

11.0 LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element of a master plan is essentially a blueprint for development. This chapter synthesizes and builds upon the preceding elements to provide a roadmap for achieving a development vision. Through in-person meetings and the extensive community survey, it became clear that Holden's greatest task today is balancing inevitable change with preservation. These desires are not mutually conflicting, but require a new kind of planning approach than the Town has pursued in the past.

Land use and zoning play a crucial role in facilitating these changes by removing existing obstacles and providing new incentives. Land use patterns influence the issues and opportunities identified in other chapters including insufficient business, service, and restaurant options for both customers and owners (Economic Development), frustrating Main Street traffic (Transportation), high levels of single-family residential construction (Housing), and expansion of recreation and preservation opportunities including Eagle Lake (OSR and Natural Resources).

Accordingly, this chapter offers strategies for preservation and sustainable development, with emphasis on four specific goals:

- Concentrating development around existing infrastructure.
- Facilitating adaptive reuse of existing buildings to complement the rural character of the Town.
- Ensuring consistency between Holden's long-range plans and Town and state regulations.
- Taking a proactive and responsive approach to emerging issues in land use.

This chapter will summarize prior land use planning, analyze current land use patterns, review existing zoning, identify issues and opportunities and their relation to land use, and provide recommendations towards achieving the Master Plan land use goals.

PRIOR PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

The Town of Holden has pursued a consistent vision of development for several decades. This vision seeks increased goods, services, and employment opportunities, and an improved tax base, without compromising the existing character of the community. This vision has been expressed since at least 2004 with Holden's Executive Order (EO) 418 Community Development Plan, and remains relevant today.¹

EO 418 Community Development Plan (2004)

The Community Development Plan recommended the redevelopment and expansion of existing commercial and industrial sites, or the rezoning of suitable land from residential to commercial or industrial use. That same year, CMRPC authored a regional 2020 Growth Strategy Study (CMRPC, 2004) that notes the tendency for towns to respond to growth pressures by adopting large-lot residential zoning as a mechanism for growth management. Recent land use data indicates that this method leads to rising levels of suburban sprawl, the deterioration of existing pedestrian-friendly development, similar deterioration of open space and town character, and the further construction of strip-style development. In response, CMRPC encourages compact development and the concentration of both residential and commercial uses in appropriate village centers—or "Smart Growth." These strategies have evolved, and are reflected in the Town's contemporary efforts to adopt mixed-use and village center zoning. Such approaches will enable new residential development concurrent to expansion of non-residential tax bases. (Land Use Inc., 2004)

Holden Master Plan (2008)

The 2008 Holden Master Plan is the most comprehensive land use planning document for Holden to date. (Community Preservation Associates, et.al., 2008) Given the continuity in vision for Holden's land use, it is important to review the goals and implementation of the 2008 plan, as seen below:

- Establish design guidelines to help assure the quality of commercial and mixed-use development, infill, and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
- Focus a diversity of future development along the Main Street corridor.
- Create and encourage mixed-use nodes at Jefferson, Holden Center, and Chaffinville.
- Encourage infill around the villages with a diversity of housing types with one to three bedrooms and home offices.
- Use cluster design principles to preserve some open space in areas outside the Main Street Corridor, recognizing that cluster provisions in the zoning bylaw need revision.

The status of these goals can be found in the Appendix E: Master Plan (2008) Benchmark Review. Many of these priorities are brought to life through zoning changes. Zoning amendments accomplished in recent years include:

2010: Replaced "Cluster Residential Development Bylaw" with an "Open Space Residential Development Bylaw".

2012: Adopted a solar array bylaw.

2014: Temporary moratorium to allow time for the creation of a governing bylaw for the regulation of registered marijuana facilities.

2014: Amended Industrial Quarry (IQ) district to allow residential uses.

2015: Adopted registered marijuana facilities bylaw.

¹ Executive Order (EO) 418 was signed by Governor Cellucci in 2000. EO 418, then known as the Community Development Plan Program, committed resources to municipalities for the purpose of creating "community development plans." A "community development plan" was defined as a comprehensive, strategic plan for the future development of a city or town.

2015: Amendments to the Sign Bylaw for definitions and guidance for enforcement and address new issues such as signage boards and gasoline pricing.

2017: Temporary moratorium prohibiting the creation of recreational marijuana facilities.

2017: Amended Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Bylaw.

2018: An amendment to ban recreational marijuana establishments in all districts.

2018: Deleting temporary moratorium on recreational marijuana establishments.

2018: Setbacks for Sheds.

2018: Amendment to Accessory Apartment Bylaw – Recently at Town meeting expanded accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to be occupied by non-family members.

The Holden Town Common: Past, Present, and Future (2007)

Students from the University of Massachusetts Amherst developed a Cultural Landscape Plan for the Holden Town Common. The plan traced the evolution of the Town Common and provided recommendations to enhance residents' favorite aspects. The plan identified a historic zone, a civic zone, and a commercial zone in the Town Center, as well as four distinct gateways at the North, South, East, and West points of the common. Recommendations included: extending the old Town Common; establishing stronger pedestrian links between civic spaces; encouraging new commercial development consistent with the Town's historic building style; improving pedestrian circulation; decreasing impervious cover to increase green space; and establishing a design review board to develop design guidelines that respect the integrity of the existing building styles. The goals and recommendations of the cultural landscape plan are still relevant today and should be incorporated into any attempts to revitalize the Holden Town Center as a village center. (Greer, Leonard, & Weiland, 2007)

Central Thirteen Prioritization Plan (2012)

The Central Thirteen Prioritization Plan (2012) identified key regional opportunities for development and preservation. (CMRPC, 2012) Four development opportunities and 12 preservation opportunities are highlighted in the plan. Holden's ability to take advantage of these opportunities will be largely dictated by municipal zoning and land use policy. The Town should keep these parcels in mind when amending zoning or identifying project opportunities to pursue. A list of the Priority Development Areas (PDAs), Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs) and Significant Infrastructure Investments (SIs) is presented in Table 11-1. The locations of these are shown in Map 11-1.

Open Space and Recreation Plan (2012)

Holden's 2012 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) recommends concentrating some future development in the Main Street Corridor where infrastructure and services exist, providing for mixed land uses where appropriate, and ensuring that land development is done in a responsible way that protects resources and has as few negative impacts as possible. The plan identified water and sewer as primary determinants of development in Holden. Increased densities "would be appropriate where water service is provided and also where adequate pressure is available." Unfortunately, different necessary existing infrastructures do not always overlap. The plan also notes numerous sand pit operations throughout Holden's history and the potential to redevelop these parcels at high densities without threatening the valuable adjacent ecosystems. (CMRPC, 2012)

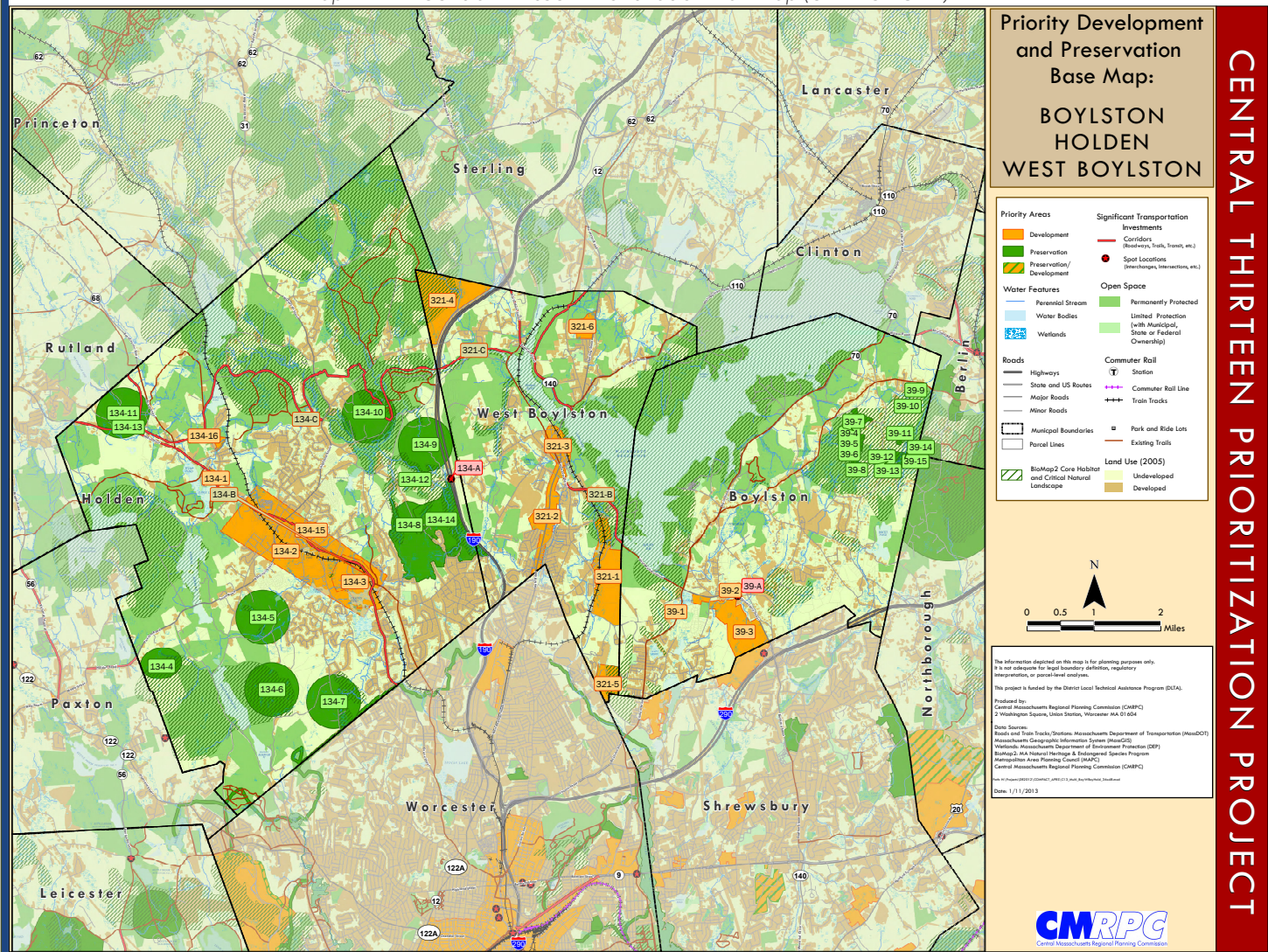
Smart Growth Bylaw Review (2015 - 2018)

In 2015, CMRPC reviewed the Town's Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Bylaw, as the Planning Board expressed concerns the bylaw did not operate as intended. The Bylaw Assessment focused on matters of permitted density, clear cutting during construction, and OSRD subdivision layouts. Similar concerns regarding excessive land use in residential development remain today, prompting the Town to amend the Village Center

Table 11-1 Central Thirteen Prioritization Plan Areas (Priority Development, Priority Preservation) and Significant Infrastructure Investments

Priority Development Areas (PDAs):	
134-1: Village Center PDA	134-11 Muschopauge Road PPA
134-2: Main Street/Rte 122 light commercial corridor	134-12 Cheney Graham/Keskula Farm
134-3: Commercial Re-use PDA	134-13 Muschapague Road Farm - JD Enterprises
134-15: Oriol Health Care campus	134-14 NHESP Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife
134-16: 176 Princeton Road	Significant Infrastructure Investments (SIs):
Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs):	134-A I-190 Interchange (Transportation Investment Spot Location)
134-4 GWLT trails area	134-B Main Street corridor improvements (Transportation Investment Corridor)
134-5 Reservoir Street PPA	134-C Water supply (Infrastructure Investment)
134-6 Holden Reservoir PPA	134-D Limited sewer capacity (Infrastructure Investment)
134-7 Fisher Road PPA	134-E Regional Transit Authority Service (Transportation Investment)
134-8 Bullard Street PPA	134-F Mass Central Rail Trail (Preservation/Transportation Investment)
134-9 Harris Street PPA	
134-10 Quinapoxet River/River Street PPA	

Map 11 - 1 : Central Thirteen Prioritization Plan Map (CMRPC 2012)



CENTRAL THIRTEEN PRIORITIZATION PROJECT

District (VCD) Bylaw. Recommended OSRD zoning changes suggested eliminating the minimum lot size requirement, at the time 10 acres, as larger parcels will lead to larger scale projects - an identified concern of the Holden Planning Board. Similarly, the Planning Board is currently reducing the minimum lot size requirement in the Village Center District. Other recommended alterations included an affordable housing density bonus to help the Town reach its Chapter 40B affordable housing units goal. The report also pointed to the example of Milford Smart Growth Bylaw which “may require developers to restore any common open space areas that may have been damaged or altered prior to the project and are not consistent with the conservation purposes of the bylaw”, as this has been expressed as a current concern of the Planning Board during the Village Center District (VCD) planning process.

In 2016 and 2017, the Planning Board began working on a comprehensive rewrite of the Town’s existing Subdivision Regulations, including compliance with Complete Streets standards. Additionally, as of 2018, the Town has worked to amend the existing Jefferson Village VCD Bylaw to improve usage.

As the Town moves forward with future planning and development efforts, they should be sure to refer to existing plans for guidance, as well as ensure that new initiatives do not conflict with local and state regulations.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Holden is a residential community on the border of an urban core. The Town has a long history of agriculture and industrial manufacturing, reflected in the dense mill villages dotted across the rural landscape (Map 11-2). Today it is largely a commuter town where workers in urban centers like Worcester and Boston can enjoy a bucolic family-friendly lifestyle. Residents want to preserve this beautiful rural character while ensuring the Town provides an appropriate selection of goods, services, and jobs.

The following sections will discuss the historical patterns of land use that inform Holden’s current conditions and the ways in which Holden can provide for the desired forms of future development.

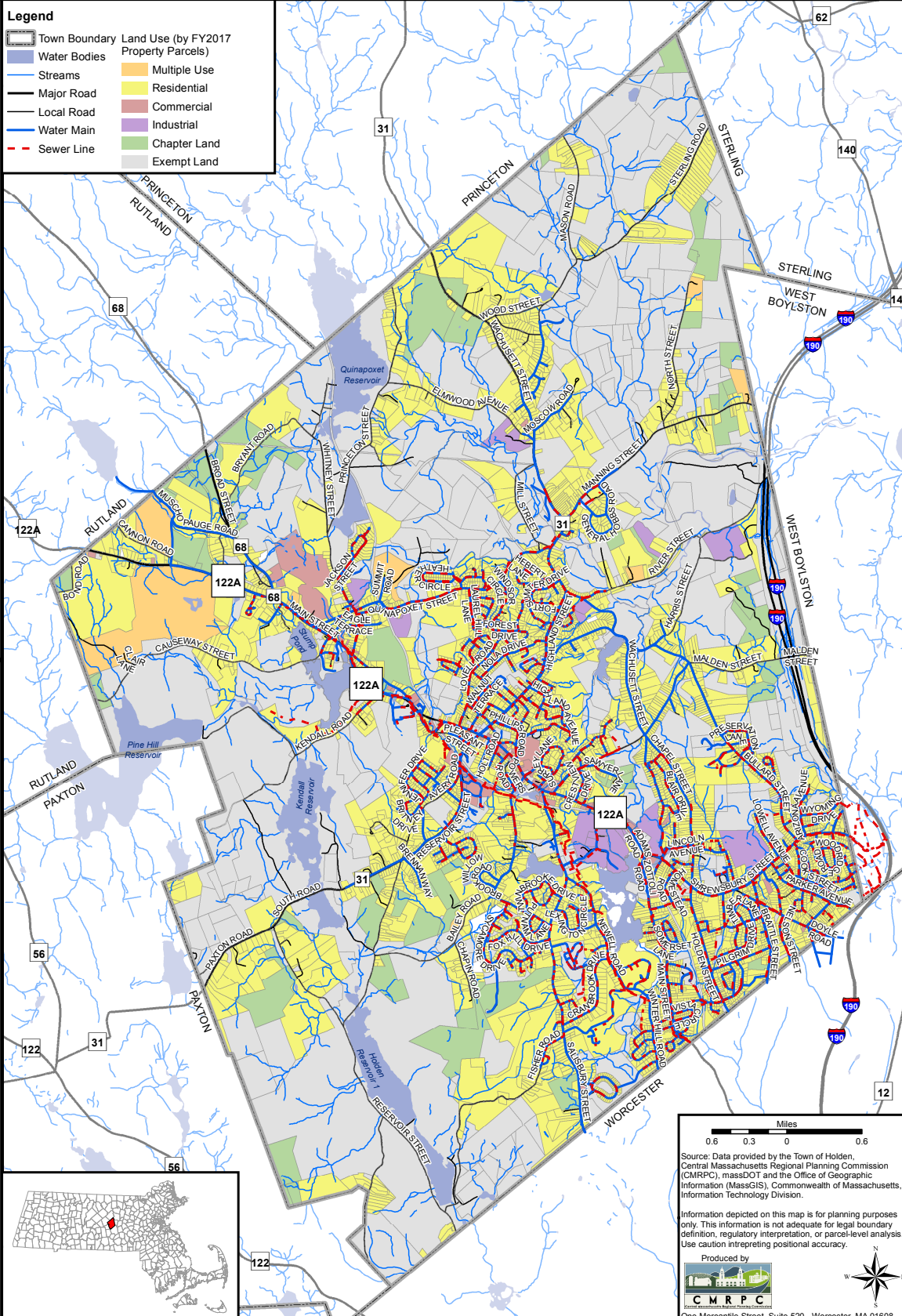
Land Use Distribution

Historically, Holden’s intensive land uses sprouted in clusters of mill-villages and village centers, while the periphery was dominated by agricultural uses. With the general reduction in small-scale industrial and agricultural production in the mid-1900s, Holden evolved into a bedroom-community. Much of the residential expansion has occurred in formerly open or agricultural lands.

Holden today has inherited useful corridors and villages from historic development patterns. The Main Street Corridor dominates local traffic flow and commerce. It runs directly through the Holden Center which is the historic core of the Town, found at the intersection of Main and Highland Streets. The Holden Center encompasses the Town Hall, Gale Free Library, Davis Hill School, Senior Center, Town Common, First Congregational Church, municipal offices at the Starbard Building, and popular new commercial ventures. Residences in the area are generally older and denser. Some have been converted to office or other commercial uses, lending a pleasant aesthetic to the area.

Jefferson Village can be found by continuing north along Main Street to the old Jefferson Mill site. This village features a small cluster of mixed residential and commercial uses at the intersection of Main Street, Princeton Street, and High Street. The Town has long recognized the potential to bring this village to life. Dawson and Chaffinville can be found following Main Street south from the Holden Center. Dawson encompasses the intersection of Main Street and Salisbury, including the Dawson Elementary School, Dawson Recreation Area, and Town Pool. Chaffinville is closest to the City of Worcester and surrounds Chaffin Pond. It is home to one of Holden’s industrial areas while also incorporating commercial and residential use. All of these villages are sites of denser mixed-use historic development that can be leveraged today.

DOR Land Use Map 2019 MASTER PLAN



In addition to traffic and commercial corridors, Holden has been successful in preserving wildlife corridors between conservation parcels in the open space network. However, modern development has occurred predominately as low-density, large parcel residential growth that eats away at both historic and natural land use patterns. As development continues, the Town seeks appropriate methods to manage growth. Map 11-2: DOR Land Use shows the distribution of primary uses based on the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) Land Use Codes (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA)).

Land Use Patterns

Table 11 - 2 summarizes land use patterns in Holden based on Massachusetts DOR land use code categories. These are standardized codes for use in local property assessments and thus provide an excellent resource for trend analysis. As the table indicates, Holden's developed land patterns are dominated by residential uses. These make up nearly 90% of the total parcel count in Holden and just under 40% of the total land area. Single-family housing accounts for nearly 70% of the parcel count and 30% of the total land area. More than 50% of the total land area falls into one or more tax-exempt category, even though it makes up less than 6% of total parcel count. This signifies that around 90% of the total acreage town-wide recorded in the assessor's data is either 1) paying no taxes or 2) is utilized by net consumers of Town services. Neither of these usages are revenue positive for the municipality. Commercial and industrial uses which, in general, pay the same in taxes as other taxable uses, tend to consume fewer resources. These uses comprise only 3% of the total land area.

Hybrid data produced by MassGIS for Land Cover/Land Use in 2016 has the advantage of describing multiple land uses or covers within a single parcel – information that is especially useful for a Town like Holden where the average residential lot covers 2.5 acres, not all of which will be built out. The MassGIS data provides land area and percentages using the following 22 categories (Table 11-3):

Table 11-3: 2016 Land Cover/Land Use (Source: MassGIS, 2019)

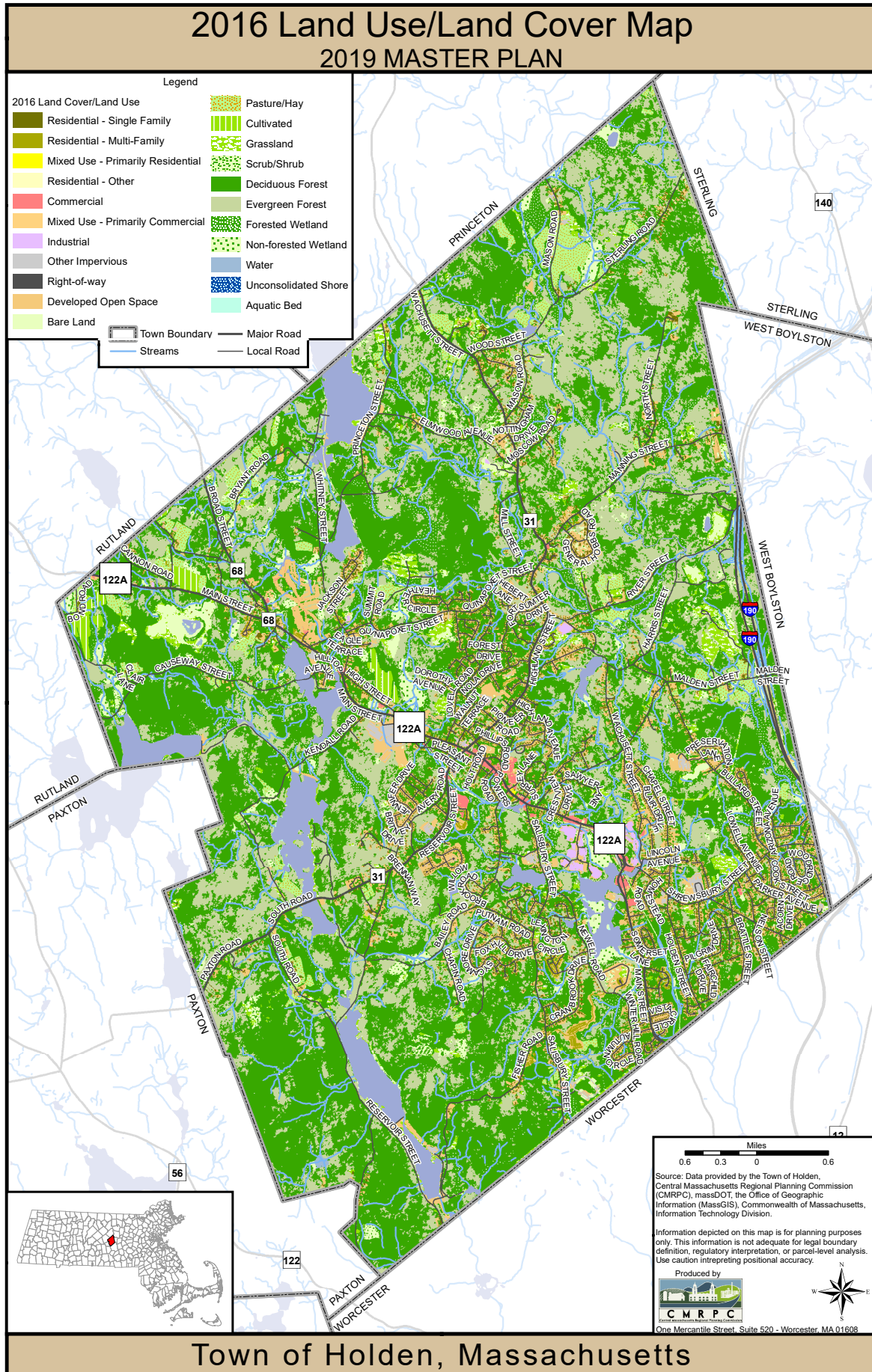
2016 LAND COVER/LAND USE HYBRID TABLE		
Land Cover Type	GIS Acres	% Total
Deciduous Forest	9,959.01	42.84%
Evergreen Forest	5,529.57	23.79%
Developed Open Space	1,712.79	7.37%
Forested Wetland	1,646.68	7.08%
Water	729.56	3.14%
Residential - Single Family	594.22	2.56%
Right-of-way	537.01	2.31%
Pasture/Hay	524.44	2.26%
Grassland	482.54	2.08%
Non-forested Wetland	429.20	1.85%
Scrub/Shrub	283.01	1.22%
Bare Land	229.60	0.99%
Other Impervious	148.03	0.64%
Aquatic Bed	122.26	0.53%
Cultivated	99.19	0.43%
Residential - Multi-Family	78.21	0.34%
Commercial	74.24	0.32%
Industrial	52.26	0.22%
Unconsolidated Shore	10.65	0.05%
Mixed Use - Primarily Residential	0.77	0.00%
Residential - Other	0.69	0.00%
Mixed Use - Primarily Commercial	0.56	0.00%
Grand Total		100%

Holden is dominated by non-developed land uses, which significantly contribute to the community's bucolic character. Over 21,758.51 acres or 94% of Holden's land cover can be classified as non-developed (Deciduous Forest, Evergreen Forest, Developed Open Space, Forested Wetland, Water, Pasture/Hay, Grassland, Non-forested Wetland, Scrub/Shrub, Aquatic Bed, Cultivated, Unconsolidated Shore). The largest developed land use category is single-family residential at 594.22 acres (2.56% total land area).² Multifamily residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-uses account for the least amount of land cover acres in Holden. Map 11- 3 shows the distribution of different land uses and coverage across Town. The following sections will discuss the history of these land use and land cover patterns, the

² Residential building footprint, distinct from parcel size.

Table 11-2: Land Use Patterns (Source: Holden Assessor, 2018)

DOR Land-Use Code	Parcel Count	Lot Size (acres)	% Total Parcels	% Total Land Area	% Total land Area per Use Category
No Code	37	0	0.44%	0.00%	--
Residential Uses	7,623	8,835	89.96%	39.56%	
Mixed Use - Primary Residential	19	494	0.22%	2.21%	5.59%
Residential - Single Family	5,915	6,228	69.81%	27.89%	70.50%
Residential - Condo	737	0	8.70%	0.00%	0.00%
Residential - Two Family	76	58	0.90%	0.26%	0.65%
Residential - Three Family	19	13	0.22%	0.06%	0.15%
Residential - Accessory Land, No Improvement	22	27	0.26%	0.12%	0.30%
Residential - Multiple Homes on one Parcel	19	60	0.22%	0.27%	0.68%
Residential - Multi-Family	816	1,954	9.63%	8.75%	22.12%
Commercial Uses	153	281	1.82%	1.25%	
Mixed Use - Primary Commercial	14	15	0.17%	0.07%	5.26%
Nursing Homes	1	5	0.01%	0.02%	1.89%
Other Storage, Warehouse and Distribution facilities	4	6	0.05%	0.02%	1.97%
Commercial Greenhouses	3	10	0.04%	0.05%	3.66%
Retail Trade	41	70	0.48%	0.31%	24.98%
Retail - Engine Propelled Vehicles, Sales/Service	22	19	0.26%	0.08%	6.59%
Office Building	37	34	0.44%	0.15%	11.93%
Public Service Properties	3	2	0.04%	0.01%	0.76%
Indoor Recreational Facilities	2	6	0.02%	0.03%	2.20%
Outdoor Recreational Properties	1	103	0.01%	0.46%	36.75%
Vacant Land	25	11	0.30%	0.05%	4.01%
Industrial Uses	28	354	0.33%	1.58%	
Manufacturing and Processing	17	138	0.20%	0.62%	39.10%
Mining and Quarrying	6	100	0.07%	0.45%	28.42%
Utility Properties - Communication	3	79	0.04%	0.35%	22.34%
Vacant Land - Accessory to Industrial Property.	2	36	0.02%	0.16%	10.14%
Agricultural Uses	78	1,381	0.93%	6.18%	
Chapter 61 - Forest Land	20	486	0.24%	2.17%	35.18%
Chapter 61A - Productive Land	42	746	0.50%	3.34%	54.05%
Non-Productive Land	2	1	0.02%	0.01%	0.09%
Chapter 61B - Recreational Land	14	148	0.17%	0.66%	10.68%
Exempt Land	554	11,481	6.53%	51.41%	
Commonwealth of Massachusetts –Reimbursable Land	192	4,338	2.27%	19.42%	37.78%
Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Non- Reimbursable	13	387	0.15%	1.73%	3.37%
Municipal or County Codes	167	1,536	1.97%	6.88%	13.38%
Charitable	66	1,047	0.78%	4.69%	9.12%
Religious Groups	24	51	0.28%	0.23%	0.45%
Authorities	11	11	0.13%	0.05%	0.10%
Land Held by other Towns, Cities or Districts	41	4,034	0.48%	18.06%	35.13%
Other	40	78	0.47%	0.35%	0.68%
Grand Total	8,473	22,331	-	-	



issues and opportunities that result, and provide recommendations that will help Holden achieve the vision for its future as expressed by the community.

Residential

Holden grew significantly from the 1940s until the 1980s, when more stringent zoning controls caused growth to taper off. In an effort to maintain the pastoral character of the Town and meet a growing demand for residential services, the Town adopted large-lot residential zoning. While intended to control population growth, this zoning encouraged suburban sprawl over the gently rolling landscape, low-density housing with beautiful yards but fragmented landscapes, extra miles of road paving, the slow deterioration of town centers from increased automobile use, and the unintended loss of unprotected open spaces and Town character.

This trend is intensified by local regulations, which have long favored single-family housing. Single-family units tend to be the most expensive and utilize the most land resources. In Holden, the average residential lot size is currently 2.5 acres. While average house size shrank during the height of the housing bubble (2005-2007) due to land costs, it has since recovered, furthering the trend of fewer individuals utilizing more land. Such a trend is ultimately unsustainable and, as described in the Population and Housing chapter, even if the Town were to change nothing, the limits of land resources would eventually be reached. To a degree, the Town has seen this trend begin to plateau already.

Under current zoning regulations, buildout projections estimated a town-wide capacity of nearly 7,000 additional residential units. The Buildout Analysis (2018) (Appendix C) found an estimated 4,269 potentially developable acres in residential zones. A significant portion of this land faces some form of partial constraint (high slopes, Aquifer Protection areas, etc.) which would potentially reduce the total number of units.

Nonetheless, the Town can prioritize higher densities in order to mitigate the potential impacts of expected future growth. Multifamily housing growth has been inconsistent over the last 10 years, but residents and Town personnel recognize that multiple styles of clustered development can

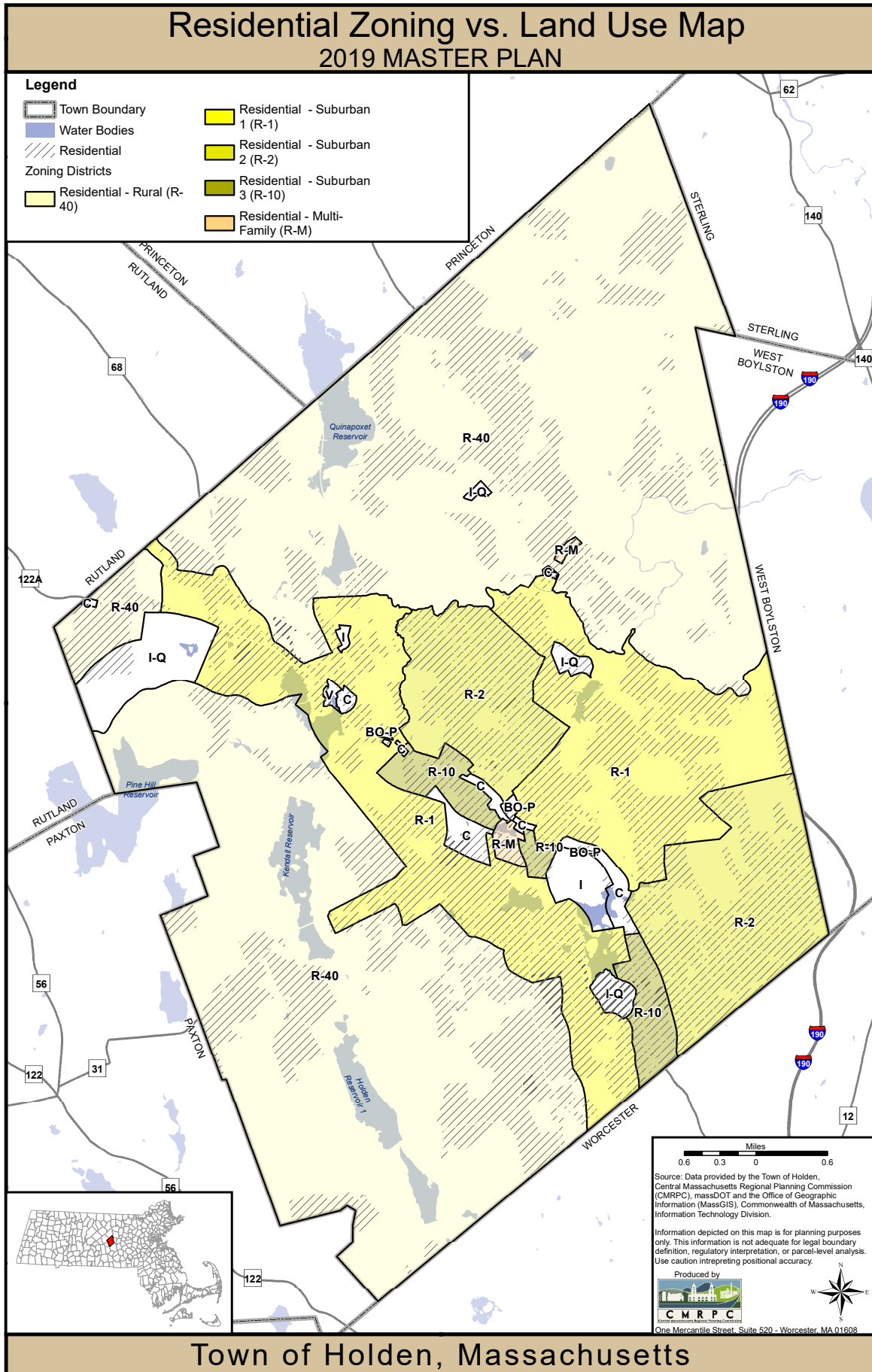
aid in the preservation of open space. Holden can look to residential densities at the center of Town which conform to traditional land use patterns rather than the recent “large-lot low-density” approach. Denser development typically follows the sewer lines, which are one of Holden’s primary development constraints. Developments of a more rural character, in turn, radiate outward from the center of Town along roadways. Given the relative weight of residential land use in Holden, residential growth management will be the key to preserving the much-loved town character for future generations. Map 11-4 depicts the relationship between residential zoning and actual residential land use by parcel.

Commercial/Industrial

Commercial land use comprises 1.25% of the Town’s total land use inventory and contributed approximately 3.3% to town revenues in 2018. Industrial land uses comprised around 2% of land use and 1.17% of Town revenue in 2018. Commercial and industrial uses are the focus of municipal growth strategies as discussed in the Economic Development chapter. The 2018 Buildout Analysis (Appendix C) estimated that Holden still has 75.9 acres, or 3,305,225 sq. ft. of buildable floor area in its Commercial and Industrial zones. The Town may not need to expand the Commercial and Industrial districts to promote economic development, but rather amend zoning regulations in the existing zones or explore increased mixed-use provisions in new areas.

Industry is clustered in the Holden Industrial Park adjacent to Chaffins Pond with access off Main Street. Existing commercial development forms a corridor along Main Street from the intersection of Route 31/Route 122A southwards towards the Route 122A/Shrewsbury Street intersection. To encourage further amenities, a Main Street Design Review and Zoning Study Committee designated a multi-use zoning district along Main Street to promote a compatible mix of residential and commercial uses. The zoning bylaw was supplemented with landscaping and lighting bylaws to improve the aesthetics of this central corridor. To date, substantial Main Street improvements have

Map 11 - 4 : Residential Zoning vs. Land Use



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been completed to facilitate commuter traffic, bury all utilities, widen the street and add sidewalks, plant street trees, and enhance the Historic District with period lighting and landscaping.

The Town will be well-served by exploring infill, redevelopment, and reuse opportunities along the Main Street Corridor. The Town should be aware of the water and sewer capacity limitations in this area. Mobility can also be improved by expanding additional clusters of commercial properties in other areas of Town so residents are not required to drive to Worcester or other locations to obtain necessary goods and services. Holden has been working to create such a Village Center cluster in Jefferson Village. Map 11 - 5 depicts the relationship between commercial/industrial zoning and actual commercial/industrial land use by parcel.

Non-Developed

There are several distinct types of land use and land cover which can, when successfully linked, create a resilient environmental network. Open space and recreation lands, non-built areas of large residential plots, surface water, and agricultural and forestry lands can interact to maintain the ecological integrity of Holden's natural resources, environmental services, and idyllic character. These lands account for over 94% of Holden's total land cover. The extent of non-developed land cover in town results from policies employed by the Town, State, and broader region. Holden already employs an Aquifer Protection District, regulations governing the public use of the waters of Eagle Lake, a Water Use Restriction Bylaw, Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Bylaw, Illicit Discharge Control Bylaw, Wetland Bylaw, Water Protection Bylaw, and Right-to-Farm Bylaw. These have a significant impact on the relative proportions of land uses.

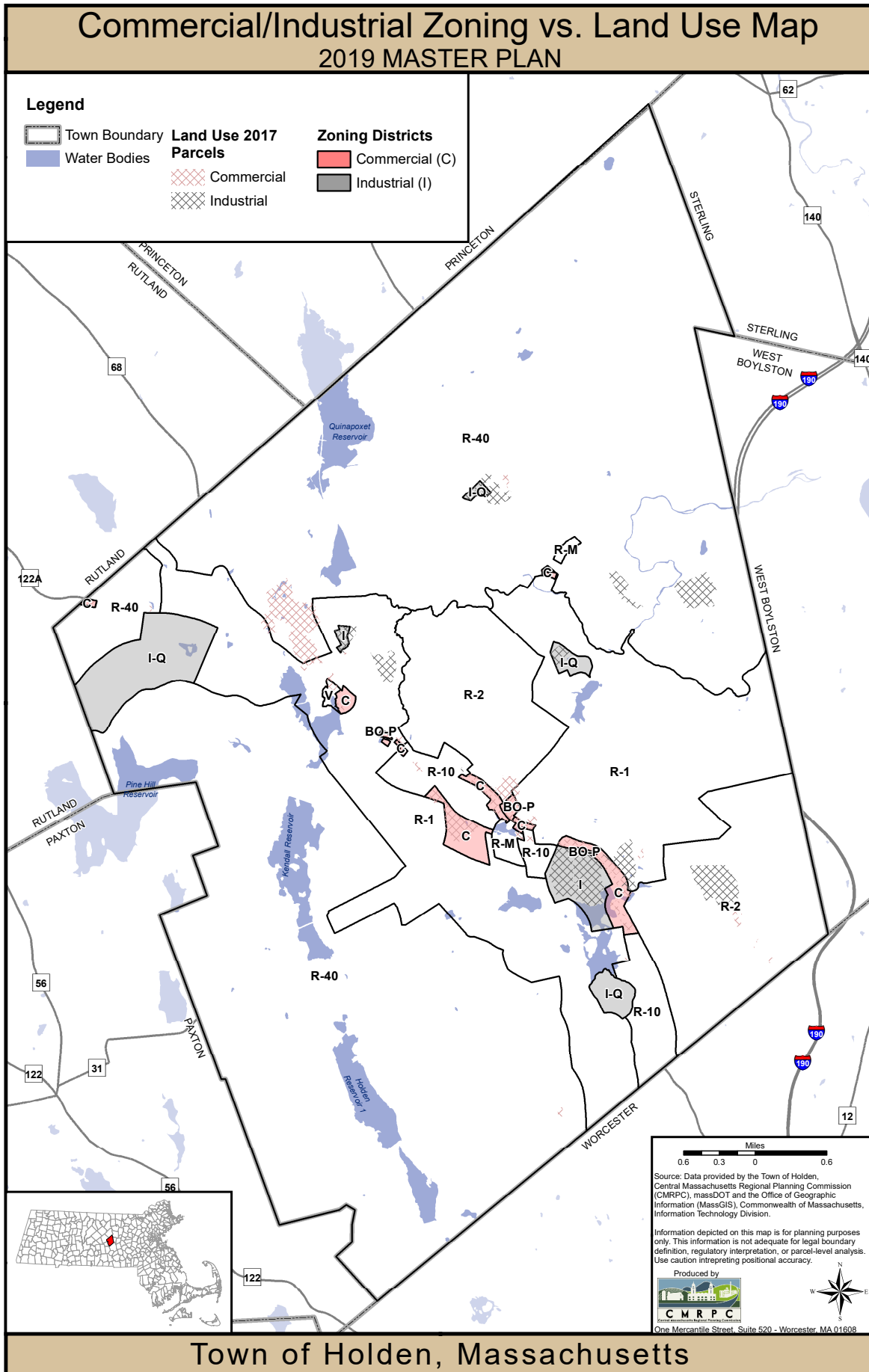
The 2016 MassGIS Land Use/Land Cover data (Map 11-3) identifies 99 acres of cultivated land and 524 acres of pasture/hay. Agricultural lands total 624 acres or 3% of the town's area. These uses are supported by Holden's Right-to-Farm Bylaw, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR), and Chapter 61A regulations. Map 11-3 shows 21,759 acres of forest in Holden (94% of the

town's total area) that could be preserved under Massachusetts Chapter 61 and Holden's Wetland and Water Protection Bylaws. MassGIS identifies 1,646 acres of forested wetlands in Holden (7% of the total area), 429 acres of non-forested wetlands (2% of the total area), 122 acres of aquatic beds (0.5% total area), and 730 acres of water (3% of the total area), all of which are also preserved by the Wetland and Water Protection Bylaws. Holden has 10 areas identified by the State's BioMap2 Project as "core habitats" for conserving biodiversity for future generations, consisting of 3,361 acres in town, of which protected core habitat consists of 2,538 acres, or 75% of total core habitat. Such lands can be protected, in part, with conservation restrictions (CR). Currently, there are over 10,459 acres of permanently protected open space and recreation lands in town. Over 110 acres of open space have limited protection, and slightly more than 150 acres make up the open space that is not protected. These open space lands are predominately protected, owned, and managed by the Town (41%) and the State (40%). Chapter 61B tax exemptions can be used to support private recreation land preservation. These non-developed lands are crucial for providing ecosystem services that make everyday life possible, but increasingly also help buffer the effects of climate change. Map 11 - 6 depicts the relationship between lands zoned for development and non-developed land use by parcel.

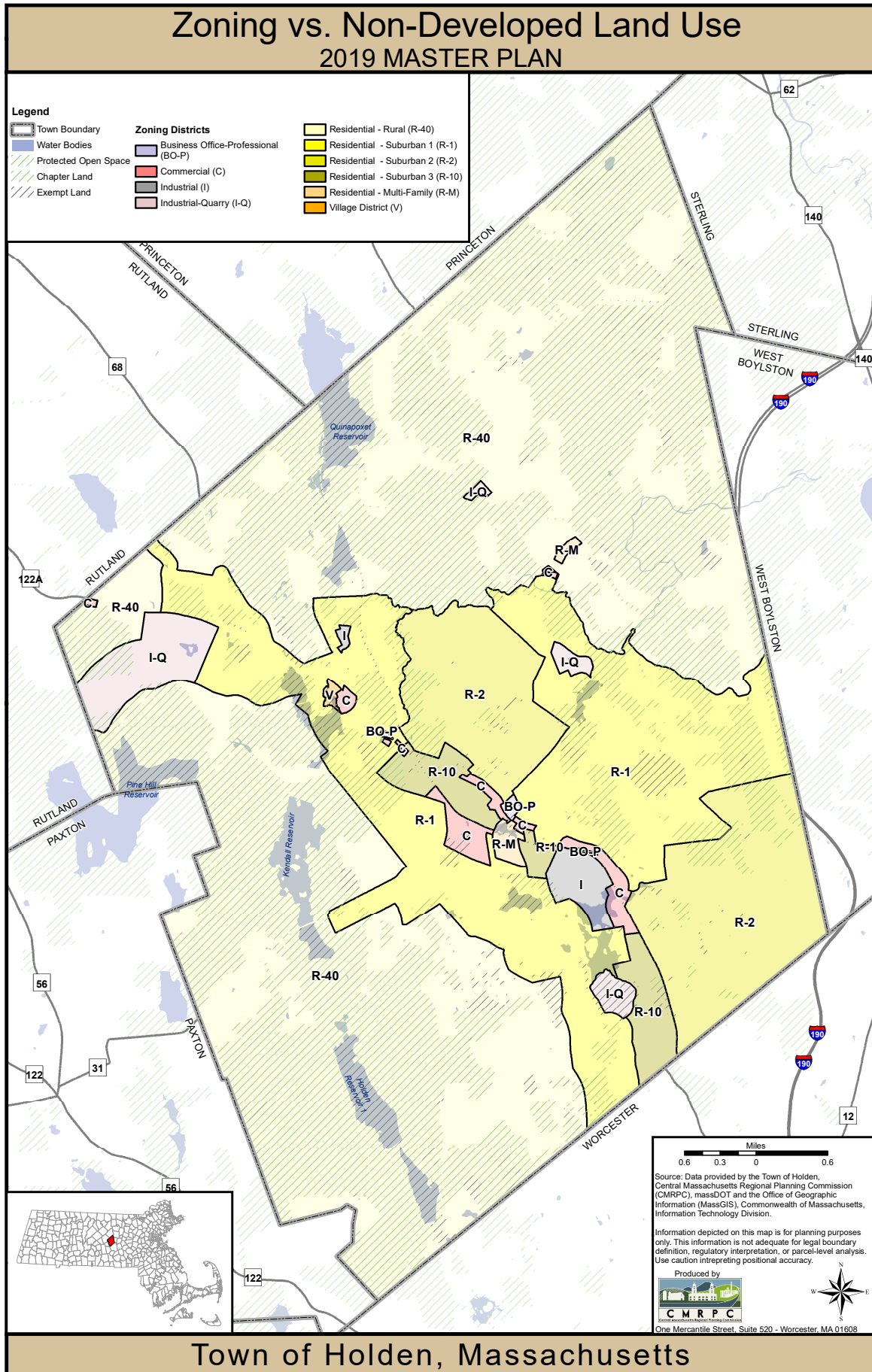
Vacant Land

Vacant lands represent an opportunity for the Town to revive underutilized areas. They are distinct from open space or preservation lands as they fall within a given zoning district but remain unused. Map 11 -7 shows vacant land parcels in Holden. Some of this land may be appropriate for redevelopment, while other areas may be best suited for conservation. The Town should focus on developing and preserving quality parcels, especially those identified in the Central Thirteen Prioritization Plan; however, vacant lands may represent additional smaller-scale opportunities. If left unmaintained, vacant land can contribute to poor aesthetics. A clear picture of ownership rights will be helpful when planning future uses of these lands.

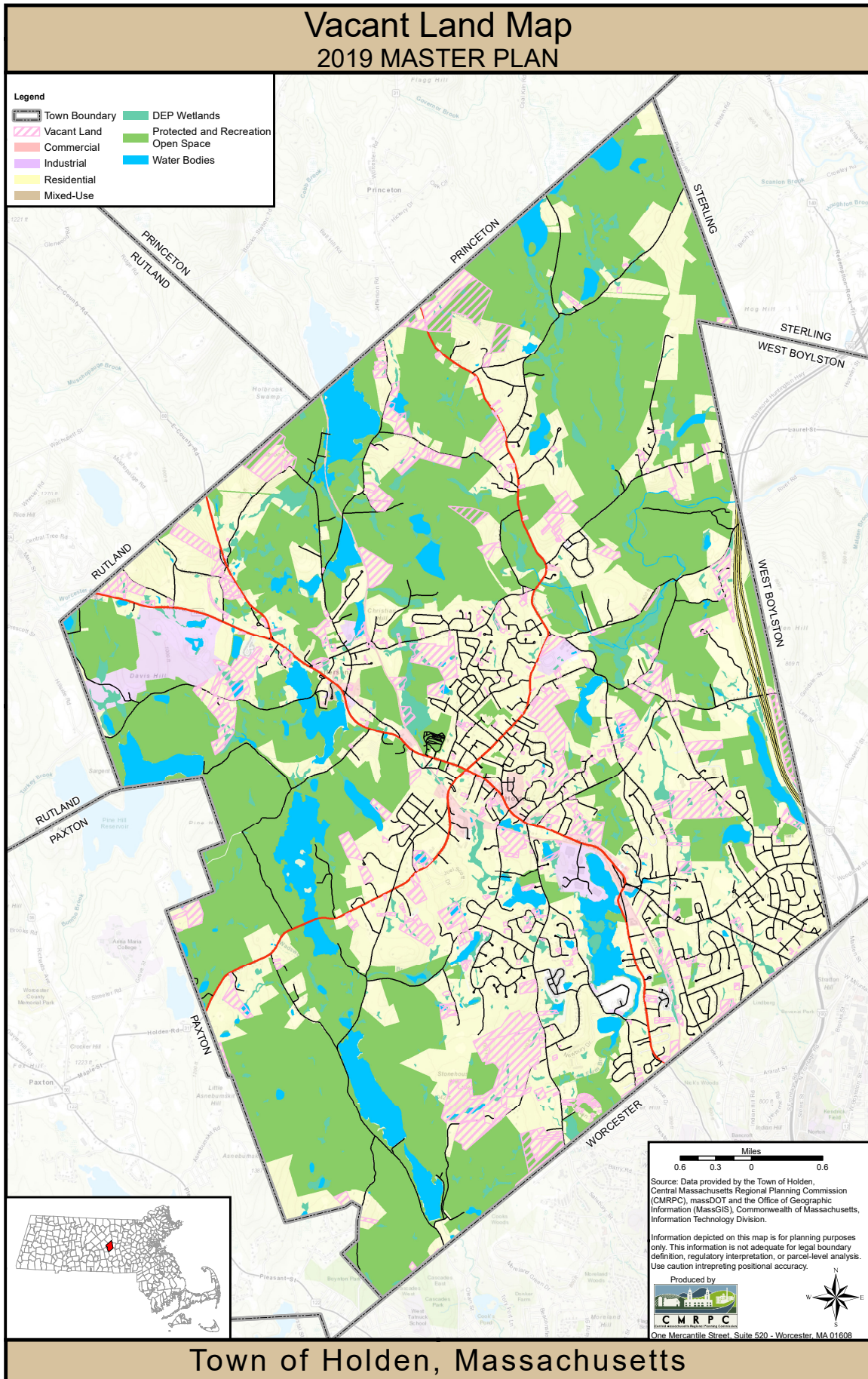
Map 11 - 5 : Commercial/Industrial Zoning vs. Land Use



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Map 11 - 7: Vacant Land



Zoning

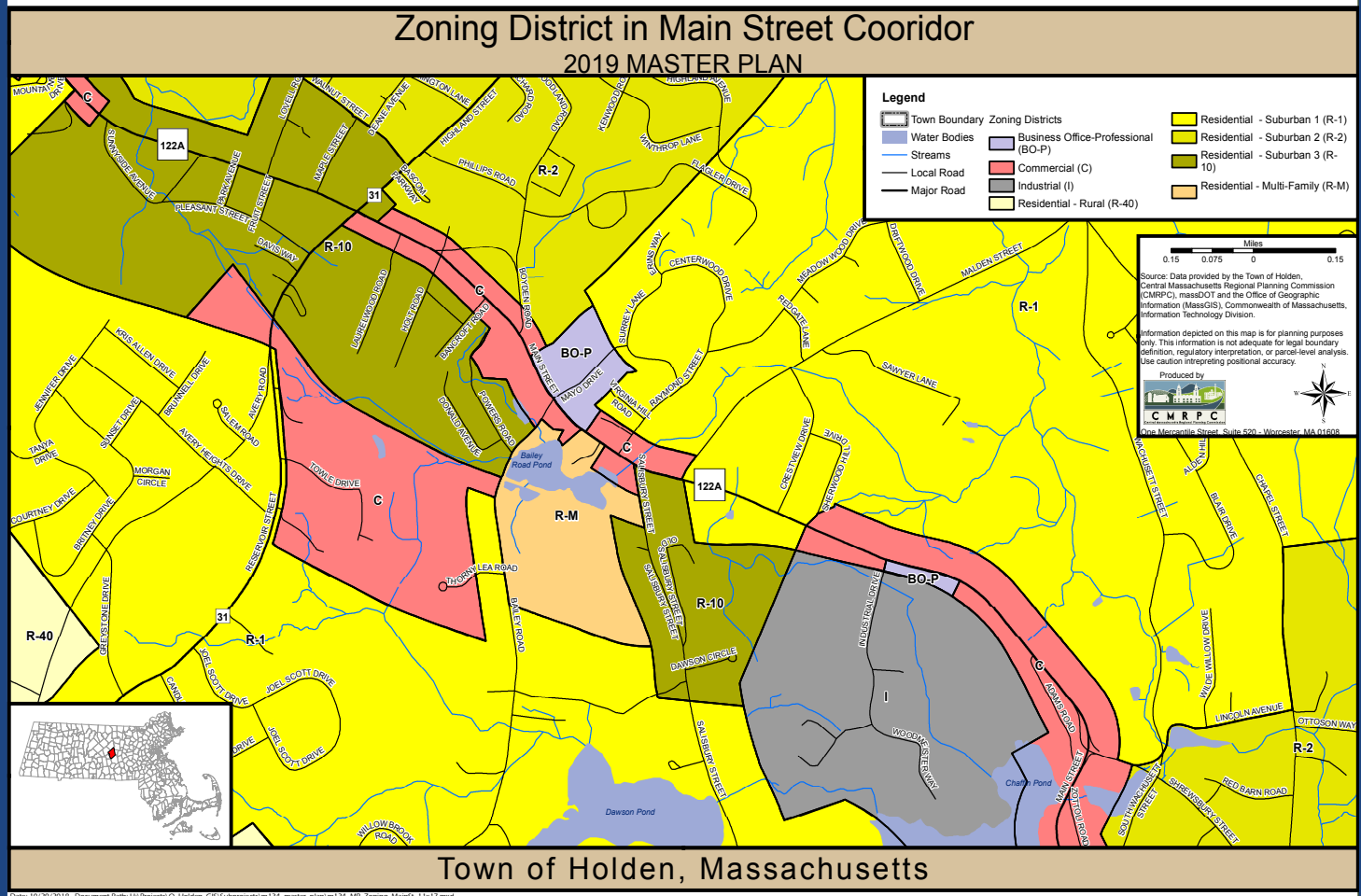
Holden is divided into 10 zoning districts, categorized broadly into Residential, Commercial/Industrial, and Overlay Districts. The majority of the Town is zoned Rural Residential, which creates large parcel neighborhoods. Industrial, Commercial, Business-Office Professional, Village Center, and Multifamily Residential define a minority of the land in Town largely clustered along the Main Street Corridor. The existing zoning regulations are discussed in depth below, along with potential and current opportunities for change. Map 11- 8 depicts the Zoning Districts in the Main Street Corridor. Map 11 - 9 demonstrates Holden's Zoning Districts town-wide.

Residential Zoning Districts

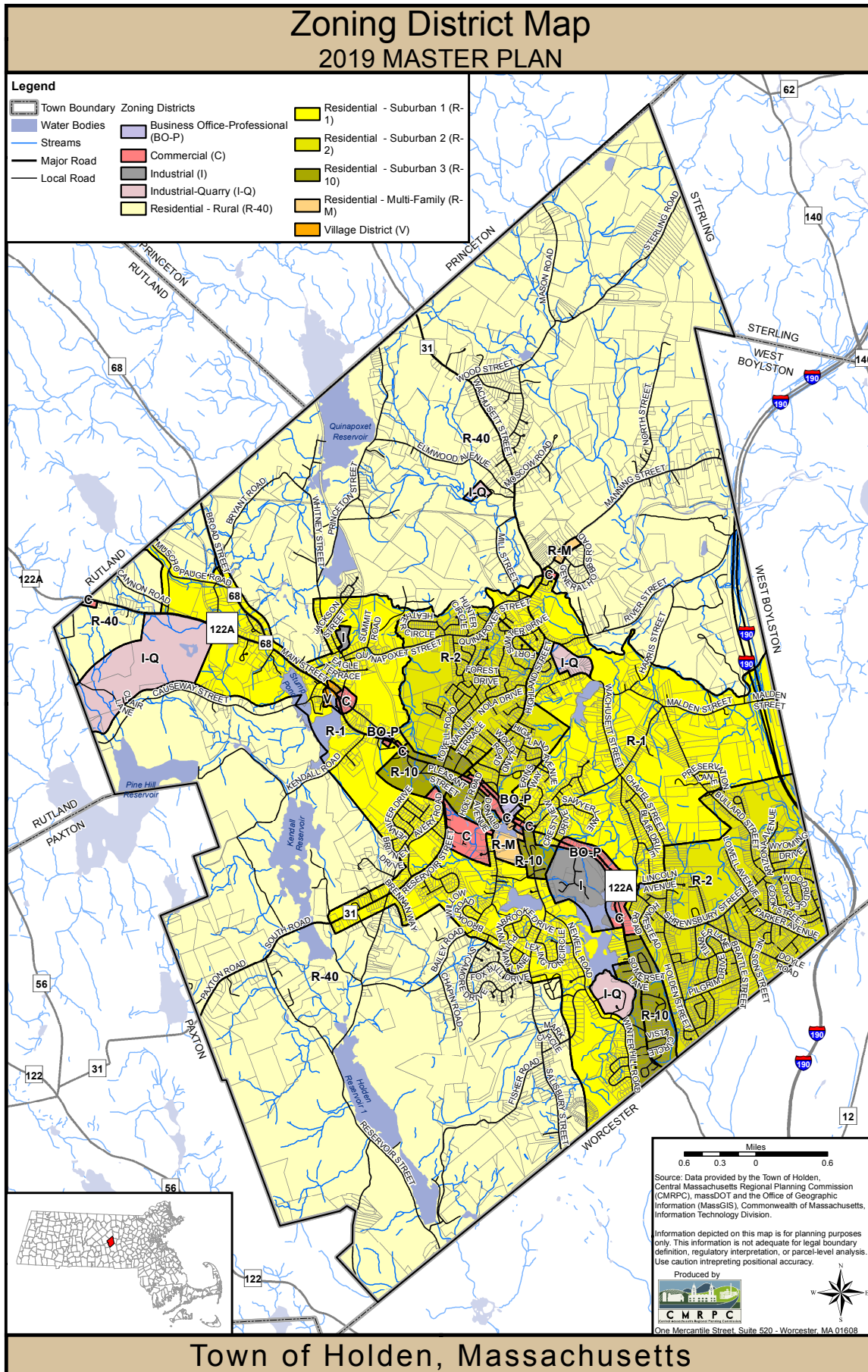
The Town has five exclusively residential zoning districts, locations noted in the Zoning Map (Map 11 - 9). These are as follows:

- Residential Suburban 1 (R1) –minimum of 40,000 sq. ft.
- Residential Suburban 2 (R2) - minimum of 30,000 sq. ft.
- Residential Rural (R40) –minimum of 40,000 sq. ft.
- Residential Suburban 3 (R10) –minimum of:
 - 10,000 sq. ft. for a one-family dwelling
 - 15,000 sq. ft. for a two-family dwelling
 - 20,000 sq. ft. for a three-family dwelling
 - 25,000 sq. ft. for a four-family dwelling
- 20,000 sq. ft. plus 5,000 sq. ft. for each unit more than three for all permitted structures of principal use
- Residential Multi Family (R-M) –a minimum of 10,000 sq. ft. plus an additional 5,000 sq. ft. for each unit more than two

Map 11 - 8: Zoning District in Main Street Corridor



Map 11 - 9: Zoning Districts



Residential-only districts comprise the largest zoning districts in terms of land area. Table 11 - 4 summarizes each residential-only district by percentage of total zoned land (distinct from real land use).

Table 11 - 4: Residential-only Zoning Districts

Zone	Acres	% Town Acres
R-1	4,561	18.03%
R-2	2,389	9.44%
R-10	483	1.91%
R-40	14,853	58.72%

The largest residential district (R-40) is also the most restrictive of all the residential-only districts and has the largest capacity for residential expansion. Of the approximately 4,269 acres in residential districts identified as developable, approximately 71% are located in the R-40 district. Under current regulations, this zone is estimated to have a development capacity of around 4,103 additional units.

No changes have been made to the dimensional requirements of the Residential zoning districts since the 2008 Master Plan, nor have the districts themselves changed. Holden has not implemented inclusionary zoning requirements to date. Rather, several bylaws have adopted density incentives to encourage creation of new affordable housing. The Town has indicated a measure of success implementing some of these incentives, especially the Open Space Residential Development option. It should be noted however, that developers have raised issues with identifying income-qualified buyers for the deed-restricted units. While no data was available to support or refute those claims as of this writing, they warrant further study by the Town.

Open-space Residential Development (ORSDD)

Option: Implemented in 2008, this bylaw revision allows developers to receive a density bonus in exchange for setting aside 50% of the total land area as publicly usable open space. The option allows the Town to off-set some the land-use impacts from single-family development.

Affordable Housing Bylaw: Allows for a density bonus to a given development provided at least 15% of the total number of units proposed are sold at prices affordable to buyers or renters earning no more than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). This provision is applicable to single-family or multi-family residential developments provided there is a permanent or semi-permanent deed-rider extending the cost restriction.

Issues with Smart Growth Policy Implementation:

It should be noted that some developers have pointed to difficulties identifying qualified buyers for some kinds of deed restricted properties. The Town should actively engage developers to help identify what these barriers are and work toward their mitigation.

Non-residential Zoning Districts

The Town of Holden has five commercial and industrial zoning districts (Maps 11- 8 and 11-9).

- Commercial District (C) - is a district that requires 10,000 sq. ft. for any permitted structures or principal use other than lodging
- Business Office-Professional District –(BO-P) minimum of 10,000 sq. ft.
- Mixed Use allowed by special permit
- Industrial District (I) minimum of 30,000 sq. ft.
- Industrial-Quarry District (I-Q) –minimum of 30,000 sq. ft.
- Village District: the greater of five acres or 10,000 sq. ft.

Table 11 - 5 summarizes the total land area covered by each of the commercial and industrial districts (distinct from real land use).

Table 11 - 5: Commercial and Industrial Districts

Zone	Acres	% Town Acres
BO-P	17.9	0.07%
C	226.37	0.89%
I	164.66	0.65%
I-Q	2,524.96	9.98%

The largest non-residential zoning district is the I-Q zone, which represents close to 10% of total land area. Build-out estimates show that there are almost 2.5 million sq. ft. of commercial or industrial development capacity in this district.

No dimensional requirements have been changed in the Commercial/Industrial/Village zoning districts since 2008. The Town of Holden has two distinct Industrially-zoned districts:

- **Industrial District (ID):** The Industrial District (ID) is located off of Main Street on Industrial Drive. The 153-acre industrial park is comprised of multiple sites and businesses. The Park's infrastructure includes water and sewer. There is a secondary 11- acre Industrial District located off of Princeton St.
- **Industrial-Quarry District (IQ):** The Industrial Quarry District (IQ) is located off Newell Road, Newbury Drive and Winter Hill Road.

Holden desires to retain its existing industry and potentially expand its light industry. Existing industrial zones are both accessed off Route 122A but lie towards the edges of town, so they do not interfere with uses in other zoning districts. Both districts have further buildout potential.

Mixed Use

Holden has experimented with various forms of mixed-use development to revive the advantages of historic land use patterns. Residents are by-and-large required to drive into Town or to other Towns to access goods, services, and jobs. The Town is interested in establishing new inclusive and resilient land use patterns that enable provision of diverse goods and services in or near places of residence. Mixed-use development is a combination of residential and commercial and/or business office professional uses. Mixed use approaches allow the Town to increase economic development opportunities while controlling growth that could threaten open space, as well as improve mobility between residential and commercial areas.

Mixed-Use Developments are allowed by special permit in the Commercial and Business Office Professional Zone and permit:

- 2, 3 and 4 family dwellings;
- Duplexes
- Townhouses

If the Town is interested in increasing the usage of Mixed-Use zoning, it may wish to establish by-right mixed uses/mixed-use base districts.

Village District

The Village District is an adaptation of the mixed-use approach designed to replicate traditional small-town development patterns where dense mixtures of land use provide a selection of goods, services, jobs, and opportunities in local pedestrian-friendly and attractive core areas. The intent of village zoning is to integrate different elements such that each complements the function of each other use, thus improving the quality of the village as a whole. Holden is amending its current Village Center Overlay District into a base Village Center District in order to simplify zoning and thus promote the desired development. The Village Center District allows many mixed-uses by right, but in a concentrated area, as opposed to the existing mixed-use overlay which allows development by special permit in the larger Commercial and Business Office Professional Zones. Holden currently has one Village Center District in Jefferson Village (Map 11- 10).

A village development shall include a minimum of three of the following permitted land uses, one of which shall be residential:

- Residential
- Restaurant
- Theater or Auditorium
- Recreational Facility
- Parking
- Business and Professional Office
- Retail Establishment
- Personal Service Business
- Hotel or Motel
- Community Facility

Jefferson Village Center District

October 2018



Date: 5/29/2019 Document Path: Z:\GIS Library\GIS Workspaces\Baylen\VCD\Holden\Holden Village District.mxd



Information depicted on this map is for planning purposes only. This information is not adequate for legal boundary definition, regulatory interpretation, or parcel-level analysis. Use caution interpreting positional accuracy.

Produced by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, One Mercantile St. Suite 520, Worcester, MA 01608

The Village Center Overlay District was implemented to encourage development in and around the Jefferson Mill which has yet to occur. Stakeholders identified the five-acre minimum dimensional requirement as an obstacle. As such, the Town of Holden is working with CMRPC to amend the Village district to reduce the minimum lot size, establish a base district, and review uses to make the original intent of the village concept more feasible.

Overlay Districts

The Town of Holden has two overlay districts - an Aquifer Protection District and the Flood Plain District. The Aquifer Protection District protects existing and future water and groundwater supply sources in Town. There are three zones each with its own set of permitted and prohibited uses designed to protect these valuable resources. The Flood Plain District requires development designed to minimize flooding within the 100-year flood risk zones.

Parking Requirements

Current parking regulations in the Town of Holden adhere to the standard minimum of two spaces per dwelling unit and one space per 200 sq. ft. of net retail space. However, common parking standards are car-oriented rather than pedestrian or multi-modal transit oriented. Significant portions of land are commonly underutilized by parking structures. Holden's standards dictate all paved parking structures use either bituminous or cement concrete, which is the easiest option to maintain in the New England climate, but restricts permeable pavement options or other alternatives. Parking lots are required to maintain vegetative screening between all developed parking structures and abutting residential properties. There are further regulations regarding plantings within the bounds of the parking lots. This helps improve the aesthetics of parking lots but can also be designed to address stormwater runoff and other ecological concerns. As the Town targets more dense, resilient, and mobility-inclusive development, it would be well-served to re-evaluate parking regulations.

Subdivision Regulations

The Town's subdivision control regulations greatly influence how land in Holden is developed, given the predominance of residential land uses. These subdivision regulations are intended to guide the approval process of a subdivision plan, and include general design standards, required improvements for an approved subdivision, and general administration. Subdivision bylaws have historically contributed to Holden's unintentional sprawl. However, these existing regulations are undergoing extensive review as the Town pursues the adoption of Stormwater Management Regulations.

Additional Bylaws

Holden has adopted additional bylaws effecting land use, some of which are discussed in prior chapters. A brief list is included here for reference:

- Signs and Billboards
- Cluster Residential Development Bylaw
- Accessory Apartment Zoning Bylaw
- Phased Growth Zoning Bylaw
- Wireless Communications Bylaw
- Retirement Community
- Board of Appeals - Zoning
- Regulation of Billboards
- Removal of Soil
- Street Opening
- Handicapped Parking
- Water Protection Bylaw
- Town By-Law Establishing So Called Fire Lanes On Public and Private Properties
- Underground Utilities Bylaw
- Wetland Bylaw

Development Constraints

Environmental conditions constrain development. Most types of development are limited on slopes over 15%, which equates to about 7% of the Holden's total area. In addition, glacial history has left much of the town's soil as poorly drained or rocky, making development in many areas a challenge. Specific constraints are discussed further in the Natural Resources Chapter and Buildout Analysis. (Appendix C)

Holden's role in the regional water system also constrains future development. Large swaths of land surrounding reservoirs are restricted from public access entirely, much less active development and use. Other zones control for type or density of development, water and sewer, and other partial development constraints. Capacity of water and sewer distribution systems restrict the type and density of development in some areas, including along the Main Street Corridor. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and City of Worcester share responsibility for the management and protection of the regional water system, and continue to acquire land in order to enhance water quality. In addition to preservation buffers, future development must also account for local floodplains. Luckily most of the Town falls within Zone C – Areas of minimal flooding. The Natural Resources chapter discusses environmental constraints in depth and should be referred to for details on specific locations, regulations, and stakeholders as the town considers future development.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Extensive public outreach during the Master Planning update process highlighted the dynamic balance between the Town's high quality of life and resultant growth. Both residents and the Town are actively discussing Holden's future trajectory. Members of the public consistently envisioned forms of community-appropriate development that expanded amenities without sacrificing the Town's character. Several themes emerged from outreach efforts:

- Appreciation of Main Street's historic commercial character
- Desire for restaurants, small scale home businesses, and energy generation
- Lack of commercial space
- New growth that is overly focused on single family residential construction and does not provide required diversity (Figure 11-5)
- Traffic on Main Street that frustrates residents and dissuades visitors

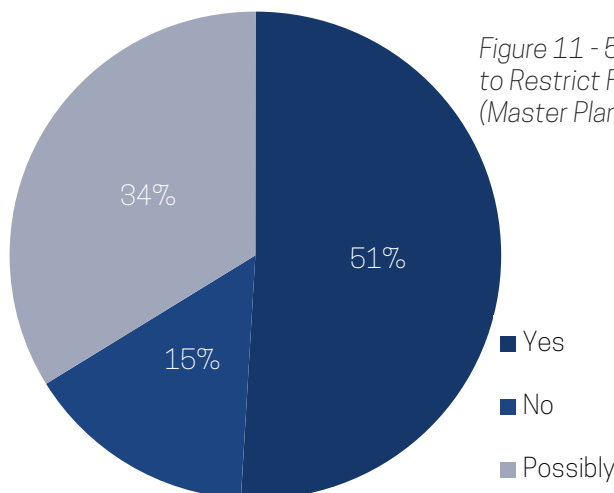


Figure 11 - 5: Should the Town Amend its Bylaws to Restrict Future Residential Growth (Master Plan Community Survey Results, 2018)

Land Use Projections Population Changes and Projections

Holden's evolving land use policy will be driven largely by the population changes projected over the lifespan of this plan. The Fiscal Impact Analysis (Appendix D) completed by CMRPC in 2018 estimates that the Town can expect to add roughly 4,000 new residents by 2030 (Table 11 - 5). These estimates are fairly conservative, as they assume a relatively stable rate of new housing unit production, persons-per-household figures, and average

Table 11 - 5: Projected Population Growth (CMRPC, 2018)

Year	Population	Difference per Decade	% Change per Decade
2010	17,346	-	-
2020	19,393	2,047	12%
2030	21,009	1,616	8%
2040	22,625	1,616	8%

occupancy rate. Any major real-world fluctuation in these factors could have a significant impact on the accuracy of these estimates.

Population increases will require expanded housing options (either single or multi-family), expanded municipal services, more business and service options, and greater school system capacity. The expected population increase can have dramatically different impacts on the nature of the town based on the type of housing and commercial development the Town's zoning is designed to encourage. As a bedroom community, housing development will be the linchpin of the

Answers	Responses	Percent
Yes	458	51%
No	137	15%
Possibly	304	34%
Total	899	100%

land use discussion. The Town should strive to proactively adopt zoning changes rather than be caught off guard. Holden is already working on localized housing and commercial zoning changes in the Jefferson Mill area, and may wish to consider other broader efforts.

Housing Unit Projections

The Fiscal Impact Analysis estimated the number of new residential units the community might expect to see over time. Table 11 - 6 shows the projected number of total housing units in 2017 and then each decade through to 2040. These estimates are a linear projection based on the 10-year average of 69 units added per year. This will have a significant

Table 11 - 6: Projected Housing Unit Growth

Year	Housing Units Town-Wide
2017 (Baseline)	8,094
2020	8,281
2030	8,971
2040	9,661

impact on town services and land use patterns. For further discussion, see the Fiscal Impact Analysis section (Appendix D) in this document.

Residential Road Miles Projections

The Buildout Analysis calculated the following road

Table 11 - 7: Projected New Road Miles per Residential Zoning District (CMRPC, 2018)

Zone	New Road Miles per Zone
Residential - R-1	11.96
Residential - R-2	7.08
Residential - R-10	1.81
Residential - Multi-Family (R-M)	0.73
Residential - Rural (R-40)	35.32

miles (Shown in Table 11 - 7) will be added when current zoning districts are completely built out (See Appendix C for methodology).

The buildout analysis estimates road development potential to be 56.9 miles Town-wide. The Transportation chapter analyzes the potential costs and benefits of adding additional road miles

to the Town's overall road inventory. However, land use policy can reduce the ratio of new road miles for new development by promoting "Smart Growth" approaches including infill development, cluster development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and other higher-density tactics. The Master Plan has recommended the town identify other areas in addition to the Jefferson Village project where denser development can be implemented in order to preserve non-developed land.

Student and School Facility Projections

Population growth in Holden may have significant impacts on school facilities and the delivery of educational services. The excellent school system is often cited as a draw for new residents. Single family housing development also encourages families with children to move to the area, rather than couples or individuals who may be interested in smaller or multifamily options. Despite this, the Buildout Analysis indicates that families with school-aged children are not currently the fastest growing population. Nonetheless, growth in this cohort is still significant and it is very likely that the Town will need to explore expanding existing facilities in the near future. See Appendix C for projections of new students by school. It is recommended elsewhere in this plan that the Town undertake a more thorough investigation into enrollment trends and facility needs than what has been presented here.

Commercial and Industrial Development Potential

The buildout analysis projected the total commercial development potential in the Town of Holden generated by new development on available land under existing zoning. Given current zoning

Table 11 - 8: Buildable Floor Area by Zone (CMRPC, 2018)

Zoning District	Buildable Floor Area (Sq. Ft.)
Commercial (C)	687,696
Business Office - Professional (BO-P)	52,994
Industrial (I)	104,452
Industrial - Quarrying (I-Q)	2,460,083
Total	3,305,225

conditions, Holden still has 75.9 acres, or 3,305,225 sq. ft. of buildable floor area in its commercial and industrial zones. Table 11 - 8 summarizes the total area and Buildable Floor Area by zone. There is significant buildable floor area, indicating that the zoning districts alone are not the only obstacle to desired development. The Business Office-Professional district is closer to built-out than the Commercial and Industrial districts, but still exhibits some potential. Note that these calculations do not account for potential redevelopment, which is a density approach the town indicates it may like to pursue. See the Buildout Analysis section for the methodology behind these estimates.

Emerging Issues in Land Use

Land use issues are evolving faster than ever. Towns are operating at the intersection of changing environmental and policy pressures. The Town of Holden cannot predict every emerging land use issue, but the Town can commit to acting in a proactive and responsive fashion in order to best serve the community. A variety of land use considerations have emerged as clear questions the Town must contend with moving into the future.

Climate Change: Towns today must cope with rapid changes in environmental trends in addition to social and demographic changes. Towns can no longer rely on the former climatic status quo, but must actively plan for changes in rainfall quantity, storm severity, water supplies, droughts, invasive species and other climate effects. These will affect the services residents require and the Town's ability to provide them. Holden must prepare itself to be responsive to emergency situations (Fire, EMT, Police), but can also offset climate change impacts by proactively planning for the Town to fit new environmental conditions. This includes promoting "Smart Growth," which increases density and mobility options in order to reduce carbon impact, as well as designing infrastructure and services for resilience. The more proactive planning Holden successfully completes, the less reactive recovery the Town will face. In 2018, the Town completed a very progressive

planning process (a Community Resilience Building Workshop) to identify likely hazards and what aspects of infrastructure, environment and demographics in Town would be impacted and how best to plan for resilience. The Community Resilience Building Workshop was supported by the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program funding from the Commonwealth. The Town is now a designated MVP Community and can apply for dedicated funding to address the challenges identified in the plan (Fuss & O'Neill, 2018).

Growth Management: An major subject of this Master Plan has been the Town's desire to strike a balance between development and preservation. Residents desire improvements in local amenities, and the quality of life in Town continues to attract new residents, but this very growth in population can impact the character of Holden that attracted residents in the first place. Holden is projected to continue growing, but the community can shape that growth in appropriate directions through the active use of land planning tools. Holden must re-evaluate the former large-lot low-density zoning approach, which has largely failed to reduce growth rates, and instead encourage clusters of denser, well-designed development that is climatically resilient and enjoyable to live in.

Affordable Housing: The housing affordability crisis is deepening across the state. People are being pushed out of urban centers into growing suburban commuter zones. Recovering land prices, combined with the current large-lot zoning requirements, encourage developers to build larger more expensive houses in Holden to recoup their expenses. The majority of employed residents of Holden do work in Town; the second largest group is employed in Worcester. However, rising housing in prices in Worcester and Central Massachusetts are likely to affect this balance. Holden should aim to provide

housing options achievable for workers employed at all wage levels in Town, be it at minimum wage or higher.

Aging Population: Many Holden residents are seeking to age in place. Holden will need to continue planning for Health Aging to adequately serve its aging population. This includes appropriate housing size, accessibility, and affordability, inclusive mobility options, elderly and emergency response services, multi-generational community spaces, and more. Appropriate zoning can help facilitate Health Aging while simultaneously improving the quality of life for other generations of residents.

Green Energy: Many residents in Holden expressed a desire to be part of the recent expansion of green energy generation in Massachusetts. Solar farms and wind turbines are the most likely applications of green energy given the natural resources available in Holden. The Town will need to develop the necessary regulatory infrastructure to facilitate green energy in a manner appropriate to the vision of the Town. A proactive assessment of available or suitable land would help direct these new developments with appropriate zoning conditions.

Airbnb: Airbnb and other new platforms for small-scale shared use (such as Uber and Lyft) require a new approach by Towns because they inhabit a legally ambiguous area under most current regulations, especially zoning. These platforms can provide flexible amenities in Town to address existing concerns, such as the lack of lodging options or lack of transit options, but the Town would be well served by resolving zoning and other legal ambiguities.

Creative Economies: Holden residents have expressed interest in seeing popular new economies brought to Holden. This can range from Craft Breweries to Farm-to-Table restaurants to Makerspaces³ and

rideshare services. The Town should be aware of these emerging trends and have a consistent approach to incorporating these new uses into zoning regulations.

Jefferson Mill Village Center District

The Town of Holden has undergone an extended effort to implement the community's vision for the Jefferson Mill. Previous chapters, including Economic Development, have discussed this opportunity in depth. However, there are crucial land use and zoning conditions that impact the viability of this transformation. The Town is currently redesigning the Village Center Overlay District into a base district to simplify permitted uses and project development in the surrounding area. The Town reissued building permits for the site in 2017, but the project continued to stall due to uncertainty around Eagle Lake, the former mill pond of the Jefferson Mill. Development of the Jefferson Mill area is also limited by the layout and design of Route 122. Any traffic calming, changes in road layout, or pedestrian and bicycle amenities will need to be coordinated with MassDOT, as Route 122A falls under their jurisdiction. However, the Village Center District is being amended to facilitate these amenities as best possible within the town's jurisdiction.

Eagle Lake

The future of Eagle Lake has been discussed at length in the Master Plan's Natural Resources and Open Space and Recreation Chapters. The Eagle Lake Committee report (Holden Eagle Lake Committee, 2018), recommends preserving the recreational, natural, historical, and cultural importance of the area. Permanently drawing down the lake would significantly alter land use patterns and future opportunities in the Town. The presence of the lake provides certain opportunities, but, with good planning, so could the restoration of the original stream. There are limited ways in which land use tools are able to help resolve the question of Eagle Lake's future given that the primary difficulty is in the repair, maintenance, and ownership of the man-made dam. The following grants programs may prove to be avenues worth exploring to fund repair, restoration, or other options for the area.

³ A makerspace is a collaborative work space inside a school, library or separate public/private facility for making, learning, exploring and sharing that uses high tech to no tech tools.

Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Program

Grants and Funds: Two requests for proposals are typically offered each year for state funds. One is a grant program to support the completion of designs and permit applications to repair or remove dams, seawalls and other coastal infrastructure, and levees. Municipalities and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. The second is a grant and/or loan program to support the construction phase of repair or removal of dams, seawalls and other coastal infrastructure, and levees. Municipalities and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Certain private owners of dams may apply for loan financing. The next round of applications is expected to open in late spring of 2019. Please check this page <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/dam-and-seawall-repair-or-removal-program-grants-and-funds> or www.commbuys.com for updates. This program is the most appropriate of the listed grants for Eagle Lake, however, it is a highly competitive grant.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant

Program: Holden has recently qualified as an MVP Community, making it eligible for funds for planning and prevention around climate change issues. MVP Action Grants provide direct funding and technical support to municipalities which seek to implement key priorities and projects identified through the MVP Planning Grants. Eagle Lake was featured in the MVP Plan by Fuss & O'Neill (2018). It is possible that the Eagle Lake Dam may be eligible for MVP funding if the town can highlight how various climate change scenarios (excessive rainfall, flooding, etc.) threaten the integrity of the dam and therefore downstream or flood zone land uses. It is also possible that Eagle Lake helps maintain the resilience of the surrounding environment, including wetlands, and therefore should be maintained as a part of the town's climate resilience strategy. This grant could potentially be used to either restore the stream or rehabilitate the dam.

FEMA High Hazard Dam Rehabilitation Program:

FEMA is expected to announce a new grant program aimed at rehabilitating high hazard dams like Eagle Lake Dam. The program will be administered through MEMA and the first year will be limited to plans and studies, with construction allowed in future funding years. The amount of funding is limited nationwide, so the grant process will likely be highly competitive.

Coldwater Fish Resources:

Funds are available through MassWildlife for the protection and revitalization of Coldwater Fish Resource (CFR) waterbodies such as Eagle Lake. It may be possible to use funds to reconstruct the dam in order to maintain the lake as a functional habitat. This may be dependent on the active presence of the protected species.

5 Star Wetland and Urban Waters Resoration

Grants: The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation offers the Five Star Wetland and Urban Waters Restoration Program which brings together students, conservation corps, other youth groups, citizen groups, corporations, landowners and government agencies to provide environmental education and training through projects that restore wetlands and streams. The program provides challenge grants, technical support and opportunities for information exchange to enable community-based restoration projects. Funding levels are modest, from \$10,000 to \$40,000, with \$20,000 as the average amount awarded per project. However, when combined with the contributions of partners, projects that make a meaningful contribution to communities become possible. This opportunity may be relevant for the scale of work around Eagle Lake.

The New England Forests and Rivers Fund:

The New England Forests and Rivers Fund is dedicated to restoring and sustaining healthy forests and rivers that provide habitat for diverse native bird

and freshwater fish populations in New England. The program annually awards competitive grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$200,000 each. It funds projects to restore early successional and mature forest habitat, modify and replace barriers to fish movement, restore riparian and instream habitat, and engage hundreds of volunteers in forest habitat restoration and stream connectivity projects in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont. This program is provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Division of Ecological Restoration: The State of Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration has several programs applicable to Eagle Lake. The DER coordinates with communities through their River Restoration program to provide services for streamflow, dam removal, and wetlands restoration. Stakeholders can apply to the DER to become a Priority Project. Eligible applicants include private property owners, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions. Typically, DER selects projects based on ecological and community benefits and local leadership. Selected projects are eligible for:

- Technical services such as data collection, engineering, design work, and permitting
- Project management and fundraising help from DER staff
- Small grants

If a project has high ecological benefits but critical feasibility issues, DER may select the project as a Provisional Project. DER will review progress toward resolving feasibility issues one year after the project was selected. Projects that have resolved identified issues may receive full Priority Project status.

MassWildlife Habitat Management Grant Program: The MassWildlife Habitat Management Grant Program provides assistance to private and municipal owners

of protected lands to enhance wildlife habitat, while promoting public access for outdoor recreation. MHMGP objectives are to:

- Improve habitat(s) for game species (those species that can be legally hunted, fished, and trapped in MA)
- Manage habitat(s) for Species of Greatest Conservation Need as identified in the Massachusetts State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) – special emphasis on State-Endangered and State-Threatened Species
- Promote public recreational opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping, and other wildlife associated recreation on conserved lands

Applicants are eligible to receive between \$10,000 and \$50,000 per grant towards their approved habitat management project. The Town should explore whether Eagle Lake or the original water body is habitat to any Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

Supplemental Dam Funding: The following grants can all be used to fund dam-related construction (Appendix H):

- New England Emergency Streambank and Shoreline Protection
- New England Flood Reduction Projects
- New England Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Projects
- New England Environmental Restoration
- Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Agreement Authority
- Emergency Watershed Protection Program
- Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) Program
- North American Wetlands Conservation Fund
- Investments for Public Works and Economic Development Facilities
- Massachusetts Environmental Trust

- River and Harbor Grant Program
- State Revolving Loan Fund: Clean Water Fund
- Wetlands and River Restoration and Revitalization Priority Projects
- Community-Based Restoration Program River Grants
- The Toyota Together Green Innovation Grants Program

Town Center

The Town Common sits at the heart of Holden Center, the Town's most developed village center. As the Town seeks to cluster future development, it can leverage the existing Town Center to create more public and green spaces, improve mobility, provide access to services, create gateways, facilitate commercial development, construct diverse and inclusive housing, and revive the historic aesthetic of the community. The Town can reduce commuter traffic issues along Main Street by providing more local commercial opportunities and greater mobility options. Development efforts for the Main Street Corridor and Holden Center will overlap and enhance each other. The Town should review prior planning efforts for these areas and begin to implement the recommended strategies.



Jefferson Mill (CMRPC Staff, 2019)

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION ITEMS

The Master Plan recommends the following action items based on the goals and objectives crafted with careful consideration of the public outreach results, analysis of current conditions, and progress achieved since 2008. The action items accompanying the objectives will also be reflected in the Implementation Chapter (Chapter 11).

Goal 11.1: Concentrate development around existing infrastructure.

Objective 11.1.1: Consider innovative zoning that encourages mixed-use development of Priority Development Areas (PDAs).

- **Action Item 11.1.1.1:** Identify land and buildings suitable for mixed-use redevelopment and employ land use tools to encourage their adaptive reuse.
- **Action Item 11.1.1.2:** Consider funding opportunities for properties of regional or local significance the Town wishes to see developed as mixed-use.
- **Action Item 11.1.1.3:** Conduct or update feasibility studies for the five Priority Development Areas (Oriol Health Care Campus, 176 Princeton Road, Commercial Re-use PDA, Village Center PDA, and the Main Street/Rt. 122 light commercial corridor.)
- **Action Item 11.1.1.4:** Complete the Village Center Bylaw.

Objective 11.1.2: Provide for a cohesive permitting process for development that considers existing infrastructure, as well as local and regional plans.

- **Action Item 11.1.2.1:** Revisit and update Priority Development Areas and Priority Preservation Areas identified in the Central Thirteen Prioritization Plan.

- **Action Item 11.1.2.2:** Consider utilizing 43D Expedited Permitting to encourage development of Priority Development Areas.
- **Action Item 11.1.2.3:** Conduct regular development review team meetings that include staff from relevant departments.
- **Action Item 11.1.2.4:** Consider revising site plan review regulations to streamline the permitting process for projects that are small-scale and of limited complexity.
- **Action Item 11.1.2.5:** Consider revising site plan review regulations in their entirety to enhance clarity and specificity.

Goal 11.2: Facilitate adaptive reuse of existing buildings to complement the rural character of the Town.

Objective 11.2.1: Explore zoning tools that encourage adaptive reuse including Mill Overlay Bylaws, Mixed-Use Bylaws, and Adaptive Reuse Overlay Districts.

- **Action item 11.2.1.1:** Form a Zoning Bylaw Review Committee to evaluate potential amendments.
- **Action Item 11.2.1.2:** Pursue technical assistance grants that support smart growth zoning, including EEA Planning Assistance and Massachusetts Downtown Initiative.

Objective 11.2.2: Develop design preferences or guidelines that are consistent and complement the existing and desired character of the Town.

- **Action Item 11.2.2.1:** Form a Design Review Committee and adopt Design Guidelines and/or Site Plan Regulations.

Objective 11.2.3: Identify vacant or underutilized buildings suitable for adaptive reuse.

- **Action Item 11.2.3.1:** Partner with property owners to explore reuse options for buildings the Town does not own but wishes to see improve via adaptive reuse.

- **Action Item 11.2.3.2:** Examine Jefferson Mill as a building/area eligible for adaptive reuse.
- **Action Item 11.2.3.3:** Form a Municipal Building Reuse Committee to review municipal properties and buildings that could benefit from adaptive reuse, including Adams road.

Goal 11.3: Ensure consistency between Holden's long-range plans and Town and state regulations.

Objective 11.3.1: Review and update all municipal planning documents.

- **Action Item 11.3.1.1:** Review timelines (including expiration dates where applicable), relevance, and oversight of municipal plans.
- **Action Item 11.3.1.2:** Review plans for conformance and present-day applicability and consistency with Town and state regulations.
- **Action item 11.3.1.3:** Actively review and implement strategies indicated in the various plans as resources and opportunities arise. Consider areas of commonality and conflict.

Objective 11.3.2: Amend applicable policies, regulations and bylaws to reflect active municipal plans and to incorporate Town and state regulations.

- **Action Item 11.3.2.1:** Form a municipal committee to review plans, policies, regulations, and bylaws for compliance with Town and state regulations.
- **Action Item 11.3.2.2:** Conduct a comprehensive zoning bylaw diagnostic to remove conflict with existing plans and to support goals and objectives of this and other plans.
- **Action Item 11.3.2.3:** Review general bylaws, regulations and policies for consistency and compliance.
- **Action Item 11.3.2.4:** Continue efforts to manage and regulate where water and sewer

hookups may be granted, including delineating a sewer/water service district on the zoning map, with consideration for extensions outside the service boundary by special permit.

Goal 11.4: Take a proactive and responsive approach to emerging issues in land use.

Objective 11.4.1: Review opportunities and challenges associated with emerging land use issues.

- **Action Item 11.4.1.1:** Form a Zoning Bylaw Review Committee to assess emerging issues in land use with regard to infrastructure demands, traffic, and tax implications.
- **Action Item 11.4.1.2:** Consider adding new definitions to Zoning Bylaw to expand (or clarify) desirable commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses.
- **Action Item 11.4.1.3:** Increase awareness of emergent industries, uses, and associated resources.
- **Action Item 11.4.1.4:** Evaluate phased growth and housing production to ensure that future development is manageable.
- **Action Item 11.4.1.5:** Allow for a mix of new land uses in the Jefferson Mill area that are appropriate to both the needs of the community and the scale of surrounding neighborhoods.

Objective 11.4.2: Encourage sustainable development and sustainable buildings.

- **Action Item 11.4.2.1:** Build a greater awareness of sustainable development and design principles such as Low-Impact Development and how they may be encouraged.
- **Action Item 11.4.2.2:** Seek opportunities to promote comprehensive and integrated planning that supports community resilience.

- **Action item 11.4.2.3:** Consider forming a Sustainability Committee to ensure the Town's ability to utilize available resources; respond and adapt to changes in climate, land use, or economy; and withstand and recover from adverse situations.



*Residential Land Use
(CMRPC, 2019)*



LAND USE

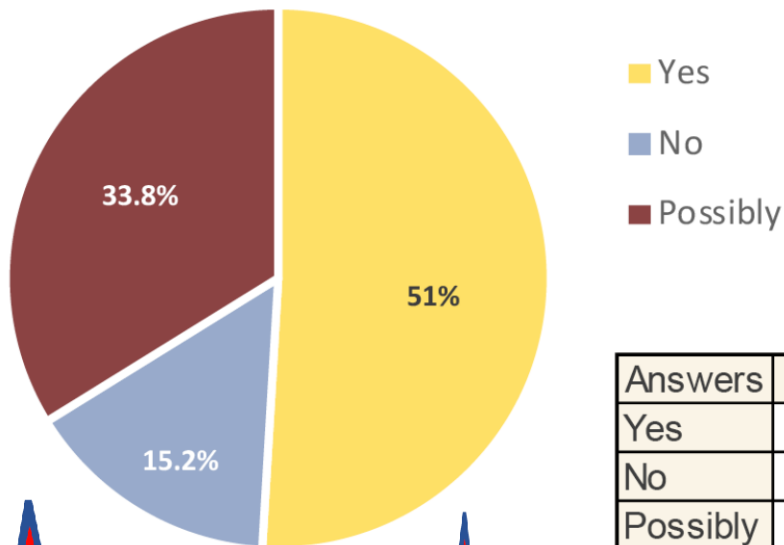
Holden Community Survey Results

What does
Holden think
about Land Use?

TOP 3 PREFERRED TYPES OF DEVELOPEMENT

1. Restaurants
2. Small Scale Home Business
3. Energy Generation

DO YOU THINK THE TOWN SHOULD CHANGE ITS BYLAWS TO RESTRICT FUTURE RESIDENTIAL GROWTH?



Yes
No
Possibly

Answers	Responses	
Yes	50.95%	458
No	15.24%	137
Possibly	33.82%	304



FOR MORE INFORMATION: www.holdenmasterplan.com Town of Holden Master Plan Committee