

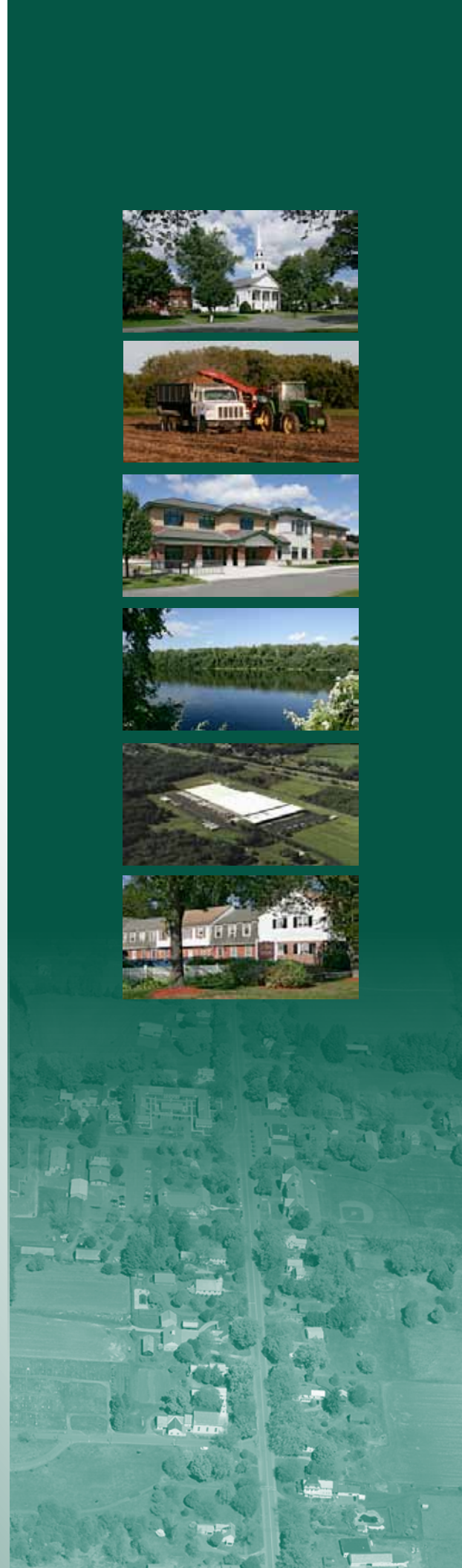
Hatfield Master Plan

Section B. Growth and Development – How Land Is Used



 Prepared by:
Pioneer Valley
Planning Commission

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts 2012 District Local Technical Assistance Program
and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission



Hatfield Master Plan Update

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Hatfield Master Plan Update

B. Growth and Development—How Land is Used

1. Facts

Because other land use issues, such as farmland and economic development, were covered in other sections of the 2001 Master Plan, this 2012 Update of this “Growth and Development” section will continue to address the residential and commercial development and related land use in Hatfield. In the eleven years since the 2001 Master Plan Hatfield continues to be relatively insulated from the development pressures being experienced in other areas of the Pioneer Valley and nearby communities. Some of this can be explained by much of Hatfield being located in areas with environmental constraints to development such as floodplains or wetlands. The town’s somewhat antiquated and limited public utilities also limit development opportunities to expanded areas. And certainly the general widespread economic downturn of the past decade that curtailed development, especially residential, in the region had an impact. But evidence of development overflowing from abutting communities have appeared over the last ten years with commercial growth expanding along Route 5/10 along the town line with Northampton. This has resulted in the need for the town to consider expanding public utilities to serve these developing areas.

Hatfield continues to be an attractive place to reside. Its rich soils and large expanses of farmland continue to support a healthy agricultural industry which also contributes towards preserving the rural small town character that many people seek. Hatfield’s proximity to the employment base provided by the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, the continued economic growth in Northampton and the convenient access to Route I91 providing easy access to expanding employment opportunities along the entire length of the Knowledge Corridor continue to support a community of well educated and employed residents.

Town officials recognize the need to accommodate a growing commercial/industrial tax base to help increase revenues to allow the town to continue to provide a quality of life that Hatfield residents have become accustomed to. However this need for increased tax revenues presents a delicate balancing act in terms of preserving the existing character and neighborhoods of the town.

Zoning

Zoning is the primary tool used by municipalities for guiding growth and development patterns in their community. The Zoning Bylaws dictate which uses are permitted in which Districts, and the Zoning Map illustrates where those Districts are located. In addition to land uses Zoning also regulates density, lot size, parking, signage, building heights, setbacks and numerous other items that contribute to developing and preserving the character and fabric of the community.

Hatfield’s development patterns have resulted from land use decisions made by the town over the years through the by-laws that have been adopted and the permits that have been

issued. Hatfield's Zoning Bylaw establishes eight zoning districts, three of which are specific to residential uses, two for mixed residential/business uses, and three for commercial and industrial uses.

Table One: Hatfield Zoning Districts

Zoning District	Intended Uses	Total Acres	% of Total
Agriculture	Low density single-family residential, agricultural/horticultural/floricultural/vitacultural	2,070.8	20.4
Outlying Residential	Low density single/two-family residential	3,000.2	29.6
Rural Residential	Low-medium density single/two/multi-family residential, limited retail	3,227.8	31.8
Town Center	Medium density single/two/multi-family residential, limited retail, food service, offices, services,	594.7	5.9
Town Center Business	Single/two/multi-family residential, limited retail, food service, offices, service, vehicle services	22.4	0.2
Business	Small to large scale retail, food service, lodging, offices, vehicle sales/services	243.2	2.3
Light Industrial	Industrial, manufacturing, offices	200.6	2.0
Industrial	Wholesale, transportation, industrial, machining, manufacturing, processing	788.4	7.8
TOTAL		10,148.1	

Residential Zoning Districts - The three residential districts make up nearly 82% of the town's total area.

The Agricultural District is comprised of some of Hatfield's best farmland and the entire district is situated within the 100-year floodplain of the Connecticut River and is further regulated by the Floodplain Overlay District. The primary uses permitted in this district are agricultural/horticultural/floricultural/vitacultural in nature and while single-family homes are permitted, they do require Site Plan Review by the Planning Board to ensure that they comply with the requirements of overlay district.

The Outlying Residential District is comprised of the hilly terrain westerly of Route 5/10. A significant portion of it is also subject to the Water Supply Protection District, an overlay district designed to protect the public water supply. The area is heavily forested and subject to steep slopes, poor soils, under constructed roads and a lack of public utilities. The minimum lot size is 60,000 square feet with 200 feet of frontage. This area is currently not under development pressure due to environmental and accessibility constraints.

Rural Residential is the town's single largest district encompassing nearly 32% of the town's area. While there is a smaller area running along the flatlands along the westerly side of Route I91, most of the district is located through the heart of the town between the industrial districts to the west and the old town center and Connecticut River floodplain to the east. This is the district where most of Hatfield's residential growth has developed over the years. It is flat, fertile and contains much farm and forest land suitable for development.

Commercial Zoning Districts – The three commercial districts consist of 8.4% of the town’s acreage.

The historic town center is comprised of the Town Center and Town Center Business Districts. These districts encompass the cultural and institutional center of Hatfield including its town offices, library, schools, churches, recreational facilities and a few commercial uses. It also includes two of the town’s National Register Historic Districts, the Hatfield Center Historic District and the Mill-Prospect Street Historic District. Although both districts permit small scale business and retail uses, the Town Center Business District also permits some more intensive commercial uses such as motor vehicle repair and entertainment venues.

While there are small individual parcels zoned Business scattered throughout the town, the Business District in Hatfield is located primarily along three sections of Route 5/10. Two areas are located at either ends of Route 5/10, accessible to and from Route I91. While the area at the Northampton end is comprised of newly constructed or renovated buildings containing professional offices, restaurants and shops, uses that are typical to such districts, the northerly section approaching Whately is more rural and contains many homes, working farms and farm stands, businesses operating out of homes and is lightly developed commercially. Most of it is also located within the North Hatfield National Historic District. There is an additional, smaller section of Business zone situated midway along Route 5/10 which has little actual commercial use but many buildings, some being prior motels, that have been converted to multi-family use.

Industrial Zoning Districts – the town’s two industrial districts comprise 9.8% of the town’s area.

Hatfield has two types of industrial districts, Light Industrial and Industrial. The Light Industrial Districts are located in two pockets along Route 10 directly across the street from the two southerly Business Districts. The small district across from the southerly Business District at the Northampton town line includes Cooperative Power, Stiebel Eltron and rkMiles home improvement center . The middle Light Industrial District includes the FedEx Express Shipping Center, Diamond RV Center and a self storage facility. There is an additional Light Industrial district which straddles the B&M/Connecticut River Railroad line and abuts the northerly Business District by Whately. The parcels are not currently used for light industrial purposes but are actively farmed. This district is actually “landlocked” as it has no direct frontage onto North Hatfield road. This district also abuts C&SW Wholesale Grocers-North and the Food Bank of Western Mass which are located in an Industrial District.

Hatfield’s Industrial District also straddles the B&M/Connecticut River Railroad line for almost its entire length through the town. C&S Wholesale Grocers South, John Deere and Brockway Smith occupy much of the southern property, and there is a long expanse of undeveloped land from there until the C&S North and Food Bank parcels at the northerly end of the district.

Residential Growth

Although the region's residential growth rate slowed considerably at the end of the decade, the Pioneer Valley did experience growth in residential development between 2000 and 2010. In updating the data in the comparable communities in the 2001 Master Plan, Hatfield averaged only a little over ten new single family residential parcels each year, the lowest figure of the four communities. Statistically however, because Hatfield had the smallest number of such parcels to begin with, its growth rate shifted from one of the slowest (1.6%) to one of the fastest (11.5%) of the four.

Table Two: Number of Single Family Residence Parcels

Community	1990	2000	2010	1990-2000		2000-2010	
				Increase # parcels	%	Increase # parcels	%
Hatfield	924	939	1,047	15	1.6	108	11.5
Hadley	1,299	1,498	1,625	199	15.3	127	8.4
Northampton	5,122	5,348	5,531	226	4.4	183	3.4
Southwick	2,278	2,638	2,982	360	15.8	344	13.0

Overall, residential property sales and values continued to rise in the region over the past decade, but slumped during the economic recession towards the end. Percentage wise, housing sales in Hatfield increased the most among the four communities. Hatfield's median sales price (\$263,000) was the highest of the four for most of the decade, but had the biggest decline (-17%) when the recession hit.

Table Three. Residential Sales

	Number of Sales					Median Sales Price (\$)				
	2006	2008	2010	% Change 06-08	08-10	2006	2008	2010	% Change 06-08	08-10
Hatfield	31	43	50	39	16	250,000	263,000	218,750	5	-17
Hadley	66	94	74	42	-21	244,000	259,950	244,450	7	-6
Northampton	444	353	342	-20	-3	247,750	249,950	237,250	.9	-5
Southwick	188	119	125	-37	3	222,500	200,000	210,000	-10	5
Hampshire Cty	2,433	1,775	1,715	-27	-3	234,000	225,000	215,900	-4	-4
PV Region	10,927	7,050	6,623	-35	-6	127,823	180,055	185,060	41	3

The increase in the average tax bill for a single-family residence in Hatfield from 1990-2000 was 42.8% (the lowest of the four communities), and from 2000-2010 it increased 61.7%. While this was still only the third lowest of the set, it was closer to the higher rates of increase in Northampton and Southwick than it had been a decade earlier.

Table Four. Average Single Family Residence Property Tax Bill

Community	FY 1990	FY 2000	FY 2010	1990-2000		2000-2010	
				Increase in \$	% Change	Increase in \$	% Change
Hatfield	\$1,374	\$1,962	\$3,172	\$588	42.8	\$1210	61.7
Hadley	\$1,097	\$1,977	\$2,861	\$880	80.2	\$884	44.7
Northampton	\$1,469	\$2,314	\$3,819	\$845	57.5	\$1505	65.0
Southwick	\$1,369	\$1,971	\$3,424	\$602	44.0	\$1453	73.7

Hatfield's residential property tax rate continues to be one of the lowest in the area, but it's % of change continues to be about average with the comparison communities. While in the past Hatfield's rate had been about half of what the region was experiencing, today it is much closer to the average.

Table Five. Residential Property Tax Rate

Community	FY 1990	FY 2000	FY 2010	1990-2000		2000-2010	
				Change in \$	% Change	Change in \$	% Change
Hatfield	\$9.36	\$13.24	\$10.87	\$3.88	41.5	-\$2.37	-17.9
Hadley	\$7.18	\$13.03	\$9.32	\$5.85	81.5	-\$3.71	-28.5
Northampton	\$10.99	\$16.07	\$12.64	\$5.08	46.2	-\$3.43	-21.3
Southwick	\$12.17	\$15.56	\$13.44	\$3.39	27.9	-\$2.12	-13.6

Commercial/Industrial Growth

Hatfield's commercial and industrial base has seen a steady increase from 1997-2005. Today the town's Business and Town Center Business Districts total 256.6 acres (if the Town Center District, which also permits limited business and mixed uses, is factored in then the total commercial acreage increases to 860 acres). From 1997 to 2005 the amount of commercially developed land has increased 35% (an annual rate of 4.4%) compared to 45% over the previous twelve years (an annual rate of 3.7%). Most of this growth has occurred along Route 10.

Of the town's 989 acres of Industrial zoned property (788.4 in Industrial, 200.6 in Light Industrial) 188 acres (19%) have been developed. Between 1997 and 2005 73 acres have been developed. This is an increase of 63% in industrial developed land in eight years (an annual rate of 7.9%) compared to 53% over the previous twelve years (an annual rate of 4.4%). This growth has occurred primarily along the Route 5/10 and I91 corridor.

Table Six. Current Business and Industrial Acreage

	1997 (Acres)		2005 (Acres)			
	Zoned	Developed	Zoned	Developed (%increase from 1997)	Undeveloped	Unconstrained for development
Commercial	287	71	266*	96 (35%)	170	62.6
Industrial	1,047	115	989	188 (63%)	801	11.2
TOTAL	1,334	186	1,255	284 (53%)	971	73.8

*Business and Town Center Business Districts

As was pointed out in the 2001 Master Plan, while Hatfield does have significant acreage of industrial and commercial zoned land, much of the land that isn't already developed is constrained from future development due to floodplains, wetlands, river protection lands, and other environmental constraints most of which are regulated by law. While this legislative protection is likely to continue into the future, other environmental constraints may not. As the town's and region's flat and more easily developed properties get developed, it may make more marginally developable parcels (i.e. steep slopes, poor soils, ledge) more cost effective to develop. This is what has happened in other parts of Massachusetts and the country as available land becomes scarce and growth pressures increase.

Given Hatfield's current land use and the twin goals of maintaining rural character and strengthening the tax base, the town should re-zone some land to direct economic development to locations best suited for that use and should update existing zoning regulations to harmonize new development with the character of the town.

Population Growth

Hatfield's population growth rate had been relatively slow in the previous two decades (3% in the 1980's, 2.2% in the 1990's). From 2000 to 2010 the rate was even lower at .7%, very low when compared to Hadley (9%) and the Hampshire County (3.8%) and state-wide (7.5%) figures. While Hatfield's population growth is slow, the increase in Hatfield's median age is increasing at a much faster rate. Back in 1980 the median age of Hatfield's population was 34.1 years. While high for the region (the Hampshire County median age was only 27) it was only 1.2 years older than the median age for Hadley, and 3 years older than the state-wide median age of 31.1. That figure has steadily increased in Hatfield over the ensuing years (38 in 1990, 43.2 in 2000) and in 2010 the median age had increased to 48.3. While still relatively close with Hadley's figure of 46.9, it is a widening 9.2 years older than the state-wide figure of 39.1 and 12.1 years older than Hampshire County's median age of 36.2.

While the overall population growth rate of Hatfield has remained low and relatively stable, the town's population is steadily aging. Residents are staying in Hatfield and living out their years. While the percent of the population under age 19 declined slightly from 1990 (23.1%) to 2000 (23%), it declined much more rapidly over the past decade (19% in 2010). Over these same time periods the town's population over age 65 increased from 16% to 16.7% between 1990 and 2000, and at an even greater rate by 2010 (18.3%). This aging of Hatfield's population will continue to have an effect over the town's demographic and economic character as an aging population's contributions to the town are different than a younger population's and they have different needs requiring different services.

Table Seven. Population Changes

Total Population							
	1980	1990	% Change	2000	% Change	2010	% Change
Hatfield	3,095	3,184	2.9	3,254	2.2	3,279	.7
Hadley	4,125	4,231	2.6	4,795	13.3	5,250	9.4
Northampton	29,286	29,283	0.0	28,968	-1	28,549	-1.4
Southwick	7,382	7,669	3.9	8,871	15.7	9,502	7.1
Hampshire Cty	138,813	146,568	5.6	152,251	3.9	158,080	3.8
Massachusetts	5,737,037	6,016,425	4.9	6,127,881	1.9	6,587,536	7.5

Table Eight. Median Age

Median Age							
	1980	1990	% Change	2000	% Change	2010	% Change
Hatfield	34.1	38	11.4	43.2	13.7	48.3	11.8
Hadley	32.9	37.7	14.6	42.3	12.2	46.9	10.9
Northampton	30.2	33.4	10.6	37.3	11.7	37.1	-.5
Southwick	28.0	32.9	17.5	37.9	15.2	42.1	11.1
Hampshire Cty	27.0	30.3	12.2	34.4	13.5	36.2	5.2
Massachusetts	31.1	33.6	8.0	36.5	8.6	39.1	7.1

Regulatory Review

In the ten years since the development of Hatfield's 2001 Master Plan the town has implemented a number of its significant recommendations, including:

- adopting Site Plan Approval for all Commercial and Industrial developments
- adopting commercial and industrial design guidelines and performance standards
- developing elderly congregate housing
- adopting the Community Preservation Act, a Transfer of Development Rights Bylaw, a by-right farmland cluster zoning bylaw and establishing an Agricultural Advisory Committee
- implementing a stormwater management bylaw

Hatfield's has been doing a good job in updating its zoning regulations to keep up with new ideas and principles. However, in helping the town to continue addressing the types and intensities of development that are occurring now, and will continue into the future, the following gaps should be addressed:

- The dimensional regulations in Section 4.3 permit only large lot development in all zoning districts in Hatfield. Lot sizes range from 45,000 square feet to 60,000 square feet. This results in a “sprawl” development pattern with the conversion of open space to spread-out suburban building patterns.
- The frontage requirements for all new building lots in town are universally 200 feet in each district, prescribing that lots must be spread over formerly open space and along town roads.
- While performance standards were adopted for cluster, commercial, industrial and mixed use developments to ensure that new businesses will be constructed in ways that do not undermine the town's rural and historic character, there are no performance standards for multi-family, town house, and elderly housing developments.
- Hatfield does not have a “non-criminal disposition bylaw” for zoning enforcement. Such a bylaw would be a helpful addition to the zoning bylaw, because it makes it easier for the town's Zoning Enforcement Officer to enforce the bylaw.
- Hatfield's zoning map illustrates where the town's zoning districts are located within the community. What stands out on the zoning map are the number of individual isolated Business zones scattered throughout the town's residential districts. In some cases these business uses might serve the intended purpose of providing services to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. In many cases it appears that these properties are no longer used for business purposes, but could be used for uses permitted in the Business District that is incompatible with the surrounding residential uses.
- The Zoning Map also shows a large Industrial District on Kellogg Hill Road. This area is identified as being located within the Floodplain Overlay District which restricts development within the 100-year floodplain of the Connecticut River. Access to this site is through the town's historic town center which would seem to be inconsistent with development which generates industrial traffic flows.
- In addition, it should be noted that the Zoning Map also shows that the Light Industrial District off of the westerly side of North Hatfield Road is landlocked as it doesn't appear to have any frontage on a public way.

Changes in Land Use and Development Patterns

Beginning in the 1950's the State of Massachusetts started an ongoing program of land use data collection of its cities and towns. Originally conducted by William MacConnell and the University of Massachusetts, the land use patterns of Massachusetts communities have been documented through the analysis and interpretation of aerial photography. Hatfield's aerial photographs were again taken and analyzed in 1971, 1985, 1997 and most recently in 2005 (the 2005 data was produced by the Sanborn Company). There a number of considerations that need to be taken into account when reviewing and comparing the data contained in these land use interpretations and mappings:

1. The need to aggregate land use categories into those identifiable from aerial photography and comparable over several decades of analysis, may result in some categories offering misleading information because of limitations of the technology and methodology. An example of this is how "Wetland" was categorized. This category did not necessarily reflect the vast majority of acreage consisting of Bordering Vegetated Wetlands, a resource area regulated under the Wetland Protection Act.
2. The 2005 aerial photography interpretation changed some of the classifications and created some new ones including:
 - a. "Forested Wetland" – prior to 2005 forested wetlands were not included in the "Wetland" category, but were included in the aggregate total of "Forest" lands. However, for the 2005 aerial photographs a new classification of "Forest Wetland" was established, which now changed the aggregate for the former Forest and Wetland (now labeled "Non-Forested Wetland") acreages from prior years.
 - b. "Residential Very Low >1 acres lots" was previously included in "Residential Greater than 1/2 acre lot"
 - c. "Open Land" no longer includes power lines.
 - d. "Urban Open, parks, institutional, cemeteries" was split into separate classifications
3. Because of technological advances in aerial photography and the ability to analyze and interpret them, the 2005 data is substantially more accurate than the data from previous years. Prior to 2005 the land use data was manually interpreted from aerial photographs. Beginning in 2005 the land use map was derived directly from an ortho image.

While all of the above new methodology maintains much compatibility with the older system, it also explains some of the significant changes in land uses since 1997 which previously may have been misinterpreted or classified and have skewed the percentage of change from 1997 to 2005.

Table Nine: Land Uses in Hatfield 1985-2005

Land Use	1985		1997		2005		'85-'97	'97-'05
	Acres	Use as % of Total	Acres	Use as % of Total	Acres	Use as % of Total	% Change	% Change
Crop Land	3,717	35	3,478	32	2,793	25	-6	-20
Pasture	84	.8	82	.8	161	2	-3	96
Forest	4,868	45	4,795	45	4,189	39	-2	-13
Wetland/Forest	-	-	-	-	910	8	-	-
Wetland	141	1	141	1	390	4	0	176
Mining	15	.1	21	.2	6	0	39	-71
Open Land	118	1	139	1	65	.6	18	-53
Recreation	30	.3	30	.3	21	.2	0	-30
MF Res.	2	.1	2	.1	18	.2	0	800
Res. < ¼ acre lot	5	.1	7	.1	6	.1	30	-14
Res. ¼-½ acre lot	396	4	411	4	200	2	4	-51
Res. >½ acre lot	544	5	711	7	847	8	31	19
Commercial	49	.5	71	1	96	1	43	35
Industrial	75	.7	115	1	188	2	52	63
Urban Open	64	.6	53	.5	68	.6	-17	28
Transportation	170	2	156	1	148	1	-8	-5
Waste Disposal	8	0	8	0	8	0	0	0
Water	479	5	479	5	540	5	0	13
Orchard/Nursery	-	-	67	.6	92	.9	-	13
Successional Brushland	-	-	-	-	9	0	-	NA

Source: MacConnell Land Use Survey and Massachusetts Geographic Information System (GIS).

Table Nine shows that industrial, commercial and residential land uses continued to gain the most acreage from 1997 to 2005. Industrial land uses increased by 73 acres (63%) in that eight year span, an 82% increase over the 40 acres converted from 1985-1997. Commercial uses gained 25 acres (35%) from 1997 to 2005, which was only a 13% increase over the 22 acres converted from 1985-1997. Most of this increase in commercial and industrial development occurred along the previously mentioned sections of Route 10 and the B&M/Connecticut River Railroad line.

While Table Nine shows an actual decrease of 60 acres in the total acreage of residential land uses between 1997 and 2005, this figure would appear to be inconsistent with the fact that Building Permits for 96 new dwelling units were issued during this same time frame (see Table Twelve). This would appear to be one of the instances cited above where the improved aerial photography and interpretation in 2005 provided more accurate information than that obtained in earlier aerial photos.

Table Ten: Hatfield Residential Building Permits Issued

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	TOTAL
SF Units	3	14	10	13	12	9	9	7	3	80
MF Units	8	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	16
TOTAL	11	14	10	13	20	9	9	7	3	96

Source: SOCDs Building Permit Database, HUD

While most of the conversion to residential uses since 1997 resulted from large lot, low-density single family development, 16 acres (an 800% increase) resulted from the development of 16 multi-family residential units.

The land use categories which are shown to have had the greatest decrease in acreage were Open Lands (abandoned agriculture and areas of no vegetation) which lost 64 acres (53%), Cropland (intensive agriculture) which lost 685 acres (20%), and Forest which lost 606 (13%). While much of the acreage lost in these three land uses can be attributed to the conversion to new residential, commercial and industrial development the majority of the decline can be attributed to the new classifications and interpretations used in the 2005 aerial photographs (most notably “Forest/Wetland’s” 900 acres).

Tables 11, 12, 13 and 14 below show that the rate of lands being developed in Hatfield continues to be consistent with what is typically occurring in other communities in the region. While the relatively strong and stable economy between 1997 and 2005 maintained a healthy growth in real estate, the US economy slowed sharply at the end of 2005 and continues through 2012 resulting in an overall depressed real estate market. While the more intensive growth pressures experienced over the prior two decades in the adjacent communities of Hadley and Northampton was not experienced in Hatfield, as the economy recovers and the future developable land supplies in the region are depleted, the demand will likely spill over into Hatfield. Guiding this anticipated development and directing it in a manner that allows Hatfield to still retain the community’s unique characteristics is the challenge that the town will be facing and must be taken into consideration when determining its course of action.

Table Eleven: Agricultural Land Change (Cropland & Pasture acres)

	1971	1997	2005	'71-'97		'97-'05	
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres Lost	% Lost	Acres Lost	% Lost
Hatfield	3,826	3,560	2,954	266	7	606	17
Hadley	7,984	7,386	6,335	598	7	1,051	14
Southwick	4,631	4,330	3,294	301	6	1,036	24
Northampton	3645	3,301	2,739	344	9	562	17

Table Twelve: Residential Development Change – all (acres)

	1971	1997	2005	'71-'97		'97-'05	
				Acres Gained	% Gained	Acres Gained	% Gained
Hatfield	748	1,131	1,071	383	51	-60	-5
Hadley	1,121	1,658	1,540	537	48	-118	-7
Southwick	2,093	2,891	2,624	798	38	-267	-9
Northampton	2,990	4,061	3,338	1,071	36	-723	-18

Table Thirteen: Commercial Development Change (acres)

	1971	1997	2005	'71-'97		'97-'05	
				Acres Gained	% Gained	Acres Gained	% Gained
Hatfield	35	71	96	36	103	25	35
Hadley	136	283	343	147	108	60	21
Southwick	92	163	242	71	77	79	48
Northampton	343	416	374	73	21	-42	-10

Table Fourteen: Industrial Development Change

	1971	1997	2005	'71-'97		'97-'05	
				Acres Gained	% Gained	Acres Gained	% Gained
Hatfield	59	115	188	56	95	73	63
Hadley	42	68	59	26	62	-9	-13
Southwick	6	35	57	29	483	22	63
Northampton	146	241	222	95	65	-19	-8

While Hatfield continues to experience residential, commercial and industrial growth, the majority of the land (nearly 80%) is still undeveloped forested, agricultural and open space giving the community its rural character.

The several hundred acres of land that have been developed for new urban uses have fronted mostly along the public roads, including Linseed Road, Routes 5/10, Bridge Street, North Prospect Street, and King Street. This pattern of development is consistent with the way the town has traditionally grown. Such patterns have avoided substantial diminution of the most critical wetlands, forest, and water habitats. However, these traditional linear growth patterns that result in dispersed development can have negative impacts, including inefficiency in the provision of public water and sewer, and a decline in road maintenance, which can increase the cost of these government services. Other problems include congestion and corresponding environmental impacts.

What Does This Mean For Hatfield?

Hatfield's current land development pattern of commercial/industrial strip development along the Route 5/10 and I91 corridor and residential development along existing street frontages could affect the community's desire to retain the charm of its historic rural farming character. However, as the cost of providing municipal services continues to increase the town also needs to increase its commercial/industrial tax base in order to reduce the tax burden on residential properties.

Hatfield is blessed with an abundance of forest and farmland. Unfortunately the need to accommodate the town's growth and maintain a vital economic base will likely involve some of these undeveloped lands being converted to urbanized uses. The challenge to town officials will be to strategically direct this development in a manner that minimizes impacts on the community's character and preserves its attributes. Such a strategy should take into consideration the lack of permanent protection of the town's agricultural lands and open space deemed significant to maintaining its character.

2. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT Issues

- **Balancing the Need to Expand the Town's Tax Base Through Increased Economic Development While Preserving Hatfield's Rural Character** — As it becomes increasingly expensive to administer town government and provide municipal services Hatfield, along with most other municipalities, finds itself in the position of needing to enhance its revenues through the expansion of the town's commercial tax base. While this provides much needed employment opportunities and increased tax revenues, this must be done in a manner that does not impact Hatfield's rural character.
- **Impact of Development on Open Space and Environmentally Sensitive Areas** — Hatfield's growth continues to be accommodated by the conversion of forest and farmland, much of it the result of large-lot zoning which results in a sprawled and scattered pattern of development. This style of development also threatens the community's natural resources such as the water supply aquifer, wetlands, water courses and natural and endangered species habitat through actual encroachment or off-site impacts. Because the vast majority of the town is still comprised of forest, farmland and wetlands it can often times be taken for granted. Coupled with a relatively slow growth rate the gradual loss of these resources to the community can sometimes not be readily apparent or recognized.
- **Mitigating the Impacts of Development** — As Hatfield continues to grow, the impacts of development on the quality of life and character of the community will continue to become more apparent. Truck traffic will continue to increase as a result of the commercial and industrial development along Routes 5/10 and I91. Residential and commuter traffic flows will increase on Hatfield's interior roads as the residential population increases. Hatfield's growth will continue to tax the town's ability to provide municipal services such as public utilities and infrastructure. Conflicts between incompatible uses will become more apparent as the current sprawl pattern of development continues.
- **Balanced Development on Route 5/10** — With its readily available access to Route I91, Route 5/10 continues to attract commercial development and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. While this is the logical area for the town's commercial base to grow, attention should be given that it does not develop as just another long commercial strip for its entire length. There are a number of environmentally sensitive areas (aquifer, wetlands, etc.) as well as residences along Route 10 that would be negatively impacted by extensive commercial development. The commercial uses should be developed in mixed use clusters at strategic locations.

- **Lack of a Written Municipal Infrastructure Improvement Plan** — The town currently lacks a written water/sewer expansion plan that is coordinated with growth planning goals. Planning for town facilities and services continues to occur without a cohesive set of goals and land use policies that could guide such planning. Without an overall plan for growth and development in the town, decision makers are forced to judge the merit of specific projects without comprehensive policy tools to guide them.
- **Lack of Permanent Farmland Preservation** – There is little question that the large expanses of farmland contribute heavily to Hatfield’s rural character. While Hatfield has some of the most fertile agricultural lands in the county, and some of it offers limited development potential as it falls within the 100-year floodplain of the Connecticut River, very little of the town’s upland farmland is under any form of permanent protection or preservation. Only five farms totaling 310 acres are enrolled in the state’s Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program. Without an active farmland preservation program, the development pressures on these lands make them vulnerable to intensive development that can quickly change the character of the community.
- **Large Areas of the Town Zoned for Commercial and Industrial Uses are Constrained Environmentally** — While Hatfield’s Zoning Map shows extensive areas along Route 5/10 and I91 corridors being zoned for commercial and industrial uses, much of that land cannot be fully developed due to environmental constraints such as the existence of wetlands, floodplains, watershed and water supply protection, riverfront protection areas, and rare species habitat.
- **Housing Opportunities for Young Families and Elders are Limited** — There is a lack of affordable housing, both ownership and rental, in Hatfield. Whether its seniors looking to downsize, or young families and first time homebuyers seeking to stay in or move into Hatfield, the availability of flexible, appropriate, and affordable housing is extremely limited. This is reflected in Hatfield’s aging population and rising median income. Multi-generational continuity is disrupted as long-time Hatfield elder residents, their children and young families are forced to look outside Hatfield for housing.
- **Balancing the Need for Alternative Energy while Maintaining the Rural Character of the Community** – The Hatfield community supports the need for seeking alternate energy sources that are more environmentally friendly and lesson the dependency on fossil fuels. However a recent proposal to develop a commercial solar facility proximate to a residential neighborhood in town has heightened people’s concerns over the aesthetics of such facilities and their impact on abutting property values. This has generated a community discussion over where such facilities should be located and what process should be followed.

3. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT Recommendations

The following recommendations are being proposed to address the issues identified in the previous section. Each recommendation is categorized in terms of:

Type: whether the recommendation is Regulatory (i.e. zoning or subdivision regulation change) or Non-Regulatory

Importance: 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = relatively less important

Who: the entity that has primary responsibility for implementation of the recommendation

When: a timetable for when the recommendation should be acted upon

Zoning Map Improvements

- Street names should be shown on the Zoning Map for easier orientation
- All of the overlay zoning districts should be shown

Type: Regulatory

Importance: 1

Who: Planning Board

When: Spring 2013

Educate younger generations about the need to preserve the rural character of Hatfield.

Long range land use planning begins with a caring and informed citizenry. In addition to learning about specific issues such as the function of wetlands and the business of agriculture, young Hatfield residents could benefit from learning to understand their community within a larger context. The town's schools can enhance students' knowledge and experiences regarding the town. Prior to retirement, one Hatfield teacher did, in the past, include this as part of the class curriculum. Long-time residents should be invited to speak to students about the Hatfield of 25, 50, or 200 years ago, and young residents should be given opportunities to develop new ideas about how to maintain and enhance the town when they inherit this community in future years.

Type: Non Regulatory

Importance: 3

Who: School Department, Historical Commission, Historical Society

When: In the next two to four years

Encourage development that preserves environmentally sensitive areas

Land use data for the town shows that new residential and commercial development continues to encroach onto previously undeveloped natural areas of grassland, open fields, forest and agricultural lands displacing natural habitat. This is inadvertently encouraged as these environmentally sensitive areas are included in zoning districts that permit development. To preserve these areas and mitigate the development impact of them regulations should be developed to:

- encourage adequate undisturbed vegetated buffer strips between developed areas and wetland areas which will help maintain healthy wetlands and waterways by preventing soil disturbance, serving as a natural erosion control devices, limiting application of herbicides and pesticides near sensitive areas, and preventing the incidental encroachment of human activity into wetland areas
- promote more creative developments and preserve environmentally sensitive areas extend the Open Space Development method to include multi-family developments
- Green Development Performance Standards

Type: Regulatory

Importance: 1

Who: Planning Board, Conservation Commission

When: Spring 2013

Assess the extent of the Rte 5 & 10 Corridor aquifer and its potential as a drinking water supply

The state’s MassGIS Online Mapping indicates that a potential medium yield aquifer may exist under a large section of Hatfield encompassing most of the land along the entire length of the Rte 5 & 10 corridor and easterly to the Connecticut River. These GIS data layers are based on U.S. Geological Survey mapping. Indications are that this aquifer could be capable of yielding 25 to 1,000 gallons per minute (gpm). This is part of a larger aquifer that extends along both sides of the Connecticut River for its entire length in Massachusetts. The town should determine if this is a viable water source for the community:

- an engineering firm should be retained to undertake a groundwater exploration (well drilling, pumping tests, water quality sampling, etc.) to assess the potential well yields and determine its favorability for groundwater source development
- if so, the town should determine the area of the aquifer that could serve as a potable water supply (including any Zone 2) and consider preserving its long term viability through its inclusion in the town’s Water Supply Protection District

Type: Regulatory

Importance: 1

Who: Department of Public Works/Water Department, Board of Selectmen

When: Summer 2013

- - -

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Actively encourage farmland preservation and participation in the state's Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program.

While many Hatfield farms are temporarily protected by enrolling in the state's Chapter 61A Assessment and Taxation of Agricultural and Horticultural Lands program, to date only five farms, encompassing 310 acres, have been permanently protected under the Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction program. This is a very low participation rate for a community with some of the Pioneer Valley's best farmland, particularly when compared with neighboring Hadley, where 76 farms totaling 2,651 acres have APR protection. Hatfield needs to:

- undertake an outreach program to educate farmland owners about the merits of the APR program, and to assist them in applying for the program

Type: Non Regulatory

Importance: 1

Who: Agricultural Advisory Committee

When: Ongoing

Increase use of the Chapter 61 program while assuring that Chapter 61 conversions of land are reviewed by the town.

While only temporary in nature and not offering the permanent protection of the APR program, the town should continue to encourage farmers to utilize the state's Chapter 61A Assessment and Taxation of Agricultural and Horticultural Lands program. This real estate tax abatement program helps to keep farmland undeveloped by offering a window of opportunity for the town to purchase the farmland in the event that the owner chooses to sell their property. Within 120 days of being notified that the property is being sold and removed from the program, the town may choose to exercise its right of first refusal and make arrangements to acquire the property. This allows the community the opportunity to protect natural resource lands that might otherwise transfer to a private owner. Because the law does not provide much time for the town to react and respond to a conversion letter (only 120 days), in order for the town to effectively exercise its right of first refusal ability it needs a pre-arranged, organized and efficient review process which can assess properties and prioritize them relative to their value to the community.

Type: Non Regulatory

Importance: 2

Who: Agricultural Advisory Committee

When: Ongoing

Rezoning

In the interest of preserving Hatfield's prime agricultural lands and agricultural community the following rezoning proposals should be considered to avoid the development of incompatible land uses:

- the former Pilgrim Airport site on Main St. at the Whately town line should be rezoned from its current Rural Residential District to the Agricultural District to discourage the residential development of this prime farmland
- the Kellogg Hill Rd. area should be rezoned from its current Industrial District to the Agricultural District to better reflect, be compatible with and reduce potential negative off-site development impacts on the uses of the surrounding Agricultural, Town Center and Rural Residential Districts

Type: Regulatory

Importance: 2

Who: Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee

When: Spring 2014

- - -

Improved municipal infrastructure planning

Businesses and residential growth in the town is placing increased demands on the public water supply while at the same time threatening it with potential contamination from failing on-site septic systems. With limited resources the town needs to identify and prioritize these required improvements by:

- updating and digitizing the sewer and water line maps
- developing master plans and capital improvement plans for public sewer and water improvements and extensions
- identify and secure funding for required extensions
- development of Rte 5/10 Corridor Infrastructure improvements to service homes and businesses with failing septic systems negatively impacting the Water Supply Protection Overlay District/aquifer for two town wells

Type: Regulatory

Importance: 1

Who: Department of Public Works, Board of Selectmen, Redevelopment Authority, Planning Board, Capital Improvement Planning Committee

When: Spring 2014

- - -

Manage Residential Development.

New development

Hatfield continues to be fortunate that it has not yet experienced a major influx of new residential development experienced by other communities in the area. Regional growth trends, however, suggest such growth pressures are inevitable. While Hatfield has taken measures since the last Master Plan to help manage and direct where and how residential development occurs, additional efforts should be taken to develop regulations which:

- favor compact village center and cluster development over sprawling development in rural areas
- limit extensions of roads, sewer, and water lines into rural and agricultural areas
- continue efforts to matching lot size and frontage requirements to surrounding neighborhoods to promote infill development which replicates and compliments the character of existing neighborhoods.
- improve the appearance of new larger commercial and multi-family townhouse style developments and make them more compatible with the character of existing neighborhoods by adopting design standards to guide and control their exterior appearance

Type: Regulatory

Importance: 1

Who: Planning Board

When: Spring 2014

Develop zoning regulations to promote a diversity of housing opportunities in Hatfield.

Hatfield continues to provide a narrow range of housing options limiting opportunities for the elderly or handicapped persons, low and moderate income families, new homebuyers and young families. While the town has taken recent efforts since the last Master Plan by adopting zoning provisions for elderly, handicapped and congregate housing, consideration should be given to adopt zoning for:

- Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TDN)
- inclusionary zoning, and
- accessory apartment/accessory building bylaws

especially to encourage the retention and attraction of young families and seniors.

Type: Regulatory

Importance: 2

Who: Planning Board

When: Spring 2015

Zoning compatibility

- There are many small, isolated Business Districts on individual lots or small clusters surrounded by the Rural Residential District. Many of these isolated Business Districts are no longer used or suitable for business uses, are vacant, or have already been converted to Rural Residential District uses. Consideration should be given to rezoning these parcels to Rural Residential to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses. Even where some of these individual parcels may continue to be used for business purposes, rezoning to Rural Residential should be considered to allow such uses to continue as pre-existing nonconforming, but will ensure a transition to more compatible uses in the future.
- The existing residential properties on Valley and South Streets should be rezoned from the Agricultural District to the Town Center District as the present uses are non-agricultural in nature and some of the current regulations of the Agricultural District make renovations difficult.

Type: Regulatory

Importance: 2

Who: Planning Board

When: Spring 2015

- - -

Manage Commercial/Industrial Development

Route 5/10

With the continued reduction of available land for business expansion in Northampton and surrounding communities, Hatfield will continue to feel expanded commercial growth pressures. Since the last Master Plan several industries and professional offices have moved to Hatfield. As traffic volumes increase on Route 5/10, other auto-oriented uses are being attracted. While there is strong sentiment to prevent Route 5/10 from developing into just another commercial strip in the region, the current zoning regulations offer few development restraints to those seeking developable commercial and industrial properties and this area is feeling the demand for continued development. These “pressures” can be perceived as both an opportunity and a challenge, but should be managed properly. The town could consider:

- adopting Mixed Use Zoning along Rte 5/10 – avoid trend towards commercial strip development by preserving existing residential neighborhoods and clustering commercial development in mixed use nodes at strategic locations
- requiring street trees along both sides of the street, even where business and light industrial uses exist. The appearance of business and light industrial uses could be softened by screening with plantings and trees

Type: Regulatory
Importance: 1
Who: Planning Board, Redevelopment Authority
When: Spring 2013

Rezoning North Hatfield Road

- The property on the easterly side of North Hatfield Rd. approaching the intersection with Rte 5/10 should be rezoned from Rural Residential to Light Industrial. The properties across the street on the west side of North Hatfield Rd. are already in the Light Industrial and Industrial Districts, and properties abutting to the north at the Rte 5/10 intersection are already in the Business and Industrial Districts. Development of these properties for residential use would be incompatible with, and could make development of the surrounding commercial and industrial parcels difficult.
- The frontage lots on the westerly side of North Hatfield Rd. approaching the intersection with Rte 5/10 should be rezoned from the current Rural Residential District to the Light Industrial District. The current Rural Residential zoning could potentially land-lock and restrict access to the existing Light Industrial parcels to the rear. Development of these frontage lots for residential use would be incompatible with, and could make development of the current Light Industrial parcels difficult.

Type: Regulatory
Importance: 1
Who: Planning Board, Redevelopment Authority
When: Spring 2014

Commercial Solar Facilities

In light of recent controversies regarding the potential siting of a commercial solar facility proximate to a residential neighborhood, there is a heightened community interest in the town's need to adopt local regulations which:






























- reasonably regulate commercial solar facilities to ensure that they are located on appropriate parcels in appropriate districts
- require adequate screening
- require decommissioning of facilities and bonding

Type: Regulatory
Importance: 1
Who: Planning Board, Energy Committee
When: Spring 2013

Appendix

- Hatfield 2005 Land Use map
- Hatfield Zoning Map

Legend

-  Pasture
-  Cropland
-  Orchard
-  Nursery
-  Brushland/Successional, Transitional
-  Forest
-  Non-Forested Wetland
-  Forested Wetland
-  Golf Course
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Junkyard
-  Very Low Density Residential
-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  High Density Residential
-  Open Land
-  Cemetery
-  Marina
-  Participation Recreation
-  Spectator Recreation
-  Urban Public/Institutional
-  Transportation
-  Powerline/Utility
-  Mining
-  Waste Disposal
-  Water
-  Water-Based Recreation



Hatfield, Massachusetts
Master Plan
2012 - 13

2005 LANDUSE

Hatfield Master Plan Committee
and
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
September 4, 2012





Zoning Map

Town of Hatfield

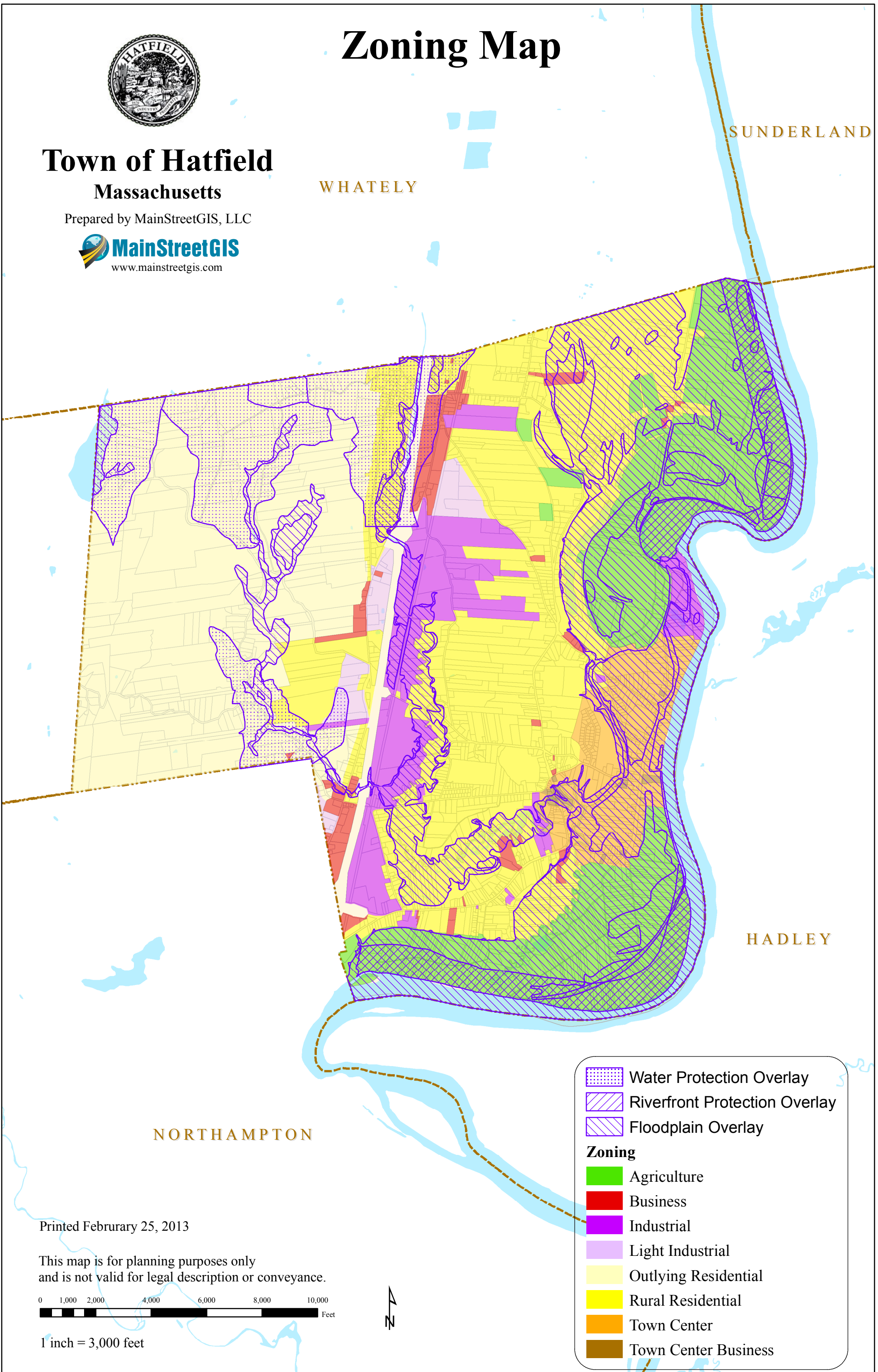
Massachusetts

Prepared by MainStreetGIS, LLC



SUNDERLAND

WHATELY



HADLEY

NORTHAMPTON

	Water Protection Overlay
	Riverfront Protection Overlay
	Floodplain Overlay
Zoning	
	Agriculture
	Business
	Industrial
	Light Industrial
	Outlying Residential
	Rural Residential
	Town Center
	Town Center Business

Printed February 25, 2013

This map is for planning purposes only and is not valid for legal description or conveyance.



1 inch = 3,000 feet

