brook and Strong Pond greenway corridor contains many community assets, such as historic mill sites and diverse plant and wildlife communities. It also provides opportunities for both active and passive recreation, and for a community gateway. This greenway corridor is unique from the other greenway corridors in that, in addition to a major streambelt of approximately 3,800 linear feet, it contains a pond of approximately eight acres and large interconnected, highly functional wetland systems. Therefore, its shape will not be the traditional linear greenway but, rather, a combination of greenways and forest preserve areas. Additionally, this greenway will provide linkage to the Dickinson Creek greenway corridor and allow for future linkage into East Hampton.

Greenway Development Tasks

Explore opportunities with DEP to create pathways and parking areas for public access into state forest lands

Examine opportunities for creating pathways and parking areas for public access into Town Open Space Properties

Examine opportunities with the Towns of Colchester, East Hampton, Glastonbury and Hebron to create continuous greenway systems

Contact all property owners of desired open space land to begin a dialogue concerning the creation of the greenways

Perform an inventory of the plant and wildlife species found within these greenways

COMMUNITY PARKLAND

Marlborough is fortunate to have some significant parklands, such as Blackledge Field, Blish Park, Farley Field and the West Road ball fields, and lease playing fields at the Moose Lodge, that meets the community's current active recreational and community gathering needs. As the Town grows, however, these needs are increasing and additional parkland will be necessary.

A review of all the existing open space properties in Marlborough indicates that there are limited opportunities to develop parkland on existing Town Open Space Land in order to meet the future needs of the community. Only the West Road ball field's site has abutting undeveloped land. There are two sixty (60) acre parcels along the northwest side of the existing site, which can be incorporated into that site to expand the area for active recreation. Additionally, these two (2) undeveloped properties contain significant natural resources and will provide passive recreational opportunities.

After reviewing the available vacant and partially developed property throughout Town the following properties are identified as possible future community parkland:

FOREST PRESERVE AREAS

Forest preserve areas have several functions, including: protecting streambelts from erosion and sediment transport of the upper watershed areas; contributing to the maintenance of the water quality; preserving a variety of wildlife habitat areas; and preserving the natural landscape of the community. As development pressures come forward over the next ten (10) years the need to develop a plan to retain unfragmented forest preserve areas is vital to the well being of Marlborough residents.

There are significant areas of contiguous forest land within Marlborough, comprising state forest land, state forestry tax program land (private ownership), Town open space land, and private restricted land. These lands function as community gateways and natural resource protection areas, and provide recreational opportunities throughout the community. Additionally, the location of the state forest land provides opportunities to increase the unfragmented forest area and make regional open space connections into certain areas of Colchester, East Hampton, Glastonbury, Hebron and Portland.

State Forest Land

A portion of the Meshomasic State Forest is located in northwest corner of Marlborough. This area contains two hundred and seventeen (217) acres that abut approximately forty-two hundred (4,200) acres within the state forest in Glastonbury, East Hampton and Portland. This provides a direct link to the Shenipset Trail through the state forest into East Hampton and Portland.

There are two undeveloped parcels left in Marlborough that directly abut the existing Meshomasic State Forest and the West Road Ball Field that total one hundred and twenty –one (121) acres .

Additionally, there are three large areas of the Salmon River State Forest within Marlborough that contain large portions of the Blackledge River and Dickinson Creek. One area is located in the southeast corner of Marlborough and extends along the Blackledge River from Phelps Road south to Rte. 2, crossing Rte. 2 south to South Road. It contains four hundred and ninety-seven (497) acres that abut additional hundreds of acres of state forest in Colchester, which encompass the Air Line Trail.

The second area of the Salmon River State Forest is located from Flood Road southward, along the entire length of the west side of Ogden Lord Road to Bull Hill Road. This area contains nine hundred and fifty four (954) acres that abut additional hundreds of acres of state forest in Colchester, which encompass the Air Line Trail.

The third area of Salmon River State Forest is located north of Hebron Road (Rte 66) and extends to North Parker Road. Contains six hundred and twenty-nine (629) acres that abut one hundred and forty-nine (149) acres of Town open space and an additional hundreds of acres of State Forest in Hebron.

Private Forest Land

Between the Salmon River State Forest, located north of Hebron Road (Rte. 66) and the southeast corner of Marlborough lies approximately sixteen hundred (1,600) acres of privately-owned land, which for the most part is undeveloped. Much of this property is in a tax abatement program, either the 490 Forestry Program or the old Ten Mill Program.

These programs reduce the assessment in such manner that taxes are significantly reduced for a period of ten (10) years for the 490 Program and fifty (50) years for the Ten Mill Program. Much of this land has reached its tax-abatement maturity date and will become vulnerable for development. The conservation restrictions allow limited development as long as this development is consistent with the goals and objectives of the conservation restrictions.

Beyond these forests land holdings above there is another seven hundred and sixty (760) acres classified as forest land by the Tax Assessor's office in the State's Public Act 490 Program.

POCD – COMPATIBILITY WITH STATE & REGIONAL POCD

The 2008 Marlborough POCD Update for the most part is in compliance with both A Plan of Conservation and Development for the Capital Region and the State POCD. The only issue of conflict with both plans is relating to economic development areas shown on the Marlborough POCD Future Land Use Map. In particular the areas of conflict are the Town Business Park land on the east side of Rte 2 and the East Glastonbury Fish & Game property off of Planeta Drive that fronts Rte 2.

Currently approximately half of the Town owned land is denoted as Area of Municipal Focus on the Capital Region POCD and a Rural Community Center on the State POCD. The Town has denoted an area that reaches further to the east and north which encompasses land denoted as Undeveloped and Unpreserved and Development Constrained Land and Areas Suitable for Protection on the Capital Region POCD and as Rural Land and Preservation Area on the State POCD.

The East Glastonbury Fish & Game property is denoted as a Future Designed Commercial Area on the Marlborough POCD Future Land Use Map, is denoted as a Preserved Open Space and Recreation Land on the Capital Region POCD and as Rural Land and Conservation Area on the State POCD.

The Town will seek to have the designation changed on the updates to both the Capital Region POCD and the State POCD that will be forth coming next year. In developing this area for economic development the conservation and preservation goals of the environmentally sensitive areas of the sites can still be achievable through the use of proper design guidelines and best management practices.