

**ELEMENT IX**

**LAND USE**

## Element IX

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## IX

### LAND USE

1. The purpose of this Land Use Plan is to provide a guide for future land use and to propose implementation of land use control regulations. This element presents a description of Middletown's future use of land, based on the interrelationship of development trends, natural constraints, the transportation network and basic public services and facilities. It is upon these relationships that decisions can be made to determine the ultimate character of the town.
2. The Land Use Plan is described herein and depicted visually on the map entitled Land Use Plan (Figure 5). The recommended pattern of future land use is based on the problems, issues, and policies identified in the previous sections of this Comprehensive Community Plan, as well as from information derived from the Build-Out Analysis for Middletown. The Land Use Plan does not specifically reference property lines or ownership patterns, (although it has recognized them), but does acknowledge much of the established pattern of development which has taken place.
3. Before addressing the analysis that went into the development of the revised Land Use Plan it is appropriate to examine the current land use/land cover. What has already happened cannot be changed easily; however, by studying the past trends, the town may now determine the future course for the lands which are not "used up".

### PRESENT SITUATION

1. Middletown shows great contrasts in its development pattern. The western portion of town is urbanized and densely populated, while the eastern portion tends to be largely agricultural and undeveloped, but is in danger of becoming over developed. Within the town are two principal through highways, East Main Road and West Main Road, that have spawned highway oriented commercial development along their frontages as well as significant residential developments set back from the roads. Two principal connecting roadways, Aquidneck Avenue and Valley Road, are experiencing development pressures.
2. The predominant patterns of urbanization correspond with the natural landforms oriented along three major north and south drainage basins. These basins/valleys contribute directly to public drinking water supply reservoirs. The town's soils and natural ground cover contribute to chronic problems of high water table, soil erosion, poor drainage and periodic flooding. Continued development has added large areas of impervious surfaces tending to increase surface water runoff flooding.
3. Sewer services the majority of the town, but because of development pressures, which occurred as the sewer system was extended into the eastern area of the town, a moratorium was placed on sewer extensions. This moratorium has curbed development of the town's eastern agricultural land to some extent. The control of development cannot rest on the temporary nature of the moratorium. Development should be controlled through the Zoning Ordinance.

4. Middletown's role in the regional and local economy is significant and cannot be overlooked. It provides extensive retail and commercial opportunities for Aquidneck Island and, in fact, houses most of the island's commercial office space.
5. The Land Use Plan at Figure 1, depicts the scheme of current development . Figure 2 is the Zoning Map, which was implemented in 1985 based on Land Use Plan at Figure 1. Figure 3 shows the Watershed Protection Plan, which was developed along with the Zoning Ordinance of 1985. When laid over the Zoning Map, the Watershed Protection Districts shows the areas of greatest concern with regard to protecting water quality.
6. Using the zoning regulations in effect in 1990 and the zoning map at Figure 2, a Build-Out Analysis was completed by IEP Inc. using the Aquidneck Island Geographic Information System (AIGIS) which was developed by the Aquidneck Foundation to support the comprehensive planning process. The build-out analysis found that of the 6,389 (available) acres in Middletown, 3,564 acres (56%) are developed. Table 1 provides a breakdown of 1988 land use allocation. Tables 2 and 3 provide breakdowns of present and potential residential, commercial and industrial development acreage in Middletown. It should be noted that parcels of land in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Program (approx. 1500 acres) were not included in the build-out analysis of Table 2. Table 4 provides information on the build-out potential of land currently in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Program.
7. The potential for future development in Middletown is tied to the Zoning Ordinance. A revised build-out analysis following adoption of a new Zoning Ordinance will, most likely, change the development potential in some zoning districts.

Figure 1 – Existing Land Use



Figure 2 - Existing Zoning



Figure 3 - Existing Watershed Protection District



Figure 4 - Existing Agricultural Land Use



**Table 1**

**CURRENT MIDDLETOWN LAND USE**  
(Includes developed and undeveloped land)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Residential	2442
Commercial/Service	422
Industrial	288
Transportation	83
Recreation Conservation and Open Space	1966
Agricultural	2449
Mining and Waste	32
Institutional	361
Other	369
<b>Total</b>	<b>8412</b>

Comments: Approximately 945 acres of platted roads are distributed among other categories. Wetlands and forests/wooded areas, which are undeveloped, are included in Recreation, Conservation and Open Space.

Source: RIGIS 1988 Land Use/Land Cover Data

**Table 2**

**ANALYSIS OF RESIDENTIAL GROWTH**

ZONING	EXISTING UNITS (Structures)	%DEVELOPED	DEV. POTENTIAL (Structures)	%INCREASE	BUILDOUT POT. (Structures)
R-10	2,414	80	590	24	3,004
R-10A	121	66	61	50	182
R-20	1,059	67	527	50	1,586
R-20A	137	47	156	114	293
R-30	103	54	86	83	189
R-30A	47	92	4	4	51
R-40	627	82	138	22	765
R-60	227	73	82	36	309
RM & RMA	55	28	145	264	200
MT	250	100	0	0	250
OTHER	2,065	100	0	0	2,065
TOTALS	7,105	80	1,789	25	8,894
FARM, FOREST, & OPEN SPACE			1,505 ACRES	1,869	10,763*

\*Total units at build-out, including build-out of land under Farm, Forest and Open Space Program  
Source: Aquidneck Island Build-Out Analysis

Table 3

**ANALYSIS OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT  
1988**

ZONING	EXISTS. BLDG. AREA (Square feet)	%DEV	POT. BLDG. AREA (Square feet)	%INCREASE	BUILD-OUT TOTAL (Square feet)
LB	61,857	28%	160,202	259%	222,060
LBA	661,810	48%	708,578	107%	1,370,388
OB	835,145	46%	970,819	116%	1,805,964
OBA	574,431	44%	721,835	126%	1,296,266
GB	299,925	47%	343,196	114%	642,122
GBA	1,316,788	42%	1,848,799	140%	3,165,587
LI	305,883	35%	559,809	183%	865,692
LIA	0	0%	119,878	100%	119,878
TOTALS	4,055,839	0%	5,433,116	134%	9,488,957

Source: Aquidneck Island Build-Out Analysis

Table 4

**FARM, FOREST AND OPEN SPACE PARCELS  
1988**

ZONE	ACRES	POTENTIAL UNITS
R-10	9	29
R-10A	35	134
R-20	146	271
R-20A	84	156
R-30	167	206
R-30A	344	424
R-40	666	616
R-60	54	33
TOTAL	1,505	1,869

Source: Aquidneck Island Build-Out Analysis

**CRITERIA FOR FUTURE LAND USE**

**1. LAND USE CATEGORIES**

a. The following discussion provides guidance for future planning decisions based on categories of land use. The general character of the town may change significantly by the year 2010; however, Middletown can accommodate changes if those changes are accomplished in an orderly, constructive and positive manner. The general categories of land use listed below have been used in developing the "Land Use Plan for the Future". Table 5 summarizes the land use categories listed below.

## 1. Residential Land Uses

a. According to the RIGIS Land Use Cover Data, approximately 2883 acres, or 34 percent, of the land area of the town is presently in residential use. For planning purposes, residential land, is categorized into three categories of residential uses: 1) high density, 2) medium density, and 3) low density.

b. The build-out analysis also indicates that of the 79% of land presently allocated to residential uses, the highest percentage is dedicated to medium and high density housing (Table 2). Therefore, future plans must consider allocating more land for high-density development, in areas that are able to support higher densities. Again, it should be noted the "allotted land" does not include land that is presently under the Farm Forest and Open Space Program. The following describe the three residential land uses:

(1) High Density Residential - This includes areas devoted to multi-family housing, duplexes or single family housing on lots generally one third of an acre or less and mobile home parks. An average density of four dwelling units per acre (or more) will be found in high-density residential areas. Such high-density areas are presently zoned R10, RM or MT.

(a) The purpose of high-density residential areas is to provide central, built-up areas of town that are convenient to shopping areas and public facilities. High-density development need not be associated with over-crowding, if attention is paid to proper site planning and design controls.

(b) The western portions of town have developed in a high-density residential pattern, and are planned to continue to do so. Such high-density patterns require extreme care in the design and construction of surface water drainage systems, and disturbance of soil during and after construction.

(2) Medium Density Residential - This includes areas predominantly developed for single family housing on individual lots of one-half to three-quarters of an acre. Residential densities average between 1 to 2 dwelling units per acre. Medium density areas are zoned R20 and R30, and are located in areas, which are environmentally sensitive or lack either public water or public sewers. Medium density residential areas are more restrictive than high-density areas and usually exclude or strictly limit non-residential uses. It is expected that much of the new subdivision activity, in the town, will take place in medium density areas as the need for new housing grows.

(a) Since many of the medium density areas are located within reservoir watersheds, the potential problem of soil erosion and pollution of waterways must be addressed. Areas located directly adjacent to waterways or reservoirs are generally planned for medium and low density development depending, on the availability of public water and sewers. These areas also fall into the Watershed Protection Zones and must conform to special protection restrictions regarding any

(3) Low Density Residential - These areas recognize districts within the town where very little urban development has taken place, but where future community expansion is likely to occur. These areas contain much of the remaining farmland in town. Much of this land is located in the watersheds of Gardiner and Nelson Ponds. Soils in these areas, often, are limited in their ability to support high-density development. Frequent flooding is sometimes experienced along the areas' waterways.

(a) Low Density development is zoned R40 and R60. Portions of these low-density areas have access to public water and/or sewer services and may be able to support a higher net density of development. The average coverage in low density areas should be less than one dwelling per acre (1 DU/AC); however, gross densities could be greater by using cluster zoning techniques, or multi-family residences (Condominiums/Townhouses). Uses considered appropriate for low density are agricultural production, single family residential dwellings, large estates, essential public/ quasi-public uses and facilities, and open space/recreation.

### **3. Commercial Land Uses**

a. Areas needed to serve as Middletown's commercial districts are already well established. The build-out analysis estimates that 43% of the land presently zoned for commercial uses is developed. For the next ten to twenty years, new commercial growth should continue to be in-fill development along the established business corridors. High-density density development requires extreme care in the design and construction of surface water drainage systems, and erosion control measures during and after construction. With the possible construction of the East Main Road Upgrade Project, a good deal of the through traffic on Route 114 (West Main Road) will be redirected, resulting in improved traffic flow to local businesses on West Main Road. Areas shown on the Land Use Plan as commercial areas are designated by general location only. These areas will be described precisely in the revised zoning ordinance.

b. Included in the category of commercial land uses are wholesale and retail sales, office businesses, consulting services and personal/ professional services. Commercial land uses are important to both local and regional markets. Land designated for commercial uses in the plan forms the hub of Middletown's business district and provides important commercial space to Aquidneck Island. The Town Center Overlay District provides for a business district that encourages economic development by increasing allowed density to encourage the location of additional retail and office space in the core commercial district. Commercial land uses include: General Business, Limited Business and Office Business.

c. The town may in the future consider "down zoning" certain parcels of land in the West Main Road corridor to control the spread of commercial development. Currently zoned General Business (GB) or General Business Traffic Sensitive (GBA), a "down zoning" to Office Business (OB) or Office Park (OP) would allow for less intrusive high tech businesses into the area.

#### **4. Industrial Land Uses**

a. Middletown has two land areas that are zoned for industrial purposes, as well as areas suited for future industrial expansion. The current Land Use map (Figure 1) and the current zoning map (Figure 2) indicate two significant areas for current and future industrial land use: 1) the U.S. Naval Base property as designated in the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission's West Side Master Plan, and 2) the land surrounding the Newport State Airport.

#### **5. Institutional Uses**

a. This category includes major land holdings of local, state and federal governments or their agencies, plus major quasi-public institutions. Middletown's single largest user of public (institutional) land is the United State Navy. The purpose of this category is to recognize the extent of public and quasi-public land holdings and how they relate to overall planning for the community. No major expansion of public land holdings are expected, but reuse of federal (Navy) land could have a significant impact on Middletown if, in the future, land at the Naval Base is determined to be "in excess" of federal government needs. Currently, the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission is preparing a West Side Master Plan to utilize Navy Property to the maximum benefit of the three island communities in the event the land becomes excessed.

#### **6. Agricultural Uses**

a. Recognizing that nearly one-third of Middletown's land area is devoted to agricultural uses, a separate "agricultural" land use category is included. Because agricultural uses have diminished, rather than expanded, the plan emphasizes land in this category to encourage continued use of land presently "in production" for agricultural purposes. Since one of the goals of this Plan is to encourage the continuation of agriculture as a significant economic activity in the community, some form (or forms) of economic incentive will be required to assure continued agricultural land use in the future. The allowed uses for agricultural land should include:

- (1) Agricultural production.
- (2) Sale of local produce and farm products.
- (3) Farm residences and accessory structures.
- (4) Planned residential "mini-farm" communities.
- (5) Processing of agricultural crops.
- (6) Agricultural parcels utilizing permitted, commercial, accessory uses (e.g. Agritourism).

#### **7. Conservation, Recreation and Open Space Uses**

a. This category recognizes the existing pattern of land and water bodies maintained as open space, while looking forward to future land patterns that would preserve and maintain additional lands for through conservation techniques for open space and recreation. Land that is bequeathed to the town or to other organization for owners who desire their property preserved as permanent open space is recognized in this category. Land preserved via conservation easements and transfer of development rights by the town or other organizations is also acknowledged. These areas include:

- (1) Fresh water ponds, wetlands and streams.
- (2) Salt marshes, tidal ponds and coastal beach areas.
- (3) Areas subject to periodic flooding.
- (4) Unique natural areas.
- (5) Public recreation lands.
- (6) Major conservation lands, public and private.
- (7) Land identified as Stissing and Mansfield Soils.

b. Land and water in this category are essentially eliminated from intensive use, but should not be considered "unused". They provide valuable natural functions in addition to satisfying human recreational and psychological needs. Land and water areas in this category must be protected from any development through land use planning and zoning regulations and comply with the Rules and Regulations of the CRMC and RIDEM that have jurisdiction in these areas.

c. The Town shall monitor the wetland areas that have been approved for development by RIDEM Wetlands Section as an "Insignificant Alteration". The cumulative impact of these decisions must be monitored for impact on the town's Watershed Protection Districts.

## **8. Transportation Uses**

a. This category includes land dedicated to transportation services, such as airfields, rail, bus and marine facilities, and land designated for future highways. Lands earmarked for alternative forms of transportation such as pedestrian ways, bicycle paths, and shuttle routes are uses considered viable to the town's transportation system and are included in this category.

**Table 5****LAND USE CATEGORIES**Residential

High Density: 4 or more DU/Acre on average

Medium Density: 1-2 DU/Acre

Low Density: Less than 1 DU/Acre

Commercial and Services

Sale of products and services (retail, business, consulting)

Industrial

Manufacturing, Design, Assembly

Transportation

Airports, roads, rail/bus facilities, marine terminals

Recreation, Conservation and Open Space

Public and private recreation areas, golf courses + play fields, (not including schools), wildlife refuges, beaches, and dunes

Agricultural

Pastureland, cropland, orchards, groves, nurseries, vineyards, turf farms, idle agriculture

Mining and Waste

Strip mines, quarries, gravel pits and refuse stations/dumps

Institutional

Education including school playing fields, health, correctional facilities, religions, cemeteries, military families, municipal, state and federal facilities.

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**LAND USE PLAN FOR THE FUTURE - THE PLAN**

**1. ANALYSIS**

a. A matrix approach was used to identify issues to be considered in formulating the new Land Use Plan. On the vertical axis, each land use category was listed. The horizontal axis listed each element of the Comprehensive Plan. (Table 6)

b. To assist in analyzing this element, the required scope of analysis and the available reports on the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan were used. From the analysis, nine considerations relating to land use were identified.

**Table 6**  
**ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY**

CATEGORIES	HOUSING	NAT & CULT	OPEN SPACE	CIRCULATION	ECONOMIC	SERVICE
LAND USE CAT						
RESIDENTIAL						
HIGH						
MEDIUM		<b>PROBLEM NOW, AT BUILDOUT ?</b> <b>ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES ?</b> <b>RECOMMENDED GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STEPS</b>				
LOW						
COMMERCIAL						
INDUSTRIAL						
TRANSPORTATION						
RECREATION, CONSERVATION OPEN SPACE						
AGRICULTURAL						
MINING AND WASTE						
INSTITUTIONAL						

**1. INCONSISTENCIES WITH EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS**

a. A comparison of the existing zoning districts with the Future Land Use Plan, at Figure 5, indicates minor changes to existing zoning. Generally boundaries have been modified to delete areas of "spot" zoning which, for the most part, were zoned based on existing usage at the time the Zoning Ordinance was amended in 1985. A comparison with the Land Use Plan of 1984 shows a return to more consistent land uses of adjacent properties. Other inconsistencies are the result of changes to densities of residential land uses.

## **LAND USE**

### **1. SCOPE OF ANALYSIS**

- a. Consider allocation of land for residential, business, industrial, municipal facilities, public & recreation, major institutional facilities, mixed uses, open space, agricultural, natural and fragile areas.
- b. Base optimum intensities and standards of development for each element on current development, natural land characteristics, and "projected municipal, regional, and state services and facilities".
- c. Consider the impact on surface and groundwater, wetlands, coastal features, and other fragile natural resources.
- d. Consider general characteristics and trends of population and employment.
- e. Consider regional influences and adjacent communities' development.
- f. Consider major state and federal lands, including their basic uses and their compatibility with adjacent "town" land uses.
- g. Analyze the general effect on the town that will be brought about by the Plan's implementation.
- h. Analyze inconsistencies between the plan and existing zoning district boundaries and the standards/use requirements for these districts compared to new land use goals and policies.
- i. Conduct five-year update of plan taking changes in land use and development pressures into consideration to formulate future community needs to be addressed in the plan.

### **2. LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS**

- a. The following considerations were used in crafting the plan:
  - (1) Mix low, medium and high-density residential development throughout town to provide affordable housing and location opportunity to all income groups.
  - (2) Designate certain land as "agricultural" using open space funds and private/public partnerships with land trusts and conservation organizations to secure land.
  - (3) Restrict land designated for mining and insure waste dumping is not allowed at these excavated sites.

(a) Preserve the unique historical and cultural aspects of Paradise Rocks by not allowing quarrying to expand past the present boundaries of Peckham Brother's quarry.

(b) Provide a designated waste disposal area for tailings.

(4) Designated land for waste disposal and recycling, including composting, construction waste disposal and municipal waste.

(5) Establish a transportation land use category.

(6) Soil types in determining the appropriate land use.

(7) Environmentally sensitive areas such as: watersheds, flood plains and wetlands for surface water/groundwater impacts.

(8) Protect woodlands and fields for conservation/open space recreation.

(9) The town's existing scenic roadways.

(10) Land use along Middletown's borders with neighboring towns and the Navy, utilizing the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission's West Side Master Plan for development on the west of the town. Support overlay districts to protect public drinking water travel ways to municipal reservoirs.

b. From these considerations, the Goals/Policies, which follow, were developed and the **Land Use Plan** (Figure 5) evolved.





**GOALS/POLICIES/IMPLEMENTATION**

**GOAL I:** Achieve growth and development patterns that are consistent with environmental, historical and economic needs of the town.

**POLICIES:**

1. Effectively utilized the Town Center Overlay District to centralize commercial/retail activity in the town.
2. Allow cluster zoning and other conservation subdivision techniques within low-density land use areas.
3. Support development of a Master Plan for the town's East Side, and the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission's West Side Master Plan.
4. Allocate portions of developments within low, medium, and high- density categories to accommodate all income levels.
5. Work closely with private/public conservation organizations towards the preservation of open space.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

Implementing this goal will require accommodations in the Town of Middletown Subdivision and Land Use Regulations as well as the zoning ordinance. Language must be added that will provide for flexibility where conditions will allow high density residential development in lower density zoning districts. Constraints, such as soils, storm-water controls, watershed protection, public water/sewers, Greenways, preserved open space, important agricultural and natural features, historical features, etc. must be the controlling considerations if this flexibility is to be allowed.

To control sprawl of commercial/retail development and prevent it from encroaching on residential land uses, the Town Center Overlay District should be utilized to its maximum potential, with other commercial development to be discouraged in areas outside the established business corridors. Tear down and rebuild is an acceptable alternative within these districts.

1. Consider incentives to attract development to desirable areas, particularly the Town Center District.
2. Amend the zoning ordinance to discourage development in less desirable areas.
3. Amend subdivision and zoning regulations to allow conservation style development.
4. Work closely with regional planning organizations and private organizations to support good planning and promote openspace preservation.

**GOAL II:** Reduce the development of agricultural land.

**POLICIES:**

Provide incentives that encourage retention of agricultural land use.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

Implementing this goal will require changes within the Zoning Ordinance that provide incentives for property owners to keep agricultural land as agricultural use. Additional incentives should also include tax relief in a form similar to the Farm, Forest and Open Space Program. Become familiar with Natural Resources Conservation Service's "Farm Land Protection Program" to protect farm lands. The town should undertake the creation of a conservation land map earmarking sensitive lands to which incentive programs and specific development standards are attached thereto.

1. Coordinate with land trusts and private/public land preservation organizations to acquire and/or secure land development rights to agricultural parcels.
2. Support zoning changes that allow for accessory uses where the primary land use is agricultural.
3. Encourage owners of agricultural land, who wish to subdivide, to apply conservation development and growth management techniques that provide for connective Greenways and preserve agricultural land.
4. Identify land to be designated for continued agricultural use giving highest priority to land in watershed sensitive areas.

**GOAL III:** Establish a pattern of land use that considers environmental and historical characteristics of the land as well as the overall impact on infrastructure.

**POLICIES:**

1. Allow for the orderly development of residential areas based on the guidelines recommended in the State Guide Plan.
2. Enhanced regional cooperation to address the growth pressures brought about by development as it effects transportation, education and public health, safety and welfare.
3. Initiate zoning techniques that provide landowners with options to encourage land conservation in their subdivision designs.
4. Enact innovative zoning to preserve natural features, mitigate environmental impacts, and preserve, where possible, valued community resources.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

Consideration of environmental constraints along with the availability of utilities (water, sewer) must play an important role in determining development with the town's zoning, but historical features, sensitive agricultural lands, Greenways and existing commercial land uses must also be considered in the town's zoning and subdivision regulations. The zoning map must be configured in a manner that identifies economic centers, environmentally sensitive areas, and infrastructure deficiencies as they translate into each zoning district. Land use regulations can create overlay districts which will distinguish an area in the town considered to be of particular significance.

1. Amend zoning and subdivision regulations as necessary.
2. Maintain involvement with the efforts of the AIPC.

3. Institute conservation style development in the subdivision and zoning regulations.

**GOAL IV:** Protect environmentally sensitive areas.

**POLICY:**

Identify and prioritize environmentally sensitive areas as protected Greenway linkage through public private partnership.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

1. Take action to encourage donations of land, and to accept land offered as gifts, to add to the town's open space inventory. Consider purchasing environmentally sensitive land as it becomes available.
2. Take action to encourage public/private partnerships with entities such as land trusts, conservation foundations, agricultural associations to identify at risk lands (such as farms, forested areas, watersheds, etc.) for protection by purchase of development rights, conservation easements, or acquisition.

**GOAL V:** Protect water quality on a local and regional basis for private and public water supplies.

**POLICIES:**

1. Support incentives that encourage landowners with substandard ISID systems to upgrade for protection of water quality.
2. Investigate techniques to improve the quality of stormwater runoff and adjust local regulations as required.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

1. Much has been implemented in the town's Zoning Ordinance to control the quantity of stormwater runoff when development takes place. Little is required in town ordinances to improve the quality of that water en route to the reservoirs, but changes to the subdivision regulations is necessary to address the issue. Just as a zero rate of increased runoff is now mandated, there is a need to improve the quality of that stormwater runoff by introducing best management practices.
2. Identify and establish Watershed Protection Districts as appropriate for both surface and groundwater protection.
3. Develop a Stormwater Runoff Management Program Plan (Phase II) to improve surface water runoff within the town that leads to sensitive environmental areas.

**GOAL VI:** Maintain and preserve beaches and other shoreline features as significant natural resources.

**POLICIES:**

1. Maintain Third Beach in an undeveloped, natural state.
2. Continue to support Sachuest Beach (Second Beach) for recreational use with improvements to existing facilities as necessary.
3. Sachuest Point should be supported as perpetual open spaces and a nature preserve as referenced in the Rhode island natural Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan.
4. Support preservation of shoreline features along the West Side of the town as detailed in the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission's West Side Master Plan.
5. Significant geological features such as Purgatory Chasm, Easton's Point, Hanging Rock etc. should be maintained in their natural state with the town working to preserve public access.
6. Acquire shoreline property for public use, as it becomes available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

This goal parallels similar goals in the Natural and Ecological and Recreation Open Space and Conservation elements.

1. Provide for zoning to prohibit development at Third Beach.
2. Provided for necessary funding to support Second Beach.
3. Maintain communications with Federal and State agencies.
4. Continue participation with the AIPC.
5. Establish a funding mechanism for the acquisition of shoreline properties and maintenance of existing properties.

**GOAL VII:** Maintain Town services and facilities in the face of new development.

**POLICY:**

Ensure that new subdivisions bear present and future costs linked to their development.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

Consult with land use expert on the task of generating a needs assessment report for use to determine which town infrastructure areas are negatively impacted by growth and development. Once the needs assessment has been accepted by the town council impact fees should be levied in the areas where deficiencies occur. The funds should be handled as determined by the state enabling legislation. The town needs to also establish, either through staff generation or via consultant, a long-term capital improvement plan for all infrastructure improvements town wide. The plan should detail all activity for a ten (10) year time frame.

1. Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of town infrastructure to establish areas of impact.

2. Enact impact fees to link costs the town will incur, as a result of new development as detailed in needs assessment.
3. Work to create and maintain long-term capital improvement plan for all infrastructure improvements needed due to growth development.

**GOAL VIII:** Zone the town in accordance with land uses depicted at Figure 5.

**POLICY:**

Develop, adopt and maintain a zoning ordinance and map in accordance with this Comprehensive Plan and the blueprint for the town depicted in Figure 5 "Future Land Use Plan."

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

Figure 5 provides the land use blueprint for the future. The Zoning Map which is developed from this Plan must reflect the land use schemes presented. While the land use boundaries shown are not precise, the Zoning Map should show boundaries along specific lot lines, wherever practical, to ensure that each lot is zoned for not more than one use.

1. Propose necessary changes to the zoning map and zoning ordinance.

**GOAL IX:** Identify and protect those Middletown Open Space land parcels that remain in all Residential, Business, Industrial and Commercial Zoned Areas. Due to the need to prioritize these locations, a strong effort to control development and establish effective growth management techniques is required.

**POLICIES:**

There must be a firm legal basis for innovative development controls to protect the undeveloped land from the potential development build-out scenario that exists in future years. This will require inventory of large tracts of land that must be recognized as needing some sort of rural character protection or controls from commercial sprawl.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

1. Conduct an inventory of all open space, public and private.
2. Prioritize parcels for protection