1993

Overall Economic Development Program for the Milford Labor Market Area of Massachusetts

Center for Economic Development

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Overall Economic Development Program
for the Milford Labor Market Area of
Massachusetts

September 1993

For submission to

The Economic Development Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
I. Administrative Organization

A. History and Organizational Structure

In the fall of 1992, the Boards of Selectmen of each of the five towns which comprise the Milford Labor Market Area designated economic development representatives to serve as a regional Overall Economic Development Program Committee. This action was the result of an initiative by Massachusetts State Representative Richard T. Moore of Uxbridge, who suggested a renewal of a working relationship between the towns and the Economic Development Administration (EDA), as EDA is viewed as an agency that might complement an array of economic development efforts throughout the state.

Following a preliminary planning meeting in Uxbridge on December 2, 1992, this group sought the advice of William Fitzhenry, Economic Development Representative, during January. Based on his advice this informal group sought out technical assistance from the Center for Economic Development, an EDA sponsored university center, located within the Regional Planning Department at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Acting on the advice of Mr. Fitzhenry and CED, a decision was reached to implement an Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP) planning effort with expectations that the final document would be submitted to EDA September of 1993.

In an attempt to recognize the perception that comprehensive economic planning was a critical need within the Milford LMA, agreement was reached that OEDP committees would be formed in each community. Representatives from each of these organizations became the coordinating group for the entire OEDP and held their first formal meeting in Milford on February 3, 1993. Committee meetings were held throughout the spring (March 17 in Hopedale, April 27 in Uxbridge, June 2 in Hopedale, June 30 in Mendon, and August 4 in Hopedale) with ongoing assistance from CED. EDA policies and guidelines were carefully observed throughout the process. Each OEDP committee held a series of brainstorming discussions. Drafts of OEDP documents were repeatedly circulated by mail and fax for Committee review. In addition, the Committee made a concerted effort to seek elected official and public input. All meetings were announced in local media and were open to the public, several news articles appeared in the Milford Daily News and Woonsocket Call, and priorities were reviewed and approved at public Selectmen's meetings held in each community prior to final adoption of the OEDP.
Final drafts were carefully reviewed by the coordinating group to resolve any outstanding concerns. CED facilitated in these discussions. The final version was provided to OEDP committees for review.

The final OEDP submission represents the negotiation and prioritization of goals and objectives in order to fairly represent the unique qualities of each area. The success of this effort can be attributed to the willingness of the coordinating group from each to establish a common agenda without the burden of creating a new administration and bureaucracy. It is the full expectation of the coordinating group that after completion of the OEDP they will remain a working group in order to initiate and guide various implementation efforts.
B. Overall Economic Development Program Committees

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMBER</th>
<th>AFFILIATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rep. Richard T. Moore, Chairman</td>
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<td>235 Williams Street</td>
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<td>Uxbridge, MA 01569</td>
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<tr>
<td>209 Dutcher Street</td>
<td>Educational Sales Representative</td>
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<td>446 East Street</td>
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<tr>
<th>Mr. Ivan Fieldgate</th>
<th>Electro-Mechanical Engineer</th>
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<td>High-Tech Industry</td>
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<th>Barbara Gardner</th>
<th>State Representative</th>
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<td>114 Jennings Road</td>
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<td>Holliston, MA 01746</td>
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<td>(H) 508-429-7594</td>
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<td>(W) 617-722-2203</td>
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Retail & Commercial Business

Retail and Commercial Business

Minority Group

Selectperson

Medway Historical Commission

Retail and Commercial Business

Telecommunications Industry

Planning Board

Metal Products Industry

Labor

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Minority Group
Retail and Commercial Business

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II. The Area and Its Economy

A. Background Information

1. General Description of the Area

The Milford Labor Market Area (LMA) is comprised of the five towns of Milford, Hopedale, Mendon, Medway, and Uxbridge. The towns have a collective population of 55,377 according to the 1990 United States Census. The LMA is located in south central Massachusetts between Boston, MA, Worcester MA, and Providence, RI. The area was first settled in the 1700's and includes about 79.33 square miles.

Zoning

All of the LMA has zoning. The exact zoning by-laws vary between the municipalities, but each town has both use and size zoning. The zoning by-laws have residential, commercial, and industrial classifications.

Federal and State Designations

Uxbridge, Hopedale, and Mendon are members of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission, which acknowledges the area as the first industrial area in America. Its mandate from the U.S. Congress (P.L. 99-647) is to ensure appropriate regional planning, encourage towns to preserve and protect the cultural and necessary resources of the valley. The towns in the Blackstone River Valley corridor are interested in cooperating with the Corridor Commission in stimulating the types of economic development which will compliment the further growth of the Corridor's activities.

Medway has a National Register Historic District called Rabbit Hill. Its central point is the community church in West Medway. It encompasses 58 buildings and 30 acres. Hopedale, Mendon, and Uxbridge belong to the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning District, while Milford and Medway are members of the Metropolitan Area Planning District. Milford, Hopedale, Mendon, and Uxbridge are served by the Southern Worcester County Service Area Regional Employment Board. Medway is part of the Metro Southwest Service Area. These are public-private agencies responsible for coordinating federal and state job training programs.

Conservation Areas

The Milford Conservation Commission owns property at the western end of Camp Street (two Parcels: 1.8 acres and 11.4 acres) and has jurisdiction over Cedar Swamp Pond (156 acres)
and property at the eastern end of Wales Street (two parcels: 1.2 acres and 6.2 acres known as Craddock Crewes Pond). Additionally, the property known as Louisa Lake was dedicated for recreational use by Town Meeting; this property has 32.1 acres.

Medway has more than 100 acres set aside as conservation land. While conservation areas owned by the Town of Uxbridge include the Pout Pond area which is 65 acres, and the Hale Swamp area which is 75 acres. Uxbridge also has several other smaller parcels, of one to five acres reserved for conservation purposes.

**Geographic Features**

The area was glaciated and then further shaped by the many rivers that flow through it. Primarily made up of river valleys and adjacent uplands, the area has significant bedrock outcroppings. There have been large amounts of granite mined in the area as well as significant sand and gravel deposits that have also been mined. Three of the large rivers in the area are the Charles, the Blackstone, and the Mill which flows into the Blackstone.

**Existing Infrastructure**

Each town has sewer and water supply. They also have police, fire departments, and school districts. Some of the towns have departments of public works and highway departments.

**Transportation Linkages**

The area has Interstates 90 and 495 running through it which provide easy access to the Massachusetts Turnpike, (I-90) a major east-west transportation route. There are also many smaller state highways crisscrossing the area. Among them is Route 146, the major highway link between Worcester, MA (New England's second largest city) and Providence, RI (Rhode Island's capital city). It has the potential to become the third metropolitan Beltway when it is joined in 1997 to Interstate 290 at the Massachusetts Turnpike. Interstate 495 is the second major beltway around Boston. The first, route 128, brought with it large scale economic growth as did the second so it is expected that even if it is at a smaller scale the third will also bring economic growth.

In addition to the road network it has been proposed to connect the area to Boston by the MBTA commuter rail. The Franklin line would be extended to Bellingham and Milford. Rail service is currently available from the near by stations of Forge Park and Franklin Center. The area is served by the Providence and Worcester Railroad with freight service. The P&W provides essential rail freight service to over 120 businesses which have facilities located on its rail lines, 30 of which are located in Massachusetts in 18 different communities. In addition, the P&W serves
hundreds of other companies throughout New England through rail/truck transfer operations which include Intermodal (customs bonded containers) terminals in Worcester, bulk products transfer facilities throughout its system and a warehouse/distribution center in Worcester. Bus service is currently available from Milford to Framingham and Boston. Small private planes can land at Hopedale and Norfolk airports and commercial air travel is available within a one hour drive at Logan International in Boston, Worcester Municipal Airport in Worcester and Green International in Providence, RI.

2. **Natural Resources**

   There are many water resources in the area such as rivers, brooks, lakes, and ponds that could be used for recreation. In addition there is a large aquifer in the area that supplies plentiful potable water. There are large deposits of granite with some active quarries. Sand and gravel deposits are prevalent but there is some fear that over mining of these will interfere with the quality of the aquifer. There are several thousand acres of land suitable for agricultural purpose but only some of that is in production.

3. **Environmental Issues**

   **Endangered Species**

   The Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program has identified two rare species, namely the marbled salamander and the Mystic Valley Amphipod. Milford has two areas depicted on the Endangered Species Habitat Map. One area is in the general vicinity of Cedar Swamp Pond and the other is east of Interstate 495, in the vicinity of Route 109.

   **Hazardous Waste**

   There are confirmed hazardous waste sights and other possible sights are outlined in Appendix A.

   **Solid Waste Disposal**

   Uxbridge has a capped landfill, which is monitored regularly per the Department of Environmental Protection requirements. Milford has a landfill that is no longer in use, and remains uncapped. This is a critical environmental issue as it is adjacent to the public well fields in Cedar Swamp Pond. Residential solid waste is transported by a private contractor and taken to Millbury, MA.
Recycling is strongly encouraged for cans, glass, and newspaper in Milford, with curbside pick up every two weeks. Disposal of white goods is also at curbside in Milford, however, a sticker must be displayed verifying that the disposal fee has been paid. Alternatively, if residents deliver white goods to the transfer facility there is no fee (except if the white good contains CFC's). Brush leaves, grass, clippings and similar material is not picked up but they can be delivered to the transfer facility. Uxbridge has private curbside pick-up and operates a recycling transfer facility.

There is some concern over potential increases in prices due to requirements which may affect the operations of the private contractors. Commercial disposal is arranged for on an individual basis with the various contract trucking firm licensed to do business in Massachusetts.

**Sewage Disposal**

Approximately 74% of residential property (including vacant), 84% of commercial (including vacant), and 27% of industrial property (including vacant) in Milford is serviced by town sewer. The sewer treatment plant, built in 1986, has adequate capacity to accommodate full build-out of the community. Development in unsewered areas is permitted with approved septic systems. The FY 1990-1995 Master Plan for Sewer Construction Projects list approximately $4.4 million in needed upgrades to pumping stations, interceptors, force mains and other elements of the delivery system.

Uxbridge's sewage system is operating at approximately 26% capacity. The sewer lines do not extend to any of the three primary undeveloped industrially-zoned sites. The town is also preparing to remove the sludge from the waste water treatment plant landfill, according to the requirements of the Department of Environmental Protection.

Medway has experienced reasonable water and sewer charges through their affiliation with the Charles River Pollution Control District and their town wells. During 1992, the Charles River Pollution Control District's regional advanced waste water treatment facility received and treated approximately 1,276 million gallons (3.5 million gallon per day) of raw waste water, including 10.2 million gallons of septage, from the District's member and customer towns before discharge into the Charles River. The volume of waste treated was approximately the same as last year. On September 30, 1992, EPA and DEP issued the District a final five year NPDES permit with stringent copper and chlorine residual limits in it's discharge to the Charles River. Medway's share of the District's operation, maintenance and capital projects assessments are estimated to be $99,230 and $67,440, respectively, in the District's Fiscal Year 1993, 7% of the total.
4. **Political Geography**

All of the towns are governed by Town Meeting and a Board of Selectpeople. Hopedale, Mendon, Milford and Uxbridge are all within Worcester County and the Second Massachusetts Congressional District (represented by Richard Neal in 1993). Medway, in Norfolk County, is part of the Third Congressional District (represented by Peter Blute in 1993).

5. **Population and Labor Force**

The demographics of the area are presented in chart form in appendix B and some of the highlights are discussed below.

**Population Profile**

- Milford LMA has experienced an increase (approx. 17%) in population over the past decade. According to the 1990 census information, Milford LMA has a total population of 55,377 people, as compared to 47,224 in 1980.

- Milford LMA has approximately 4% minority population.

- The median age is approximately 33.6 years of age. This is in keeping with that of Massachusetts.

- The percent of people, 25 years and over, with an educational attainment of high school graduate or higher is lower than that of Massachusetts as a whole. However, the percent with a bachelors degree or higher is 25% which is similar to that the statewide average of 27.2%.

**Housing Profile**

- According to the 1990 census, there are 20,686 housing units in the Milford LMA.

- 72% of all homes are on public water systems and 85% of all homes have public sewage disposal facilities.

- The median monthly rent for a home is $552.00.

- The median house value is $160,720.
The median house value in Mendon and Medway is higher than the other towns in the Milford LMA. Uxbridge has the lowest median house value.

Labor Force Profile

- In Milford LMA, the civilian labor force accounts for approximately 66% of all persons 16 years and over as compared to the statewide average of 67%.
- The unemployment rate in Milford LMA was at 7.0% according to the 1990 census. More recent State Department of Employment and Training Data, (July 1992), shows an unemployment rate of 14.4%. Compare this to the statewide rate of 8.7%.
- The mean travel time to work for Milford LMA residents is 26.4 minutes. This is longer than the statewide average of 22.7 minutes.
- The majority of the labor force works in the private sector (77%), approximately 11% work in the government sector and 5% are self employed.

6. Economy

Explanation and details on the industry divisions and types of businesses are in Appendix B.

Income Profile

- The median household income in Milford LMA is $46,794. This is higher than the statewide average of $36,952. The median household income in Mendon ($55,914) and Medway ($54,857) is higher than that of Hopedale ($44,961), Uxbridge ($40,059) and Milford ($38,180).
- The per capita income in Milford LMA is $17,599. This follows the same comparative trend as the median household income.

Occupational Profile

- The top occupational categories of Milford LMA residents are technical, sales and administrative support with 31.16% and managerial and professional specialty occupations with 28.45% of total employment; followed by operators, fabricators and laborers with 12.78%
Industrial Profile

- In the Milford LMA, the service sector accounts for the highest employment (29.3%).
- More than 23% of all jobs in Milford LMA are within the manufacturing sector. A statewide comparison shows 18% of all jobs the manufacturing sector. This along with the educational attainment percentages indicates that Milford LMA is still a predominately blue collar community.
- Wholesale and retail trade accounts for approximately 20% of all jobs.
- Milford LMA appears to have a balanced industrial profile with manufacturing, trade and service jobs.

7. Infrastructure and Services

Water Supply

All of the towns have town wells that supply water to the residents, however there are areas that depend on private wells for their potable water. A couple of the towns have protection districts to protect their water supplies. A regional water supply protection plan is being prepared by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and is near completion. Implementation of the recommendations in the study will further enhance protection of this resource in Milford and Medway.

Educational Institutions

Each town operates its own school district. Hopedale, Mendon, Milford, and Uxbridge belong to the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational-Technical School District, while Medway is a member of Tri-County Vocational District. There are many universities and colleges with in commuting distance of the area. There are adult education programs in the area as well as summer youth employment and training programs. There is at least one adult literacy program and some of the area colleges conduct continuing education extension programs in the public school facilities.

Public Services

Several towns have their own professional police and fire services, however some of the fire service is volunteer. Restoration and expansion of the existing Milford police station is expected to begin in early 1994. A new fire station was built on Birch Street in Milford in 1992. The up-grade and expansion of the downtown Milford fire station in planned although no
construction schedule has been identified. Medway recently built a new fire station to better serve the community. Uxbridge is planning a new police station. Milford, Mendon, and Hopedale are served by the Milford District Court. Medway is served by the Wrentham District court and Uxbridge is served by the District court in Uxbridge.

Hospitals and Clinics

Tri-River Family Health Center, an affiliate of the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, is located in Uxbridge, and is currently undergoing expansion of its facilities. This clinic offers area residents a wide range of medical services, in a convenient location. In addition Milford-Whitinsville regional hospital at the junction of routes 140 and 16 in Milford provides emergency and hospital service. Milford has two walk-in clinics and one appointment only clinic. There are various nursing homes available in the area. Leonard Morse and Framingham Union hospitals in Natick and Framingham also serve the area.

Community Services and Facilities

Several of the communities have libraries, programs for the youth and the elderly. There are facilities available for use in community service projects and programs such as 12-step self help programs.

Cultural and Recreational Facilities

There are a couple of local theater groups that perform several times a year as well as a symphony orchestra, a band concert series and several local museums. There are little league and softball programs in each community. Swimming pools, softball and baseball fields, basketball courts, football fields, running tracks, soccer fields, tennis courts, playgrounds, forests and parks are also available for recreation.

Services for Low-income and Aged Populations

South Middlesex Opportunity Council, based in Framingham provides special services for persons in need. Low-income and elderly housing is available in the area. Numerous services for low and moderate income populations are available in the area. These include a homeless shelter, a food pantry, an office of the Department of Employment and Training, an office of the Department of Welfare, AFDC services, a methadone clinic, and other substance abuse services, a "clubhouse" for mental health patients, a mental health clinic, a full-time veteran's agent and a full-time senior center director.
Supply and Quality of Housing

The majority of housing in the area is comprised of single family houses. The majority of the structures were built before 1950. A significant portion of the housing is renter occupied but the overall quality of the housing is relatively high. For further information please see appendix B.

Industrial Parks

There are several industrial parks in the area, however, many of them are not yet developed and lack sewer and water connections. This will be a impediment to growth in those parks. The sites that are currently well used are Granite Park (with approximately 1,500 employees), Bear Hill Industrial Area, to name a few. Small manufacturing sites are scattered throughout the towns. A major single facility site is occupied by United Medical Corporation (Trotter).

Business Districts

As in many areas of the United States, some downtowns in the LMA have experienced disinvestment and deterioration. However, there are programs established to revitalize these areas. Commercial districts in Uxbridge, Mendon and Hopedale have rebounded and are, in some cases, thriving. There are several strip malls in each community with retail ranging from discount to upscale clothing and accessories.

Major Employers

The major employers in the area are the occupants of the industrial parks, the towns themselves and the hospitals. These companies include: Photofabrication Engineering, Inc. (PEI), Boston Digital, Dennison Stationery Products, Seneca Sports, A.J. Knott Tool and Manufacturing, Fenwal Electronics, Milford-Whitinsville Regional Hospital, Foster Forbes, Benjamin Moore and Co., United Medical Corporation (Trotter), Boston Scientific, Millipore/Waters Chromatography Division and numerous offices in the Birchwood Business Park.

Impediments to Growth

Limitations to growth include the existing road network, the diffused and part-time nature of the local form of government, the volunteer fire service, and lack of sewer and water connections at the industrial parks. Some of these issues are being addressed now and others will have projects proposed to help alleviate them.
8. Planning and Economic Development

Milford and Medway are members of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the regional planning agency for the greater Boston area. MAPC has developed a master plan for the region, known as MetroPlan 2000. The plan applies to the 101 cities and towns within the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's district. In the Milford Labor Market Area, this includes the town's of Milford and Medway. MetroPlan 2000 does not make any recommendations which apply to the other communities in the Milford LMA.

The underlying principle of the MetroPlan 2000 is that new development should be encouraged to locate in areas where existing infrastructure is available. The plan defines a three-tiered geographic classification of the MAPC region, based on the availability of rapid transit (the "urban core"), sewers (the "multi-service area") or neither form of infrastructure (the "suburban/urban area"). Within these areas, the plan provides guidance on land use types and densities, and makes provisions for the designation of special areas called "Concentrated Development Centers" (CDC's). The role of MAPC in this process is advisory.

Milford has filed applications for two CDC's: the Bear Hill area and the downtown area. These applications are pending.

Hopedale, Mendon, and Uxbridge are affiliated with the Central Massachusetts Planning Commission. The Milford Board of Selectmen have initiated a Total Quality Management training program, funded by EOCD. Hundreds of town employees, as well as elected and appointed officials will be attending these sessions. Further TQM methods will be implemented by Milford's government.

Each year, the town of Milford typically seeks funding from EOCD through the Massachusetts Small Cities Program for a "special purpose" study for the downtown area. This year a re-use study of the 40,000 square foot Gillon Court building was funded. A comprehensive Housing Study (modeled after the CHAS program) was also funded and is near completion.

Milford and Medway participate in a sub-regional planning group of MAPC, known as the South-West Area Planning Committee. This group includes representatives from Millis, Sherborn, Dover, Wrentham, Franklin, Bellingham, Holliston, Hopkinton as well as Milford and Medway.

The Greater Milford Chamber of Commerce, located in Milford, provides services to business in the Towns of Milford, Medway, Hopedale, Mendon, Millis, Bellingham, Upton,
Holliston, and Hopkinton. The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce, an affiliate of the Worcester Area Chamber of Commerce and the Blackstone Valley Regional Development Corporation serve the business community in Uxbridge, Mendon and Hopedale in addition to nine other communities.

Uxbridge has an active five member Industrial Development Commission, which is a body appointed by the Board of Selectmen. This body has actively developed strategies to encourage further development and keep current businesses in town. The Commission is currently providing leadership in devising a biotechnology by-law, as a way of making it clear to bio-tech companies that Uxbridge is open to their establishing research and manufacturing operations.

The Medway Industrial Development Commission was instrumental in advancing the development of the 240 acre Milford Street at I-495 industrial park. They have continued their efforts to improve the site by gaining the town's support for the extension of public water supply to the site. The Medway Business Council is a networking opportunity for local businesses.
B. Evaluation of Strengths Opportunities and Constraints

1. **Strengths**
   - The area has an increasingly advantageous location, as the new Massachusetts Turnpike interchange comes closer to reality. The area will be in a unique position of accessibility.
   - The area has an abundance of water, which is a requirement for many new industries, particularly bio-tech companies. This volume of water would lower the key operating expenses of bio-tech companies, perhaps making citing such a company in the area a truly affordable option.
   - There is a small town character within close proximity to the Metropolitan Boston cultural and educational environment.
   - Available labor force with broad range of skills.
   - Affordable and wide range of housing.
   - Quality school systems, including vocational-technical schools.
   - Excellent regional (i.e. Milford-Whitinsville Regional Hospital) and community (i.e. local libraries) facilities.
   - Established history as industrial center balanced with commercial and residential development.
   - Cultural diversity.
   - Large and diverse existing employment base.
   - Respected arts community and adequate open space and recreational facilities.
   - Variety of lodging in the area.
   - Proximity to major airports.

2. **Opportunities**
   - Opportunities include the undeveloped industrial spaces, the open spaces, the water resources, proximity to major airports, retail and recreational development in the last 4-7 years, variety of lodging in the area, local support for entrepreneurship and small businesses, and water and sewer capacities.
   - Significant industrially zoned land available.
   - Welcoming approach toward entrepreneurship and business development.
   - Older industrial buildings that can be recycled for new uses, preserving the historic character of the area while allowing economic growth.
3. **Constraints**

- By-Laws do not specifically permit or address bio-tech companies.
- In some communities, town services (i.e., fire) are limited.
- In some communities, the form of government is not conducive to timely approvals.
- In some communities or areas, sewer and water delivery systems need to be upgraded.
- Transportation infrastructure (roadway network) capacity.
- Transportation services locally, regionally and inter-city.
- In some communities, higher tax rate for non-residential property.
- Significant non-English speaking population has difficulty in job market.
III. Goals and Objectives

A. Procedure for Arriving at the Goals and Objectives

OEDP sub-committees were formed in the five communities. Each Committee compiled a list of opportunities and constraints for economic development in its respective town. From this list, the Committee's proceeded to develop goals and objectives specific to their area. These area-specific lists were reviewed by CED and the OEDP Coordinating Group. Similarities and differences were noted and a set of area-wide goals and objectives, representing the unique needs of each region, were developed and are presented here.

B. Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. Develop a strategy that encourages new economic growth through the modernization and preparation of older industrial sites and underutilized sites, while maintaining the quality of the area's natural and historical resources.

Objectives

Short Term

1. Encourage the re-use of existing buildings to create jobs, improve the overall economic climate and reduce the number of abandoned buildings. Conduct feasibility study regarding potential future uses of abandoned mills and other vacant buildings to identify a course of action to utilize these spaces. Develop an incentive program to make building re-use economically feasible.

The vacant buildings include:

- Bernat Yarn Mill, Uxbridge
- Waucantuck Mill, Uxbridge
- Big D shopping center, Uxbridge
- Stanley Woolen Mill, Uxbridge
- Porter Shoe Building, Milford (partially occupied)
- Data General Building, Milford
- Prime Computer Building, Milford
- Elegante Building, Milford
- Rockwell International Draper Corporation Mill building, Hopedale
Possible alternative uses to be evaluated include:

- Northeast Golden Era/Tri level Care, Health, Fitness and Residential Complex
- Bio-tech, high tech or medical equipment businesses
- Incubator facilities
- Vocational Retraining Center for the Northeast United States

2. Identify businesses and industries that could be attracted to the region.

Long Term

3. Clean-up environmentally hazardous deposits or accumulations on existing and proposed industrial sites located with the Milford LMA.

Goal 2. Build a strong business retention, expansion and entrepreneurial development program that supports balanced growth, through the development of a plan for marketing readily developable industrial areas and for extension of infrastructure and other services to appropriate industrially zoned parcels possessing other attractive features.

Objectives

Short Term

1. Pursue the development of identified industrial and business park zones in Medway
   IND - 3 Milford Street and I-495 (Trotter Park)
   IND - 2 Milford on West Street occupied by Boston Edison
   IND - 1 Main Street at the Millis town line

2. Develop a marketing plan for the 40 acre parcel of industrial land owned by the Town of Milford located off Birch Street. The plan would include an evaluation of the appropriate businesses to be targeted for location here, the means by which these businesses would be targeted, alternative subdivision configurations for a parcel, and additional information helpful to the marketing of this property. The Town has completed perimeter and topographic surveys of the property.

3. Extend water and sewer lines to a large industrially zoned area. Uxbridge has two undeveloped industrial sites. One site consists of eighteen approved lots and totals 198 acres. The other site is a twenty lot industrial park of sixty-one acre sub-division.

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**Long Term**

4. Support updates to Master Plans and Zoning By-Laws that encourage sound economic development. Develop inventory of appropriate parcels of land that are presently zoned for commercial/industrial use, including data on available infrastructure. Identify infrastructure needs (roads, water, sewer) and environmental issues that need to be addressed prior to developing parcels.

5. Develop a streamlined paperwork and approval process for local approvals for new businesses.

**Goal 3. Pursue tourism and recreational opportunities that will promote economic development and the overall aesthetic quality of the area through available amenities.**

**Objectives**

**Short Term**

1. Expand hours and operations of the Little Red Shop in Hopedale, to include use of the facility as a museum and location for historical seminars to be held.

2. Develop bikeways in the region to encourage biking and walking along the Old Trolley Line.

**Long Term**

3. Develop walking tours for historic and scenic sites in Hopedale, including the Parklands, Hopedale Pond and historic properties, encouraging conservation of the Parklands while providing residential and tourists with a recreational area and educational experience.

4. Enhance the use of Hopedale Pond by providing canoe rentals, paddle boat rentals and provision of fishing facilities.

5. Enhance the use of Milford Town Forest by formalizing the trail system to allow hiking, biking and cross-country skiing. Acquire parcel of land that will connect Town Forest to Louisa Lake, creating a 138 acre passive recreational area.
6. Develop neighborhood parks as appropriate throughout the Milford LMA, so that residents in newly developed areas have similar recreational opportunities as those residing in established neighborhoods.

7. Adapt existing recreational facilities to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

8. Promote the Historical and Natural resources of the region to increase employment and industry from tourism.

Goal 4. Build a stronger partnership among education, industry and the community to ensure a skilled, knowledgeable work force that will be likely to find adequate employment in the area if it is desired.

Objectives

Short Term

1. To conduct market based research in conjunction with local colleges and other educational resources to identify training and retraining needs of unemployed and underemployed individuals. The needs of unemployed, underemployed and economically disadvantaged persons would also be analyzed with the emphasis on future establishment of resources to meet identified needs. Identify likely areas of future job growth in the region. Develop appropriate training programs in the local school system, including the vocational-technical school, to target these jobs.

Long Term

2. Enhance English as a second language programs and provide job placement assistance for non-English speaking populations.

Goal 5. Improve access to capital for business start-ups and expansions to enable businesses to thrive in the area.

Objectives

Short Term

1. Improve the availability of gap financing for developing industries in the region.
Long Term
2. To participate in the establishment and implementation of a revolving loan fund to assist both new endeavors and businesses seeking to expand.

3. Develop a property taxation system throughout the labor market area towns that is equitable to both residents and businesses.

Goal 6. Promote, improve, and expand transportation linkages throughout the area to increase accessibility without degrading the character of the area.

Objectives

Long Term
1. Promote and encourage the extension of the Franklin commuter rail into Bellingham and Milford. The total project length is 2.8 miles.

2. Promote and encourage the extension of the Massport Shuttle bus service to the Milford area.

3. Upgrade and improve the existing road network to better accommodate industrial traffic in Milford, Hopedale, Mendon, Uxbridge and Medway.

4. Construct the Veterans Memorial Boulevard by-pass road in Milford, to (1) decrease congestion and accompanying stop and go traffic on Route 16, the major east-west route in the LMA (2) better facilitate efficient truck traffic throughout the LMA and region (3) improve access to the proposed MBTA station. Total project length: 5,850'; portion constructed: 1,200'; portion owned but not built: 3,280'; portion to be acquired: 1,370'.

5. Promote car pooling, bus ridership and other alternatives to the one-person-one-car transportation method and provide improved transportation service to employment centers. (There is a grant application pending for a commuter lot in Milford).
IV. Development Strategy and Implementation Plan

A. Program and Project Selection

An analysis of Milford LMA's strengths and weaknesses combined with a review of the area's goals and objectives leads to the following conclusion: with the decline of industrial employment in the area's larger national and multinational corporations, an overall labor force reduced by thousands since 1990 and an area-wide unemployment rate of 14.4%, there is a strong need for creating new jobs that utilize the extensive skills of the existing labor force. At the same time, the area's natural and cultural resources are seen as being its most important assets to preserve. An appropriate economic development path must foster the creation of higher skilled, industrial, information sciences and emerging technologies job opportunities while preserving the natural, historical and cultural resources that have led to the quality of life. What seems to be important to the future health of the industrial sector is the growth of smaller, locally owned manufacturing businesses, especially those that reinforce each other.

The area's non-profit economic development organizations, working in concert with local governments, are pursuing a path aimed at supporting the development of new, skilled industrial jobs in a manner which is in harmony with the environment. Rather than concentrate all economic development activity in a single large facility, the economic development organizations are pursuing smaller industrial parks and industrial buildings in several sites. These initiatives concentrate economic development activity in areas that have broad community support.

In addition to land, a key ingredient in the development of the area's emerging industries is capital. In particular there is a need for lending under $200,000, especially if we are to support the continued expansion of small businesses.

Finally, other key ingredients needed include user-defined technical assistance and emerging small businesses and work force training initiatives in the workplace that go beyond what is available through JTPA-funded programs. The majority of state and federal programs are geared to address the training and technical assistance needs of the large and medium sized firms. The small firms and cottage industries need to gain more efficient, less expensive access to these services.

In summary, the highest economic development priorities are the enhancement of local access to capital at reasonable costs for job-creating enterprises, the enhancement of the
competitiveness of local businesses through the provision of technical assistance and work force training, and the support of industry-driven collaborationist. Its second highest priority is the development of diverse industrial space that can meet the needs of growing local industry and targeted out-of-town firms in a manner consistent with the area's goals.

The implementation plan below identifies specific short, medium and long term economic development priorities of the Milford LMA. These priorities were selected through an analysis of the goals and objectives developed by the OEDP Committees, the area-wide goals and objectives described in Section III and discussion with economic development professionals throughout the region. The Coordinating Committee decided, and this decision was endorsed by the subcommittees, that the short-term priorities should be those which take advantage of a number of area opportunities and strengths as well as addressing several constraints to economic development.

Once the priorities were outlined and agreed to by all the Committees, a decision had to be made regarding the first programs to be implemented. As many existing and emerging businesses are currently unable to access capital at a reasonable cost. In an effort not to concentrate economic development on one sector of the economy, it was determined to move forward on implementation of a revolving loan pool program, allowing businesses throughout the county, access to capital for start-up and/or expansion activities.

It was also determined, by the Coordinating Group, to focus on accelerating the development of current industrial parks in order to have "ready to build" space available to both local and new businesses.

B. Implementation Plan

Initial Priorities

1. Area-wide Revolving Loan Fund and Technical Assistance Program (Goal 5, Obj. 1)

Availability of credit for business development is a major issue. Business owners in the area say that the recent changes in the banking industry (tightening of regulations by monitoring agencies, mergers of banks, etc.) have adversely affected the availability of financing from private sources. Therefore, it is anticipated that the area would apply for funding under Title IX of EDA for funding for a revolving loan fund and a technical resource pool. It is anticipated that a non-
profit organization, a political subdivision or a consortium of political subdivisions will be selected to be the lead agency in applying for funds but it would work closely with other economic development officials in conceptualizing the program, preparing the application and implementing the program. It is anticipated that the grant request would be $1,000,000 with a match of $250,000 coming from a variety of state and local sources.

Short Term Priority
1. Improve climate for financing of small companies within the local banking community. Sponsor seminars and workshops for banking and business community to develop working relationships.

2. Establish a committee of representatives of the five town region to designate and advise a lead agency, such as the Milford Community Development Office to administer the RLF program.

3. Provide Gap financing for small businesses

2. Pursue the development of identified industrial and business park zones
   (Goal 2, Obj. 1)

The Town of Medway currently owns about an 8 acre site at the far end of Alder Street in IND-3. This would provide an excellent site to begin promoting the region. The purpose of the Center would be to develop a Regional model to attract business development, offer technical assistance and direct users to key incubator sites in the Region. The location at exit 19, Route I-495, and 10 miles south of the Mass Turnpike interchange provides an excellent introduction to the Region. This Center will spearhead the development of the area from the Second Beltway to the proposed Quaker Technology Highway.

IND-3 represents seven major divisions encompassing 240 acres. The major parcels may be subdivided into a minimum of 5 acre parcels. There are three projects under development in IND-3 which may represent up to 200 new jobs to the area. A health care equipment manufacturer plans to expand, adding 100 positions, and a construction company supporting 85 positions. A local sporting goods equipment manufacturer will retain jobs as well as add 15 positions over a five year period. Two other undisclosed companies have expresses serious interest to locate at IND-3. Between then, they would add 52,000 sq.ft. of building space. Important tax revenue to the town will also be generated.
Short Term Priority
1. Complete water line tie in of 2,600 line feet. Tie in would enable owners to meet state fire code for sprinkler systems.

2. Construction of a 3,000 sq.ft. facility.

3. Complete road through industrial park to Regional Industrial and Tourism Development Center.

4. Staff with Director of Industrial Development and Marketing for the promotion of the Region. Provide required professional, technical and support staff to achieve objectives of Regional Industrial and Tourism Development Center.

5. The Town of Medway voted to borrow the sum of $110,000 for the purpose of installing water mains on Alder Street for 2,600 linear feet and authorized the Board of Selectmen to apply for and expend any possible State or Federal grant funds that may be available for such purposes.

6. The Town of Medway owns an eight acre site at IND-3 suitable for developing a 3,000 sq.ft. facility.

Medium Term Priority
1. Support update of town master plan and zoning by-laws with feasibility study of town resources and future industrial and economic needs of community.

Long Term Priority
1. Support expansion of the Second Beltway and the proposed Quaker Technology Highway.

2. Support development of IND-1 and IND-2 in Medway.

3. Encourage the re-use of existing buildings to create jobs, improve the overall economic climate and reduce the number of abandoned buildings (Goal 1, Obj. 1).

The Hopedale Industrial Development Commission and the Master Plan completed by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission and the Hopedale Planning Board have determined that rehabilitation and modernization of the former Draper-Rockwell Building would provide some of the following benefits:

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A. Increase the commercial tax base of the Town of Hopedale by 10% which will reduce the real estate tax from the highest rate in the state to one closer to norm.
B. Decrease unemployment in Hopedale by 4.5% from 9.7% in 1992 to 5%.
C. Encourage and increase ancillary support business activity to improve local economic climate within the affected 5 town OEDP consortium.

The primary implementation plan would involve the Board of Selectmen, Industrial Development Commission, Planning Board, Building Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, and be coordinated by the OEDP Committee and the Town Administrator. Additional support will be offered by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Committee as it continues forward in its next phase of the town's Master Plan.

The Town of Hopedale at its annual town meeting voted to appropriate $3,000. to expand the efforts of the OEDP and a feasibility study of the Draper-Rockwell Building. Funding, thus far, has been made for a master study and computerized zoning maps by the Hopedale Foundation, a non-profit corporation that uses investments made by the former Draper Corporation to support community endeavors.

The members of the OEDP Committee believe that the composition of the implementation group is broad enough to provide a thorough review of all possible uses to include environmental, structural, zoning and infrastructure. Additional involvement with the current owners of the complex will allow for an in-depth review of issues such as leases, condominiums and public ownership. Possible uses of the building will not be limited to industrial uses, but be expanded to include commercial, health, educational and residential uses. The study would also identify federal and state funding programs for which grants can be made to finance identified programs. In addition to the vacant buildings in Hopedale, vacant Milford buildings will be evaluated for their possible re-use.

Short Term Priority
1. Research the feasibility and conduct of converting the former Draper-Rockwell Building for occupancy by domestic or foreign bio-tech, high tech, medical equipment, and/or research business as an industrial complex and/or incubator facility.
   a. Study would also include evaluation of the building as a suite site for multi-level health care living for the elderly.
   b. Feasibility review would also include an evaluation of the building as a potential site for a state or community college complex.
c. Review the process for including Draper-Rockwell Building on Historical Register.

2. Research the feasibility of converting and re-using the Elegante Building, Data General Building and/or Prime Computer Building in Milford as manufacturing, bio-tech, high-tech, research and development facility or other appropriate industrial uses. Market these buildings based on the feasibility studies.

Long Term
1. Develop marketing strategy for existing facility and/or renovate a portion of the building to function as a model to demonstrate facility’s potential.

2. Assess the vocational and technical skills needed to respond to current employment demands and develop a training program to respond to those work force needs.

3. Establish an educational partnership with business and industry that would encourage vocational skills training and a cooperative sharing of facilities in such a way as to attract new business to the building.

4. **Extend water and sewer lines to a large industrially zoned land (Goal 2, Obj. 2).**

   Uxbridge contingent of the Overall Economic Development Program Committee met to discuss potential priority projects. In addition, the issue of setting priorities was presented before the town's Board of Selectmen at two regular meetings. These meeting were attended by citizens, and such input formed the basis on which priorities were set by the Uxbridge contingent of the Overall Economic Development Program Committee.

   This process resulted in overwhelming support for the highest priority project to the extension of water and sewer lines to a large industrially zoned part of town. Other short and long term priorities will also be discussed in this section.

**Short Term Priorities:**

The targeted area has two undeveloped industrial sites on either end of this proposed project. One site consists of eighteen approved lots and totals 198 acres. The other site is a twenty lot industrial park of sixty-one acre sub-division. In between these two sites there is a stretch of two and one half miles of minimally utilized industrially zoned land. It is expected that in addition
to enabling new businesses to locate into town, this project will also encourage existing businesses to expand. It is important to note that this stretch of land is between two exits on Route 146, the primary thoroughfare between Providence, Rhode Island and Worcester. The stretch of road on which the sewer and water pipes will be place is a limited access highway, which runs parallel to Route 146. Should the project be completed, it is the intention of the Uxbridge contingent of the Overall Economic Development Program Committee to take steps to designate this stretch of road as the Quaker Technology Highway. This designation would pay homage to the historical heritage of this area, while denoting its current identity as an area for future oriented industries.

If we assume that fifty new employees would on average be hired for fifty new developed sites, it would create 1,750 jobs. While this method of projection is perhaps too optimistic, it does signify the incredible potential of this project to improve the labor market's total employment.

The primary implementation plan would involve the town's Department of Public Works, which was established in 1984. The Department of Public Works includes a water division, a wastewater division, and a highway division. Some of the major accomplishments of the DPW in the last nine years include:

* In 1985, 7,200 feet of sewer main was added to the sewerage system. Over 28,000 feet of sewer pipe was installed between the years of 1987 to present.
* In 1987, the DPW commissioners approved a thirty year water system development plan. Since 1985, seventy-three feet of water main have been installed.
* From 1987 to the present, at least fifteen major roadways have been resurfaced.
* During 1991, there was a contaminated wells/water crisis. The DPW installed 12,000 feet of temporary water lines with state and local funds. This effort brought water to over thirty affected homes. In 1992, Uxbridge's DPW managed a grant of $510,000 to provide a permanent municipal water supply to the affected families. The Department of Public Works had done a great deal of advance work on this project, so that when the federal funds became available, work was begun immediately.

The Uxbridge contingent of the Overall Economic Development Program Committee is confident that the DPW has the capacity to ensure the successful completion of this project in less than one year. The project will result in the extension of water lines by approximately 15,000 to 18,000 feet, and the extension of sewer lines by approximately 8,000 feet. As it is predicted that much of the work will be done concurrently, it is expected to a relatively short time frame. It is hoped that once funding is in place, the bulk of the project could be completed in approximately...
one year. This would make the establishment of the Quaker Technology Highway a reality in the near future, and greatly enhance the potential for the siting good, progressive industries.

The estimate of the cost of this project is 1.9 million dollars. It is expected that some of the dollars needed to contribute to this project would be raised by user fees and hookup fees, as the lines would go by existing properties. Additionally, it is expected that the community will support this effort through approving bonding any funds necessary to support this project.

Uxbridge is prepared to provide leadership on the establishment of a market based research plan. Such a proposal was developed by Quinsigamond Community College last year, and would have cost approximately $175,000.

5. Conduct a marketing study for the town owned 40 acre industrial parcel located off of Birch Street in Milford (Goal 2, Obj. 2).

The Town of Milford owns a 40 acre parcel of industrially zoned land off of Birch Street. In 1987, a cul-de-sac road was built to access this previously land-locked parcel and Birch Street was upgraded to better accommodate the industrial traffic. The work was funded by a Public Works Economic Development Grant ($544,094), EDA funds ($450,000), Town funds ($250,000), and private funds ($108,000).

The proposed study would evaluate the highest and best use for this land, identifying the types of businesses for which this location would be appealing, specific company names to be targeted, design and placement of advertisements in appropriate real estate and professional journals, evaluation of alternative configurations for subdivision of the parcel, and additional information appropriate for the effective marketing of the parcel.

6. To conduct market based research in conjunction with local colleges and other educational resources to identify training and retraining needs of unemployed and underemployed individuals (Goal 4, Obj. 1).

Study the feasibility of developing a "campus without walls" that would serve the Blackstone Valley Region. The study would look at meeting the needs of business, industry, the community at large, and the school systems. The proposed cost of the study is approximately $175,000. The study would look into the following areas:
1. The kinds of training and education programs, courses or services are needed in the area and are not currently available or are difficult to access within the Blackstone Valley Region.

2. The needs of specific segments of the market, such as the unemployment, the underemployed, new entrants into the labor force, and senior citizens.

3. The needs of specific types of industries such as large v. small companies, and companies in specific industries like banking and insurance.

4. The effectiveness of a "campus without walls" structure would meet the unmet training and education needs within the Blackstone Valley Region.

5. The best design for the location, curriculum, support staff, and programs offered.

6. The awareness and image of the colleges on the periphery of the Blackstone Region.

Short Term Priority

Analyze the needs of business and the general public in the Blackstone Valley Region to the proposed campus without walls by:

1. Analyzing business trends in the Blackstone Valley Region
2. Conduct a telephone survey of 200 businesses in the Blackstone Valley Region to determine their need
3. Conduct telephone survey of a random sample of 500 people living in the Blackstone Valley Region

Long Term Priority

If it is determined there is a need for a campus without walls in the Blackstone Valley Region then the following steps would be taken.

1. Develop prototype descriptions of the types of programs that could be offered.
2. Test the prototype concepts through interviews with members of targeted groups.
3. Meet with representatives of organizations that could provide space for classes and/or further assesses the feasibility of the project.

7. Expand hours and operations of the Little Red Shop in Hopedale, to include use of the facility as a museum and location for historical seminars to be held (Goal 3, Obj. 1).

Expanded hours for the Little Red Shop with additional historical information available to visitors would be suggested. This facility could be used as a museum and a location for historical seminars during the year. Topics for seminars could include architecture in Hopedale and
surrounding New England communities. Additional seminars might center on the cultural diversity of the work force in the Mills including the role of women in the early mills.

**Short Term Priority**
1. Develop regional marketing programs to tie together the historic resources of the five town region. Promote the national register districts and properties in each community.

2. Work with National Park Service/Blackstone Valley Corridor management to coordinate resources and identify services needed to build a tourism industry.

**Medium Term Priority**
1. Develop themes and events such as Religion, Revolution and Industry. Gain support of local Historical Societies to match funds for a Curator/consultant to develop theme exhibits based on local history and museum holdings.

**Long Term Priority**
1. With Milford and Hopedale develop a plan for a Charles River Recreation Parkland to tie together bike paths, hiking areas and boating. Survey communities for existing recreational areas that may be linked to future Parklands.

8. **Develop bikeways in the region to encourage biking and walking along the Old Trolley Line** (Goal 3, Obj. 2).

   The five town communities plan to develop a bikeway along the 15 mile right of way (where feasible) of the now defunct Milford-Uxbridge Street Railway, a trolley line that operated around the turn of the century. The Milford-Uxbridge Street Railway brought workers to local factories and carried residents to recreational facilities such as Lake Nipmuc in Mendon.

   The proposed bikeway would provide alternative transportation or capabilities to link major area hotels such as the Sheraton-Milford and Tage Inn near I-495 in Milford along an east-west route to Bed and Breakfast businesses in Uxbridge and Mendon as well as retail restaurants and shops, thereby encouraging a local tourism industry to create and retain jobs.

   At its western terminus in Uxbridge, the "Old Trolley Line" Bikeway will connect to the "Blackstone River" Bikeway which is currently in the preliminary design stage. This planned 46 mile bikeway through the Federally designated Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor...
between Providence, Rhode Island and Worcester, Massachusetts will be a significant economic and recreational asset for the region.

The OEDP Committee, in cooperation with the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission, Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce and Greater Milford Chamber of Commerce will request a technical assistance planning grant to determine the feasibility of the project and availability of Federal and State Transportation funds. (Also see Goal 6)
Other Priorities

Hopedale

• Prepare an analysis of the current distribution of persons age 65 and over, their life expectancy, residential and health care needs in relation to income levels and the proposed National Health Care Program. Devise a strategy that would determine the most suitable space available for reuse and a plan to demolish deteriorated buildings.

• Test the "Farrar and Carty" and the "Rockwell International Draper Division" landfills for 21E violations. Test potential development sites for compliance to all federal and state rules and regulations including but not limited to the Draper factory and adjacent space, Rosenfeld's mining operation and Draper playground fields which are zoned industrial.

• Research would be done to determine the employment and training needs of displaced workers. A regional or New England Center in a rural setting and a former industrial complex could give the appearance of a college campus environment in a factory setting. As a federal facility, the investment would be not only in retraining workers but investing in the manufacturing facilities built in the industrial era. Development of the vocational site would include residential dorm use, recreational facilities and vocational classroom space.

• Develop a walking tour for the Parklands, Hopedale Pond, and the historic districts, and an environmental center in the Parklands. This would allow for the conservation of the Parklands as well as provide residents and tourists with a recreational area and educational experiences. It is anticipated that by developing the area around Hopedale Pond, there would be an increase in the area's special appeal to tourists while enriching the recreational opportunities for residents. The area might also include canoe rentals and paddle boat rentals and a small bait store. These rentals would be handled by the Park Commission similar to the summer swimming program.

Uxbridge

• Support update of town master plans and zoning by-laws. Identify appropriate parcels of land that are presently zoned for commercial industrial use. Determine current infrastructure needs such as roads, water, and sewer, and identify environmental issues that will need to be addressed before utilities are extended to these parcels:

• To create a Quaker Technology Highway on a stretch of road which is already zoned industrial, but which is under-utilized due to the lack of municipal services. It is expected that at least 500 new jobs would be created in the earliest phase of subsequent development, after the
installation of water and sewer hookups. The interest of Uxbridge would be in enticing emerging technology companies, such as biotechnology companies to locate here. In order to make that happen, it is imperative that we prepare certain areas Uxbridge/South Uxbridge for development by extending the sewer lines and the water lines. This is particularly important if the town were to attract biotechnology companies.

**Milford**

- Promote and encourage the extension of the Franklin commuter rail into Bellingham and Milford
- Promote and encourage the extension of the Massport Shuttle bus service to the Milford area.
- Maintain and improve the existing road network.
- Construct the Veterans Memorial boulevard by-pass road.
- Promote car-pooling and bus ridership (grant application pending).