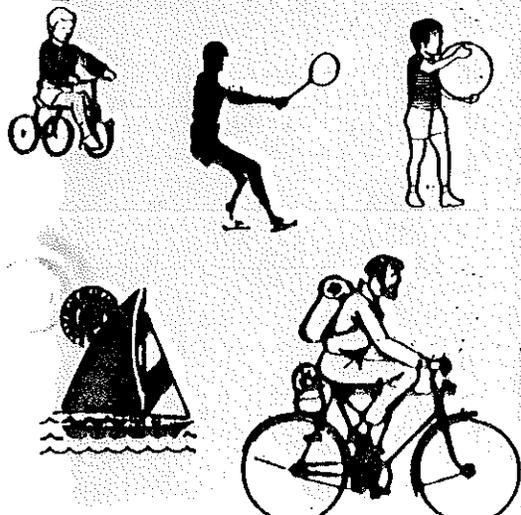
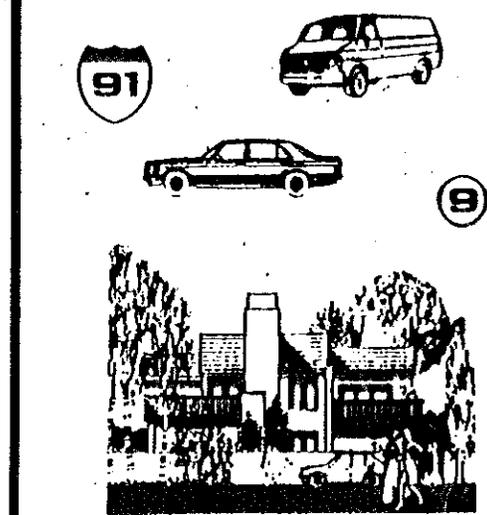


*GUIDING THE FUTURE:  
A PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT  
FOR THE YEAR 2000*



PLANNING & ZONING  
COMMISSION  
MIDDLETOWN, CT.





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### Appendix I

Middletown Planning and Zoning Survey of Citizens - July 1989

The chapter on the Natural Environment was adopted on March 13, 1991  
with an effective date of March 31, 1991

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## LIST OF MAPS

Current Land Use  
Location of Public Water Supply  
Location of Public Sanitary Sewer  
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Park and Recreation Service Areas  
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Future Land Use Map

The following were adopted on March 13, 1991 with an effective date of March 31, 1991

Prime Agricultural Soils  
Water Resources  
Land Resources

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### LEGAL BASIS AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Connecticut municipalities are authorized to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans of development by Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes. This section is hereby incorporated in its entirety. State law defines the plan as "a statement of policies, goals, and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipalities...In preparing the Plan, the Commission may consider physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends...The Plan shall be designed to promote with greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people". Besides being mandated by State law, comprehensive planning and the plan of development are critical for sound decision making in Middletown.

The state statutes discuss two significant court rulings in terms of the Plan of Development. These rulings confirm that the Plan of Development is controlling as to municipal improvements but merely advisory as to zoning and that recommendations in the Plan of Development designating appropriate uses for various areas in town is merely advisory and does not bind the Zoning Commission.

The Plan provides an opportunity for the City to delineate guidelines for the best possible environment in Middletown. Preparing the Plan helps the City to clarify its thinking on local issues: on growth, on community facilities and programs, on economic development, on preservation and conservation, on transportation, and on housing and redevelopment.

Middletown's earliest Plan, adopted by the Planning Agency in the 1930's has been updated from time to time most notably in 1965 and 1976. The 2000 Plan is intended to see the City through the remainder of the 20th century. It is an extension of the past but is dedicated to a future Middletown.

**THE NEED FOR CONSISTENCY  
AMONG STATE, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS OF DEVELOPMENT**

It is well understood that many of the problems which municipalities experience today transcend municipal boundaries and are of regional and often state wide concern. Traffic congestion, surface and ground water quality, air pollution and solid waste disposal are concerns which often must be addressed at the regional if not the state level. For this reason, consistency with state and regional plans is an essential characteristic of a local Plan of Development.

The state of Connecticut contains fifteen (15) planning regions. These fifteen planning regions encompass the states 169 municipalities. Ideally, each of the 169 local Plans of Development will be consistent with their respective regional plan and similarly all regional plans will be consistent with the State Plan for Conservation and Development.

Other states such as Vermont, Rhode Island and Maine, have passed laws establishing a formal process for reviewing plans at each level for consistency with legislatively adopted goals and policies. While Connecticut has not reached this level of sophistication in state and regional planning, the availability of excellent state and regional plans provides for an informal means to achieve such growth and land use management coordination.

Therefore a concerted effort has been made to insure that the Year 2000 Plan of Development for the City of Middletown is consistent with the MidState Regional Plan and the State Plan for Conservation and Development. In this way the three levels of government will be working in concert both to provide an opportunity for growth and development where appropriate and also to preserve and protect environmentally significant land and water resources.

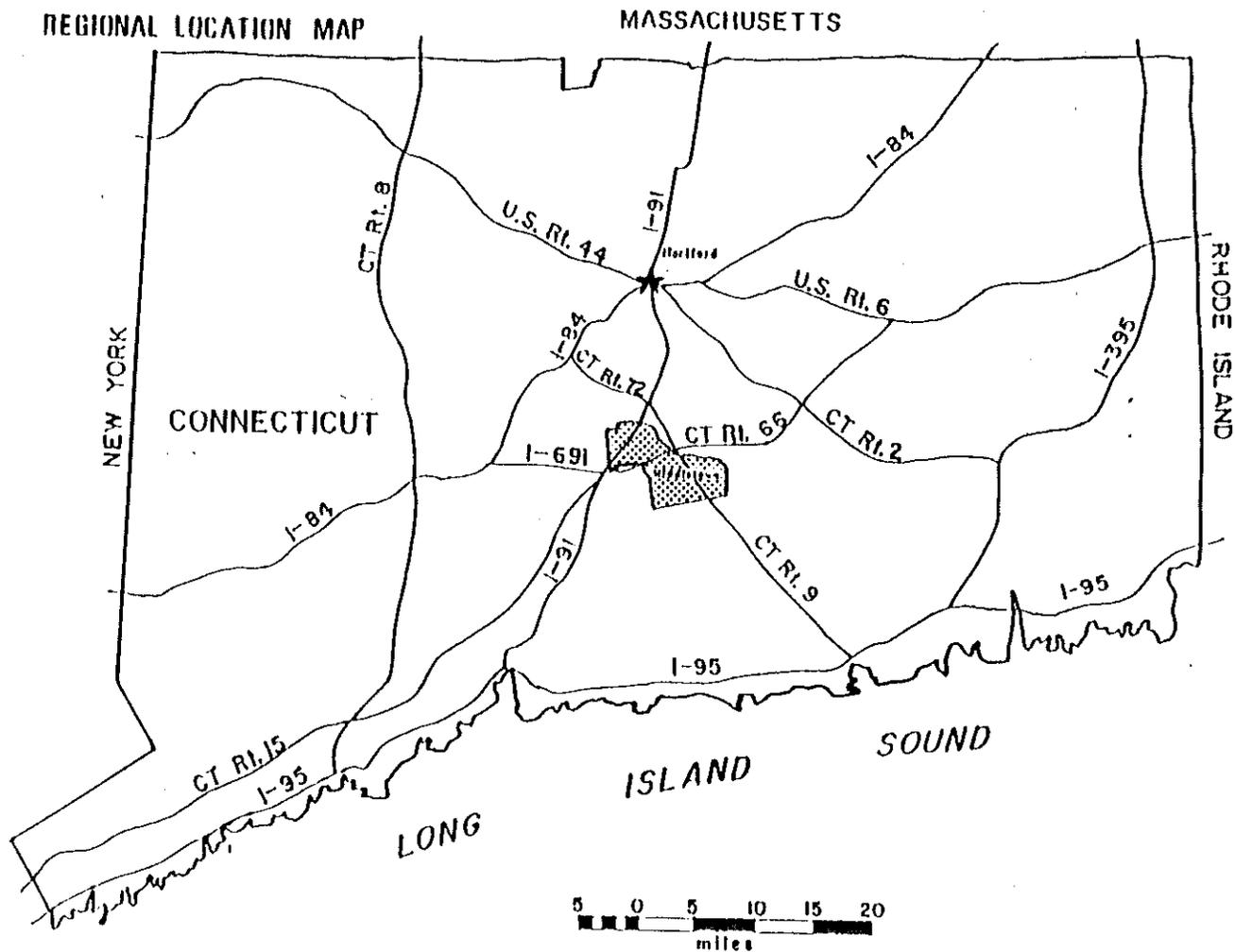
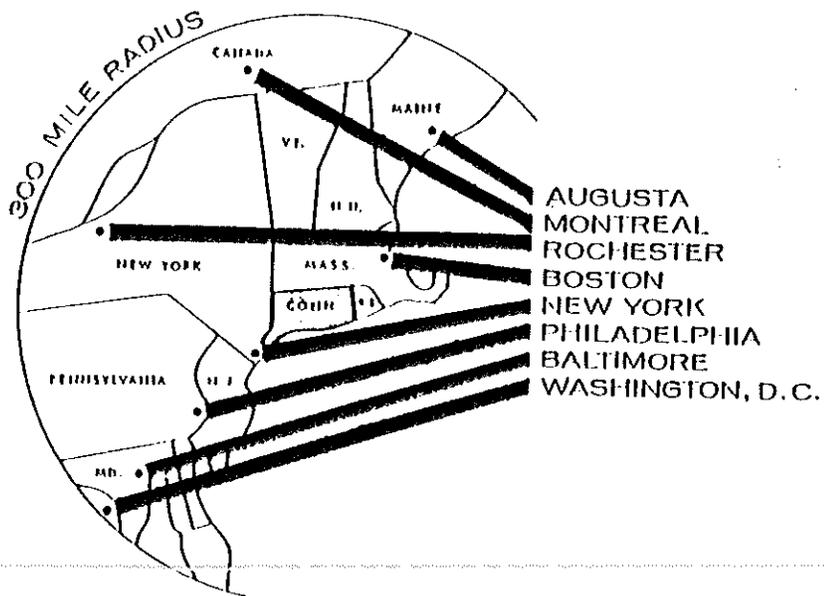
### GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF MIDDLETOWN

Middletown is almost at the geographic center of Connecticut. It is approximately equal distance, 20 miles, from two key Connecticut cities, Hartford and New Haven. The City is also approximately equal distance, 100 miles, from New York City and Boston. Middletown is part of the eastern megalopolis reaching from Norfolk, Virginia at the southern end to Boston, Massachusetts at the northern end.

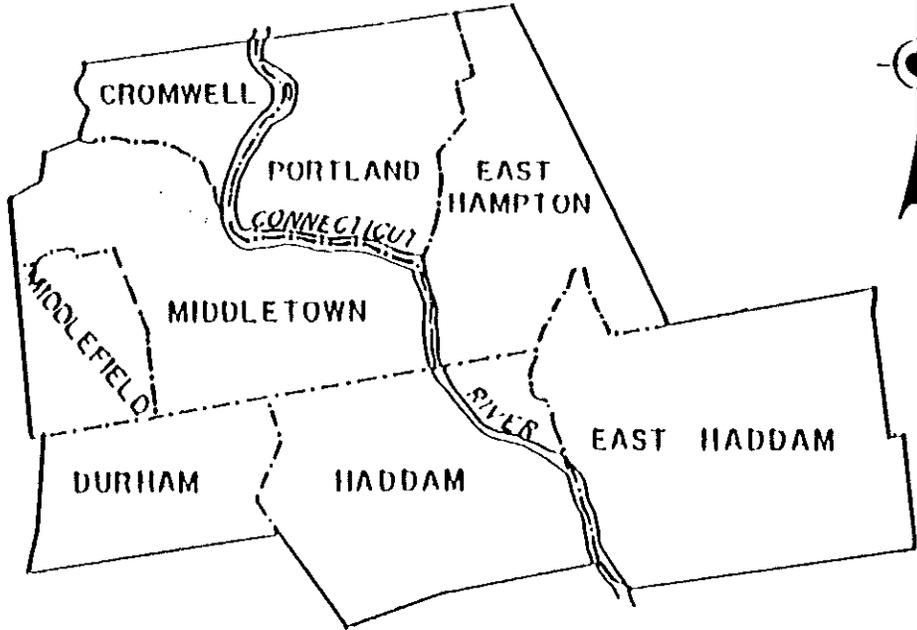
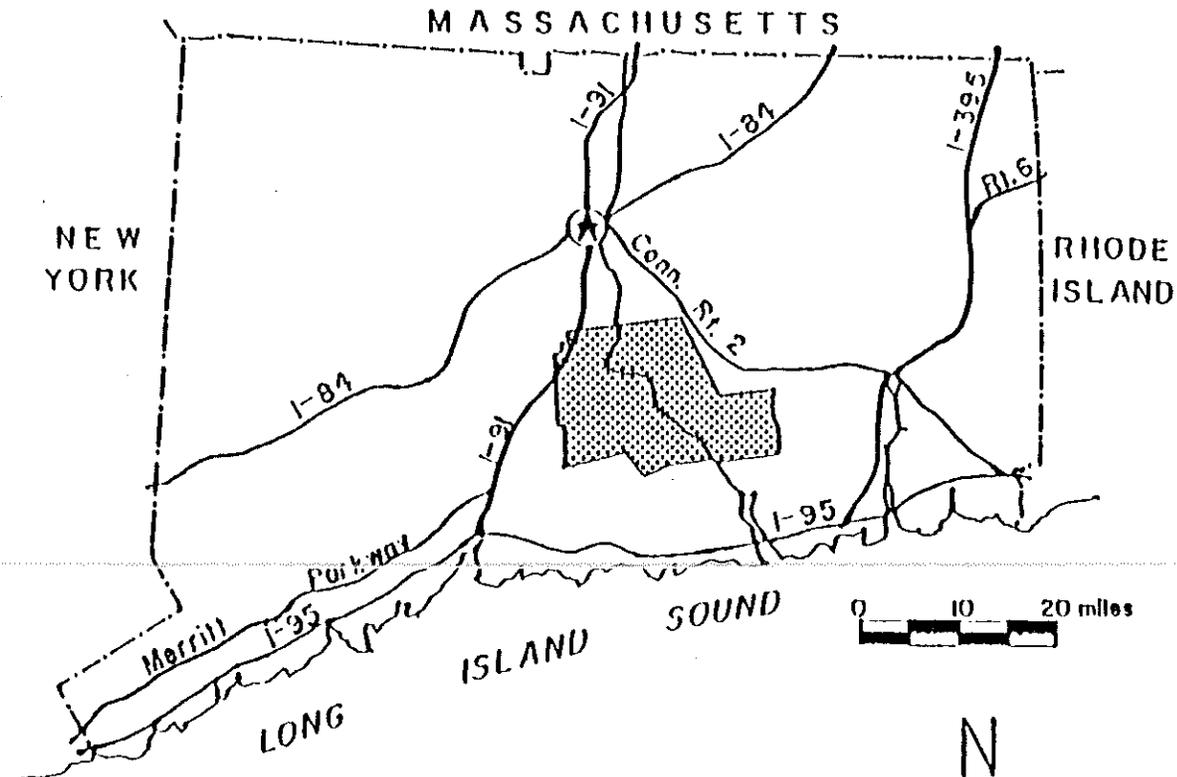
This geographic position has an undeniable influence on the future of Middletown. Within its own State designated planning region, Middletown is a mature urban center for the rural communities to the south and east. To the north and west Middletown is in the development shadow of Hartford and Meriden.

While Middletown is part of the urban and urbanizing eastern megalopolis and connected to the interstate highway system at the western boundary, it still has a significant portion of its ground surface undeveloped. It is precisely for this reason that a Plan of Development is essential. This plan will set general policies in order to guide the growth of the city. Middletown is in an advantageous position in terms of its options for its future course of development. Middletown can develop its own special combination of resources to be different from other communities in the State. It does not have to be dominated by industrialization nor must it exclusively play the role of a suburb. It can generate a unique complex of activities relating to the environment. This opportunity is provided by its location on the Connecticut River, its rolling landscape, and the qualities of a mid-sized New England city.

Middletown does not need to be unduly influenced by an irresistible set of forces which it cannot control. Middletown's location within the state, its accessibility to major highways and its large quantity of undeveloped land presents the city with a major advantage. Whether or not the community will respond to the advantage is part of what the Plan of Development is all about.



# MIDSTATE REGION



## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

A. Middletown has an area of 42.9 square miles.

B. Altitude:

The highest peak above mean sea level is 907 feet at Mt. Higby Reservoir. The lowest mean sea level is 15 feet at the Connecticut River. Most of Middletown is under 480 feet.

C. Topography:

Middletown consists of flat marshlands at the river levels to rolling hills. The Connecticut River and its tributaries, the Sebeth or Mattabasset River, Coginchaug River, and Sumner Brook, are the principal waterways.

The original city center lies on relatively level land, rising slowly from the river level to the Wesleyan campus at the west. The land falls off abruptly into the valley of the Mattabasset in the north and into that of Sumner Brook to the south. This natural topography serves to define and limit the area of the central district.

Along the westerly boundary, adjacent to Meriden, the land is rugged and in places reaches an elevation of nearly 900 feet. Easterly from this boundary the land becomes more gently rolling. The soils in much of the north and west sections of the City are generally of a medium to heavy character, with slow internal drainage. Some areas have poorly drained soils with clay or slit, although there are limited pockets of well-drained gravelly or sandy soils. Near the Mattabasset and Coginchaug Rivers there are extensive areas of aluvial soils, much of them subject to flooding. In general, the soil conditions of this part of the City are unsuitable for development except at a very low density, unless public sanitary sewerage is available.

Sumner Brook and its tributaries drain much of the south central area of the City. These streams rise near the Middlefield and Haddam lines and join south of the city center, where Sumner Brook flows into the Connecticut. Soil conditions in this part of Middletown vary, but much of the area contains medium to heavy soils which require public sanitary sewerage where development exceeds a low density. There are, however, some limited areas with sandy or gravelly soils, but there are also pockets of poorly drained soils as well as of rocky and rugged land. The topography of most of the south central area is gently rolling, becoming more rugged near the City's south boundary.

D. Climate:

Average annual temperature: 50.20 F.

Mean maximum January temperature: 36 F.

Mean minimum January temperature: 18 F.

Mean maximum July temperature: 83 F.

Mean minimum July temperature: 61 F.

Average annual rainfall: 50.34 inches

Average annual snowfall: 37.2 inches

## HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Middletown's Plan of Development is based on aesthetic and cultural resources and the goals of the community. The importance of history and historic preservation in the local planning process cannot be overstated. The basic planning objectives of maximum utilization of scarce land and building resources in densely built up areas can be aided by a preservation program, focusing on economically feasible adaptive uses for old structures.

To formulate and implement development goals, a community must be knowledgeable about its history, as well as about current trends. The historical, along with the physical, is the basis for determining community goals and objectives.

In planning for Middletown, the history of the community as well as social, economic and financial conditions must be considered. The following has been prepared so that policy on Middletown's growth and future direction will be based on a thorough awareness of itself and its history.

### THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Differences in politics and theology brought settlers to the Connecticut River Valley. There was also another reason: overcrowding in Massachusetts. Unplanned growth and urbanization still are important motivations for people migrating to new areas.

One of the first towns founded in Connecticut was Middletown. The original site included territory that became the towns of Middlefield, Chatham, Portland, Cromwell, and a part of Berlin. These towns date to the early 1700's. Now local governments annex areas for more efficient operation, but in the eighteenth century the approach was to form smaller, separate communities.

Colonists first called Middletown by the Indian name Mattabesek, which means carrying place or portage. Mattabesek was not an accurate name because of the many streams in the township. In 1643 the Massachusetts General Court renamed the area Middletown. This was one of the first times that a new and descriptive name was used for a town in America; usual practice was to take names from the Bible.

In spite of the 1650 settlement date, Middletown records only date to 1653. The first recorded vote was for a meeting house near a great elm at the north end of town, in the vicinity of Saint John's Square. The town had strong religious convictions, and developed around the church meeting house.

As in other New England settlements, Middletown's economy had an agricultural base. Along with corn, which first had been planted by the Indians, the early farmers grew rye, oats, and wheat. Farm gardens produced cabbage, lettuce, carrots, beans, and parsnips. In the late 1700's farmers began to market their surplus. A farmer's club, first of its kind in the state, was formed in 1842. Even when other industries developed in Middletown, agriculture continued as an important element of the local economy. In more contemporary times farmers specialized. They concentrated on dairy and poultry farming, because of Middletown's proximity to larger cities. Middletown's strong commitment to agriculture lasted until 1963. The Interim General Plan of Development, then adopted, did not recommend that Middletown maintain itself as an agricultural center. This was a significant policy change for the City. By 1970, only one percent of the employed labor force was in the agriculture, farming and fishing industries.

Along with agriculture, industry has been a significant factor in Middletown's economic development. In the early days almost every stream in Middletown was used for powering mill machinery. The first mill was a grist mill near Pameacha Pond (1655). Later, a mill was located on West Street near Newfield. These mills were the antecedents to today's industrial parks and areas.

When the area was first considered for a settlements, it was thought adequate for 15 families. By 1654, there were 31 taxable homes here. The number had only grown to 52 in 1670. The City's early growth, then, was slow. The impetus for growth was not to be felt for another hundred years. It was shipbuilding, and the merchant trade which developed because of the shipbuilding, that attracted newcomers to Middletown. The population was concentrated near the river, the location of the principle activities of the town.

By 1790 the population had grown to 5,370. In that year Hartford had a population of 4,090, and New Haven had a population of 4,484. Middletown was one of the largest communities in Connecticut. More important, though, was the City's status as a riverport. Middletown was an official

port of entry. Vessels of a high grade anchored in the river, and trade flourished. Initially the river trade was confined to the Atlantic seaboard but by 1760 the West Indies trade was well established. Commerce at first built up the farming interests so farmers as well as merchants prospered. Eventually, though, foreign trade was to hurt the farmer.

#### MIDDLETOWN DURING THE REVOLUTION

By the time of the American Revolution, Middletown was one of wealthiest communities in the Colonies. While official records reveal that town concerns were on the minds of Middletown residents, there never was any doubt of local support for the independence cause. Town officials agreed to support any action taken by the General Congress. The City assured the First Continental Congress that it would support its policies even to the extent of a complete halt in trade with the British. For a town with important overseas trade interests, this was a substantial commitment.

Middletown citizens became prominent during the Revolution in civic rather than military affairs. Eventually, Middletown's leadership was to extend to the wider spheres of state and continental matters. There were very few loyalists in Middletown; no local resident had property confiscated because of loyalist sentiment.

Because it was inland, Middletown experienced less interference with normal peacetime activities than other towns in Connecticut.

The City was not attacked by the British. After the British seized Rye in 1776, Middletown became a critical supply depot. During the Revolution the City mined lead. The mine was one of the most important in Connecticut. The lead vein was exhausted in 1778, but by that time 15,563 pounds of lead had been produced for cannons and guns.

Simeon North, the first official pistol maker in America, established his arms factory in Middletown during the Revolution. Later, in 1813, he introduced the principle of interchangeable parts, a significant production innovation.

During the war Middletown's privateers experienced a mixture of success and failure. The oldest American warship, the Oliver Cromwell, came from Middletown. Privateering did not replace the West Indies trade which had stopped during the Revolution. But ultimately wartime conditions had a positive effect on local trade. Traffic was diverted from

the shore road to routes through Middletown. Middletown came out of the conflict in a good position to capitalize on expanding commercial and industrial opportunities in the following decades.

#### GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

Long before Middletown was formally incorporated by the Connecticut General Assembly, the Massachusetts General Court had ordered the appointment of a constable here. Appointment and swearing in of a constable was considered incorporation of a town, and any further government organization was left to the local inhabitants. The Charter incorporating Middletown after the Revolution was granted in 1784. Middletown was one of the first towns incorporated in Connecticut.

The original Charter authorized a mayor, four aldermen, a common council, a city court, sheriffs, and a tax collector. Middletown's first mayor was a revolutionary war hero, Jabez Hamilton. The mayor held office until his resignation or death. It wasn't until 1840 that two year terms for the mayor's office were inaugurated.

The Common Council has had the most extensive governmental authority in Middletown. The first ordinance passed by the Council was actually a zoning regulation: "A Bye Law Restraining Swine and Geese from Roaming at Large through the City." The law had zoning implications since it restricted the use of property. By 1888, the Common Council set rules and regulations for public works, registration of voters, preservation of records, health, public utilities, consumer protection, law enforcement and waterfront matters. The 1888 City Code mandated eight committees of the Council: Street and Highways, Finance, Sewers, Fire, Police, Abatement, Street Lamps and Lights, and Health and Nuisance.

When City departments were created to administer the day to day activities of local government, they came under the control and direction of the Common Council. In 1924 there were five departments: The Department of Public Works, the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Charities Department, and the Park Department. So besides making bylaws and ordinances which articulated city policy, councilmatic authority extended to the daily regulation of municipal affairs.

The present charter delegates all legislative powers to the Common Council. It is the primary policy setting body in Middletown. The Council implements policy by its authority to levy taxes, to borrow money, to adopt a budget, and to appropriate funds. Until recently, Middletown's government was characterized as a weak mayor - strong council organization. The mayor's function was to preside at council meetings. He was a member ex-officio of the council. The chief law enforcement officer in the City was the Mayor. He could suppress all "tumults" and could jail persons for twenty-four hours if they behaved in a disorderly manner. Recommendations could be made to the Council by the mayor only in particular areas: Police, security, health, cleanliness, ornaments of the city, and the improvement of government and finances. While the mayor prepared a yearly report on government, finances, and improvement, the report was published by the Common Council.

The Mayor's office was considerably strengthened in 1964 when he was made a voting member of boards, commissions and agencies appointed by him. The 1964 Charter further made the mayor responsible for the administration of all city departments, agencies and offices. The mayor could now make recommendations to the Common Council in any area.

The greatest innovation of this charter revision concerned the mayor's budget making authority. This was probably the most significant change in Middletown's government operation since its incorporation. The mayor became the official responsible for submitting a budget to the council.

Increases in the mayor's authority are in keeping with the nation-wide trend for a stronger chief executive. Charter revisions effective in November 1973, further strengthened the office of the mayor so that now he exercises even more influence on city management. The mayor can veto ordinances and appropriations passed by the council. A vetoed provision cannot become law unless it is passed again by the legislative body.

#### THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: MANUFACTURING GROWTH

The shipping industry never really recovered after the Revolution. Around 1800, Middletown began to rely less on the river as the mainstay of its economy, and industry started to spring up. Since its early years, Middletown's favorable location on the river and its centrality in the state have

attracted many industries. During the first part of the nineteenth century, Middletown lead the state in the number of factories and value of its products.

The Industrial Revolution brought a new era to Middletown: the local economy was now based on textiles. The first industries were cotton and wool. The Middletown Manufacturing Company was a pioneer in using steam for power. During the War of 1812, great quantities of gun powder were manufactured. After the War, the City began manufacturing ivory combs, gold spectacles, pewter goods, a variety of small hardware, muskets, swords, docks, pumps, cotton webbing, marine hardware, hammocks, silver plate, lace rubber goods, and fertilizers. In 1895 local businessmen formed "The Society for the Encouragement of Connecticut Manufactories." In 1910 the group was incorporated as the Manufacturers Association of Connecticut. Manufacturing has always been a very strong element in Middletown.

In 1834 the Russell Manufacturing Company was founded. The firm purchased a mill site near Rubber Mill Pond. In 1841 the firm began manufacturing elastic webb which up to that time had only been done on hand looms. Machinery was invented to weave the webb on power looms. The Russell Company was the first anywhere to make elastic on power looms.

#### TRANSPORTATION

The first roads in Middletown were built and maintained by private companies who were repaid for their investment by toll collection. The oldest road was the Middlesex Turnpike which ran from Saybrook to Haddam to Middletown. Main Street was laid out soon after the arrival of the first settlers. To prevent a surprise Indian attack, a large area was cleared, the antecedent of our present wide main thoroughfare. While Middletown was settled before Philadelphia and Savannah, Middletown streets were not laid out on any comprehensive plan. It wasn't until the planned residential developments of the 1970's that street systems were planned. Street growth in Middletown was slow but constant. As the community developed, the appearance of the streets changed more drastically than their location. At first, Main Street was the site of stately homes as was Washington Street. When shipping declined, downtown residences were razed to make way for business and industrial uses. Business and commercial land were located

in the Court Street area, along with municipal buildings. Through the years changes in the street system have permanently obliterated many of the famous local landmarks, such as a rope walk and a park.

The first permanent street names were fixed in 1809. All but six of these streets (Turnpike Rd., and Swamp, Low, Parsonage, Lumber, and Elm) have retained their original names. City streets were noted throughout the State for their tranquility and beauty. In the nineteenth century great elms and maples formed canopies over the roads. One of the truly unique characteristics of Middletown has been the extent and variation of its trees. One story holds that Middletown was not settled before the other old river town (Saybrook, Hartford, Wethersfield and Windsor) because the forest cover was so thick with trees that the back country seemed uninviting.

The increasing number of factories in Middletown caused major transportation problems. Middletown had a chance for a railroad in 1830, but the shipping interest convinced local leaders the town did not need one. Nothing could make up for the lack of the railway. By 1846 the community had decided it wanted a railroad and gave a New York and Boston firm a charter for a line from New Haven with a drawbridge over the river. The line was completed in 1872, and traffic began a year later. The railroad company discontinued service when it saw that it was not going to make a profit.

A branch line to Berlin was offered to Middletown in 1849, and the town took it. The line ran from Berlin junction through East Berlin and Westfield and Newfield and into Middletown, entering behind Saint John's Church, crossing over what is now Hartford Avenue and running south along Water Street to the foot of Washington Street. Without quick and efficient transportation to and from other Connecticut points, life in Middletown became low key. The City was to make in comfort, culture, and beauty what it lacked in commercial importance. For a long time the town tried to recruit an institution of higher learning. Attempts to get Trinity College failed. Wesleyan University was founded in 1831. The University received its charter after \$18,000 had been raised by local residents. The establishment of state facilities - The Connecticut State Hospital (1868), and the Long Lane School for Girls (1870) made the town known as the site of notable state institutions.

## PUBLIC SCHOOL TRADITION

New England, of course, has a strong tradition in public education, and Middletown exemplifies the tradition. Schools had been the central element in residential areas. Middletown has put schools at the core of the neighborhood.

By 1675, the town had its own schoolhouse. Local school districts were established around 1784, when the City was incorporated. Each school was supervised by a committee, which meant there were little uniform standards in education.

The City School Districts were unified in 1857. A Board of Education was provided for with its members to serve for three years, one third of whom were elected annually. Middletown High School was established in 1840, the first in Connecticut and one of the first in the nation. The Court Street structure was built in 1896. Besides the City School District, there was also a Town School District. In 1884, the town really had eighteen school districts. The budget for that year was \$7,100 for 1,213 students, a per capita expenditure of \$5.35. This contrasted with the fiscal 1989 per capita expenditure of \$3,918.00. The inevitable inefficiency of numerous school districts lead to the enactment of a state law mandating consolidation of the town school district. In 1922 the separate districts were consolidated into a single Town School district.

## INTO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Middletown's manufacturing and population grew after the Civil War. The height of manufacturing prosperity was the 1920's. A Chamber of Commerce brochure of the period attributed the attractiveness of the community to the even balance between industrial and residential development.

Deprived of a railroad, Middletown had been obliged to look to close markets, ones that could easily be reached by existing modes of transportation. What has been important for Middletown has not been its central location, but its location relative to Hartford, New Haven, and other cities as well as a main corridor connecting Boston to Washington. It was the automobile that brought dramatic change to Middletown.

## PLANNING IN MIDDLETOWN

Up to the 1920's Middletown's development had been unplanned. There were not attempts to clarify community feeling on the kind of living environment it was trying to create by specific decisions. Spurred by the national interest in planning and zoning, Middletown passed its first zoning ordinance in 1927. The Commission on the City Plan and Zoning was established in 1931 by the Connecticut General Assembly.

After World War II, extensive building caused local development issues to become more important to municipal governments. The Federal government encouraged planning at the local level. The Housing Act of 1954 required each applicant for funds to have a workable housing program, one element of which was a comprehensive plan. Since 1954, Federal housing programs have increasingly required the conformance of proposed improvements to a local plan.

The national interest in planning after World War II motivated Middletown's Commission on the City Plan and Zoning to become more active in planning issues. A staff was hired in 1954. A comprehensive plan was adopted in 1955. This plan was more than a confirmation of existing city zones, as had been the earlier plan. The guiding principals of the 1955 plan were to retain the downtown district as a shopping center for the community, to make land available for industry, and to control residential development. The plan recommended making Pameacha Pond a recreational area and encouraging agriculture. For Washington Street this plan proposed a low volume of traffic with only showroom stores. Eight years later the Plan was amended. The 1963 revisions reiterated many of the already adopted proposals, but there was one major policy change. The comprehensive plan abandoned the goal of maintaining Middletown as a rural agricultural center. The plan proposed that Middletown direct its efforts towards new industrial, commercial, and residential developments.

While the City Plan and Zoning Commission was considering the 1963 amendments, it was also working on a more detailed comprehensive plan. The 1965 Comprehensive Plan was the City's first truly comprehensive plan. It was the first attempt to deal with the essential elements of a community. It took into account regional trends and was related to the social and economic forces it was designed to accommodate.

Because of changes in Middletown since 1965, the Planning and Zoning Commission extensively revised the Plan of Development and adopted a major update in 1976. The 1976 update helped the city achieve its present prosperous position and unique character.

This comprehensive update of the Plan Development is designed to guide the city through the year 2000.

## GOALS OF THE 2000 PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT

An important part of a Plan of Development is the articulation of the City's goals. The following general goals are designed towards achieving the highest possible quality of life for the current residents and future residents of Middletown. The more detailed objectives, which are recommendations designed to help achieve these goals will be presented in each individual chapter.

### ON THE ECONOMY

To encourage balanced growth so as to insure Middletown of a sound fiscal position and a secure employment and tax base.

To encourage and assist existing businesses to remain, prosper and expand and to attract high quality, new businesses.

- To encourage retail and service establishments to locate in the Central Business District and discourage their dispersion to other parts of the City.

### ON TRANSPORTATION

To develop a more efficient transportation network which will minimize travel time and congestion and improve air quality city wide.

To provide for a variety of alternative transportation modes in order to reduce automobile traffic, conserve energy and continue to improve air quality.

To minimize the current peak hour traffic congestion in the Central Business District, using creative traffic channelization, intersection improvement, improved signalization, and staggered shifts among our major employers.

### ON HOUSING

To continue to encourage a diverse mix of private single family residential dwellings on lots of varying densities so as to correct the current imbalance between multi family and single family dwellings.

To provide for diversity in the future single family residential housing stock in order to attract an economically and culturally diverse population, capable of sustaining or improving the current status of the community.

To identify older neighborhoods in need of rehabilitation and adopt polices and regulations to encourage this rehabilitation while discouraging gentrification.

Monitor population growth and avoid residential density increases which would over burden the capacity of the city's infrastructure.

#### NATURAL RESOURCES

To maintain sufficient and carefully selected undeveloped areas so as to preserve the rural character of Middletown, to assist in carefully managing significant but fragile natural systems, and to provide areas for passive recreational opportunities.

To provide for a healthy living environment by promoting clean air, reducing noise levels, ensuring clean water resources, and properly managing hazardous materials and solid wastes.

#### ON RECREATION

To provide for the optimal number of safe, well maintained, active and passive recreation facilities in areas most suited to service the diverse population.

#### ON COMMUNITY FACILITIES

To provide the optimal type and distribution of facilities and to effectively maintain and enhance the existing facilities.

#### ON EDUCATION

To promote well coordinated and comprehensive educational and training programs designed to equip students, of all age groups, for a constantly changing job market.

#### ON HISTORIC AND CULTURAL MATTERS

To preserve historic and architecturally significant resources and to promote cultural activities in Middletown's Central Business District.

#### ON URBAN DESIGN AND CITY BEAUTIFICATION

To require buildings, and other structures, to be of high quality design and properly maintained in order to create and insure a healthy, safe, pleasant and attractive living environment.

ON LAND USE

To encourage the appropriate, coordinated, and economic use of land in a manner which is consistent with the the goals articulated in this plan, facilitates conservation of energy, and enables the efficient supply of public utilities and services.

## CHAPTER 2

### HOW DO MIDDLETOWN CITIZENS FEEL ABOUT THEIR CITY?

In July of 1989, 3057 surveys were sent to households of registered voters throughout the city of Middletown. The purpose of the survey was to document public attitudes, for this Plan of Development, toward the problems and prospects concerning future growth and other issues pertinent to the Plan of Development. More specifically, the survey asked for citizen input regarding choices and priorities concerning housing, the local economy, recreation, open space, urban problems, safety, traffic, community facilities, environmental concerns and neighborhood improvement. The Planning Department considers the survey results to be a strong and meaningful statement from the citizenry regarding efforts to formulate a future direction for the city.

A total of 949 or 32 % of the surveys were returned within the next month. By any statistical measure a citywide return of 32 % is indeed impressive. It shows that the people of Middletown have a genuine interest in helping to shape their communities future.

The entire survey, which displays the preferences among the various voting districts, is available in Appendix I of this Plan.

### WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY?

The majority of those responding to the survey were long time residents of the city. The average number of years that survey respondents had lived in the city was 30 years. The age distribution of the respondents was as follows:

<u>AGE DISTRIBUTION</u>	
18-30	16 %
31-45	31 %
46-64	25 %
65-up	30 %

The majority of respondents (54%) lived in single family homes with 33% living in apartments and 13% in condominiums.

When asked where the respondents work 49 % indicated in Middletown, 40% indicated outside of the city and 11 % indicated retired.

The average household size in the city was 2.5 persons per household. This figure is the same as the average household size for the city in the 1980 U.S. Census of the Population. This figure strongly supports the Planning and Zoning Department population estimates for 1990 and beyond, which are included in the population chapter of this plan.

#### THE SURVEY FINDINGS

The majority of the information coming from the survey will be particularly useful in the Community Facilitates and Capital Improvements portion of the Plan of Development.

The following highlights were especially useful, to the Planning staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission, in formulating goals, objectives, and recommendations for this Plan of Development.

- 1.) The overwhelming majority (88%) of respondents are quite satisfied with their dwelling unit and their neighborhood.
- 2.) Sixty percent of those responding to the survey agree that the town should increase the supply of low and moderate income housing.
- 3.) It appears that multi-family dwellings should be dispersed throughout the city. But, the comments to this question suggest that the city should avoid increasing residential densities.
- 4.) The majority (61%) of respondents felt that Middletown should actively pursue further Commercial and Industrial development. Respondents clearly recognize the importance of the Commercial and Industrial portion of the city's tax base.
- 5.) Air quality and solid waste disposal are the most important environmental issues here in the city.
- 6.) More open space land acquisition, dispersed throughout the community, is strongly desired. (81%)
- 7.) The majority of respondents are in favor of the establishment of bicycle (70%), hiking (65%) and jogging trails (64%).

8.) A slight majority of the respondents (55%) were opposed to the development of a municipal golf course by the city. This is most likely the result of the respondents taking into consideration the tax consequences of such a large municipal project.

9.) A majority of respondents (61%) would like to go places in the city at night but do not because they would not feel safe. The majority of respondents indicated that these places were downtown, particularly the north end, and the Harbor Park area.

10.) The majority of respondents shop for food (81%) in the city and for clothing (66%) outside of the city.

11.) There is a large consensus (72%) that the library is an excellent and frequently used facility.

In the final three questions, discussed below, citizens were asked to write in their comments. Due to the fact that the comments were so varied, no true numerical or statistical analysis would be valid or useful. But, nevertheless, the reoccurring comments and suggestions are quite interesting and may prove useful in privatizing particular projects and future policies. The comments to these questions are in no particular order.

12.) When asked "What new programs and facilities would you like to see in Middletown?", the most common responses, among those who responded, were as follows:

More Library parking	Preschool programs
Teen activities	Adult recreation
Movie theater in CBD	More playgrounds
Better ice skating area	Road improvements
Development Moratoria	Art programs
Dance programs	More tennis courts
Improved recycling	Improved park maintenance

13.) When asked How can the city improve its appearance, The reoccurring improvements, from those who responded to this question, were as follows:

Remove vagrants from CBD	Remove soup kitchen from CBD
Clean up CBD	Increase tree plantings
Clean up river front	Address north end problem
Move soup kitchen to CVH	More flower beds citywide
Improve public housing areas	Improve access to the river
Widen Route 66	More open space
Less multi-family development	

14.) When asked other than price why would you not shop in downtown Middletown, the majority of those responding to this question indicated that a lack of variety was the major reason why they would not shop in the downtown area. The other reoccurring reasons for not shopping in the downtown were as follows:

Parking	Traffic congestion
Vagrants	Lack of quality stores
Unsafe feeling	Lack of a true department store
Not convenient	

**HOW THE UPDATED PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS REFLECT THE RESULTS OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING SURVEY OF CITIZENS**

This updated Plan of Development for the year 2000 is designed to reflect the public preferences expressed through the survey.

There is an emphasis on issues concerning air quality and the plan contains several new chapters and sections. These new chapters and sections include, to mention a few, a housing affordability section, an aggressive economic development chapter with commercial area studies and also natural resource and open space chapters which recognize and recommend the conservation of valuable natural resource areas.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE PEOPLE - HOW MANY ?, THEN, NOW AND TOMORROW

The first truly comprehensive Plan of Development for the City of Middletown was done in 1965 by Technical Planning Associates. In this Plan the chapter on population was entitled "Population Projections as a Basis for Planning". The chapter began with the following paragraph:

*"It is obvious that plans for all phases of future development must be geared to the future size of the community. How many people will there be for whom provision must be made for housing, job opportunities, for shopping, recreation, schools and other facilities? A study of population trends described below concludes that today's planning for Middletown should be based on a target population of 65,000 residents and that this will be reached about 1990 or 2000"*

After review of population trends, existing and proposed land uses, and the current zoning scheme the primary conclusion of this chapter is that the 1965 Plan of Development was quite accurate at predicting the population in the year 2000.

#### **POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS IN THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN**

An important part of any Plan of Development framework is the gathering and analysis of information in regard to population trends and projections. This section is essential in a Plan of Development for it helps to describe the extent and quality of the present and potential labor force and, at the same time, population and age distribution projections will help to indicate the level of services and the expenditure of funds which may be required for education, elderly services, day care, and other public and quasi public functions.

The most valuable source of demographic information is the United States Census of the Population. While the 1980 census data is available, it is dated. For this reason, this section will pull together information from a variety of reliable sources. When the 1990 Census becomes available this section will be updated and adopted as part of the Plan of Development.

### REGIONAL TRENDS

Middletown does not stand alone as an island. The road network provides surrounding communities access to the city and, in particular, the city's downtown. For this reason, it is important to first review the demographics of the region which Middletown is in. Middletown and seven adjacent towns are in the "MidState Region". This region constitutes Middletown's primary trading area and "area of influence". The communities of the region are, to a considerable extent, interdependent. Growth and development of each will depend on the growth of the whole. Figure 3.1 displays this region in relation to the rest of the state. Table 3.1 shows the trends of population in these communities. From this table it is clear that Middletown contributes significantly (44 %) to the entire regions population. But, in 1940 Middletown's population comprised 64 % of the region's population, in 1950 the figure was 50% and in 1980 the figure was 45 %. These figures are a reflection of the decentralizing suburbanization trend which has been occurring nation wide.

**TABLE 3.1**  
TOTAL POPULATION 1980, 1986 ESTIMATE

TOWN	1980	1986	% CHANGE
Middletown	39,040	41,220	5.6
Cromwell	10,265	11,390	11.0
Durham	5,143	5,530	7.5
East Haddam	5,621	6,270	11.5
East Hampton	8,527	9,350	9.0
Haddam	6,383	6,740	5.6
Middlefield	3,796	3,900	2.7
Portland	8,383	8,610	2.7
<b>Region</b>	<b>87,203</b>	<b>93,010</b>	<b>6.6</b>

Source: U.S. Census, Ct. Dept. of Health

# MIDSTATE REGION

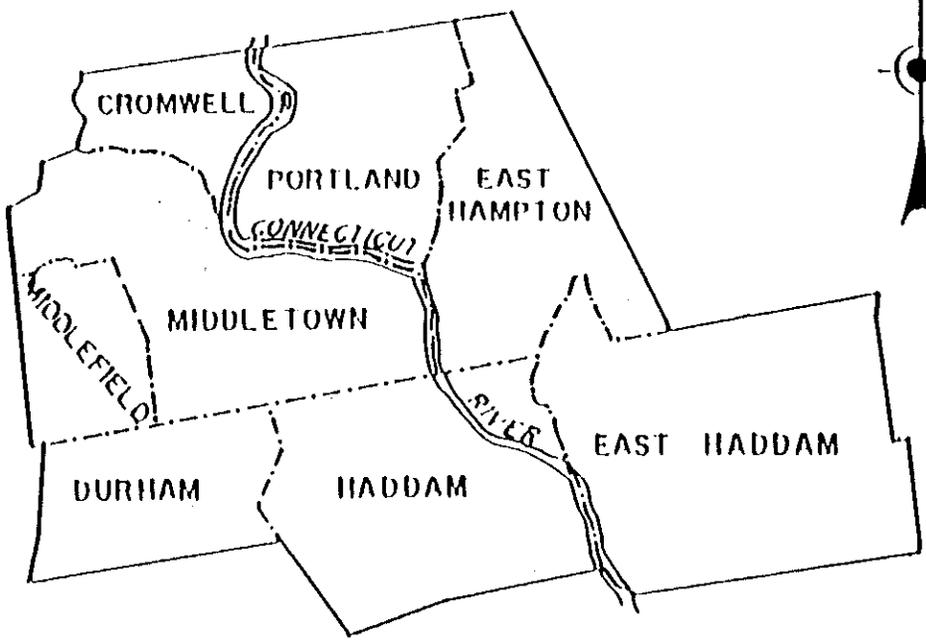
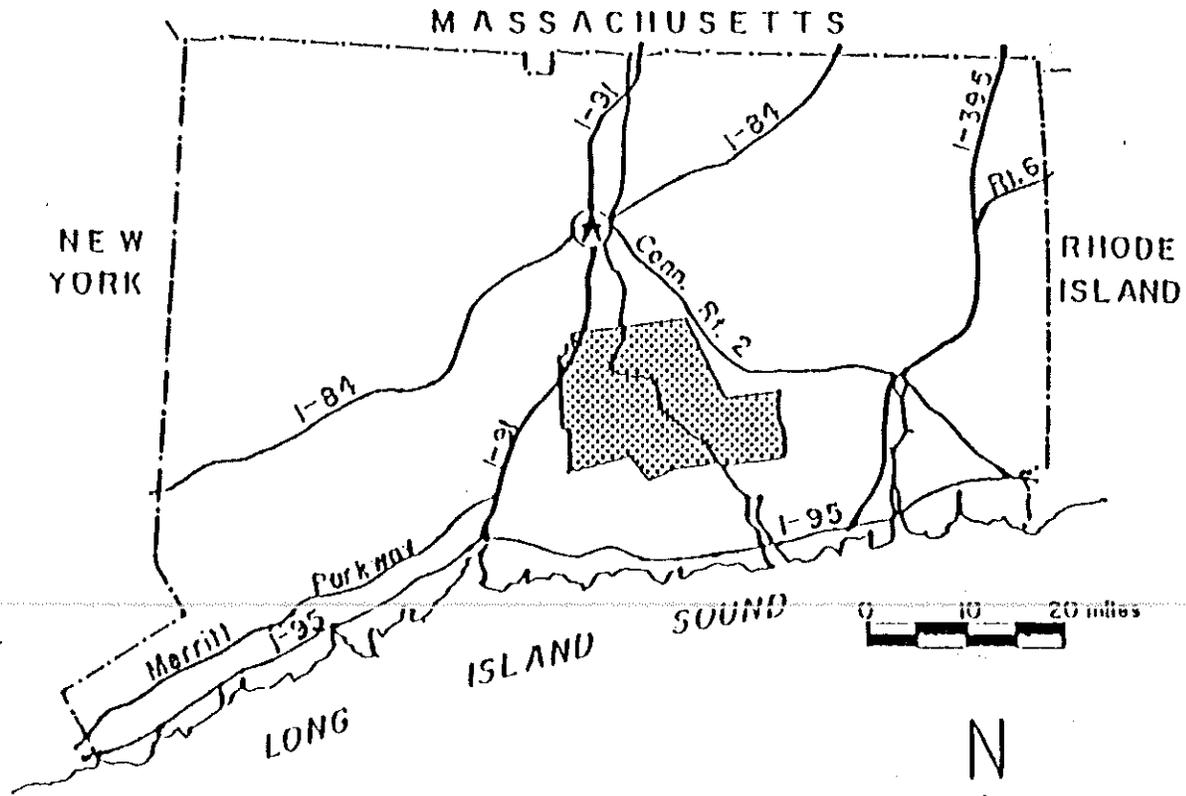


Table 3.2 provides projected population by age group for the Midstate Region. As the table indicates, several changes in the age distribution of the region's population are expected by the year 2000. A significant decline in the number of children (under 20 years) and young adults (20-35 years) is anticipated, while adults and the elderly are expected to see significant increases. The increase in the elderly population, a national trend, is expected to have a significant impact on the Region and all of the individual communities.

**TABLE 3.2**  
MIDSTATE REGION POPULATION BY AGE

AGE	1980		2000	
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
0 - 19	26,097	30	23,065	22
20 - 34	23,647	27	20,236	20
35 - 64	27,999	32	45,843	43
65 +	9,460	11	14,084	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>87,203</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>103,228</b>	<b>100</b>

### Mid State Age Distribution

MidState RPA

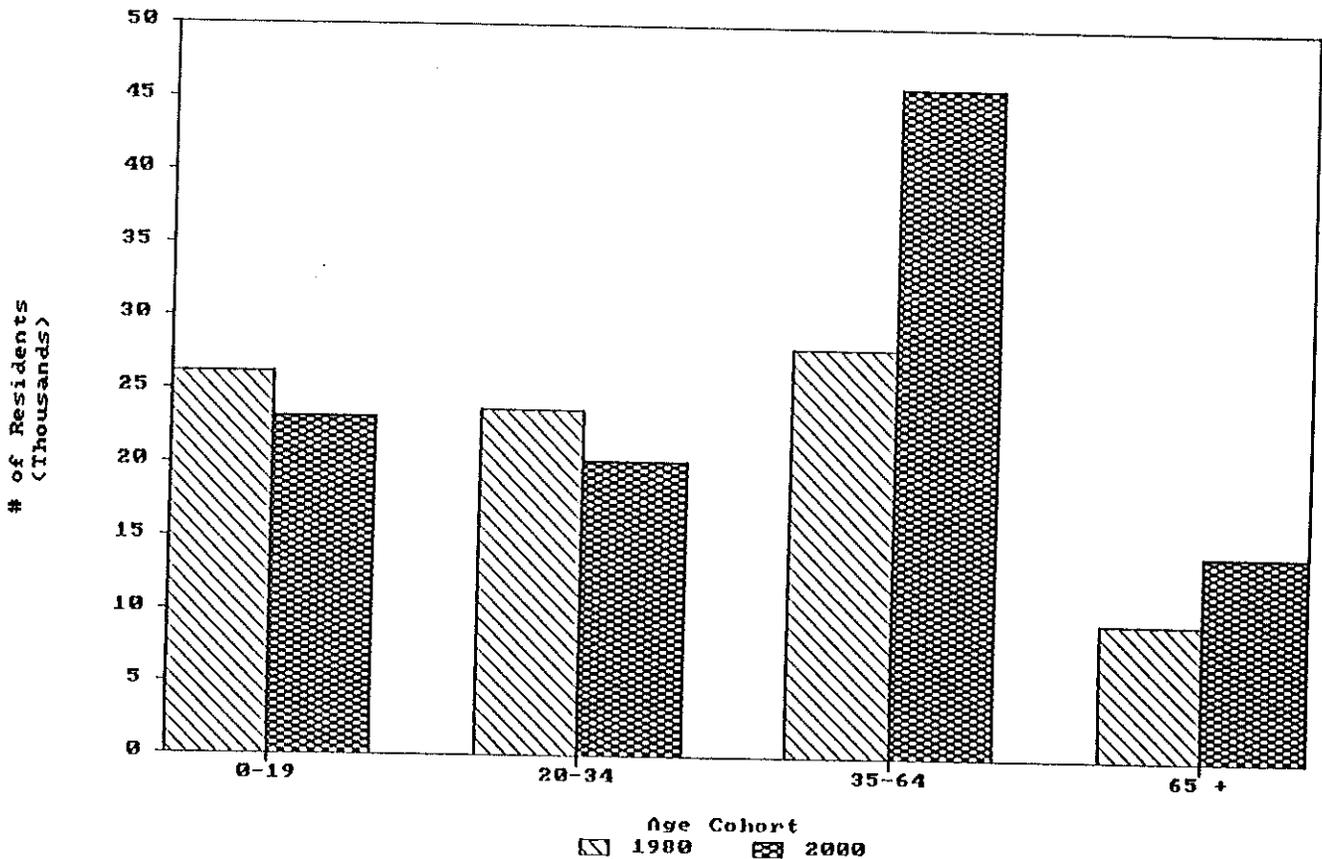


FIGURE 3.2

### LOCAL TRENDS

Historically, Middletown's population has almost always been an increasing population. This is unlike surrounding somewhat larger cities. Figure 3.3 displays the cities historical population from 1790 to 1980. Also shown in Figure 3.4 are more recent population estimates by the city's Planning Department. The critical date for the 1990 Census of the Population is April 1, 1990. Therefore the Planning Department also estimated the population on this date. The official Planning Department estimate of the total population is 46,860 residents. This figure clearly displays the record growth the city experienced between 1985 and 1988.

### MIDDLETOWNS HISTORICAL POPULATION

Source: U.S. Census, Building Dept.

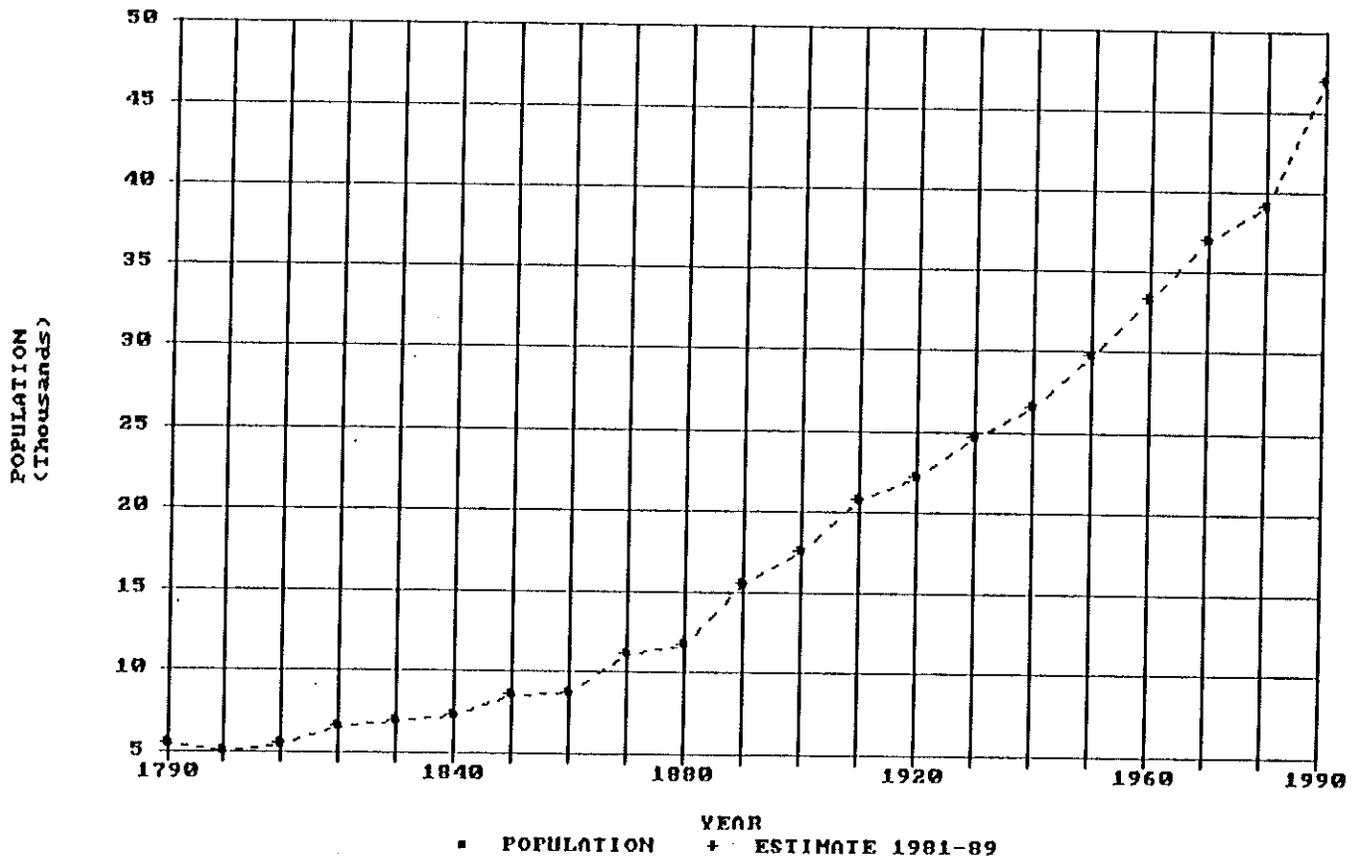


FIGURE 3.3

# RECENT POPULATION ESTIMATES

Source: Building Dept. Planning Office

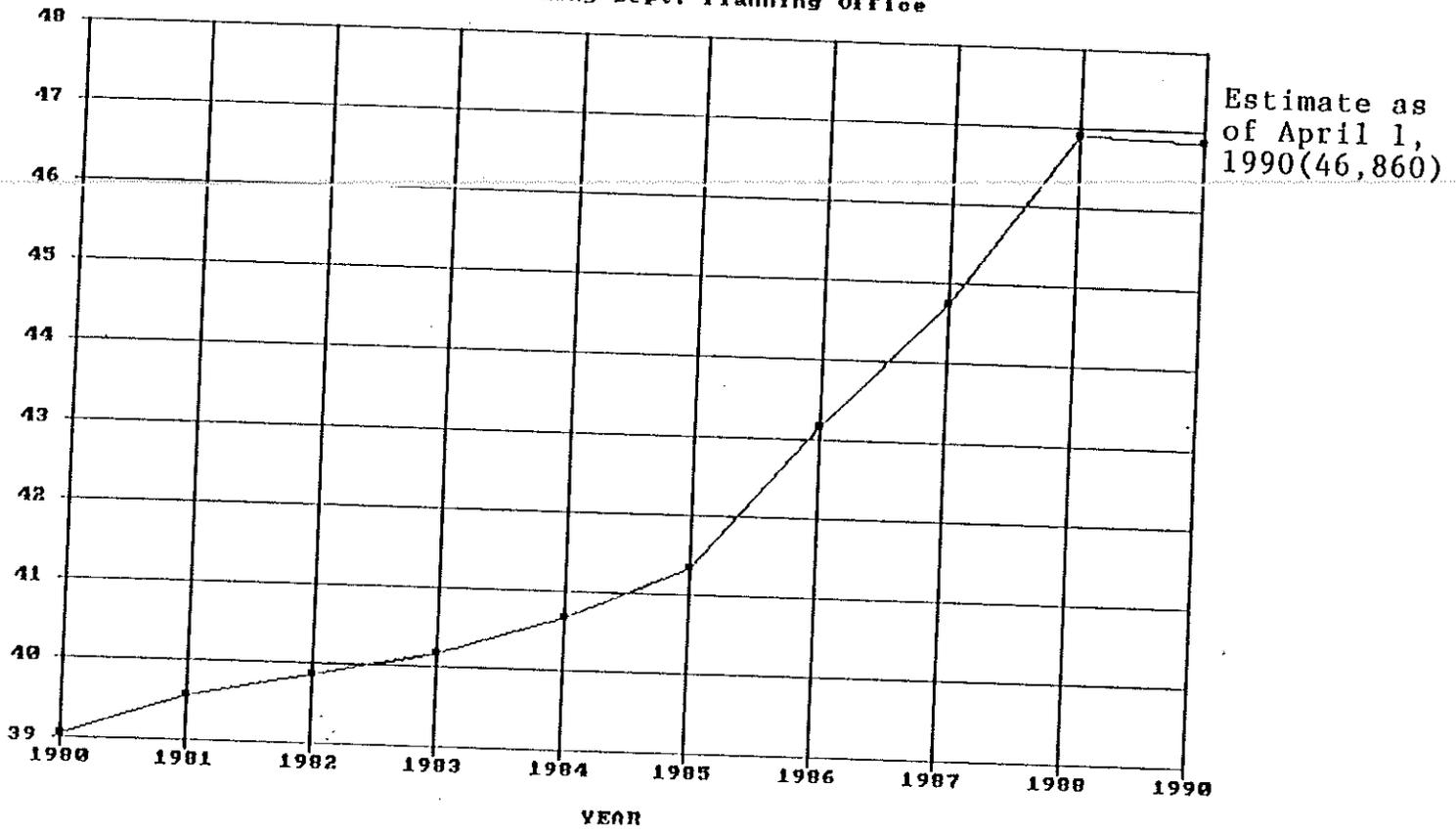


FIGURE 3.4

The age distribution of this population is important to understand in order to correctly plan for city services, such as schools or programs for the elderly. Figure 3.5 displays the 1980 and the projected 1990 age distributions for the city. From this figure, it is clear that Middletown has an aging population, similar to most other towns and the state, as was discussed earlier. This aging population and the concomitant decline in the the younger cohorts will have a significant impact on the city.

### 1980 & 1990 Age Distribution

Source: U.S. Census & Ct. OFH

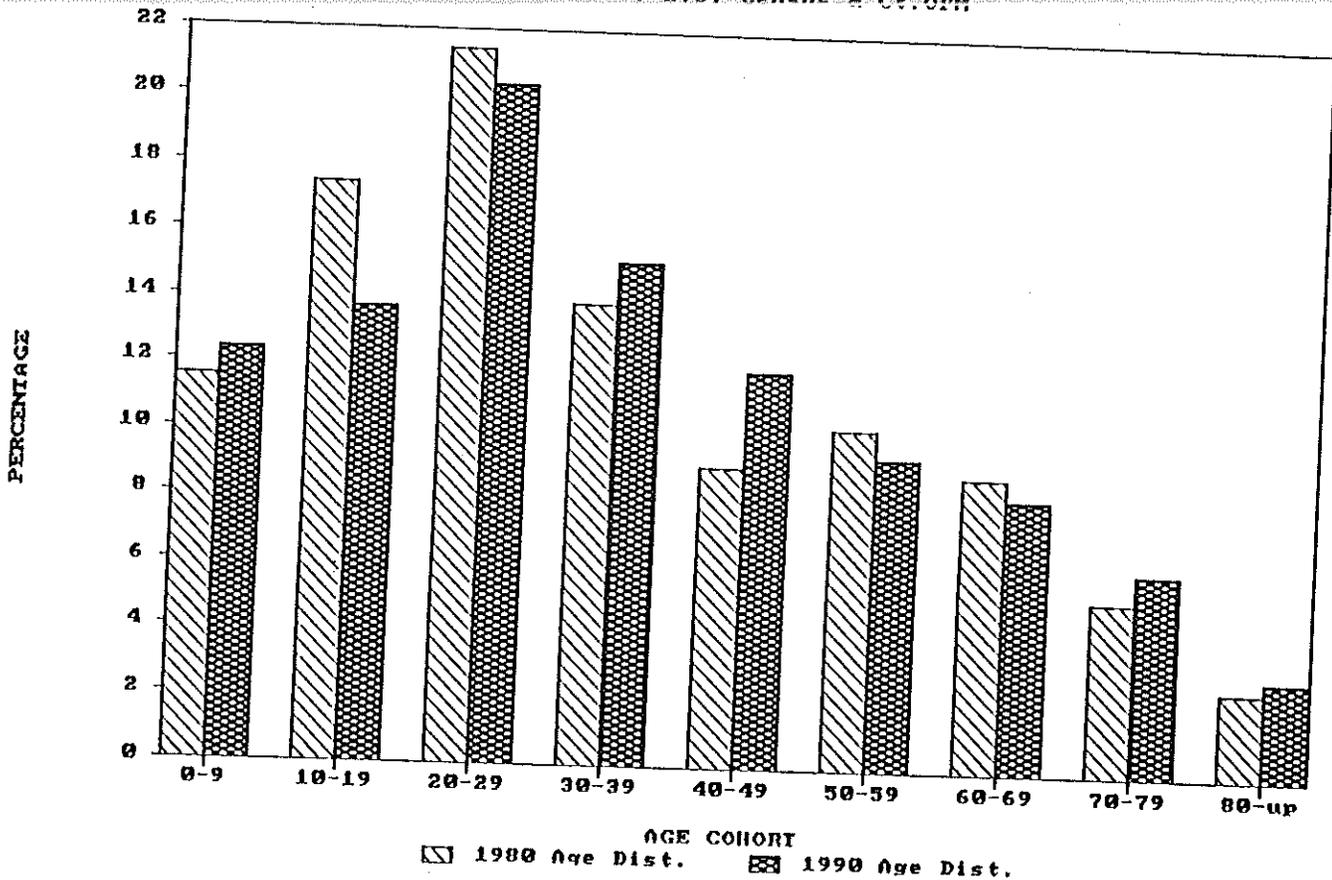


FIGURE 3.5

It is important to project the future population in the city to better understand the future demand for services. This projection was accomplished using two methods. The first method was simple linear regression using historical data. The second, more reliable method was the land use method. This method is based on the density allowed for in the current zoning scheme. Using Housing Partnership estimates of potential units based on available vacant land, subdivision records, building permits and other information, the Planning office estimated the population at total residential build out to be approximately 63,580 residents. The next figure, figure 3.6, displays these two projections. Interestingly, the 1965 Middletown Plan of Development, as discussed earlier, estimated the ideal population in the year 2000 to be 65,000 residents.

The city's target population becomes extremely relevant when one considers the fact that the Water and Sewer Department has indicated that a target population of 65,000 residents is used when planning for future water supplies.

### PROJECTIONS INTO THE FUTURE

Source: Middletown Planning Office

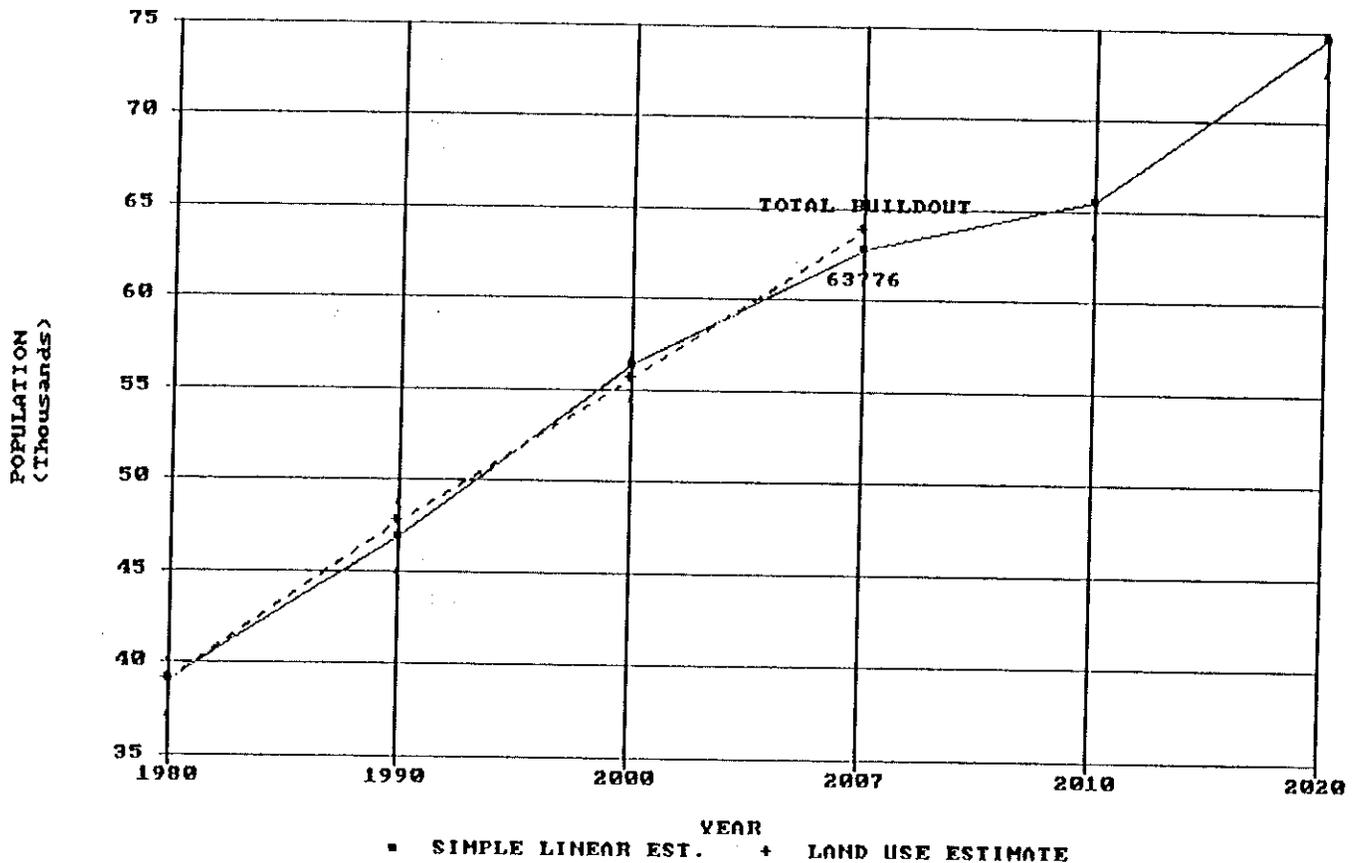


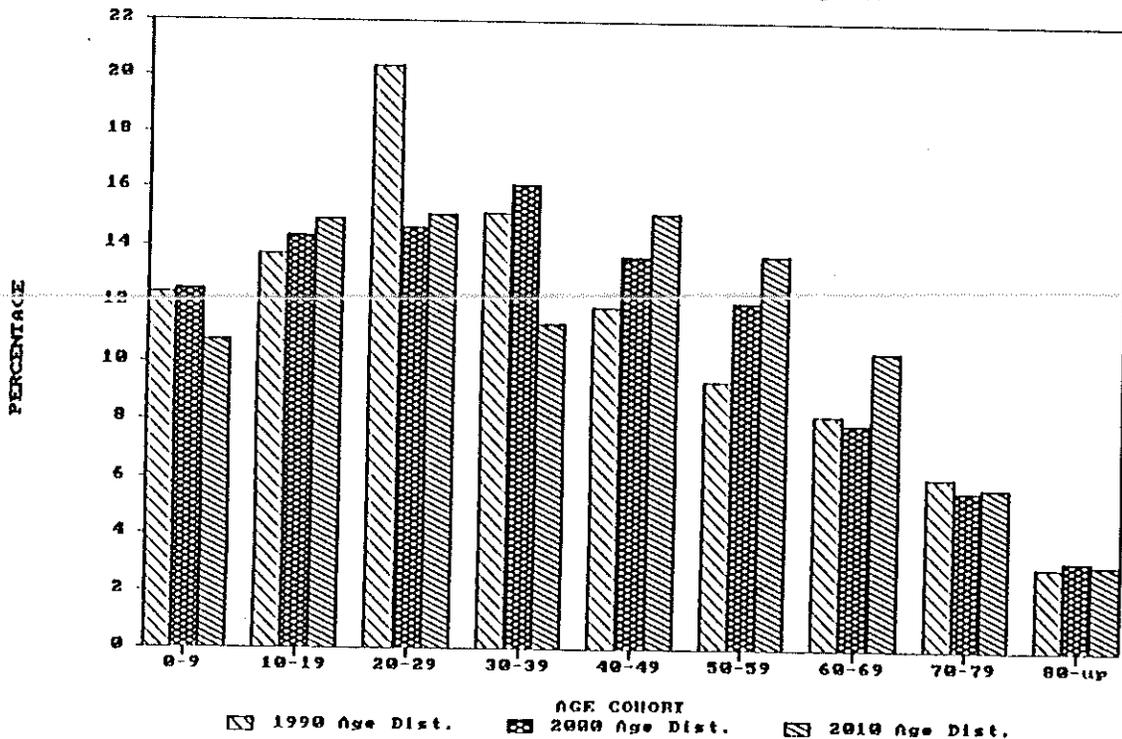
FIGURE 3.6

Another interesting and important projection to review is the future age distributions. The U.S. Census reported and the Office of Policy and Management has estimated future distribution for the years 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010. These distributions are shown in figure 3.7.

### FUTURE AGE DISTRIBUTIONS

Source: Office of Policy and Management

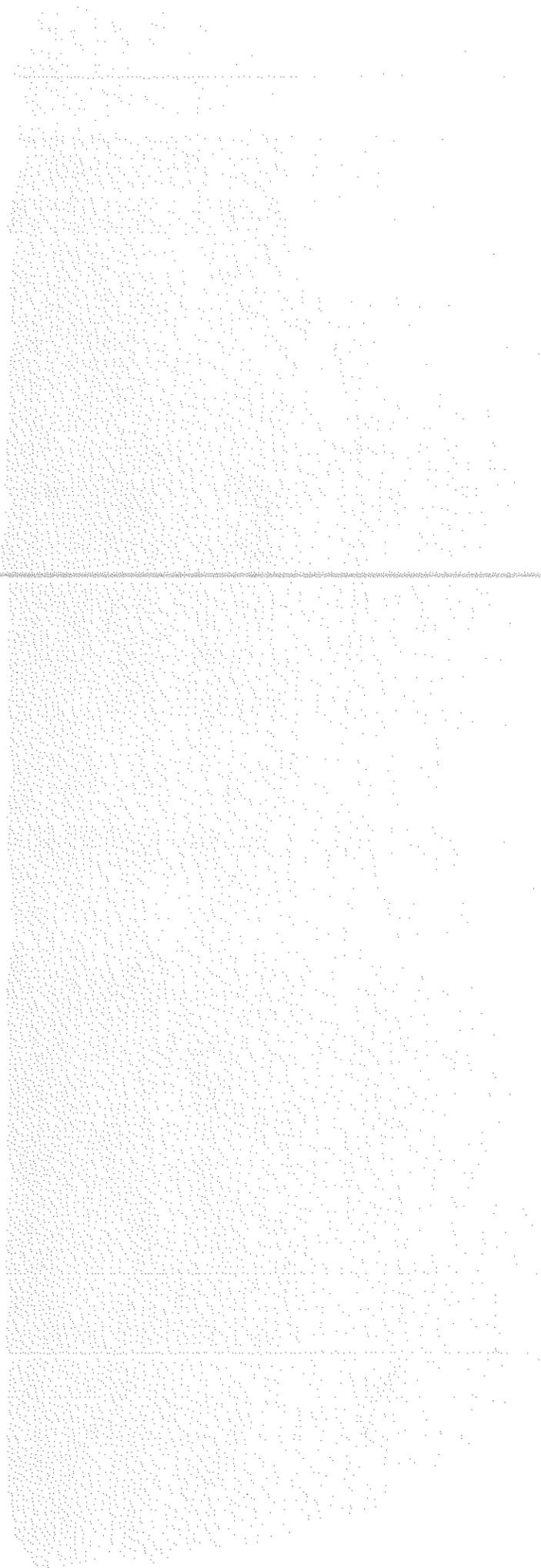
FIGURE  
3.7



#### DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

- 1.) The "MidState" region has been growing steadily, and some towns have grown dramatically.
- 2.) The "MidState" region's population is becoming a significantly older population, which will increase the need for further planning for the elderly.
- 3.) Middletown's population has been increasing steadily and it is expected to continue to do so into the year 2000.
- 4.) Housing demand will remain steady as a result of an increasing population, a declining family size and a somewhat still affordable real estate market compared to other surrounding towns.

- 5.) The age distributions indicate that:
- a. The less than 5 year old age cohort has increased dramatically between 1980 and 1989 and the 20 to 29 year old age cohort has declined. This is indicative of the trend of more career oriented couples, who have waited to have families, now having them.
  - b. The 20 to 29 year old age cohort, or first time home buyers, is the largest cohort, but they are becoming increasingly shut out of Middletown.
  - c. The 30 to 39 and 40 to 49 year old age cohorts are increasing. This displays the fact that Middletown's population is shifting to a population of older, more established, second home families.
  - d. Middletown's population is expected to become an increasingly older population into the year 2010. This will increase the need for a further emphasis on planning for older populations.
  - e. Due to this aging population the current labor shortage will intensify, barring any significant economic downturns, especially in the lower paying retail and low end service sectors.
- 6.) Finally, in order to insure an adequate supply of potable water, a relatively uncongested road network, and a quality living environment the city should be planning for an ultimate population of approximately 65,000 residents, as suggested in the 1965 Plan of Development.



## CHAPTER 4

### HOUSING: HOW MANY?, WHAT TYPE?, WHERE?, AND HOW AFFORDABLE?

In order to achieve the most desirable composition and quality of dwelling units in the community the housing and residential construction portion of the Plan of Development has identified the following goals:

*To continue to encourage a diverse mix of private single family residential dwellings on lots of varying densities so as to correct the current imbalance between multi family and single family dwellings.*

*Provide for diversity in the future single family residential housing stock in order to attract an economically and culturally diverse population capable of sustaining or improving the current status of the community.*

*To identify older neighborhoods in need of rehabilitation and adopt polices and regulations to encourage this rehabilitation while discouraging gentrification.*

*Monitor population growth and avoid residential density increases which would over burden the capacity of the city's infrastructure.*

It is important to have a housing and residential construction portion in the Plan of Development to better understand the currently available housing stock and the potential future housing stock. Understanding the type of future housing available in the city will contribute to a better understanding of the future socio-economic characteristics of the city's population.

This portion of the Plan of Development will review recent residential construction activity, the current number of dwelling units, the potential number of units and, finally, will analyze the affordability of a home in Middletown. This portion of the Plan of Development will then end with several conclusions and recommendations aimed at achieving the housing and residential construction goals as discussed above. ALL FIGURES WILL BE UPDATED WHEN THE OFFICIAL 1990 CENSUS FIGURES BECOME AVAILABLE.

## CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

Middletown has experienced a rapid surge in residential building construction over the past several years. Figure 4.1 displays the building permit activity over the past 6 years. From this figure it is clear that construction activity has decreased substantially in 1988 and 1989, down from record highs in 1985 through 1987, and it appears activity will continue to be much slower in 1990. Figure 4.2 displays the certificate of occupancy activity. The large number of certificates of occupancy, in 1988, is merely a delayed effect from the past record years in terms of building permits. Accordingly, the number of certificates of occupancy issued did decline in 1989 and 1990.

### BUILDING PERMITS 1985-AUG. 1, 1990

Source: Middletown Building Department

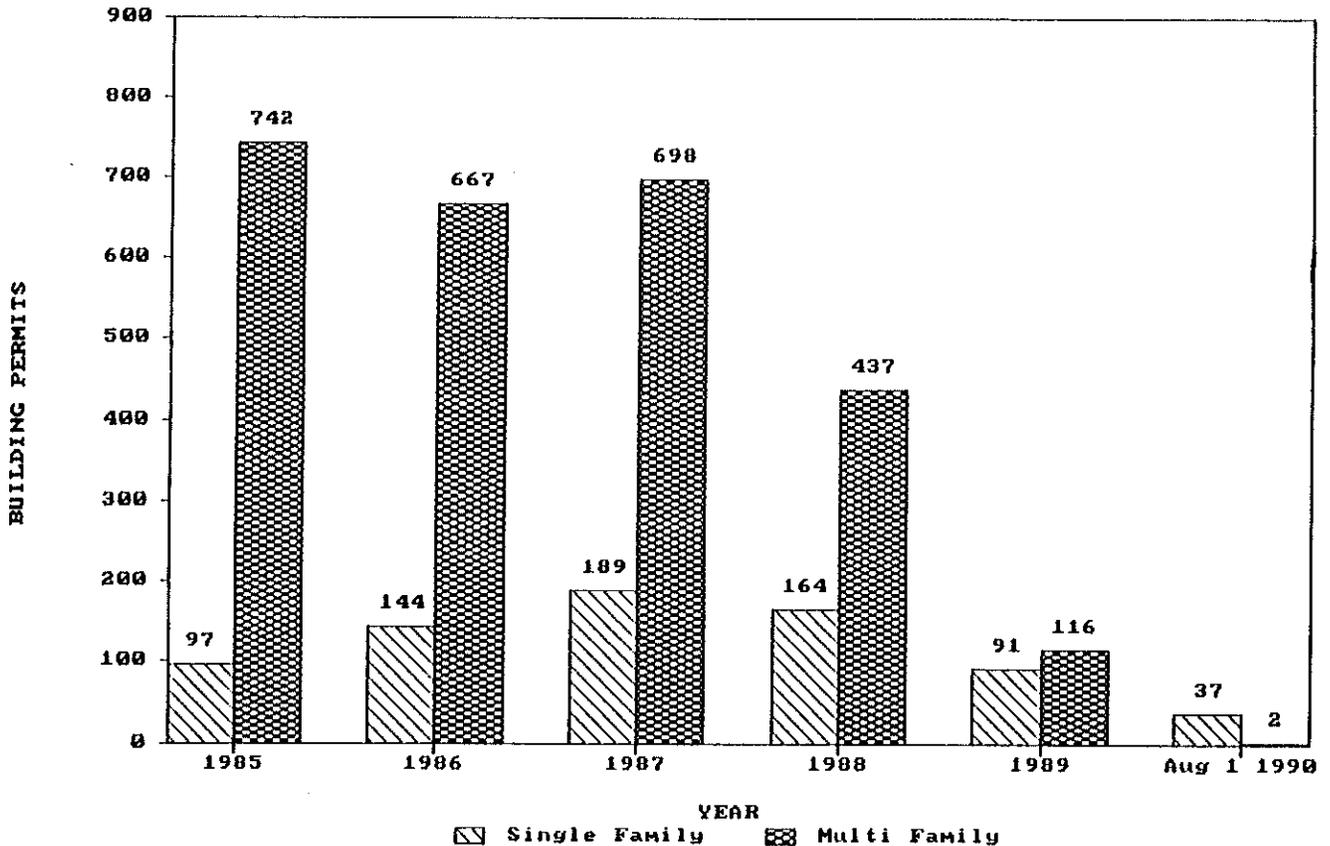


Figure 4.1

# CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY 1986-90

Source: Middletown Building Department

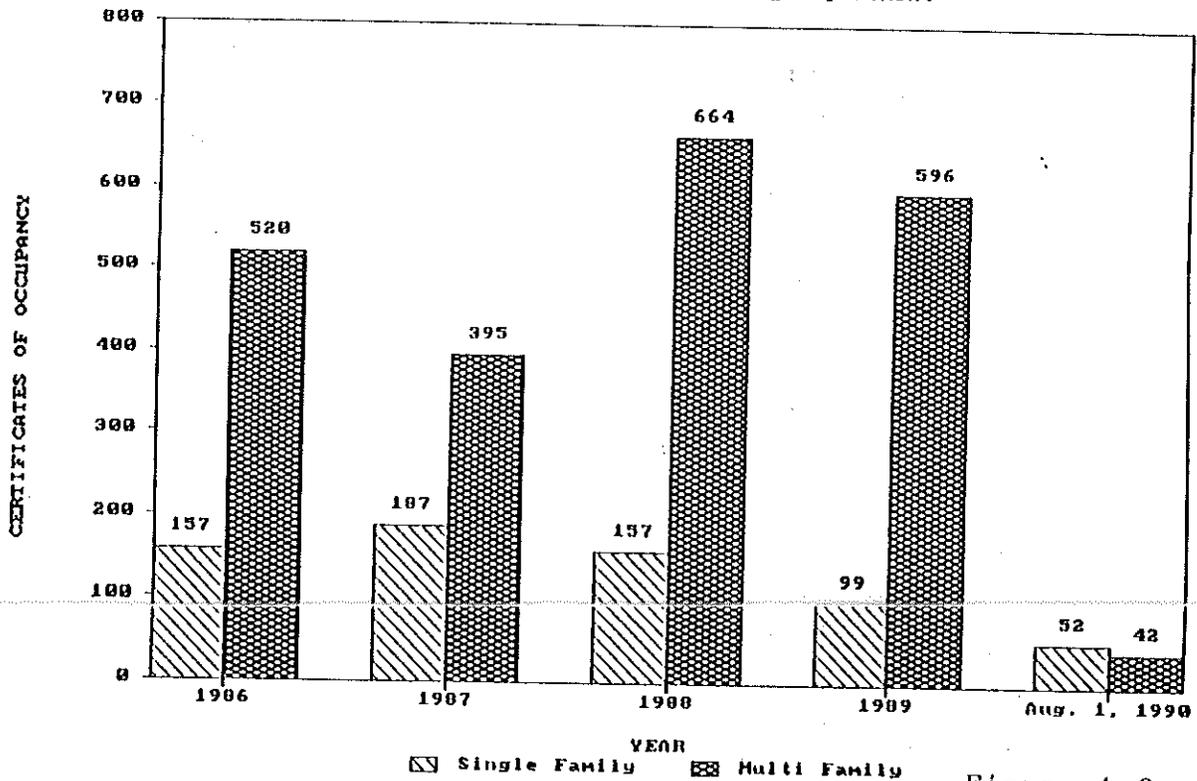


Figure 4.2

## THE CURRENT HOUSING SUPPLY

The rapid surge in construction activity has resulted in a substantial increase in dwelling units over the past decade. In 1980 there was a total of 14,774 dwelling units in the city. From 1980 to August 1, 1990, there have been 3944 building permits issued for the construction of both multi-family and single-family dwelling units. This addition in units since 1980 results in a total of 18,718 dwelling units in the city. This growth represents a 27 % increase in housing units. The next two figures, 4.3 and 4.4, display the distribution of dwelling units, by census tract, throughout the city. From these figures, it is clear that the Westfield portion of the city contains a substantial portion of the entire city's housing stock. Figure 4.5 displays the change in the number of dwelling units between 1980 and August 1 of 1990. In this figure, it becomes obvious the most substantial growth occurs in the 5413 census tract. This is the result of the multi-family construction in the Westlake Planned Residential Development. In order to gain a further understanding of the housing stock and the population contained within, it is important to divide the total number of dwelling units into single-family and multi-family dwellings. Figure 4.6 accomplishes this and shows that the multi-family homes have been increasing much more rapidly than single-family. Figure 4.7 shows the distribution of multi-family (56 %) and single-family (44 %) dwelling units. This phenomena is once again due to the rapid development of the Westlake PRD.

1990 CENSUS TRACTS  
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT  
PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT

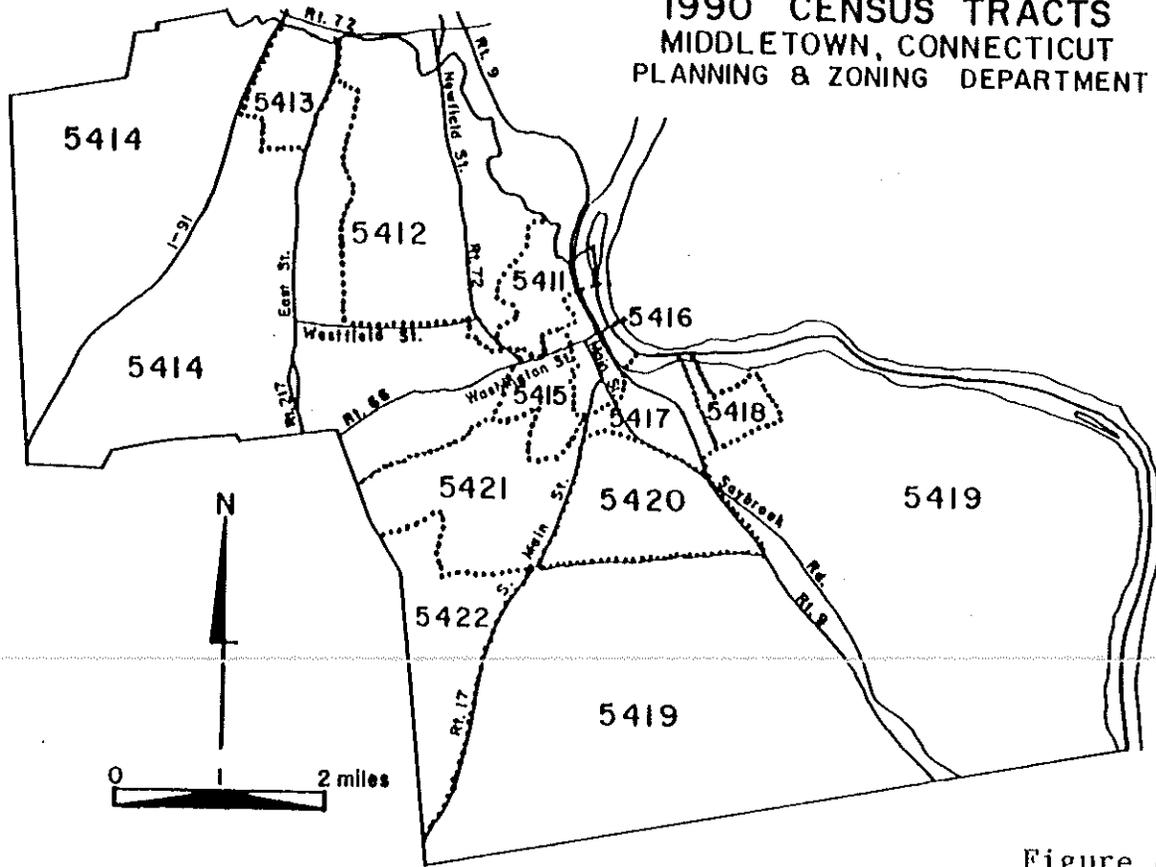


Figure 4.3

HOUSING UNITS BY TRACT

Census Tract	Units 1980	198 5	Aug. 1, 1990
5411	1206	1207	1256
5412	1615	1615	1897
5413	1511	1841	3491
5414	2240	2409	2864
5415	737	766	791
5416	1329	1404	1439
5417	890	943	956
5418	28	31	31
5419	1911	2041	2225
5420	1681	1708	1815
5421	1140	1159	1328
5422	486	561	625
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14774</b>	<b>15685</b>	<b>18718</b>

# Units by Census Tract, Aug. 1, 1990

Source: Middletown Building Department

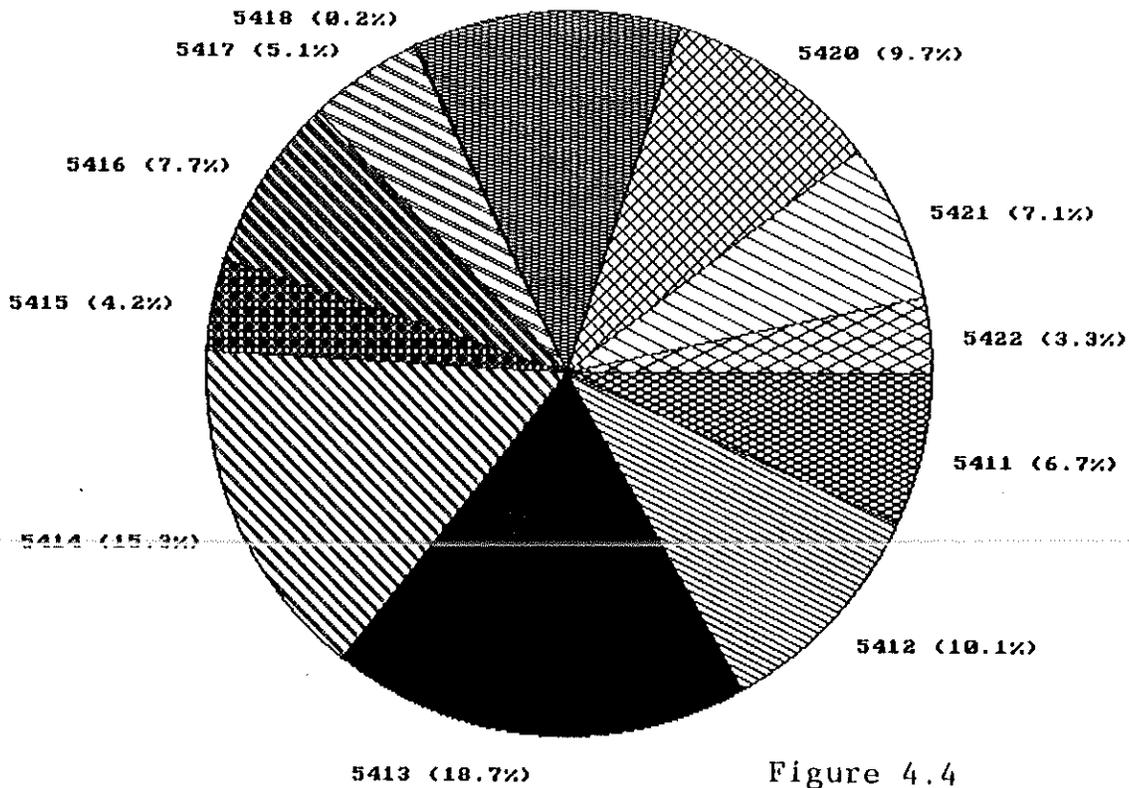


Figure 4.4

# CHANGE IN UNITS 1980-AUG. 1 1990

Source: Middletown Building Department

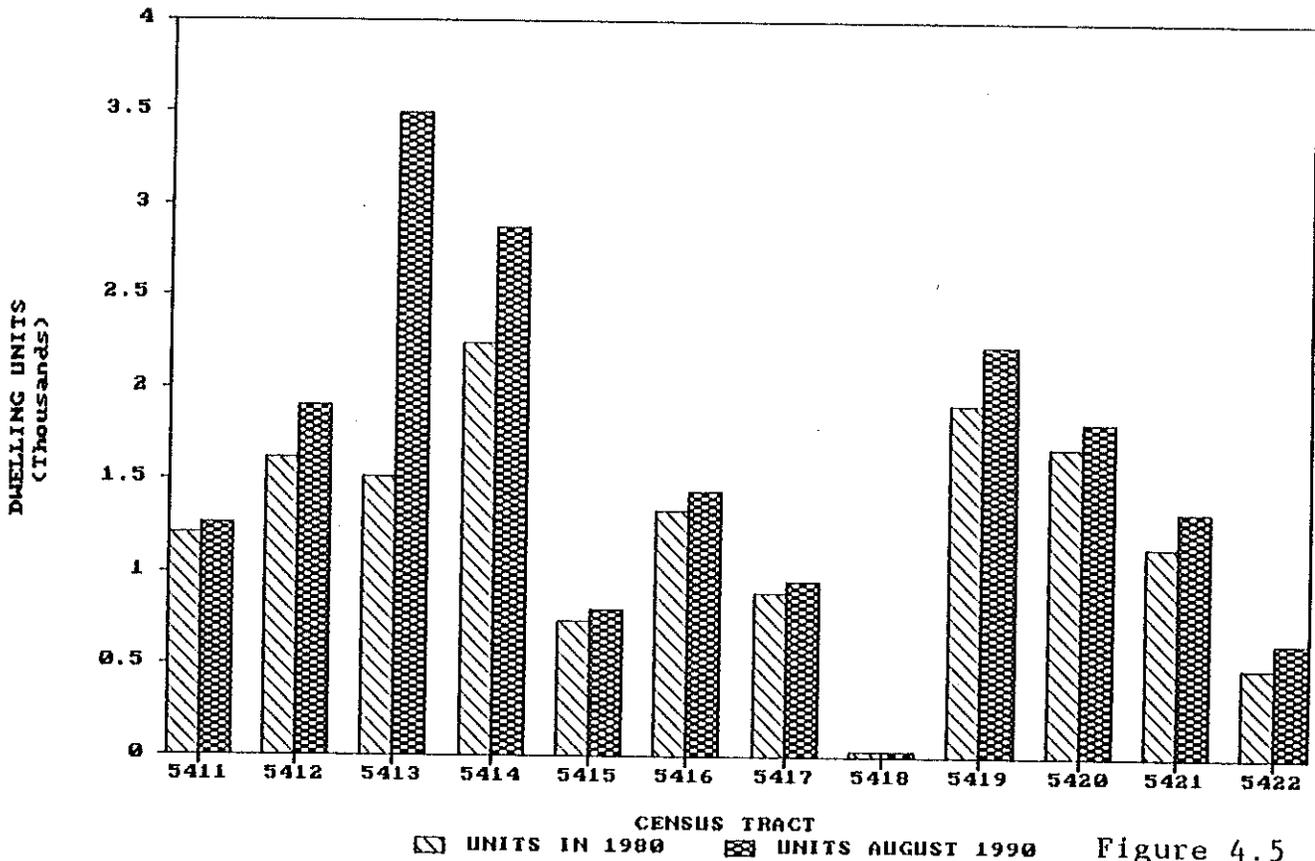


Figure 4.5

# Single & Multi Family Units, Jan.1 1990

Source: Census, DOH, Building Dept.  
(55.9%)

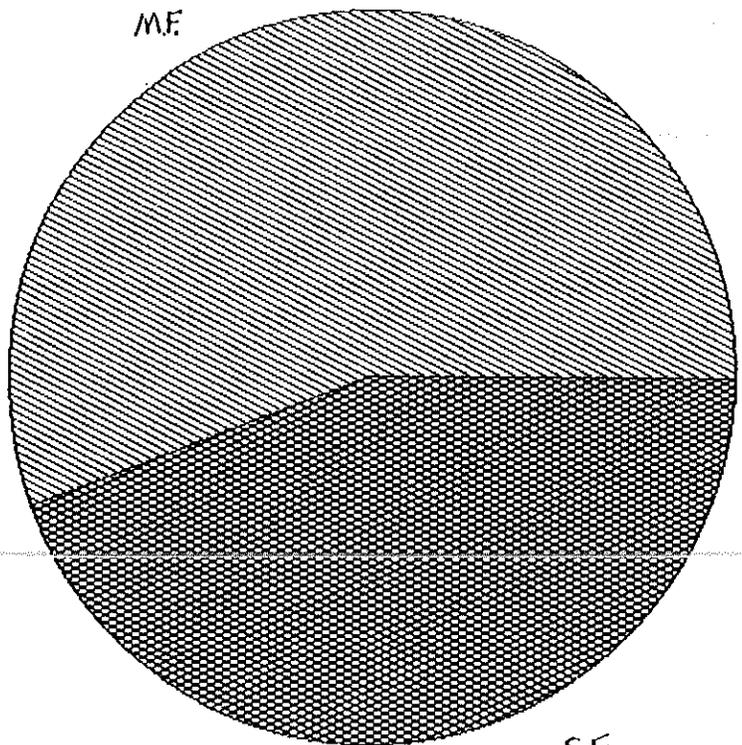


Figure 4.6

## TOTAL SINGLE & MULTI FAMILY UNITS

Source: Middletown Building Department

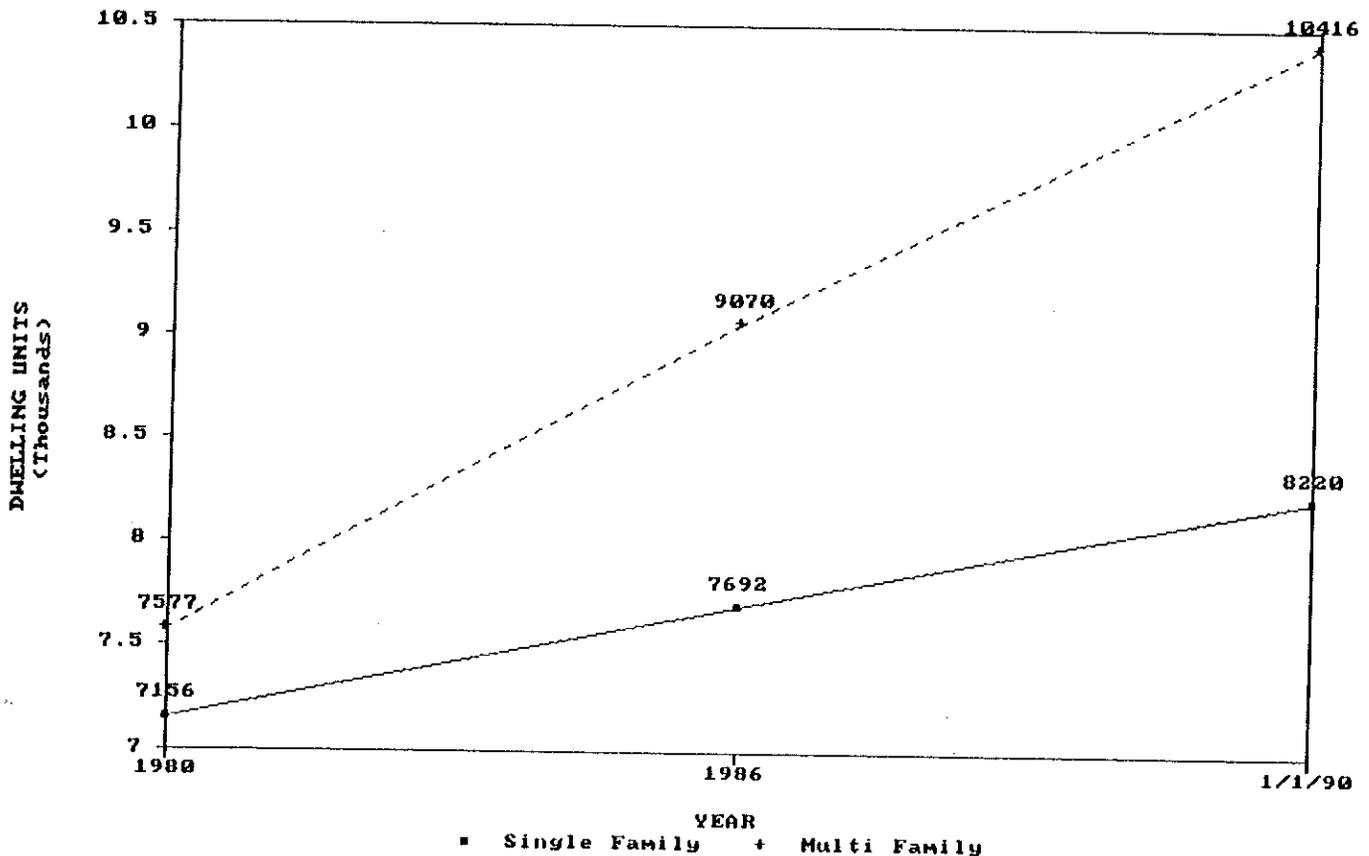


Figure 4.7

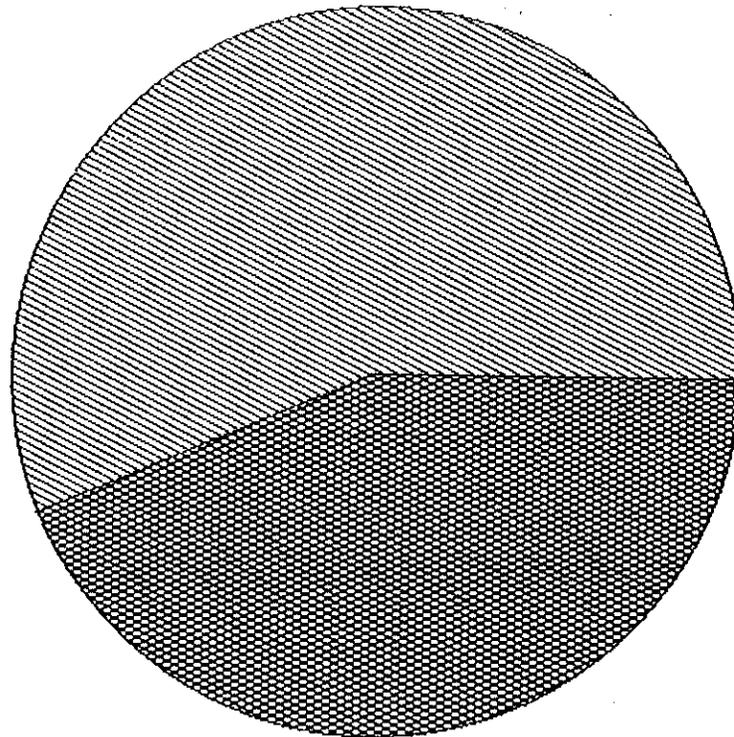
## THE COMPOSITION OF THE FUTURE HOUSING STOCK

The current distribution of single and multi-family homes, as discussed earlier, is generally not a favorable mix. Therefore, in order to understand whether the future distribution will be similar to the present distribution the Planning Office predicted the future mix. Based on the density the current zoning scheme allows for, it becomes clear that there is far more room for single-family home expansion. Figures 4.8 and 4.9 display the approximate distribution of multi-family and single-family dwelling units at the time of total residential build out, approximated in the year 2007, barring any significant residential zone changes which increase density.

The estimate of the year 2007 as the year of total residential buildout is merely an estimate based on previous building permit activity. Considering the recent slow down in construction activity, it is not unrealistic to project total residential buildout as far in advance as 2020.

### DWELLING UNITS AT TOTAL BUILDOUT

Approximately 2007  
Single Family (56.4%)



Multi Family (43.6%)

Figure 4.8

# DISTRIBUTION AT TOTAL BUILD OUT

Assume Build Out in 2007

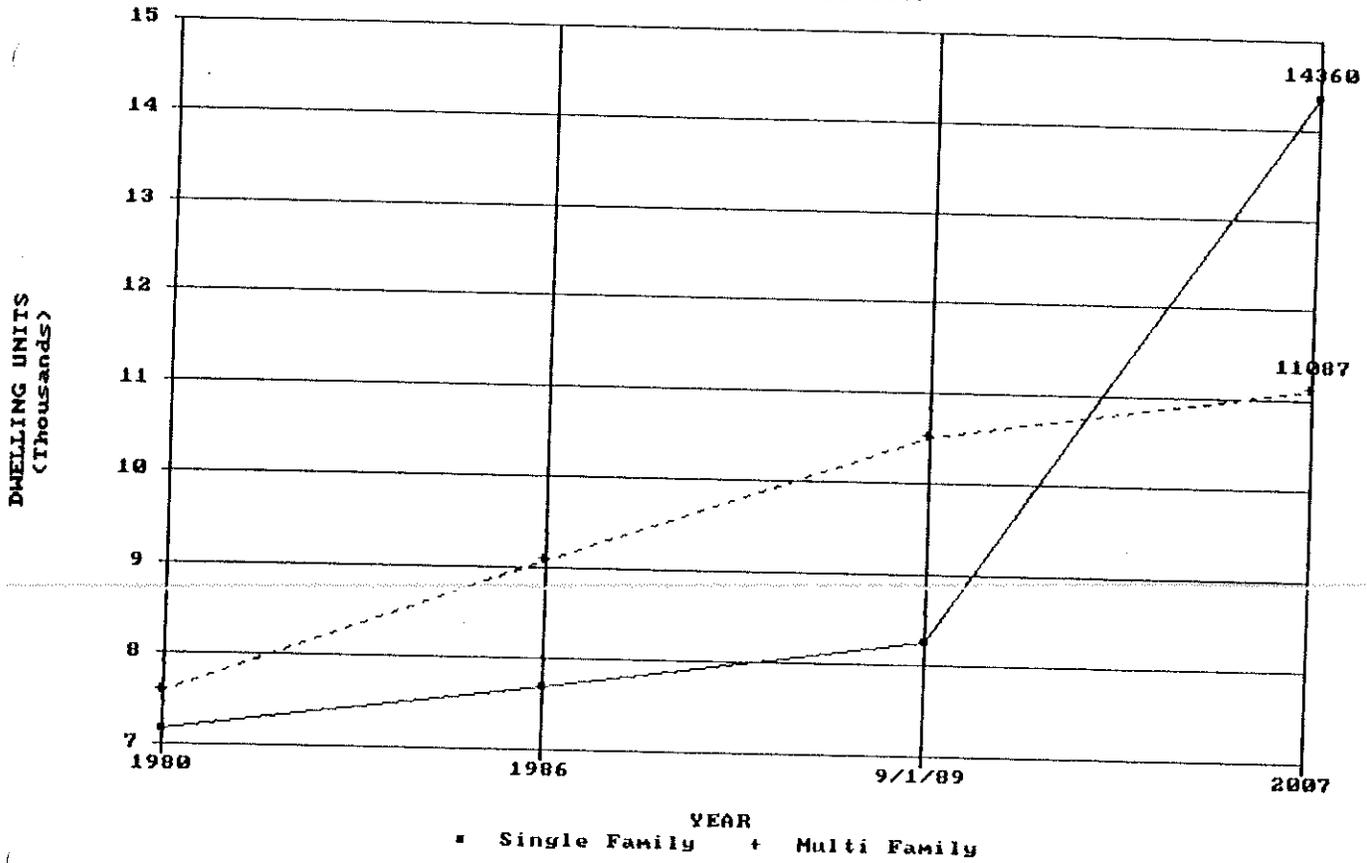


Figure 4.9

## HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Having an understanding of the quantity and distribution of dwelling units both presently and in the future raises a new issue. This new issue, which is particularly pertinent in this region, is the question of affordability. More and more the lack of starter homes in Connecticut is arising as one of the State's most serious problems. For this reason, Public Act 88-13 "An Act Concerning the Updating of Municipal Plans of Development" was adopted. This act requires that moderate income housing be considered in the Plan of Development. The act also provides that the Plan of Development may include plans for the implementation of moderate income housing programs. This section will analyze the affordability of housing in Middletown for various income groups, and then in consideration of the work of the Middletown Housing Partnership, make general recommendations aimed at bridging the affordability gap.

ON COST: What is Middletown's current real estate market?

While Middletown's housing supply has been growing steadily, the cost of these homes has increased dramatically. Based on the single-family home sales for the first half of 1990 the average cost of a single-family was calculated to be \$156,080. This figure is down from the average calculated between May of 1988 and May of 1989, that figure was \$159,900. In 1980 the Census of the Population reported the average price of a home to be \$ 60,400. This reveals that there has been a 158 % increase in the average price of a single-family home over the past ten years. Condominiums behaved similarly. The average price of a condominium during the first half of 1990 was \$ 113,860. This value is up 108 % from the 1980 value. The next table displays the current average values for various types of single-family homes and condominiums.

TABLE 4.1  
AVERAGE HOME PRICES

<u>TYPE OF HOME</u>	<u>FIRST HALF OF 1990 AVERAGE SALES PRICE</u>
<u>SINGLE FAMILY</u>	<u>\$156,080</u>
Cape Cod	\$152,790
Colonial	\$191,381
Contemporary	\$155,940
Raised Ranch	\$160,180
Ranch	\$137,500
<u>CONDOMINIUMS</u>	<u>\$113,860</u>

In general, there are two reasons for these dramatic increases in the average price of a home. These reasons are land costs and location. Since 1980, land costs have represented an increasingly large share of the total cost of constructing a home. Statewide, between 1980 and 1986, the land as a variable in the cost of a single-family home has increased from 29% to 40%. Clearly, due to the lack of buildable land, land is gradually becoming the most significant cost in the price of a single-family home.

In terms of location, there has been substantial economic growth occurring in Middletown, and in other towns surrounding the I-91 corridor. This economic development has resulted in a dramatic impact on the Middletown housing market. The development in greater Hartford has also affected Middletown and the region. Housing prices in Middletown, have historically been less than those in the Greater Hartford region and easy access to major highways has been good. This has made Middletown an attractive residential alternative.

ON INCOME: What can Middletown residents afford?

While overall, the incomes of Middletown residents have been increasing, they have not matched the increase in the average price of a single-family home. Income figures for 1990 are unavailable, however, the Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates the median income as of May 1, 1990. This estimate as shown below would mean there has been an 112 % increase in median family income between 1980 and 1990.

TABLE 4.2  
INCOME FIGURES

1980 Median Family Income \$21,085  
 1986 Median Family Income \$34,157  
 HUD ESTIMATE 1990 Median Family Income \$44,800 HUD ESTIMATE

MidState Region 1987 Income Figures  
 Median \$37,200  
 Low \$29,760  
 Very Low \$18,600

ON AFFORDABILITY: What income is required to buy a home in Middletown?

Having concluded that Middletown home prices have increased more rapidly than the incomes of Middletown residents, it is logical to discuss the incomes required to purchase these homes. The following tables analyze the affordability of homes in the following sales price distribution.

TABLE 4.3  
SALES PRICE DISTRIBUTION OF SINGLE FAMILY HOMES FIRST HALF OF 1990

10 %	25 %	MEDIAN	75 %	90 %
\$114,500	\$131,000	\$148,000	\$169,000	\$224,000

The table below presents the incomes required to purchase the homes in this distribution. The table is based on a 30 year 9.5 % mortgage and assumes that a family can devote 28 % of it's gross monthly income to mortgage payments, real estate taxes and hazard insurance. One other very significant assumption was made. In developing these examples it was assumed that home buyers had accumulated sufficient funds to cover down payments and financing costs. This is often not the case and the downpayment is commonly the factor which prevents home ownership.

TABLE 4.4  
INCOME REQUIRED TO PURCHASE HOMES IN MIDDLETOWN

Income Required to Purchase	Income
Lower 10 % of Homes	\$ 46,000
Lower 25 % of Homes	\$ 52,000
Median Priced Home	\$ 56,500
Lower 75 % of Homes	\$ 66,000
Lower 90 % of Homes	\$ 86,000
Average Priced Condominium	\$ 44,000

When comparing the above required income figures with the income figures available and the 1990 estimate for Middletown it becomes clear that many people, especially first time home buyers, are being increasingly shut out of Middletown's single-family home market and, in many cases, the condominium market.

#### ON THE RENTAL MARKET

A major source of housing here in Middletown is the rental market. In 1980 51 % of the housing units in the city were renter-occupied. For this section it is assumed that rental housing is affordable when it costs a household no more than 30 % of its gross monthly income to pay rent and utilities. The following information on rental housing in the city of Middletown was extracted from the May 1989 Middletown Housing Partnership Report.

The partnership conducted a survey of 281 two bedroom units in December 1988. This survey revealed that two bedroom non-subsidized units range from \$515 per month, including heat and hot water, to \$850 per month for a luxury unit. The survey also indicated a vacancy rate of only 1.4 %.

The next table provides estimated data on households by income range and affordable rent ranges for the various income groups.

TABLE 4.5  
1988 ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLD INCOME

INCOME	NUMBER	%	AFF. RENT RANGE
< 15,000	3,219	21.8	0 - 375
15,000 - 24,999	2,863	19.4	375 - 624
25,000 - 34,999	2,320	15.7	624 - 875
35,000 - 49,999	2,947	19.9	875 - 1,250
50,000 +	3424	23.2	1,250 +

As the Housing Partnership Report pointed out, this data suggests that for most households, the private market provides units which would be affordable. This does not mean that there are not problems in the rental market.

Rental needs tend to be concentrated at the lower end of the income spectrum. In 1980 only an approximate 27 % of renters had incomes above the regional median. A more recent survey, conducted by the Institute of Social Inquiry at the University of Connecticut, found that statewide 53 % of households with incomes less than \$30,000 were renters compared with only 8 % of those with incomes over \$50,000. For this reason, the demand and thus the shortage for rental units is skewed towards the lower end of the income spectrum.

Based on the data available, it appears that one group which is poorly served by both the private market, and the assisted market is that group earning approximately \$ 15,000 - \$25,000 per year. This group, capable of paying \$375 to \$625 per month, must struggle to find rental units which are affordable in the private market, but may not qualify for other assisted housing.

#### Assisted Housing

The table above indicates that 3,219 households had earnings of less than \$15,000 per year. This constitutes approximately 22 % of the cities population. There are 2,374 assisted housing units in the City. At first glance the conclusion may be drawn that the city needs approximately 1000 new assisted housing units. However, a substantial proportion of the households with the lowest incomes, at least 600, are elderly homeowners, often with small or no mortgage payments.

Keeping this in mind the Housing Partnership concluded that there is a need of an additional 245 rental units for households earnings less than \$15,000 annually. As mentioned earlier, there are 2,374 assisted rental units in Middletown. It should be noted that the Connecticut Department of Housing has indicated that Middletown has the sixth highest percentage of assisted housing units in the State. Only Hartford, New Haven, New London, Windham and Waterbury provide a higher percentage of assisted housing.

Nevertheless, the city should target this segment of the population when addressing the affordable housing issue. However, when attempting to provide homes for those households with incomes of less than \$15,000 creativity and new ideas should be used.

SOURCE: Housing Partnership

#### IMPLICATIONS

The implications of this lack of affordability in Middletown are many and include:

- 1.) The City and the City's employers will need to raise salaries of employees to attract and retain qualified workers who can not afford to live in Middletown or the region.
- 2.) There will be a decline in the number of residents with moderate incomes and a relative increase in the numbers of individuals at the low and high ends of the income spectrum.
- 3.) The city will lose its diversified population consisting of both blue and white collar workers of various income groups.
- 4.) Children of City residents, particularly those without the benefit of a college education, will be unable to live in the City in which they grew up, and the social network of long time residents will erode.
- 4.) Businesses in the lower paying sectors, retail and low end service, will find it increasingly difficult to attract acceptable employees.
- 5.) Formally, untapped labor pools, such as the elderly, handicapped and retarded, will be drawn from as the labor shortage intensifies.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Middletown has already done much to encourage the provision of moderate income and assisted housing. The production of moderate income and assisted housing requires creativity, innovation and new thinking. First and foremost the City should refer to the recommendations set forth in the Middletown Housing Partnership Report of May 1989.

The following are a few techniques the city should adopt.

- 1.) Develop a strong public and private sector partnership. This has largely been accomplished with the creation of the Middletown Housing Partnership. In addition, the private sector, with public sector support, should be encouraged to provide moderate income housing within market rate developments.
- 2.) The City should target firms that have large workforces and therefore must take some responsibility for the supply\demand imbalance in the moderate income housing market.
- 3.) In order to foster a pride in ownership, the city should consider the rehabilitation, possibly through sweat equity, and privatization of some of the existing assisted housing units.
- 4.) The Planning and Zoning Commission should consider amending its regulations to provide for the provisions as allowed for in Public Act 338. This act allows for Planning and Zoning Commissions to have, as special exception use, a use which is exempt from density limits. In granting this special exception, the Planning and Zoning Commission, working with the Housing Partnership, can require that for each unit constructed in excess of the number permitted by applicable density limits, the developer construct, either off site or on site, a unit of moderate income housing. In lieu of the provisions of affordable units, the developer may be required to make payments.
- 5.) The Planning and Zoning Commission should encourage the use of the infill provision allowing for carefully designed subdivisions with lots as small as 5000 square feet in the R-1 and RPZ zones so as to encourage the production of starter homes.

6.) Encourage the Housing Partnership to provide for a down payment assistance program.

7.) The city should establish a Housing Trust Fund. Money deposited into this fund will come from many sources including payments in lieu of moderate income housing construction, proceeds from sales of city owned affordable units, State Department of Housing grants, and private sector donations. These private sector donations, encouraged by tax credits, which will represent a major source to the fund, will also generate matching dollars from the Department of Housing. Once established, the fund could be used in many different ways to create moderate income and assisted housing.

Three options are as follows:

a.) Create a subsidy program that lowers the cost of a house to that amount that is affordable for target income groups. This subsidy could be used for land purchase and write downs, the lowering of interest rates, grants or mortgage purposes.

b.) A land purchase program in which the Housing Partnership buys developable land, reduces the price and sells or leases lots to individuals. The Housing Partnership may also act as a developer, with assistance available from Department of Housing to develop the land itself. The Housing Partnership would then sell these homes as affordable units to the target income groups. These units while being initially affordable, would also need deed restrictions to insure that they remain affordable.

c.) The Housing Partnership may also enter into the real estate market, purchasing existing properties and then selling them at an affordable price to those in need of moderate income and assisted housing. It is essential that the deeds on these homes be restricted to insure that they will remain affordable.

#### OVERALL HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS

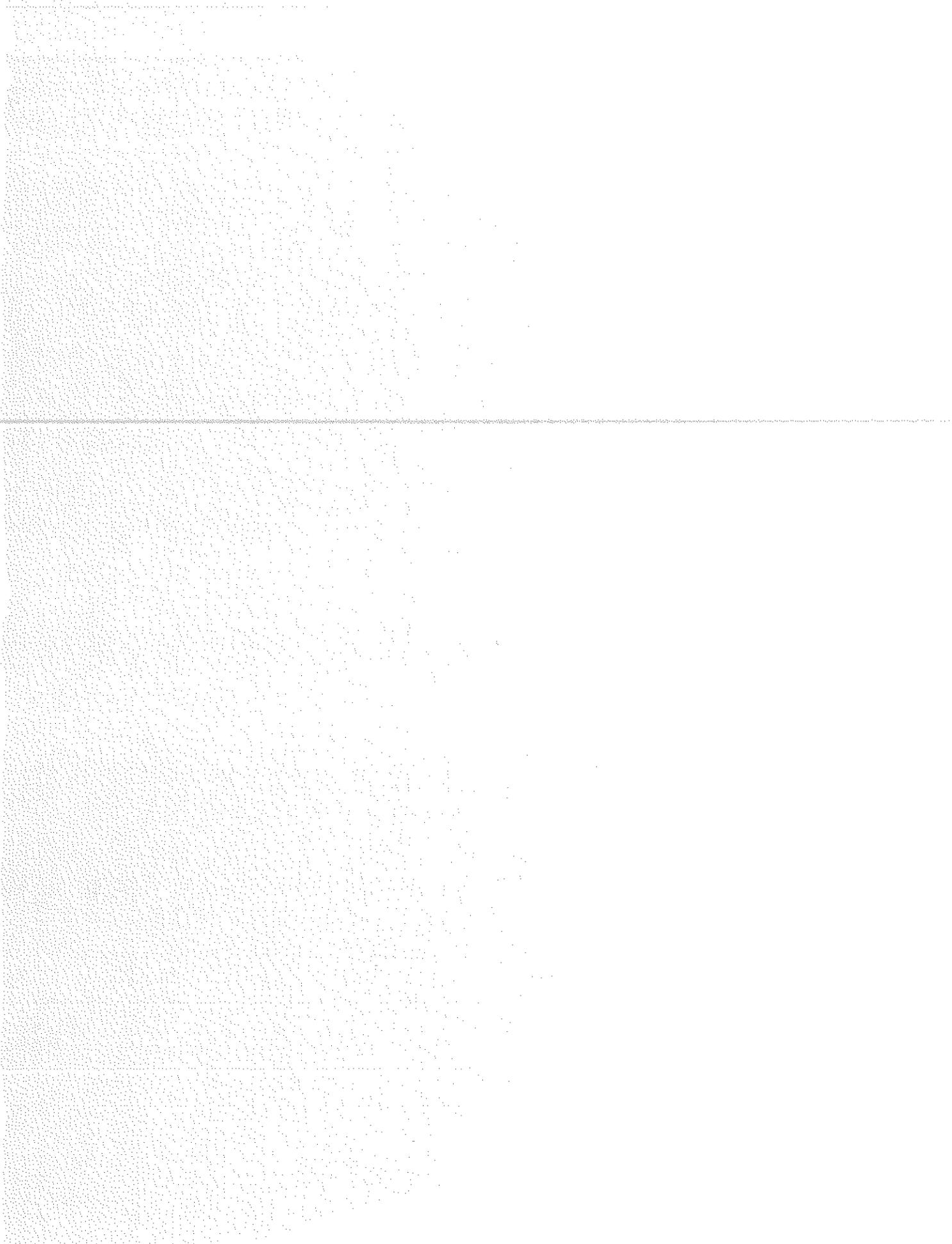
1.) Avoid zone changes allowing for significant increases in residential density which would over burden the capacity of the city's infrastructure and which would increase the ultimate population beyond the target population of 65,000.

2.) The Housing Partnership and private developers should be encouraged to provide moderate income and assisted housing in a manner as discussed in the affordability section of the Housing Plan.

3.) Adopt regulations which will lead to the gradual revitalization of older, problem neighborhoods by the private sector.

4.) Address the problems in existing neighborhoods which tend to be losing vitality.

5.) Consider the fiscal impact, in terms of city services, of large residential special exceptions prior to their approval.



CHAPTER 5

CURRENT LAND USE

Prior to formulating any recommendations for the future use of land it is essential to have a thorough understanding of the cities existing land use pattern.

The current land use map shows the extent and type of land uses existing throughout the city and the Central Business District land use map displays the uses in and around the CBD. The arrangement of land uses shown on this map demonstrates that the Plan of Development as well as the Zoning Code have served the community well over the past decade. New commercial, residential and industrial development has occurred in those areas recommended for the same in the 1976 Plan of Development and as permitted in the Zoning Code.

The table below presents the most recent, principal classifications of existing land use and the acreage involved. As is clear from this table, the majority of the land which remains undeveloped is residential. This residential land is, for the most part, located in the zones which require lots in excess of 1 acre.

APPROXIMATE LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

TOTALS	DEVELOPED ACRES	%	UNDEVELOPED ACRES	%
Residential				
19,641	14,058	72 %	5,583	28 %
Commercial				
273	213	78 %	60	22 %
Industrial\Office				
3,679	2,614	71 %	1,065	29 %
Other				
3,607	640	18 %	2,967	82 %
27,200	17,525	64 %	9675	36 %

Note: A undetermined portion of the undeveloped land must be considered undevelopable due to steep slopes, wetlands, and flood plains.

It is interesting to compare the acreage of different categories of developed land in 1989 with their 1965 counterpart.

**EXISTING LAND USE**  
(Approximate area in acres)

Category	1965	1989
Residential	2,290	14,058
Commercial	Approximately the same	
Industrial\office	780	2,614

This comparison clearly indicates that the past 25 years have seen significant residential and industrial\office development. On the other hand there has been limited commercial development. This limited commercial development is clearly the result of the locational policies, in terms of commercial uses, set by the Planning Commission. These policies and the corresponding zoning scheme are designed to maintain a viable Central Business District. For this reason, there has been virtually no significant commercial development outside of the Central Business District over the past 25 years.

**THE CITY'S LARGEST LAND OWNERS**

The state of Connecticut is the largest single land owner in the city. The state owns approximately 1,530 acres. The vast majority of this land is composed of Connecticut Valley Hospital. While the campus proper is quite developed, the majority of the land area is rugged and unoccupied. The primary use of this land is for the protection of the hospitals water supply reservoirs.

The City of Middletown owns approximately 1086 acres. This land is composed of land which is used for water supply purposes, city parks, and public schools.

Northeast Utilities also has large holdings of land within the city. These holdings comprise approximately 1500 acres. While a small portion of this acreage is developed, the majority is rugged and unoccupied.

Other large land owners include Pratt and Whitney Aircraft a division of United Technologies, Aetna Life and Casualty, Wesleyan University, and the Feldspar Corporation.

## CHAPTER 6

### *WATER AND SANITARY SEWER SUPPLIES*

#### **Water Supply**

The water supply map displays the area currently served by city water distribution lines. This is the area where city water is available and there is very little if any dependence on private wells.

Presently there are two major sources of water which feed the demand produced by the businesses and homes in this area. These sources are the Mount Higby Reservoir in the Westfield section of the city and the River Road well fields along the Connecticut River. A third less utilized water supply is the Laurel Brook Reservoir. This reservoir is located in the south western corner of the city at the municipal boundary with Middlefield. In order to achieve maximum utilization of this supply a water filtration plant is necessary.

Currently the peak demand for water in Middletown is approximately 5.4 million gallons per day. To satisfy this demand the River Road facility provides approximately 4.0 million gallons per day and the Higby Reservoir provides approximately 1.4 million gallons per day.

Considering an ultimate target population of 65,000 residents, as projected in the population and housing portions of this plan, the anticipated peak demand would increase to approximately 10.0 million gallons per day.

Water and Sewer Department projections indicate that this future peak demand can be met with the three existing facilities, provided that the Laurel Brook filtration plant is on line. The River Road Well fields and Higby Reservoir would serve as the primary water sources with the Laurel Brook Reservoir acting as a reserve.

Clearly, planning for an ultimate population of 65,000 residents, which primarily entails providing for a zoning scheme which targets this population, will avoid future expenditures which would be necessary to access additional ground water supplies.

Adequate supply is one of the two main considerations. The second consideration is water quality. It is essential that the quality of these supplies be protected and improved wherever necessary. For this reason, the city should update and strengthen the section of the Zoning Code regarding the Protection of Water Resources.

Public Act 89-305 as amended by 90-275, An Act Concerning Aquifer Protection Areas, requires both detailed mapping of public ground water supply aquifers and land use regulations which restrict uses over aquifer recharge areas. These additional land use restrictions must be designed so as to avoid potential groundwater contamination. In Middletown, the area involved is the River Road well field. This plan is in full support of this state initiative.

In conclusion, the city should continue to study the city's water sources, on a long range basis, first to insure an adequate supply of potable water for the City's ultimate population, and second, to plan for the gradual improvement of the distribution system, including new principal mains and extensions to new areas where necessary. This would include areas where available groundwater supplies are inadequate to support the existing development and where ground water supplies have been contaminated and are no longer potable.

#### Sanitary Sewerage

The sanitary sewerage map displays the area served by sanitary sewer lines. The effluent produced from these areas of the city either flows to the city's treatment plant along River Road or to the Mattabassett Regional treatment plant adjacent to Route 9 in Cromwell.

To be more specific, all effluent from the areas north of Westfield Street and west of Newfield Street is treated at the Mattabassett Regional treatment facility. The effluent produced from all other areas served by city sanitary sewer is treated at the River Road treatment plant.

After the effluent is treated at the River Road facility the remaining sludge is transported by rail to the Mattabasset facility for incineration. The ash which remains after incineration is then transported to an ash disposal site in Berlin.

Currently the peak flow to the two treatment plants is approximately 4.0 million gallons per day. The capacity of the River Road facility is estimated to be 6.1 million gallons per day.

Considering an ultimate target population of 65,000 residents, as projected in the population portion of this plan, the anticipated peak flow would increase to approximately 8.0 million gallons per day.

Water and Sewer Department projections indicate that this future flow can be treated with the River Road facility and the Mattabassett Regional facility.

#### Future Extensions of Sewer and Water Lines

Future extensions should be carefully scrutinized by the Water Pollution Control Authority and the Planning and Zoning Commission. It is recommended that the Water Pollution Control Authority continue to hold a public hearing for major extensions. This public hearing should occur prior to any application to the Planning and Zoning or Inland Wetlands Commission. As a general policy the Water Pollution Control Authority should avoid water and sewer extensions into those areas designated as conservation areas and rural areas in the State Plan for Conservation and Development.

When considering extensions, the Water Pollution Control Authority must take into consideration the guidelines, in terms of public facilities, set forth in the State Plan for Conservation and Development, the applicants environmental assessment, comment from Water and Sewer Department staff including the Environmental Manager, the City Planning staff, resolution or prevention of health problems, improvement to quality of life and cost effectiveness. Where it is found to be impractical, uneconomical or environmentally unacceptable to extend service to some of the higher and more rugged areas, where zoning allows for only sparse development, extensions should be discouraged. Additionally, the Planning and Zoning Commission should consider and promote open space (cluster) subdivisions which allow for the same number of units on a smaller area of land. While the remaining less developable land is left undeveloped. In terms of water and sewer lines, streets and other utilities, it is much more efficient, cost effective and environmentally sound to service this more compact development.

## CHAPTER 7

### TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION PLAN

The purpose of this Transportation and Circulation Plan in the Plan of Development is to determine and record recommendations for the long range transportation needs of the City of Middletown. These recommendations, if implemented, will increase the capacity and safety of the existing and future transportation network. This plan recognizes that many transportation problems are regional in scope and therefore a regional approach is essential. The goals of this portion of the Plan of Development are as follows:

*To develop an efficient transportation network which will minimize travel time and congestion and improve air quality city wide.*

*To provide for a variety of alternative transportation modes in order to reduce automobile traffic, conserve energy and continue to improve air quality.*

*To minimize the current peak hour traffic congestion in the Central Business District, using creative traffic channelization, intersection improvement, improved signalization, and staggered shifts among our major employers.*

#### EXISTING ROAD NETWORK

A basic understanding of the existing road network is essential before articulating any objectives, strategies or modifications to the existing network.

Two major highways link Middletown with the region and the nation. The other streets in the system, whether designated as highways or local streets, appear to have developed on an incremental basis with little evidence of being consciously planned as part of an adequate circulation system.

The two major highways, Interstate 91 and State Route 9, both run north and south through the city, but do not link directly with each other within the city. The recently completed Central Connecticut Expressway (Rt.9) now links the Middletown Central Business District with Interstate 91 and Interstate 84. The completion of this expressway is bound to have positive and far reaching effects on the traffic patterns in the city.

The other major east\west link is State Route 66, also called Washington Street. Washington Street links Middletown's Central Business District with Meriden to the west and after crossing the Connecticut River, over the Arrigoni Bridge, with Portland to the east. Other than Interstate 84, Route 66 is the only east-west highway in Connecticut south of Hartford and north of Interstate 95 at Long Island Sound.

No local street, other than Main Street and deKoven Drive in the Central Business District, permits traffic to move from north to south or vice versa without a jog east or west usually at Washington Street. Several arterial streets radiate out from the Central Business District. Route 17, South Main St., reaches New Haven to the south. Route 372, Newfield Street, reaches Cromwell and Berlin to the north.

The transportation network in the Central Business District and its relative convenience and ease of flow is an important ingredient in the economic growth and prosperity of the city and specifically the Central Business District. For this reason, the network in the Central Business District was carefully analyzed in order to correct current problems and plan for the future growth and economic prosperity of the most important area in the city. The city contracted with Wilbur Smith Associates to undertake a comprehensive Downtown Traffic Study. This study of the current Central Business District traffic situation and recommendations for the future is incorporated in its entirety into this section of the City of Middletown Plan of Development for the year 2000.

While it is essential that traffic flow be optimized in the downtown area, it is equally as important that traffic flow be optimized on the arterials, collectors and local streets. These streets feed traffic, including shoppers and employees, into the Central Business District and receive traffic from the Central Business District. In order to better understand the road network, it is broken down into functional classifications as discussed below. Figure 8.1 is a map which displays the functional classification of the existing street system.

## ***FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS***

**Expressways:** Designed for heavy volumes of through traffic with limited access to abutting properties. (Interstate 91 and Route 9)

**Arterial Roads:** Designed to efficiently distribute local and regional traffic through the city and between communities. All state-numbered routes which are not limited access are arterials.

**Collector Roads:** Serve primarily to funnel traffic from residential areas to arterial streets. The aim of the plan is to keep as much traffic as possible on these streets and the arterials. These streets create superblocks in their pattern. Within these superblocks development of residences can take place with local streets freed from fast and heavy traffic.

**Local Streets:** Function to provide access to residential properties. While primarily these streets are designed only for local traffic it is recognized that many of them are experiencing high traffic volumes due to the fact that they represent an alternative to congested collectors. Therefore, in terms of volume, many could also be considered collectors.

## ***RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS***

Having an understanding of the existing road network, the Transportation and Circulation Plan now recommends the following transportation strategies and objectives for improving the transportation network in the city.

### **Short Term Recommendations**

- 1.) Provide all assistance necessary to expediate the State Route 66 project. The project will provide a uniform road width on Route 66 for four basic travel lanes, sidewalk areas, and synchronized re signalization of all traffic signals.
- 2.) Induce the state to address the need to provide four traffic lanes under the Route 66 railroad under-pass.
- 3.) Investigate the possibilities of applying traffic impact fees to large scale developments.

- 4.) Promote pedestrian traffic in the Central Business District. The width and traffic volumes on Main Street can potentially represent a physical and psychological barrier to the pedestrian. This barrier can prove detrimental to the retail experience.
- 5.) Analyze and design a traffic separation system to protect the residential areas in the vicinity of Smith Street, Miner Street and Glenwood Terrace from traffic generated by the Interstate Trade Zone.
- 6.) The city and large employers in the downtown area should continue to provide for safe, well maintained and attractive public parking facilities in the rear of Main Street buildings.
- 7.) Encourage the state to study and address traffic problems on East Street, particularly at its intersection with Country Club Road, Newfield St. and South Main St.
- 8.) Study and address the implications, in regard to traffic volumes and problems, of large scale developments in the vicinity of Saybrook Road, Main Street Extension and East Main Street.
- 9.) Continue to study and propose solutions to improve the safety of critically dangerous streets and intersections. For example, the severe curve on Country Club Road west of Moody School.
- 10.) Adopt a policy to avoid and eliminate unnecessary curb cuts on the city's arterials and collectors.
- 11.) Require the installation of a carefully planned, high quality sidewalk system. The city should study the existing sidewalk system and develop a plan which identifies future needs. These future needs should be satisfied by the private sector during the development process, with the city filling remaining gaps, where feasible.
- 12.) Investigate the possibilities of designating city roads as scenic roads as provided for in Section 7-149a of the General Statutes.
- 13.) Encourage the private sector to provide for another east-west collector road in the Westfield section of the city. This will help alleviate traffic congestion on Route 66 and Westfield Street.

- 14.) *Develop a schedule to undertake the intersection and signalization improvement recommendations found in the Wilbur Smith Downtown Traffic Study of August 1989.*
- 15.) *Encourage employees of downtown businesses to utilize the existing mass transit system.*
- 16.) *Encourage major employers in the region to promote ride sharing, van pooling, flex time, staggered shifts and other analogous incentive programs.*
- 17.) *Amend the Zoning Code to require a Traffic Management Program for large scale development. This program which must be implemented, could include a traffic impact study, ride sharing, flex time, road way improvements, staggered shifts, and public transit proposals, to mention a few.*
- 18.) *Promote a regional Traffic Management Association. Such an association would be composed of representatives from private business and industry. The association would respond to the transportation needs and propose transportation alternatives for businesses in the region.*
- 19.) *Develop a safe and attractive system of bicycle, walking and jogging routes for both transportation and recreation. These may include the provision of bicycle parking and storage facilities, the provision of shower and locker facilities in private businesses and City Hall and similar incentive features.*
- 20.) *Encourage the State to redesign the Randolph Road and South Main Street intersection. This will correct the mis-alignment of Randolph Rd. and create a single four-way intersection.*

#### Long Term Recommendations

- 1.) *Work with state agencies to provide for a properly designed, elevated pedestrian bridge over Route 9 in order to reintroduce the Central Business District and the river front.*
- 2.) *Work with state agencies to analyze and design direct access to the Central Business District for northbound traffic on Route 9 by eliminating the two traffic lights. Any design should keep in mind the relationship between access and economic vitality.*

3.) *Work with state agencies to optimize access to the Central Business District from Route 9.*

6.) *Encourage the State to expedite the anticipated redesign of the Arrigoni Bridge approach to separate-through traffic on Route 66 from local and Central Business District shopper traffic. This should also include improved access to the North Main Street industrial area.*

9.) *Encourage the State to provide for improved access to Interstate 91 for the employees in the Interstate Trade Zone and future employees in the Interstate Mixed Use Zone.*

10.) *If not addressed by the private sector the city should analyze and design a safe and efficient cross town collector road in the Westfield area.*

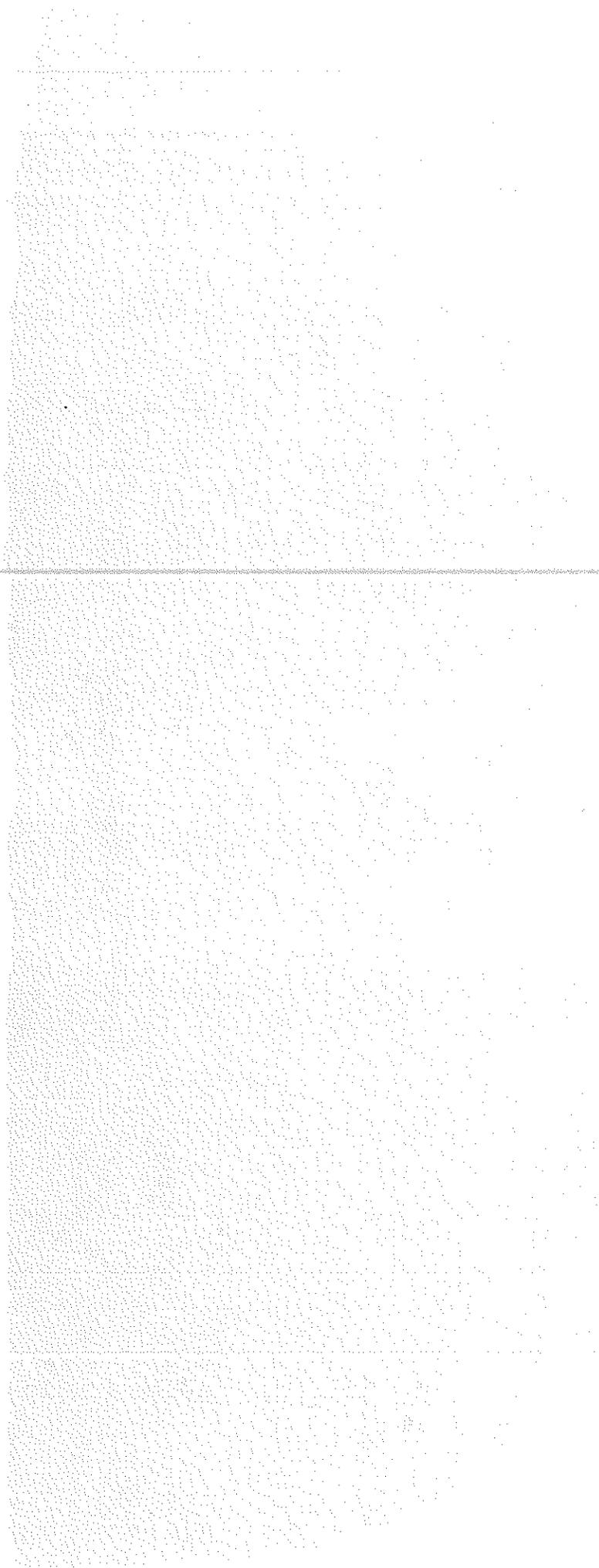
#### **TRAFFIC AND THE AIR QUALITY ISSUE**

While air pollution from non-point mobile sources, (automobiles), is largely a situation which must be addressed at the regional if not state and national levels, Middletown, being the commercial center and leader within the region, should begin to address these air quality concerns in its Plan of Development for the year 2000. For this reason the Transportation and Circulation portion of the Plan of Development will now outline and endorse local level strategies designed to allow the city to begin to do its part in improving air quality in the MidState Region. Most, if not all, of the recommendations above will help lead to the reduction of carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons in the air.

These street improvements which increase capacity, reduce congestion, produce higher speed links in the road network and shorten travel distances tend to reduce emissions due to smoother traffic flow as well as high and more uniform speeds.

Other local level strategies for reducing mobile source emissions, which the city should now be actively promoting are:

- 1.) Improved public transit
- 2.) Long range transit improvements
- 3.) On-street parking controls
- 4.) Park and Ride and fringe parking lots
- 5.) Employer incentive programs to encourage car pooling, van pooling, mass transit, bicycling and walking.
- 7.) Staggered work hours, and
- 8.) Improved traffic flow



## CHAPTER 8

### PLAN FOR PARKS AND RECREATION

Recreation areas for both young and old are an essential part of any community. They represent areas where individuals and families can recreate together, enjoy and learn about the outdoor environment and pursue physical fitness. They also are areas where citywide events, such as baseball games or carnivals, can be held. Whether they be active or passive recreation areas, there is no doubt that these areas contribute greatly to the quality of life here in the city.

For this reason the goal of this section of the Plan of Development is as follows:

*To provide for the optimal number and type of safe, well maintained, active and passive recreation facilities in areas most suited to service the diverse population.*

In an attempt to achieve this goal the town has defined the following specific objectives and strategies.

- 1.) *Inventory recreation facilities currently available in the city, then compare the existing to the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) standards and recommend the establishment of new facilities.*
- 2.) *Provide for safe, well maintained and managed facilities which are accessible to the handicapped.*
- 3.) *Provide for compatible recreational uses within our existing open space areas.*
- 4.) *Inform citizens of Middletown of the many recreational opportunities in the city.*

#### EXISTING FACILITIES INVENTORY

Currently the Park and Recreation Department manages 10 passive recreational sites, 11 active recreational sites and 9 sites which are intended for both active and passive pursuits. The first table lists these recreation areas and their acreage. The accompanying Recreation map displays the location of these facilities. The number of the facility on the map corresponds to its listing in the table.

RECREATION AREAS IN MIDDLETOWN

#	NAME	ACREAGE	TYPE
1.	Alsop Property	15.2	Passive
2.	Butternut Hollow	12.7	Active & Passive
3.			
4.	Crystal Lake	33	Active & Passive
5.	Denison Park	3.3	Passive
6.	Cucia Park	27	Active & Passive
7.	Donovan Park	2.1	Active
8.	Ferry Street	.26	Active
9.	Hubbard Tract	22.8	Undeveloped
10.	Pillarella Field	2.1	Active
11.	Hubbard Park	2.95	Active
12.	Kennedy Property	50.4	Undeveloped
13.			
14.	MacCarthy Field	3.5	Active
15.	McCutcheon Wildlife Sanctuary	29.74	Passive
16.	Marzalek Park	.41	Active & Passive
17.	Newfield Meadows	156	Undeveloped
18.	Palmer Field	9.3	Active
19.	Pameacha Pond Park	21	Active & Passive
20.	Pat Kidney Field	14.6	Active
21.	Pike's Ravine	19	Active & Passive
22.	Roosevelt Park	3	Active
23.	Rose Circle		Active
24.			
25.	Spear Park	2.2	Passive
26.	Traverse		Active
27.	Veterans Memorial Park	39	Active & Passive
28.	Union Park	1.3	Passive
29.	Washington Green	3.3	Passive
30.	John English Falls	4.0	Passive
31.	Wilcox Island	16.5	Passive
32.	Woodbury Circle	.25	Active
33.	Zoar Pond	24.7	Active & Passive
34.	Harbor Park	6.4	Active & Passive
35.	Town Farms Park	6.0	Passive

1. Alsop property is in a flood plain and environmentally sensitive area and therefore it may be difficult to fully utilize this property.

2. Pameacha Pond Park is water only and the city must acquire land as access. The plan recommends for this area a fishing boardwalk running parallel with Route 17 that connects to Pikes Ravine at the northern end.

The next table makes comparisons of the existing facilities in Middletown with the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) standards for the current population and for the capacity population of 65,000 residents. From this table facility short comings become apparent. Based on this analysis and discussions with the Director of Park and Recreation, the city is currently in need of baseball fields, tennis courts and picnic areas. The city also needs 2 additional outdoor swimming pools and a golf course to bring its recreational facilities up to SCORP standards.

It is also clear that in the near future, due to the growing popularity of soccer, softball and Little League, there will be a need for soccer fields, softball diamonds and a program to rehabilitate the existing Little League fields.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES : EXISTING, SUGGESTED AND SUGGESTED AT CAPACITY

FACILITY	STANDARD	EXISTING	SUGGESTED	SUGGESTED AT CAPACITY
Baseball Diamonds	1 \ 6000	3	8	11
Softball Diamonds	1 \ 3000	8	16	22
Little League Diamonds	1 \ 4000	11	13	16
Basketball Courts	1 \ 4000	14	13	16
Tennis Courts	1 \ 2000	18	25	33
Football Fields	1 \ 15,000	3	3	4
Track Field	1 \ 20,000	3	3	3
Natural Beaches	capacity for 3 %	2		
Outdoor Swimming Pool	1 \ 15,000	1	3	4
Indoor Skating Rink	1 \ 50,000	1	1	1
Boat Launch Area	1 water body	1 (no Motors)	1	1
Picnic Area	1 \ 4000	5	13	26
Playgrounds		25		
Golf Courses	1 hole \ 3000	0	18 holes	22 holes
Soccer		8		
Total Acreage Managed by Park and Rec.	15 ac. \ 1000	533 acres	705 acres	975 acres

\*\*NOTE

Some of the facilities in this inventory are state and private facilities which the city may lose access to.

Most Notably:

- Jarvis Softball Field
- Wesleyan Tennis Courts and Skating Rink
- Vinal Technical School Facilities

## NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

The recreation plan maps also display, for analysis purposes, the catchment areas for two types of facilities. This analysis will consider these two types of facilities: neighborhood playgrounds and neighborhood parks. These maps also display the census tracts and the estimated populations in each tract to better understand the distribution of the population throughout the city.

Playgrounds are generally considered for those children in the elementary schools. Playgrounds should serve an area within a maximum radius of one half mile. The accompanying map shows Middletown's playgrounds, with a one half mile radius indicated around each of them.

As is clear from the map, the older residential neighborhoods around the downtown area are adequately served by neighborhood playgrounds. It is these areas, in and around the downtown area, which will be utilized most heavily by pedestrian traffic. The outlying areas are not as adequately served but this plan recognizes that there is a shift towards the use of the automobile to transport young children to the most desirable playground, as opposed to having them walk from their homes to the closest playground. For this reason, this Plan of Development does not strongly emphasize the provision of playgrounds to service the currently unserved neighborhoods in the city.

Neighborhood parks, that include a playfield, should be within a one mile radius of the user's residence. The accompanying map identifies neighborhood park facilities along the one mile radius around them. Here the map shows that the majority of the city is within a playfield catchment area. Those areas which are not within a playfield catchment area are those areas which are characterized by low density development. The population in these outlying areas of low density development is small and dispersed and therefore this population would normally use an automobile to travel to an existing facility closer to the city's center.

While neighborhood parks and playgrounds appear to be sufficiently distributed throughout the city, the plan recognizes that these areas are constantly in need of frequent maintenance, upkeep and patrols to deter vandalism and other forms of crime. Activity deters crime and

therefore well advertised citywide events should be held within these facilities. This will both inform the city's residents of the existing recreation areas and bring activity to these often under utilized areas.

#### *POPULATION DYNAMICS*

It is also important to look at the city's population dynamics to better understand the need for various types of recreational facilities. As the demographic section of this Plan of Development shows, the less than 5 year old age cohort has increased substantially between 1980 and 1990. While at the same time, the citizens of traditional child bearing age declined and the older cohorts increased. This indicates that there will be an increasing demand for children's recreational facilities for a period of approximately 10 to 15 years. But, in the long run, Middletown's aging population will demand facilities more appropriate for their age groups, and hence the city should be planning to meet the needs of our aging population.

#### *CONCLUSION*

Based on the above discussion the Plan concludes that as the city's population becomes a more mobile one and there is an increased need for more efficient management and maintenance of recreational facilities the policy of recreational facilities dispersed citywide will become less and less suitable.

This Plan of Development feels that there should be a gradual move away from the policy of recreational facilities dispersed citywide. There should be a move towards a policy of providing large centralized recreational complexes. The proposed Kennedy Track and Crystal Lake facilities are in line with this centralized recreational complex theory. Other properly located complexes, such as at the Veterans Memorial Park site, similar to the proposed Kennedy and Crystal Lake complexes should be encouraged.

## CHAPTER 9

### ECONOMIC BASE: AN INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Planning for economic development must be included in the overall community development planning process. Planning is essential to insure that the community has control over the course of events effecting it. Unexpected or unplanned changes in the economy could be detrimental to Middletown. Foresight and planning can aid Middletown in maintaining some degree of stability and growth.

An understanding of the current economic base will allow city officials, residents and the Planning staff to be aware of potential problems and/or opportunities for the future. An economic development plan in the Plan of Development is one way in which city officials, residents and the Planning staff can identify the work that needs to be done to insure economic vitality in Middletown.

The economic planning process begins with the articulation of goals and objectives. The city has identified the following goals and objectives for the Economic Growth portion of the Plan of Development:

#### GOAL

*To encourage and assist existing businesses to remain, prosper and expand and to attract high quality, new businesses.*

*To encourage retail and service establishments to locate in the Central Business District and discourage their dispersion to other parts of the City.*

#### STRATEGIES & OBJECTIVES

1.) *Work with existing private and non-profit organizations in the city and state to assist existing businesses and attract new desirable businesses.*

2.) *Make all reasonable attempts to streamline the permitting process so as to make Middletown more attractive to potential businesses.*

3.) *Create a marketing brochure which highlights the benefits of doing business in Middletown and promotes the city's Central Business District.*

- 4.) Analyze the future of major employers in the city in terms of state and national trends.
- 5.) Develop an early warning system to identify industries on the verge of cutting back or closing.
- 6.) Target those industries in trouble and in need of assistance, and work with them to provide various forms of assistance.
- 7.) Insure that high school graduates are equipped to be high quality participants in the labor force by developing a working partnership between private industry and the public school system.
- 8.) Develop a program to monitor the hiring and promotion of city high school graduates by the private sector.
- 9.) Promote the expansion of day care and supervised after school opportunities.
- 10.) Promote programs to increase the hiring of veterans and persons with disabilities.

#### **GOAL**

To encourage balanced growth in areas most suited for such growth, so as to insure Middletown of a sound fiscal position and a secure employment and tax base.

#### **STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES**

- 1.) Inventory and analyze existing, undeveloped land which is zoned for business and industrial uses in order to identify shortages, and then react to these shortages. This inventory should be coordinated by the Planning Department but include representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Industry for Middletown, Wesleyan University and private industry.
- 2.) Concentrate retail sales, specialty shops, governmental and legal activities in the Central Business District.
- 3.) Adopt an aggressive and creative marketing campaign to attract more people to the CBD.

4.) *Inventory and promote the development of land using Public Act 270, particularly in the Industrial Redevelopment Zone, with the intent of retaining and attracting small growth industries whose customer base has expanded beyond New England.*

5.) *Address industrial development constraints and market available land and buildings with the intent of attracting high growth, high quality industries for the year 2000 and beyond.*

6.) *Maintain an economically sound balance between residential, commercial and industrial property taxes.*

7.) *Amend Zoning Code to allow for the incorporation of fiscal impact analysis for large residential zone changes and special exception uses, in order to better understand the fiscal ramifications of the development.*

#### ***THE REGIONAL CONTEXT***

An important fact to understand in planning for economic development is that Middletown is part of a larger region in which social and economic interaction takes place. The economic events of surrounding communities, the region, the state and the nation all have an impact on the local situation. An economic plan that ignores the regional context has very little chance of being accurate or successful. The Middletown Plan for Economic Growth recognizes that the city is part of the larger Middletown Labor Market Area and therefore the plan is in many cases regional in scope.

#### ***ECONOMIC HISTORY***

Before any technical analysis begins, it is important to review historical economic development. Any economic analysis done outside of a historical context will lack the insights necessary to make judgments about the prospects for change and growth in the future. This historical review of the city will help to gain some insights into the physical, social, and economic factors that influence the continued development of the city.

In 1614 the Dutch sea captain Adrian Block ventured up the Connecticut River aboard the "Restless" to explore its long, serene, tree-lined banks. Upon returning to the Netherlands, Block told of the picturesque areas as the perfect location

for settlement in the new world. During the early years of colonial history it was the sheer beauty of the river and its surroundings which attracted the initial settlers to this area. Subsequently, these settlers acquired from the Indians properties spanning five miles or more southward from the Sebeth River, northward as far as Rocky Hill; while from the west bank the area extended inland from five to ten miles, and from the east bank of the Connecticut River more than six miles.

These lands comprised Middletown in its earliest form. From the 1600s through the nineteenth century, the economic vitality of Middletown has centered about the Connecticut River. In fact, by 1650 the early settlers, many of whom migrated from the Massachusetts Colony, made their permanent homes in the vicinity of the river in order to cultivate farm products to trade with the outside world. The Dutch initiated the trade and shipping industry by acquiring beaver skins from the Indians to send back to the Netherlands. Although making a living under the economic constraints of the early days was not a simple endeavor, the settlers remained remarkably self-sufficient in that they tilled the land, sewed, wove, cooked, and harvested to sustain their community.

Vital to the economic growth, expansion, and commercial prosperity of the 1700s was a slow, yet steady increase in the population of Middletown. Once again, the development of the Connecticut River into the main artery of regional transportation during this period enabled trade and agriculture to flourish. In fact, as early as the 1750s trade was quite extensive with the Massachusetts Colony, the West Indies, Cuba, Jamaica, and Great Britain as the settlers exported livestock, wheat, rye, barley, oats, maize, and flax for sugar, molasses, rum, and salt. Shipping, farming, and trade with the world accelerated growth to such an extent that by 1756 a population of 5,664 made Middletown the largest town in Connecticut. Furthermore, so closely was Middletown's economic life tied to the river that, by the outbreak of the Revolution, one third of the population was engaged in commercial activities. With the establishment in 1784 of a charter for the Middletown Bank, the City became the financial center of the area attracting outsiders to come to Middletown to purchase and trade goods and to manage their finances. Finally, as land grew to be less abundant and farming less profitable, some began to look beyond the soil for their livelihood.

By the 1820s it became clear, due to various economic and political factors, that Middletown would never again be a major port - and not even a major city of Connecticut. One economic component which marked this unfortunate fact was the transformation of the local economic base from agricultural to fully industrial.

This phenomenon was engineered by external factors. The initial blow to local agriculture and trade was delivered by Thomas Jefferson when in 1807 he put into effect the various Embargo Acts in response to the seizure of American ships by Great Britain and France. This was followed by Madison's Non-Intercourse Acts, which when issued in 1809, essentially forced the relocation of shipping and trade of goods to the more easily accessible major port-cities such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Thus, as local trade with the world declined, so too did the profitability of harvesting agricultural goods for a living in Middletown.

The earliest industrial development in Middletown represented a response to the needs defined by the Revolutionary War. Simeon North's pistol factory exemplified this. However, the real driving force to the development of a diverse and extensive industrial base in Middletown was provided by the wealthy shipbuilders and traders, such as Samuel Russell, who dabbled in industrial development through investments of their capital in new areas.

The economic activities of these new entrepreneurs accounts for the relatively early existence of such varied industrial endeavors as woolen mills, soap-making companies, as well as pistol, sword, musket, and rifle factories. Therefore, an early and adequate supply of capital provided Middletown with a vast industrial base.

The period of 1830 to 1870 marked the growth and expansion of Middletown's industrial capacity. In 1860 such major manufacturers as the Middletown Plate Company, I.E. Palmer hammock mills, and later in 1875, the Goodyear Rubber Company, were established in Middletown. As a result of this, the value of industrial output increased by 140%, the value of the capital invested in industry increased by 184%, and the number of industrial workers grew from 566 in 1860 to 1,200 in 1870. Thus, it was during this crucial period of 1830 to 1870 that Middletown began to resemble the place with which we are familiar today, with industry as a permanent part of the economy.

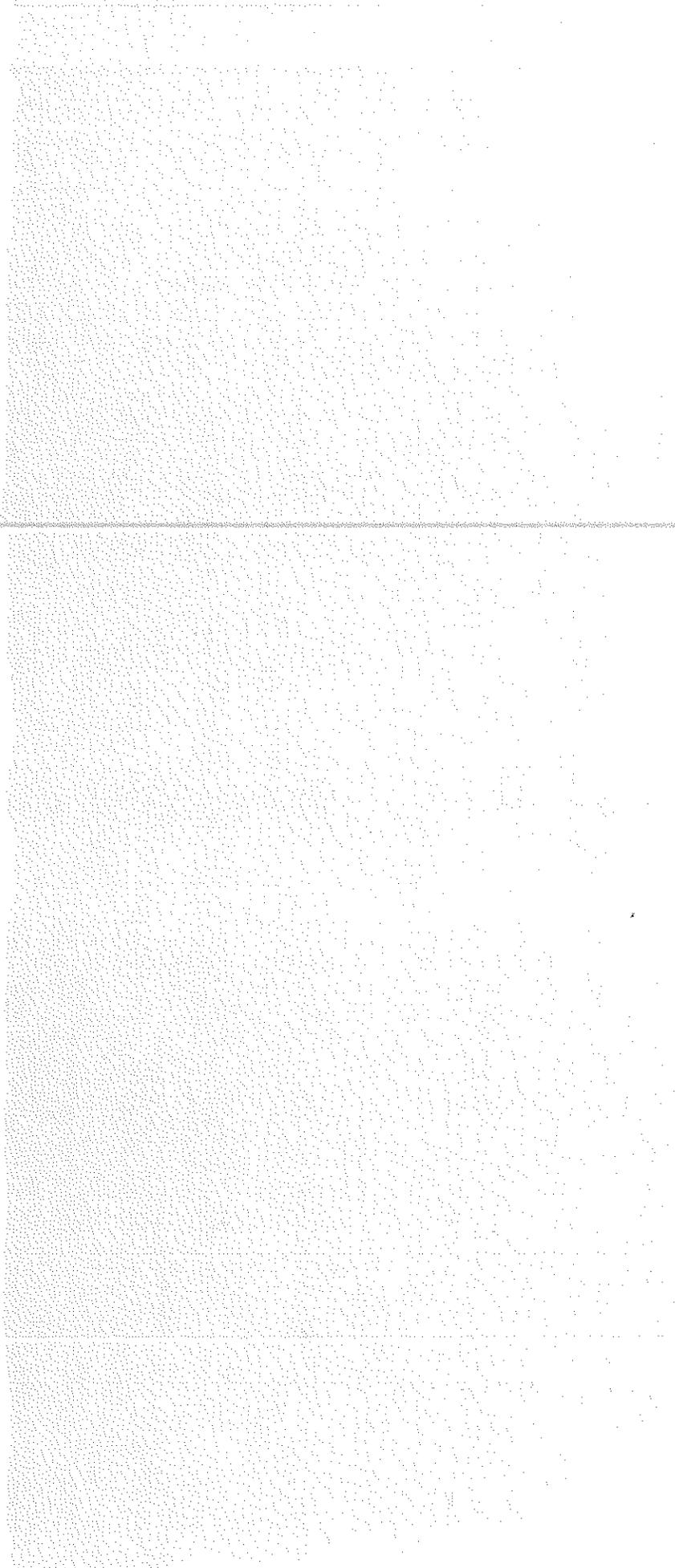
Whereas Middletown's early industrial base was dramatically expanded by the capital investments made by various manufacturing outfits, the City's overall industrial capacity was severely limited by the scarcity of adequate transportation. Prior to the advent of industrialization, the river provided adequate access to world commerce through trade.

However, the railroads assumed the role of most efficient transporter of industrial and agricultural goods during the early nineteenth century. At this point in the industrial development of Middletown, proper access to the railroad network was essential in order to establish permanent commercial ties. Unfortunately, this access was never provided. Many cite this lack of adequate transportation as the crucial factor which thwarted further industrial growth in Middletown, thereby rendering the city a second-tier industrial power in the State of Connecticut.

Although Middletown's role in both the first and second World War was not indicative of a great industrial power of New England, the entire city certainly did pitch in to support the war effort.

Specifically, the Russell Company manufactured cartridge belts for machine guns and other arms to be contributed to the cause. The net result of this concerted effort was that the industrial growth which took place during the wars enabled the Middletownians to share in the prosperity which followed each war, acquiring automobiles, radios, and washing machines in greater numbers. Similarly, an even further expanded industrial base during World War II served to revitalize the aggregate demand left lagging by the Great Depression. Thus, the cyclical leaps and lags associated with the war times ultimately fostered renewed growth and industrial expansion in the area.

By the early 1950s, however, industrial expansion, per se, was overshadowed by industrial absorption; a process by which Middletown's older and larger industries were either assimilated by distant corporations or suffered demise. For example, whereas in 1966 the Goodyear Rubber Company announced its closure, Pratt & Whitney bought the CANEL plant, thereby offsetting potential unemployment in the Middletown area. Furthermore, the economic crunch of the late 1960s and early 1970s perpetuated the trend by which large corporations such as Aetna, Fenner America, and Raymond Engineering replaced the family-owned industries. Perhaps it has been only these larger manufacturing and service outfits which, due to their ability to acquire raw



## CHAPTER 10

### THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Middletown is one of the largest, in terms of land area, of Connecticut's 169 towns and cities. Middletown has an area of 42.9 square miles. This 42.9 square miles includes, to mention a few, a highly urbanized Central Business District, flood plain, prime farm land, and rugged, steep sloped, wooded areas. The highest peak above mean sea level is 907 feet at Mt. Higby and the lowest mean sea level is 15 feet at the Connecticut River. The majority of the land in Middletown is below 480 feet.

Middletown consists of flat marshlands at the river and then levels to rolling hills. The Connecticut River and its tributaries, the Sebethe or Mattabesset River, Coginchaug River and Sumner Brook, are the principal waterways. The original city center lies on relatively level land, rising, slowly westward from the river level to the Wesleyan campus. The land then falls off abruptly into the valley of the Mattabesset in the north and into that of Sumner Brook to the south. This natural topography serves to define and limit the area of the central district.

Along the westerly boundary, adjacent to Meriden the land is rugged and in some places reaches an elevation of nearly 900 feet. Easterly from this boundary the land becomes more gently rolling. The soils in much of the north and west sections of the city are generally of a medium to heavy character, with slow internal drainage. Some areas have poorly drained soils with clay or silt, although there are limited pockets of well drained gravelly or sandy soils. Near the Mattabesset and Coginchaug Rivers there are extensive areas of alluvial soils, much of them subject to flooding.

Sumner Brook and its tributaries drain much of the south central area of the City. These streams rise near the Durham, Middlefield and Haddam lines and join south of the city center, where Sumner Brook flows into the Connecticut River. Soil conditions in this part of Middletown vary, but much of the area contains medium to heavy soils which require public sanitary sewerage, where development exceeds a low density.

There are, however, some limited areas with sandy or gravelly soils, but there are also pockets of poorly drained soils as well as of rocky and rugged land. The topography of most of the south central area is gently rolling, becoming more rugged near the city's southern boundary.

Middletown, by virtue of its physical characteristics, as mentioned above, is perhaps one of the most unique communities in Connecticut. Its diverse landscape and natural features provide many benefits, both physical and psychological, to the citizens of Middletown. For this reason, the following two goals have been adopted for this section of the Plan of Development on the Natural Environment:

#### Goals

*To maintain sufficient and carefully selected undeveloped areas so as to preserve the rural character of Middletown, to assist in carefully managing significant but fragile natural systems, and to provide areas for passive recreational opportunities.*

*To provide for a healthy living environment by promoting clean air, reducing noise levels, ensuring clean water resources, and properly managing hazardous materials and solid wastes.*

Having discussed the physical characteristics of the landscape and the city's goals in terms of this landscape it is now appropriate to discuss, in some detail, the different natural resource areas in the city and the valuable functions which they provide. The accompanying natural resource maps delineate those areas which, because of their soils, slopes and location in relation to other features, have been identified as "environmentally sensitive" and thus warranting special consideration in this Plan of Development. While the maps in this plan were manually produced, this plan does recognize that the "state of the art" in mapping techniques involves Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Ideally, at a later date, the maps in this chapter and the other maps in this plan will be incorporated into a computerized geographic information system.

## Inland Wetland Areas

The wetlands, and the soils which underlie them, and the environmentally sensitive areas as shown on the Purcell maps are, in most cases, one and the same. The environmentally sensitive areas as designated in the Purcell Study of 1982 tend to encompass the vast majority of the wetland areas. But, the Purcell study may not cover the upland wetlands which are not in a flood hazard area. For this reason a soils based wetlands mapping should be undertaken. For years these areas were considered to be "swampland" whose only purpose was to generate mosquitoes and disease. The goal was to fill and drain these areas in an attempt to create land with some value. But, the environmental movement of the 1970's changed the public's perception of these areas. It was discovered that these "wetlands" have valuable natural functions which were important to protect and preserve. For this reason, the Connecticut legislature adopted Chapter 440 of the Connecticut General Statutes "The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act". This act regulates any activity within a wetland boundary. Wetlands are classified as areas with soils defined as poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial and flood plain. The act also allows the municipality to oversee the permitting process, as Middletown chose to do by adopting inland wetlands regulations and creating an Inland Wetlands Agency.

Wetland functions can be grouped into three general categories. These include flood retention, floral and faunal habitat, and ground water recharge. First, in terms of flood retention the wetlands surrounding streams and rivers act as a sponge absorbing flood waters and reducing the volume of water in the stream or river channel. Second, the wetlands serve as valuable habitat for both floral and faunal species, including many rare species. Lush vegetation and shrubs along the wetland edges represent a valuable source of food and cover to many wildlife species and their young. Also, the calm pools in the wetlands are spawning areas for many types of aquatic wildlife. Finally, wetlands which are not over hard pan soils, act as important recharge areas for the ground water supplies.

These functions, dampening the severity of flooding, floral and faunal habitat, and ground water recharge all assist in protecting the health, safety and welfare of Middletown residents. The value of Middletown's wetlands is now well understood. Any activity in a Middletown wetland is now carefully scrutinized, to better understand the impacts of the proposed activity, by the Inland Wetlands Agency and concerned citizens.

#### **Ground Water Aquifers and Public Water Supply Watersheds**

Traditionally streams, ponds and reservoirs have supplied most of Connecticut's and Middletown's public water needs. And as such, the land surrounding these supplies, the watersheds, are regulated in order to reduce possible water contamination from runoff. However, land available for new surface water reservoirs is scarce and increasingly expensive. Furthermore, many existing surface water supplies do not meet the turbidity standards set by the Safe Drinking Water Act. The use of ground water to meet the increasing water needs has many advantages over surface water. These are lower costs of development, fewer instances of bacterial and viral contamination, lower turbidity and less disturbance of the land surface. However, incidence of and discoveries of ground water contamination are increasing and because ground water generally moves very slowly contaminants may go undetected for some time. Even when discovered it may not be possible to correct the situation and the potential of this ground water supply is lost, in many instances forever. For this reason, it is essential that this ground water be protected. Delineated on the natural resources map are the aquifer recharge zones. These are the areas identified in a "Guide to Ground Water & Aquifer Protection" prepared by MidState Regional Planning Agency.

These recharge zones are the primary areas, due to soil conditions, where rain water and rain water runoff infiltrate into the aquifers that contain the ground water supplies. Protecting these recharge areas and the water they contain from contaminant intrusion is important for two reasons. First, ground water protection is important to insure existing homes, currently relying on well water, of a clean water supply and, secondly, to insure a future water supply of adequate volume for the city of Middletown.

Zoning is the primary tool to protect these recharge areas. Since with zoning the use the land is put to can be controlled and regulated, zoning can eliminate known ground water containments from these critical areas. Section 42 "Protection of Water Resources" of the Middletown Zoning Code protects, by eliminating particular contaminants, the aquifer recharge areas and the watersheds surrounding public surface water drinking supplies. In the future, this section and its mapping should be strengthened so that it conforms with the requirements mandated in Public Act 89-305 as amended by 90-275, "An Act Concerning Aquifer Protection Areas". Additionally, any existing hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals in the aquifer recharge areas or the public water supply watersheds should be carefully managed and wherever possible eliminated.

#### The Connecticut River and its Flood Plain

The city is fortunate in that it has the Connecticut River composing one of its entire borders. The river and its associated flood plain area are perhaps the most significant and important natural resources found in Middletown. The primary function of the flood plain is the detention of flood waters during the spring rains and snow melt. The flood plain in it self is unique. Approximately the first half of the flood plain is classic Connecticut River Valley flood plain. It is wide, low lying and for the most part wet marshland. This area, which is subject to frequent flooding, is also rich in species diversity. The second half of the flood plain is quite narrow and in places non-existent. The reduction in the flood plain in the lower reaches of the Middletown section of the river is due to a change in the geological makeup of the land surrounding the Connecticut River. The topography of the land adjacent to the river rises rapidly from approximately 50 feet above sea level at the intersection of River Rd. and Silvermine Rd. up to over 450 feet above sea level. The river filters into a stretch of narrow channel, known appropriately as "The Narrows". It is at this point, where the steep slopes down to the river begin, that thousands of years ago a glacier jam created a massive natural dam. This natural dam caused water to back up and create a huge lake, which extended mid way through Massachusetts and out several miles to the east and west. It is the sediment from this lake that created the prime agricultural farmlands up and down the Connecticut River Valley, including those in Middletown.

The river has much to offer the residents of Middletown. Its banks, which create valuable edge habitat, represent a travel corridor, with ample food, water and cover, for wildlife, including the American Bald Eagle, white tail deer, raccoon and opossum to mention a few, and its waters are a spawning route for the Atlantic salmon and shad. While being important in these ways the Planning and Zoning Commission feels the most important unrealized value of the river to the city of Middletown is in terms of its recreational and educational value.

The river and its banks in Middletown hold tremendous potential for fishing, boating, hiking, bird watching and possibly, some time in the future, swimming. High quality recreation along the river, will stimulate economic growth and prosperity for the city and in particular the Central Business District. But, the key to providing quality recreation which will stimulate economic growth is access. The city must strive to make the Connecticut River more accessible to its residents and tourist alike. River Road should be upgraded and along River Road the garbage should be removed. Parking and picnicking areas should be provided along with a small boat launch which will generate launch fees from out of town residents. Also, police patrols should be increased along the river, perhaps mounted police, and there should be a carefully designed pedestrian bridge over Route 9 to reintroduce the Harbor Park Area with the Central Business District.

For the most part, the flood plain area is protected from any further development. It is zoned Riverfront Recreation which has a limited number of uses. But, the Zoning Code does allow for some non residential uses in the flood plain by special exception. These proposals should be very carefully scrutinized and where development is to be accommodated preference should be given to water oriented and/or dependent uses.

Finally, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Harbor Improvement Agency and the Conservation Commission should work cooperatively to undertake a detailed study of the Connecticut River Corridor. Using this study for guidance, the city should then do all possible, working with the state and non-profit organizations, to enhance the accessibility of the land along the Connecticut River.

## Other Rivers and Streams

The Coginchaug, the Sebetha or Mattabesset and Sumner Brook are the three other major watercourses in Middletown. These are all tributaries of the Connecticut River. The majority of the land surrounding these flood plains is highly urbanized and this presents a need for innovative management strategies which address problems unique to urban river corridors. Other sections of these rivers are more rural in character, particularly Sumner Brook, and therefore there are other concerns which need to be addressed.

This plan recognizes that these rivers do not recognize political boundaries and therefore a regional approach to the planning and management of these valuable natural resources and their associated watersheds is essential. This plan is in full support of the newly created Coginchaug River Task Force and is of the opinion that a similar approach should be initiated regarding the Sebetha River. In terms of the Sumner Brook watershed there should be greater cooperation between the City of Middletown and the Town of Durham.

These waterways and their flood plains are important areas primarily from an ecological standpoint. These flood plains represent greenbelts and wildlife corridors extending out from the Connecticut River into the city. For the most part these flood plains are protected from any further development. But, in some areas of these flood plains the Zoning Code does allow for non-residential uses by special exception. These proposals should be very carefully scrutinized in terms of their impact on flood storage, water quality and the enhancement of the river bank, for wildlife and if possible recreation. Where practical, access to these rivers should be improved, existing city property and other privately held properties should be kept free from debris and other sources of pollution should be minimized.

Additionally, the Planning and Zoning Commission should review and expand their stream belt regulations in order to protect water quality and floral and faunal habitat in all the city's streams and stream belts.

## Prime Agricultural Soils

As shown on one of the natural resources maps, Middletown has a large quantity of prime agricultural soils. Some of these areas, to date, are still undeveloped and are primarily characterized by rolling hills and meadows. While the economic value of agriculture, the production of significant amounts of cash crops, is almost non-existent in Middletown, these soils are still a significant resource. In general there are two reasons why this resource should receive consideration for protection. First of all, home grown products are still quite popular. And, secondly the aesthetic value of agricultural land is quite important both from a historic and scenic point of view. Middletown's roots are agricultural. Therefore, as with preserving an historic building, some of the city's agricultural history should also be preserved.

Currently there are very few effective techniques to protect prime agricultural farmland, cluster development and Public Act 63-490 are two of these techniques. The designer environmental subdivision (DES) is a form of cluster development which is currently available but other more flexible cluster options, which allow for private wells and septic systems, should be investigated.

Public Act 63-490 is a means of reducing undesirable tax pressures on the land owner. But, even with Public Act 63-490, pressures of taxation can still be quite significant. This plan recognizes the need to preserve the property values, and thus borrowing power, that the farmland currently holds. This plan makes no attempts to diminish these property values. Further, in an attempt to keep farming economically viable, the commission should seriously consider, in areas of the city containing active farms, proposals to enhance the value of these lands if these proposals are designed to promote the public good and are based on sound planning principals.

## Steep Slopes and Ridge lines

These are the areas which provide contrast to the rolling hills which are so characteristic of the Connecticut River Valley. Mount Higby, with the possible exception of the Connecticut River, is the most prominent natural feature in the city. From Interstate 91 Higby's wooded slopes are an easily remembered landscape in Middletown and the state of Connecticut. But even more impressive are the panoramic views from along the ridge at approximately 900 feet above

sea level. The mountain has been identified in numerous studies as being of statewide significance and there are numerous informal hiking trails which have been created by hikers over the years. Ensuring that as much of Mount Higby, as possible remain in open space will provide for the long term protection of this significant natural resource.

Other areas include Mount Lamentation, Bear Hill, Round Hill, Chestnut Mountain and the highlands in the south eastern portion of the city along the Connecticut River. These are the areas where peaks tend to exceed 500 feet above sea level and the terrain is steep sloping and rocky up to the ridge lines. These large parcels of wooded land have value for their plant and wildlife habitat, passive recreational use, and scenic quality. These values qualify them for consideration as protected open space.

These areas, as shown on the natural resources map, because of their steep slopes and poor soils have remained largely undeveloped. But, as there is less and less quality land to build upon developers have been moving to more marginal land.

If these areas are threatened by development the Planning and Zoning Commission should consider creative development proposals which would cluster development at lower elevations and leave the higher elevations as open land.

The Designer Environmental Subdivision (DES) concept and the Large Lot Environmentally Sensitive concept can encourage high quality design and resource protection but these techniques are not mandatory and the DES, in most cases, requires city water and sewer. Once again, more flexible cluster options should be investigated.

## Air Quality

The air we breath is often a resource which is taken for granted. Middletown's unique topography and geographic location presents the city with special air quality problems. The primary cause of these air quality problems is due to thermal inversions. This phenomena of thermal inversions traps the warm polluted air in the lower levels of the atmosphere and does not allow it to disperse into the upper levels. Instances of inversions are on the rise, particularly in the summer months, and air quality in the city has thus become a significant concern. In the Plan of Developments survey of citizens air quality was ranked as the number one environmental concern among Middletown residents.

The effect of air pollution on human health can vary from a source of irritation to the eyes and throat to a continuing factor in three often fatal diseases - heart disease, lung disease and cancer. Air pollution can also damage plant growth, soil materials, reduce visibility, and alter climatological conditions. Some population groups, the sick, the elderly, pregnant women and children, are more seriously effected by air pollution than others. These groups are sensitive receptors, suffering adverse effects at lower pollution levels than the general public. This fact should be incorporated in any consideration of the location and or design of schools and parks, hospitals and housing. In Middletown, the MidState region and the State of Connecticut, the main source of pollutants come from auto emissions. These pollutants are primarily carbon monoxide and hydro-carbons. The map in the transportation portion of this plan displays the top eight carbon monoxide "Hot Spots" and possible carbon monoxide "Hot Spots" in this region. When reviewing this map it becomes clear that the significant traffic volumes in the city of Middletown have reduced the city's air quality appreciably. In fact, the city's air quality has been cited by the federal government as being at one of the poorest levels in the country.

While air pollution from non point sources, automobiles, is largely a situation which must be addressed at the regional if not state and national levels, Middletown as the commercial center and leader within the region, should begin to address these air quality concerns in its Plan of Development for the year 2000. For this reason the transportation portion of the Plan of Development will

discuss local level strategies designed to allow the city to begin to do its part in improving air quality in the MidState region.

There are also non transportation related strategies to minimize air quality problems. When reviewing development applications the Planning and Zoning Commission should consider the potential impacts on air quality. The Commission should strengthen "Performance Standards" in the Zoning Code in order to limit the number of point source emissions of air pollution. Additionally, the Commission should amend the Zoning Code to allow for the incorporation of air quality impact criteria for proposed uses in order to better understand and mitigate the potential air pollution from the proposed development.

When considering amendments to the Zoning Code the following Housing and Urban Development strategies should be considered.

#### URBAN DESIGN CRITERIA

1. Separate as far as possible human activity from automobile and other pollution sources. Avoid residential uses close to highway air rights, elevated highways, tunnel exits, lower floors along busy streets etc..
2. Assure easy flow of air around the buildings.
3. Require proper arrangement of structures.
4. Avoid blocking valleys and other natural air flow ways with high rise structures.

#### SITE PLAN DESIGN

1. Setback of structures or of heavily frequented areas of the site from major roadways can greatly reduce human exposure to pollution.
  - a. Avoid long linear blocks of structure, avoid closed courts, deep angles which trap and stagnate air masses
  - b. Vary setbacks, vary building size and heights, plant irregular landscaping to increase turbulence and dispersion.

2. Landscaping improves dispersion of pollutants, and reduces infiltration of pollutants into the building.

a. Landscaping should include the planting of pollution resistant trees, and

b. Established trees which do not interfere with development should be saved in order to improve dispersion of pollutants and reduce infiltration into buildings.

3. Parking Lots: Avoid large masses of parking spaces in favor smaller parking areas more broadly distributed.

4. Grading: Avoid site grading that creates low pit areas since these spaces tend to trap pollutants.

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#### BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

1. Avoid balconies and cavities in the building shell and on the building side which is subject to heavy pollution impact.

2. Reduce infiltration of pollutants.

3. Use construction technology and building equipment necessary to reduce indoor air pollution levels.

## Noise and Noise Pollution

The Department of Housing and Urban Development defines noise as any unwanted sound which disturbs human activity. In Middletown, noise is due primarily to vehicular traffic and ventilation and air conditioning operations. Ambient noise levels in Middletown are no doubt increasing due to the growing volume of noise generating activities. Although the point at which sound becomes undesirable, and hence noise, varies with the individual and the sound itself, levels of noise can be defined. A noise level depends on the volume or intensity of the sound as measured in decibels, its frequency or pitch, and the time of day and duration of its occurrence. In most cases, the higher the intensity, the higher the frequency, the longer the duration and noise between 10 pm and 7 am are the most disturbing. But other combinations of intensity, frequency, duration and time of day can be equally disturbing.

The long term effects of noise on people are difficult to determine. A causal relationship has been established between noise and various effects such as hearing loss, interference with speech communications, sleep disturbance, general anxiety, irritability and annoyance. Other less well established effects include fatigue, unsociability and inefficiency in performing complicated tasks.

Noise clearly has the potential to have an adverse effect on the quality of life of Middletown's residents. The Planning and Zoning Departments Survey of Citizens ranked noise pollution as an important environmental concern. Since zoning is the controlling power over the use of the land and the location of uses citywide, it is the logical place to regulate, via performance standards, and adopt policies to avoid the adverse effects of noise pollution on the citizens of Middletown.

The Planning and Zoning Commission should amend "Performance Standards" in the Zoning Code in order to limit point source emissions of noise pollution. The Commission should also allow for the incorporation of noise impact criteria for proposed uses in order to better understand and mitigate potential noise pollution.

When considering amendments to the Zoning Code the following Housing and Urban Development strategies should be considered.

- 1.) Sites within 15 miles of an existing or proposed commercial or military airport will require an assessment.
- 2.) Sites within 1000 feet of streets or highways, with characteristics, such as high traffic levels, high speed or heavy truck\bus usage that would indicate high vehicular noise levels, will require an assessment.
- 3.) Sites in close proximity to other significant noise sources such as industrial facilities or power-generating stations will require an assessment.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development uses the day-night average sound level system, measured in decibels, to analyze the overall level of noise in an area. While too technical to discuss in a Plan of Development, it is strongly recommended that this system or a similar one be incorporated into the Zoning Codes performance standards in order to give the Planning and Zoning Commission the jurisdiction to consider the noise impact of a proposal.

When reviewing development applications the Planning and Zoning Commission should consider the following questions.

- 1.) Given the existing and anticipated noise levels is the site appropriate for the proposed activities and facilities.
- 2.) Will the project be exposed to noise levels which exceed noise standards established in the Zoning Codes performance standards.
- 3.) What type of noise mitigation measures are proposed for the project. Possible mitigation measures include:
  - a. Reduce noise at its source.
  - b. Locate noise sensitive uses so that they will not be exposed to unacceptable noise levels.
  - c. Modify the path along which noise emissions travel, ie. barriers, so as to reduce noise levels at the receptor site.
  - d. Design or modify structures to minimize interior noise levels.

materials and provide for transportation relatively cheaply, have been capable of competing for nation-wide markets.

This trend has been responsible for the rapid development, starting in the 1970s and continuing to the present, of the Westfield area, including the designation of the Interstate Trade and Interstate Office Park Zones in the area of Interstate 91, which has resulted in over 10,000 new jobs to date.

It is this I-91 corridor which holds the key to Middletown's future. The continued migration of large reputable corporations to Middletown means a heightened sense of professionalism for the City as well as renewed job security, commercial growth, and prosperity.

Middletown's history has been characterized by a tradition of marked change and evolution. Fortunately for Middletown, this process of evolution has been toward a position of greater economic stability and opportunity for its many inhabitants.

#### *ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND TRENDS*

Middletown has many strengths when it comes to being attractive to business and industry. The strengths include a growing and dedicated labor force, steady growth in employment opportunities, a pro-business atmosphere, and the ability to offer a high quality of life to the majority of its citizens. Middletown also has a first rate Chamber of Commerce, the Middlesex Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) and Industry for Middletown (INFORM). These are three professionally staffed private organizations which promote and assist business and industry in Middletown. The city is the commercial and retail center for the MidState Region, the fastest growing region in the state. The city possesses a well-established Central Business District, has excellent accessibility to major throughfares, maintains a significant amount of rural land and has a diverse, slightly more affordable, housing supply. Further, the present socioeconomic, and demographic characteristics, as well as the employment characteristics in Middletown and the Middletown area are an indication of a stable economy with excellent mixed growth in both the residential housing sector of the market and the employment segment of the economy. Also attractive to businesses is Connecticut's diversified economy and its excellent Department of Economic Development and their wide ranging business assistance programs.

### EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

An essential element in a healthy economic environment is the quantity and quality of the city's and the region's employment and labor force characteristics. The labor force of a community is a major factor in attracting and keeping industry and commerce and the employment opportunities are a major factor in attracting and keeping a healthy labor force.

Employment data for the Middletown market shows that covered employment jobs in Middletown increased from 23,840 jobs provided in 1980 to 32,110 jobs provided by local firms in 1987. This represents a very healthy 4.3 % compounded annual rate of growth in employment during the 1980-87 period with the local employment market adding an average 1,180 new jobs per year. This growth in employment opportunities resulted in declining and record low unemployment rates for both Middletown and the state of Connecticut. But, as the economic growth has slowed down unemployment rates have begun to rise. However these rates have not risen to any where near the levels experienced during the 1981-82 recession. Figure 9.1 displays the unemployment rates for the city.

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATES 1980-90

Source: Dept. of Labor

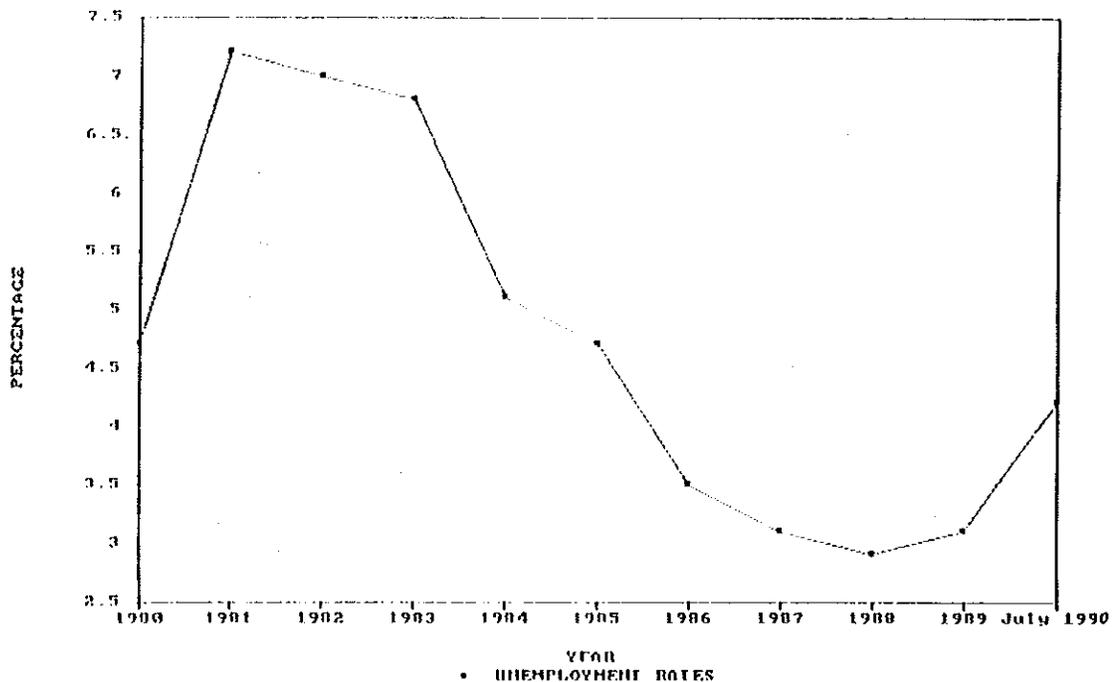
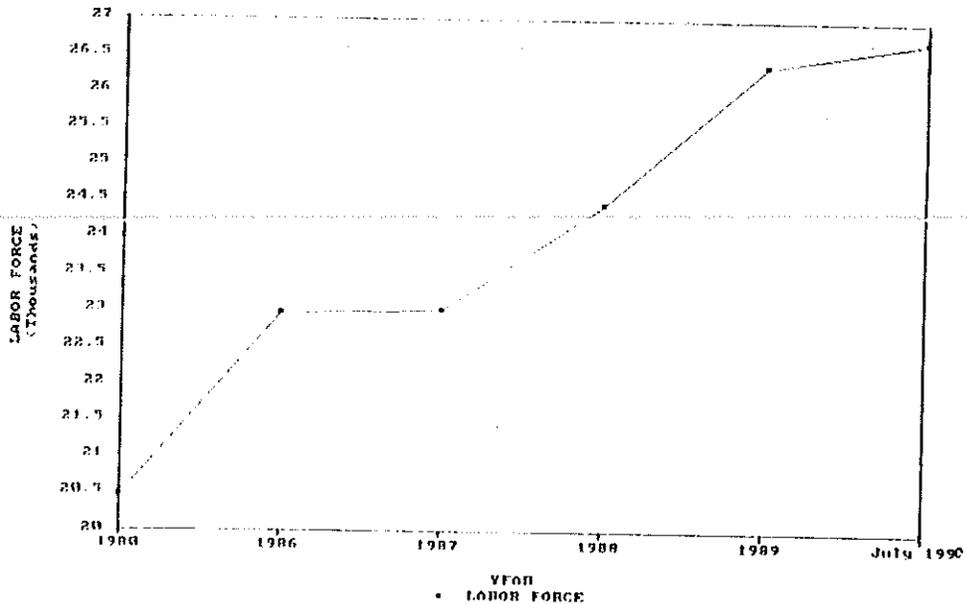


Figure 9.2 displays Middletown's labor force. This labor force has been increasing as the city and the region prospered from economic development. The residential labor force in Middletown has increased from 20,370 in 1980 to 26,718 residents in the labor force in 1990. This represents a 3.1 % annual increase in the city's labor force.

### LABOR FORCE 1980-90

Source: Dept. of Labor



The age distribution of the population and the labor force has an impact on the local economy. It influences investment spending, pensions, and government expenditures. The future age distribution figure in Chapter 2 displays that as the City moves towards the year 2000 and 2010 the labor force will be an increasingly older labor force. There will be fewer young people, which means less allocation for social investment in terms of the rearing and education of this group. However, there will be a greater number of people in the ranks of the elderly, which will translate into increased public sector spending for that age group. This aging population threatens those lower paying industries, retail and low end service, which have traditionally relied upon the younger age groups whom they can pay less. This problem is compounded by the labor shortage statewide. The city's unemployment rates, shown earlier, display that rates have declined and are now at or near record lows, as the number of employment opportunities increase with the city's economic growth and prosperity. But, the recent slow down

has begun to produce an increase in the available labor pool. But the existing tight labor market Middletown now experiences gives employees increased choice in employment opportunities and bargaining power to demand higher salaries and benefits, such as medical and day care, even from the fast food chains. But it is this same labor shortage which makes the area less attractive to new businesses who are considering locating in this region.

A further comparison of the employment and labor force data shows Middletown was somewhat of an employment center in 1980 with 19,249 local residents employed and 23,840 jobs provided by local firms. This would indicate that there was a net in commuter pattern, with more than 4,500 more people commuting into Middletown to work per day than were commuting to out of town jobs.

A comparison also shows that Middletown firms added an average of 1,180 new jobs between 1980 and 1987. And an additional 698 local residents joined the economically active employed work force per year during this period. Therefore, on the average, Middletown firms have added approximately 482 more new jobs per year than residents added to the employed labor force.

Local Middletown firms now provide about one third more jobs, than there are local residents in the employed labor force. Clearly, Middletown is increasingly becoming an employment center, as opposed to a bedroom community so characteristic of surrounding communities.

As was noted in the 1976 Plan of Development, Middletown's economy, and thus employment opportunities, is moving away from a manufacturing based economy and towards a service based economy. This is indicative of the State and New England as well. The next table displays the distribution of manufacturing and non-manufacturing employment over the years.

	<b>MANUFACTURING</b>	<b>NON-MANUFACTURING</b>
1960	42 %	58 %
1970	37 %	63 %
1980	31 %	69 %
1989	20 %	80 %

Source: Dept. of Labor

The next table gives a more detailed comparison of the behavior of agricultural and non agricultural employment  
**MIDDLETOWN LABOR MARKET AREA**

	June <u>1990</u>	June <u>1989(R)</u>	Net Change From: June <u>1989</u>
NONAG. EMPLOYMENT	48,390	47,400	+ 990
% Change			+ 2.1
AGRICULTURAL EMPLOY.	1,500	1,530	- 30
% Change			1.9
GOODS PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	10,850	11,150	- 300
% Change			2.7
Construction & Mining	1,500	1,530	- 30
Manufacturing	9,350	9,620	- 270
Durable Goods	7,510	7,710	- 200
Nondurable Goods	1,840	1,910	- 70
SERVICE PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	37,540	36,250	+ 1,290
% Change			+ 3.6
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	1,320	1,340	- 20
Trade	7,870	7,840	+ 30
Wholesale	1,650	1,510	+ 140
Retail	6,220	6,330	- 110
Finance, Insurance & R.E.	7,780	7,620	+ 160
Services	14,030	12,880	+ 1,150
Health Services	4,710	4,340	+ 370
Other Services	9,320	8,540	+ 780
Government	6,540	6,570	- 30
Federal	260	230	+ 30
State & Local	6,280	6,340	- 60
Nonmanufacturing Employment	39,040	37,780	+ 1,260

Source: Dept. of Labor

**AGRICULTURE**

Middletown can anticipate a continued decrease in farm related employment. In addition to a loss of jobs, some consideration should be given to the possible subsequent loss of farm land and its high aesthetic value to retaining the city's present character.

### **MANUFACTURING**

As displayed above the city should anticipate a continued overall reduction in manufacturing. Defence cuts could intensify this problem. However, the major manufactures who have made it through the most difficult periods can be expected to remain strong. Middletown could benefit from other small growth industries whose customer base has expanded beyond New England, if adequate space is provided. Particularly in the older industrial buildings. This possibility should be studied more carefully.

### **SERVICE AND TRADE**

This sector is growing throughout the the State, and Middletown can expect to benefit from this expansion. The shift from a manufacturing based economy to a service based economy raises many concerns of whether a city can survive and prosper with a service based economy.

Consideration should be given to whether the cities labor force will be equipped to fill service and trade jobs, and whether incomes will be sufficient for these workers to support their families and if workers in the older age cohorts will be capable of making the transition from a manufacturing based to service based employment.

### **TOURISM**

Although the city currently benefits comparatively little from tourism, this part of the service sector holds particular potential for Middletown. Its location along Route 9 and Interstate 91 is a distinct advantage. Middletown is blessed with the Connecticut River along one of its entire borders, a prestigious private university, a uniquely viable downtown area, rolling farmlands and rugged mountainous areas.

Considering the current economic conditions and the anticipated resurgence of families taking vacations "close to home" city planning should concentrate on improving sinage along the highways, promoting the city, and upon maintaining and enhancing the retail experience in the downtown.

The link between the downtown area, Wesleyan University and the Connecticut River will be essential. The three components, working as one, can create a unique situation which will draw visitors from all over the state and New England.

The city, the private sector and Wesleyan University should work in concert to promote community activities and recreation, cultural events and entertainment. Historic preservation and associated arts and culture related activities should continue and be expanded.

The economic development potential for tourism is a prime example of how (and why) the protection of natural resources, maintenance and enhancement of a strong downtown area, maintenance of the outlying rural character and economic development must go hand in hand for Middletown.

#### *INCOME AND WAGES*

The incomes and wages that the current labor pool is receiving in relation to the state, other surrounding towns and regions is also important to review since wages are an important consideration. They can encourage or deter quality businesses and workers from moving into a region. The amount of money available to individuals and to families in the region also impacts potential sales in Middletown.

	ESTIMATED PER CAPITA MONEY INCOME AND		MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME	
	Per Capita		Median Family	
	1980	1986	1980	1986
State	\$8,598	\$14,090	\$20,078	
Middletown	7,419	11,530	21,085	34,155
Haddam	8,506	14,065	24,575	39,811
Durham	8,467	14,410	25,500	41,310
Middlefield	8,162	13,116	24,740	40,078
East Hampton	7,839	12,664	23,320	
Portland	8,478	13,437	22,763	37,200

Source: Connecticut Census Data Center

As can be recognized in the table above, the city of Middletown has the lowest incomes within the region. This situation of the central city within a region having the lowest incomes is quite ordinary. For years the central cities in Connecticut, like Middletown, have had to accept disproportionate shares of their regions poor, minorities and handicapped persons. This fact is reflected in the income figures.

The next table compares the estimated Middlesex County per capita income with the other counties in Connecticut. In this table, the estimated per capita income for Middlesex county is very close to the average of all eight counties.

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>1986 ESTIMATED PER CAPITA INCOME</u>
MIDDLESEX	\$13,214
Fairfield	17,708
Hartford	13,609
Litchfield	13,381
New Haven	12,246
New London	12,187
Tolland	12,316
Windham	10,348

Source: Connecticut Census Data Center

In order to determine if the city is over reliant on one type of land use (ie. residential) and the overall health of the current tax base the city's total tax levy is presented below.

<u>MIDDLETOWN'S TOTAL REAL PROPERTY TAX LEVY BY CLASS IN 1989</u>		
<u>CLASS</u>	<u>LEVY</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Residential	\$655,086,915	60 %
Commercial	\$331,126,873	30 %
Industrial	\$ 89,934,338	8 %
Vacant	\$ 15,703,039	2 %
Residential	\$10,537,502	67%
Commercial	\$1,870,928	12%
Industrial	\$3,293,323	21%
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$1,091,851,165</u>	<u>100%</u>

Source: Middletown Tax Assessor

As the table above shows the city currently is in a sound fiscal position. Residential property taxes account for only 60 % of the total tax levy while 38 % of the total tax levy comes from commercial and industrial land uses. These commercial and industrial land uses, while contributing greatly to the total tax base, require minimal public expenditures for municipal services. Clearly tax revenues from new commercial and industrial firms could contribute significantly to easing the city's financial constraints.

The next table shows a breakdown of the city into land uses and a record of areas within each use which are currently developed and undeveloped.

APPROXIMATE LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

TOTALS	DEVELOPED		UNDEVELOPED	
	ACRES	%	ACRES	%
<b>Residential</b>				
19,641	14,058	72 %	5,583	28 %
<b>Commercial</b>				
273	213	78 %	60	22 %
<b>Industrial\Office</b>				
3,679	2,614	71 %	1,065	29 %
<b>Other</b>				
3,607	640	18 %	2,967	82 %
27,200	17,525	64 %	9675	36 %

Note: A undetermined portion of the undeveloped land must be considered undevelopable due to steep slopes, wetlands, and flood plains.

Particular attention is paid to the portions of the industrial and commercial zones which remain as yet undeveloped. These zones hold a particular relevance to this section, not only for the fact that they provide employment opportunities in the present day job market, but also for their implications to the shape of the future job market and economic well being of the area. The accompanying Business and Industry map depicts the key industrial and commercial locations in Middletown.

As the City's economy shifts to a retail and service based economy, retail and office space will become more and more important. There is also a shift towards smaller scale industrial facilities. While this shift to smaller scale, less land intensive, industries has been occurring there still may be a shortage of industrial land fully serviced by the needed infrastructure. For this reason, as one of the plans objectives states, the city should inventory existing undeveloped land in order to identify shortages and react to these shortages.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the above analysis and other indicators the conclusion can be drawn that, overall, Middletown's economy remains comparatively strong. The city is increasingly becoming an employment center in the region and for that matter the state. The completion of the Central Connecticut Expressway north of the city and the widening of Route 66 will greatly improve access to the city. The cities labor force is expanding and it's tax base is well balanced and fiscally sound.

This plan recognizes that the city, due to it's attractive location and other characteristics, as discussed, can to a large extent rely on market forces to continue to propel the economic development of Middletown. But, this plan is designed to be forward looking. A severe economic downturn in the future can have substantial impacts on the city. For this reason the plan recommends that the city actively participate in the economic development process and attempt to fulfill the goals and objectives as articulated in the introductory portion of this economic base study. A successful economic development effort can strengthen the city's ability to maintain its remaining rural character, protect it's natural resource base, and improve the quality of life for its citizens. There is no "quick and easy" way to achieve economic expansion, but it is within Middletown's reach to launch a thoughtful economic development effort that features shared community objectives, such as the ones presented in this plan, and collaboration among city commissions, local business, the Chamber of Commerce and community leaders.

## COMMERCIAL AREA STUDIES

### THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

#### *THE FUNCTION OF THE CLASSIC CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT*

A Central Business District (CBD) has been defined as the focus of a community where there is the greatest concentration of people and activities. The CBD requires a large number of people for it to function properly because the activities are specialized and are needed relatively infrequently by the populace. The greater the region served, therefore, the more potent the CBD. The more specialized the services and goods offered in the CBD become, the more they are interdependent and require concentration and mutual support.

The CBD contains three basic land uses: 1.) dominant 2.) auxiliary and 3.) service. The dominant activities are vital to the CBD and are usually so large in area that they can outbid other uses in choosing locations in the CBD. The dominant activities are broken down into five land uses: 1.) retail, 2.) office and communication, 3.) entertainment and culture, 4.) government and 5.) institutions.

#### **DOMINANT ACTIVITIES**

The commercial activity of the CBD revolves around the stores that have the capacity to bring large numbers of people to the downtown area. These are generally large department stores. Around these generators are the smaller specialty shops. These smaller shops are considered parasites as they generally live off the activity created by the generators.

The offices in the CBD are the regional decision making centers and they require a central location in order to maintain ties with other offices and to optimize the opportunities for personal contact. The employees of these firms add to the life and vitality of the CBD as potential customers and users of the other establishments.

The CBD is the communications center of the region as the radio, television, and newspapers are often located here. They depend on fresh information and the stimulus of new ideas that only the CBD can provide.

Entertainment and cultural facilities add the necessary depth to make the CBD an unusual attraction for the region. The theater, movies, art galleries, and library draw people both night and day.

Government and institutional facilities are traditionally located here. They function best in the CBD and add an atmosphere of dignity and solidarity to the area.

#### **AUXILIARY ACTIVITIES**

Along with the dominant activities of the CBD are the auxiliary activities such as law offices, banks and the like. They support the dominant functions.

#### **SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Near both the dominant and auxiliary activities and facilities are the service functions (such as barber shops, restaurants, shoe shops) that enable others to operate and live.

#### ***THE MIDDLETOWN CBD DEFINED***

For the purposes of this study the CBD is defined as follows: Bounded on the south by Union Street and on the north by the railroad tracks. Bounded on the east by the Connecticut River and on the west by Pearl Street and Broad Street. The CBD can be divided into three distinct sections. Each section has its own identity and therefore its own unique set of problems and potentials. These sections are the central retail area, the north end, and the south end. The central retail area runs from College St. on the east side and Court St. on the west side north to the intersection of Ferry St. and Main St.. The north end runs from Ferry Street north to the CBD northern boundary. The south end extends from Court St on the west and College St. on the east, south to the CBD's southern boundary.

## *CBD PLANNING HISTORY*

The CBD has been the concern of Middletown planners since the 1950's. The 1955 General Plan adopted the following principal to maintain the city as a rural city.

"the position of the CBD district as the shopping center for the city and surrounding area should be retained. Development of large scale commercial centers in any other section should not be fostered"

Despite this goal, shopping center development came to Middletown the following year with the opening of a major super market on Route 17. The 1965 Plan of Development also recommended that commercial areas be contained in the CBD because "Middletown's CBD would suffer very adversely from the spreading of retail and other commercial areas to outlying spots." Shortly thereafter in 1967 the Washington Plaza Shopping Center began development.

The 1976 Plan of Development recognized the significance of the CBD, but integrated the CBD, with community wide economic development. The plan emphasized that planning for the CBD must be coordinated with planning for Middletown's other commercial areas, because there exists a reciprocal relationship with each other. This Plan of Development supports the 1976 hypothesis on planning for the CBD but emphasizes the need for a public private partnership and an aggressive and creative marketing campaign.

The CBD is defined as the B-1, Central Business Zone. In acreage, the CBD is Middletown's largest shopping area. There are 77 acres in the CBD.

The CBD is the most important commercial area in the city. In the CBD are located general merchandise, apparel and furniture stores, offices, major public buildings, personal services, restaurants, and related commercial functions. These activities require concentration in the CBD. Concentration enables them to complement one another, and to provide important specialization to the community. More varied activities take place in the CBD than in any other part of Middletown. Within a few blocks are residences, churches, stores, businesses, government offices, service centers and restaurants. The CBD land use map in the Current Land Use portion of this plan displays the different types of land uses which are in the CBD. Clearly, the Middletown CBD generates activity because of the unique combination uses and not a single use.

### *FUTURE PLANNING FOR THE CBD*

As the Middletown CBD moves towards the year 2000 it will continue to be threatened by existing and new regional malls in surrounding towns. For this reason, it is essential that the city strive to make the CBD unique. It must be different from other CBD's and more attractive than the mall. This will be no easy task. The mall offers convenience, speed, easy accessibility, ample parking, and a wide array of shopping. But, with creativity, the city can develop a downtown retail experience unmatched by the malls. For each of three distinct areas to remain and prosper or recover and prosper it is important that the entire CBD function efficiently and that the three sections complement one another. Because these three sections are so distinctly different, creating areas which complement one another will require, first and foremost, a strong and coordinated commitment. Many experts in the field agree that commitment is the most important ingredient in improving and rejuvenating a CBD. The commitment must come from the city officials, the merchants, the Chamber of Commerce, and the residents of Middletown. Going hand in hand with this commitment is long range comprehensive planning for the CBD, which heretofore has been lacking. This Plan of Development strongly endorses the preparation of a comprehensive Plan of Development for the entire CBD.

Second to commitment and long range planning is management. Comprehensive and Coordinating are two very important words. When the idea of suburban malls was exploited by the entrepreneurs, they realized what the market required and wanted in terms of the retail experience. With these requirements in mind, they created a self contained and centralized management entity. The success of the malls is largely due to comprehensive, coordinated and centralized retail management. No matter how efficiently one store in the downtown may be managed it will have difficulty surviving if the entire downtown is not managed efficiently.

For this reason, this plan endorses a more comprehensive, coordinated and centralized management approach by the Central Business Bureau. This management entity in the downtown area would have objectives such as:

- 1.) To establish uniform operating hours
- 2.) To establish a well coordinated and adequately funded promotion and advertising program

- 3.) To work with the city police department for setting a high level of security.
- 4.) To work with the city public works department in setting standards for improved and expanded environmental services such as street and sidewalk cleaning, trash removal, snow removal, and maintenance of public areas:
- 5.) To provide marketing, merchandising and employee service training assistance to individual merchants:
- 6.) To provide leasing assistance to individual building owners; and
- 7.) To direct and coordinate implementation of a carefully formulated retail strategy.

There are many different types of centralized management approaches which put control of some of the property rights into the hands of the management entity. While these different approaches are to detailed to discuss here, they all should be further investigated to find the approach which is best suited for the Middletown CBD.

The following are a few other strategies which can help to attract people and businesses to the CBD.

- 1.) Rezone the entire downtown to recognize the three distinct entities which make up the CBD. Prior Plans of Development recognized these entities, but the corresponding zoning did not. To this end, these entities were thought of as three entities which functioned as one. For many years, prior to malls and interstate highways, the CBD was successful and functioned well as one entity. But, for many reasons, the CBD can no longer compete as is, in the retail markets. Creativity and new ideas are essential. These new ideas begin with the recognition, via zoning, of the three districts in the downtown. These three districts need not, and can not function as one. The districts must complement one another. In order to do this, each must establish its own concentrated mix of similar uses.

Shopping districts should be as compact as possible to encourage pedestrian traffic among stores, thus facilitating comparison shopping and impulse buying. It appears that these characteristics, due to the long and dispersed nature of Main Street, are non-existent. It is a long-held belief that the potential customer who has to move his car and park a second time is as likely to head home or to a suburban mall as to remain downtown and shop.

For this reason, this plan recommends three zones which, in all likelihood, will begin to take on their own separate identities and thus a concentration of similar uses will be established in each zone.

For similar reasons, comparison shopping and impulse buying, the zoning should restrict the uses on the bottom floors of buildings fronting on Main Street in the prime retail area to retail, service and eating and drinking establishments. By restricting the uses in this manner, retail store frontage can be kept continuous, with minimum interruptions by parking lots, office buildings, banks, travel agencies or other non retail uses. This proposed zoning scheme would enhance the retail experience of the downtown as shoppers will be able to concentrate their shopping in one area.

In the North End the plan recommends that the zoning should encourage the Planning and Zoning Commission, by using their discretion as granted in deciding special exceptions, to promote retail and service on the lower floors and business and professional offices in the upper levels. The spill over from the prime retail area to the south will generate retail establishments in this area which can complement the interspersed and upper level business and professional offices. The zoning should attempt to stimulate and encourage negotiations between the public and private sector in order to attract and create economically-feasible projects in this zone. It is essential that the historic nature of the buildings in this area be preserved. For this reason, consideration should be given to building height restrictions and design guidelines, as recommended in the April 1990 North End Urban Renewal Study.

The zone in the southern part of the downtown should recognize that the majority of establishments here are business, financial and professional offices, and that these uses also thrive on concentration and short walking distances between uses. Furthermore, the substantial positive spill over effects on retail and eating and drinking establishments from office development can be noted in many cities. Hartford's Constitution Plaza and Boston's Government Center are two prime examples. The opening of Middlesex Mutual Assurance will no doubt have major spill over effects as will any Government Building or Center. For all intensive purposes, this area is healthy and will function nicely as a Downtown Office Zone. Therefore, further office development should be encouraged as the primary use in this area.

- 2.) City staff should undertake a comprehensive and coordinated CBD Study. This study should recognize the three distinct sections of the CBD and their inter-relationship. Growing out of this study would be the development of a CBD Master Plan.
- 3.) While this Plan of Development primarily focuses on the physical development of the city, the social conditions in the CBD can not be ignored. Therefore the social problems in the CBD should be addressed as recommended in the June 1988 North End Task Force Report.
- 4.) Make Harbor Park more accessible to the CBD.
- 5.) Provide links between the CBD, Wesleyan University and the Connecticut River.
- 6.) Promote tourism in Middletown.
- 7.) Adopt an aggressive and creative marketing campaign to attract more people from all over the state to the Middletown CBD and continue to promote frequent CBD events.
- 8.) Create a marketing brochure and advertising campaign which highlights the benefits of doing business in Middletown and the Middletown CBD, as opposed to the surrounding malls.
- 9.) Concentrate retail sales, specialty shops, governmental and legal activities in the appropriate sections of the CBD.
- 10.) Discourage social service agencies, such as the unemployment office, the welfare office, soup kitchens or homeless shelters on Main Street. These uses detract greatly from the retail experience and discourage people from going to the CBD.
- 11.) Increase the presence of uniformed officers in the CBD.
- 12.) Encourage a mix of uses and events which will keep the CBD active both in the day and in the early evening.
- 13.) Address parking and traffic circulation concerns highlighted in the Wilbur Smith Study in order to make the CBD more accessible.
- 14.) Spruce up the CBD area with more shade trees and flower beds and do not allow litter to accumulate.

15.) Encourage the Redevelopment Agency to designate the North End as a redevelopment area and begin the redevelopment of the area as recommended in the North End Urban Renewal Study.

16.) Develop a city-wide system of street signs to direct people to the CBD and major establishments in the CBD.

17.) Preserve and rehabilitate the historically significant buildings in the CBD.

THE WASHINGTON STREET (ROUTE 66) AND SOUTH MAIN STREET  
(ROUTE 17) RETAIL CORRIDORS

Washington St. and South Main St. are Middletown's other two major retail shopping areas other than the CBD. The Washington St. study area extends generally from the westerly edge of the CBD to the Middlefield town line. The South Main St. study area extends from the CBD south to Randolph Road.

Over the past decade as Middletown's population increased, so too has the pressure on these retail areas. As development continues to fill in heretofore vacant parcels. And development is maximized on already built up land. This development, along with severe traffic volume increases in these corridors, has and will continue to contribute to development pressure similar to other retail corridors in Connecticut and elsewhere. These characteristic problems include, but are not limited to: traffic congestion, traffic hazards resulting from multiple curb cuts and unrestricted left hand turns, distracting signage, inaccessibility to pedestrians, and all the other characteristics so common to commercial strip development.

The areas are composed of a mix of small retail and service establishments including, to mention a few, fast food restaurants and automotive stores. Each corridor also has 2 large shopping plazas.

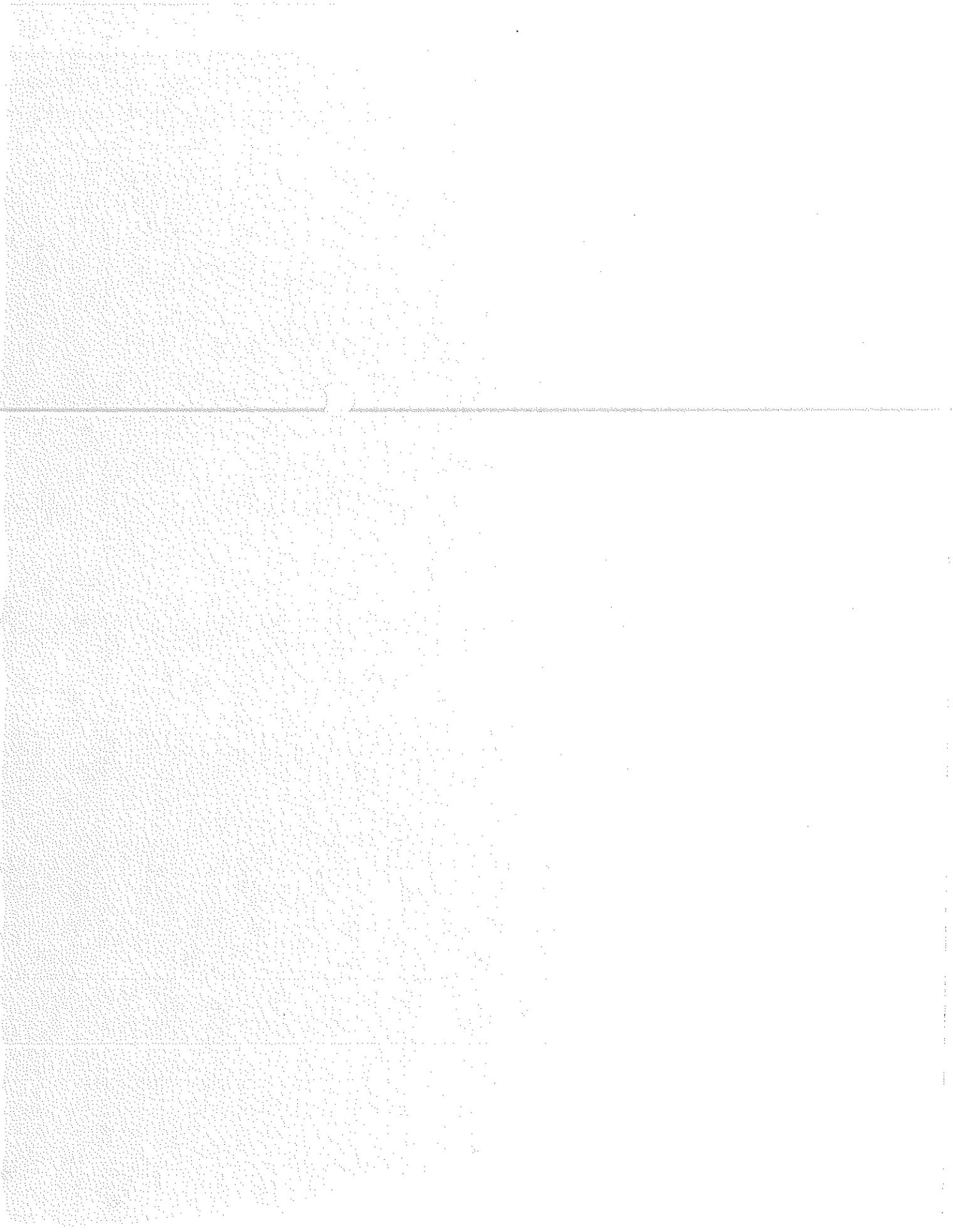
To date, development and redevelopment pressures continue to intensify in these areas, and it is therefore useful to incorporate general policies for these areas into the Plan of Development. These policies will help to guide future Planning and Zoning Commission action regarding development in these corridors.

1.) Undertake detailed land use studies for each of the corridors.

- 2.) Amend the Zoning Code to allow for uses which complement rather than compete with the uses in the CBD.
- 3.) Work with the State Department of Transportation to hasten the widening of Washington St. beginning with the areas in most need of widening and to increase the capacity and ease of flow on South Main Street.
- 4.) Encourage the private sector to redevelop the major shopping plazas within the two corridors.
- 5.) Whenever possible, particularly during the widening and improvement process, minimize the number of curb cuts along the corridors. This will reduce the number of left-turning vehicles as well as the points of entering traffic.
- 6.) Whenever possible, interconnect parking lots to reduce curb cuts between establishments and provide for safe and efficient flow within these lots. These interconnected lots, where appropriate, should also be concentrated in the rear and side yards in order to improve the visual quality of the corridor.
- 7.) Provide for more sidewalks, crosswalks and other safety features to make the area more conducive to pedestrian traffic.
- 8.) Require the maximum number of shade trees and planting beds on sites, particularly within the front yard landscaped areas. Species selected should be resistant to adverse road conditions and sufficiently dense to screen the retail establishment from view.
- 9.) Strongly recommend that retail establishments in the corridor keep their planting beds and lawns well maintained.
- 10.) Require that side yard parking areas be screened from the front yard view with a berm or a dense evergreen hedge.
- 11.) Strengthen and strictly enforce the presently liberal sign regulations in the Middletown Zoning Code. Simple signs will help reduce traffic hazards and maintain the areas attractiveness to the shopper.
- 12.) Free-standing signs should not be allowed along the corridors and existing non-conforming signs should be eliminated.

13.) Glare from various light sources identified in the study areas should be eliminated or minimized.

14.) The quality of the building design will have an overriding impact on the remainder of the development and redeveloped buildings, therefore it must be reviewed and be consistent with the character and overall design objectives of the city for these areas.



## CHAPTER 11

### THE PLAN FOR OPEN SPACES

#### INTRODUCTION

The 1968 Open Space Plan answered the question - What is Open Space? - by saying "Open Space is not a negative concept, it is not land left over after development has taken place and remains only because it was not 'of value' for any other use. Open space is a positive force that can be used to shape and direct urban development to those areas most suited and logical. The objectives of the 1968 Plan were to fulfill three major functions: 1) conservation; 2) design; and 3) outdoor recreation.

In the Land Use Component of the 1976 Plan of Development, "the environmentally sensitive category of the land use component is intended to preserve the natural process of the land rather than to authorize or prohibit specific uses. The emphasis is on how the land functions, not on what is built on it". Environmentally sensitive areas were generally defined as steep slopes, floodplains and wetlands or locations for recreational activity.

Protected open space areas are an important ingredient in Middletown's total land use arrangement. The natural features and resources of the City to a great extent define the history, beauty and character of Middletown and breaks in Middletown's urbanization pattern. The conservation and wise management of these features and resources is a major goal of this open space plan. The City should concentrate on the protection of the proposed open space systems, as displayed on the open space map, rather than acquisitions of random, unplanned and unconnected open parcels. This will promote linear development of open space systems which offers the best opportunities to protect wildlife habitat. The natural features of the City, which define the City's character, will be preserved and unique recreational opportunities will be created.

The proper maintenance and management of these systems and an improved public awareness of the passive recreational opportunities within these existing areas is also essential. Specific areas of private land containing valuable natural features and resources should be preserved and managed as permanent open space. The preservation of these areas will help to accomplish the following open space objectives:

- 1.) Preserve natural or scenic resources;
- 2.) Link existing open space areas to create open space corridors;
- 3.) Protect streams and water supplies;
- 4.) Conserve soils and wetlands;
- 5.) Provide breaks in the urbanization pattern;
- 6.) Enhance opportunities for public passive recreation;
- 7.) Preserve active agriculture and prime agriculture soils;
- 8.) Preserve cultural and historic areas;
- 9.) Promote rational development;
- 10.) Enhance the quality of life here in the City;
- 11.) Create a sense of place for those natural resource features which make Middletown unique; and
- 12.) Promote the economic benefits of open space: increased tourist dollars, preservation of community character which gives the City a competitive edge for business relocation and a financial return to the City because open space requires fewer city services than residential development.

The Survey of Citizens in 1989 found that the acquisition of open space is of high priority to the citizens of Middletown. These findings are supported by the fact that in 1989 the citizens of Middletown overwhelmingly supported a referendum to establish a five million dollar Open Space Trust fund.

This Open Space Plan was developed through the use of a computerized Geographic Information System (GIS). Eighteen natural and cultural parameters were mapped from existing information. The Conservation Commission used this information to develop a composite map of outstanding natural resources and a map which analyzed the developmental potential of the land. The types of data used in this mapping included water supply areas, prime agricultural soils, wetlands and watercourses, floodplains, depth to bedrock, wildlife habitat, archaeological sites, sewer service area, major hiking trails, steep slopes, sites of rare\endangered species, and land use. A Special Features Map referencing places that make Middletown unique was also developed to supplement the Natural Resource Inventory.

The computer was then used to overlay this information and identify areas of co-occurrence using preassigned values. In addition, some data was prioritized and given a higher value in the ranking; such as watercourses and wetlands, steep slopes, aquifers and areas of known rare species.

One composite map which resulted from the computer analysis identified the areas within the City that have high natural resource value. The other composite map identified the areas with limited development potential. In addition, the maps identified committed open space land. To produce the Open Space plan the committed open space areas were linked where possible with the high natural resource areas and the land with limited development potential to create "corridors". These corridors have been designed to accomplish the open space objectives articulated earlier in the chapter.

### OPEN SPACE DESIGNATIONS

The areas identified on the Open Space map have been broken down into four designations. These are: committed open space areas, proposed open space corridors, wetlands and floodplains.

In addition to these areas identified, this plan also recognizes that there are numerous areas which can be classified as uncommitted open space. These areas while often not accessible to the public, include private clubs, private recreation areas and private schools.

#### 1. Committed Open Space Areas

For the purposes of this Open Space Plan the term committed open space has the following definition:

*"Committed Open Spaces are those areas which are publicly owned properties, properties owned by private land conservation trusts, and private lands for which the development rights are permanently encumbered."*

These include city recreational lands, watershed lands, undeveloped state land, Nature Conservancy land, Middlesex Land Trust land and Connecticut Forest and Park Association land. Also in this designation but not necessarily displayed on the open space map are numerous acres of private land which were committed during the subdivision process as permanent open space. These areas, which are established using conservation easements, can enhance and connect larger open space areas.

Currently, here in the City of Middletown, there are approximately 3,326 acres of committed open space land out of a total acreage of 27,200 for the City. The ownership of these areas is broken down in the table below. For the most part, these areas are protected from development and are now only in need of careful management, including, for some areas, improved accessibility.

TABLE 6.1  
CURRENT ACREAGE OF COMMITTED OPEN SPACES\*

Local	1,252.	acres
State	1,529.	acres
Nature Conservancy	244.	acres
Ct. Park and Forest Assoc.	281.	
<u>Middlesex Land Trust</u>	20.	acres
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>3,326.</u>	<u>acres</u>

\*It should be noted that some of the State and Local committed open space may include institutional or educational buildings or cemeteries.

## 2. Proposed Open Space Corridors

The second designation displayed on the open space plan map are areas of private land recommended for open space protection. These are the areas which have been identified in this plan and in previous plans for their uniqueness, fragility and linkage potential. It is these attributes which make them worthy of some form of protection. These areas should be carefully considered by the Planning and Zoning and the Conservation Commission when planning for the future open space network in the City. They can represent travel corridors through the urban environment which link and complement the character of adjacent open space areas. Many wildlife species use these travel corridors, which contain ample food, water and cover, to travel between the islands of committed open space and undeveloped private land in the City.

When one reviews the Open Space Plan Map it becomes clear that the attempt is to create a corridor system of interconnected open space areas throughout the City. A comprehensive and well managed open space system is an important factor in maintaining and enhancing Middletown's quality of life and economic vitality. This open space system, when fully completed, will do much to serve the objectives as discussed in the introductory section of this Open Space Plan.

Ideally the valuable open lands displayed on the open space map as proposed open space will remain undeveloped or be acquired by the City or a private land trust and held, in perpetuity, as open space. But, as mentioned earlier, the plan realizes that these private lands may very well be developed. For this reason, designating these areas as proposed open space also serves as a reminder to the Planning and Zoning Commission that these areas possess important characteristics or contain important natural resources worthy of protection. In this way, if these lands were to be proposed for development the Planning and Zoning Commission could encourage a style of development which would result in the maximum possible conservation of environmental features, preservation of the integrity of a corridor, and dedication of the most environmentally important areas to the City or a private land trust as permanent open space.

The proposed Open Space areas shown on the plan comprise 4,924 acres of forest land, 1,191 acres of agricultural land and 1,010 acres of already developed land (that happens to lie within the proposed corridors) for a total of 7,125 acres. Excluding the developed areas, this represents 22% of the City's total acreage. When added to the City's committed open space acreage of 3,326, the total is 9,441 acres or 35%. While this is a substantial amount of land, the plan recognizes that a large majority of these lands are wetlands, floodplains, and steeply sloping lands with limited development potential. For this reason, many of these lands will not require formal acquisition.

The proposed Open Space Plan displays land within the City that is especially suitable for preservation. In each part of the City there are certain natural features that offer a "sense of place" to that area. On the Open Space Plan these areas are highlighted by a lettering system (generally from west to east) and named for clarity of discussion only. The following is a discussion of each of these areas, explaining what is special about the area and why it is worthy of protection.

The wetlands were ranked in July, 1982 by Purcell Associates as part of the Wetlands Analysis and Mapping Project. The rankings which are mentioned in the descriptive text that follows reference this report. The highest (most valuable) wetland would be ranked #1.

#### A. Lamentation Mountain

This area has numerous natural resource attributes. The most prominent resources are the ridgeline and steep slopes, the wetlands and watercourses (ranked 9th), and forested wildlife habitat including known rare species. The Blue Blazed Metacomet trail runs along the ridgeline, from Guilfrida Park in Meriden to Spruce Brook Road in Berlin. Protection of the Mountain's resources is the subject of a much more detailed study by a Tri-Town Lamentation Mountain Committee. The Connecticut Plan of Conservation and Development shows this as a conservation area.

#### B. Highland Pond Area

This area has been shown on many of the past open space plans. It has long been recognized as a special place because of the pond's recreational potential and its position within the Saw Mill Brook watershed. It is also part of a natural resource corridor from Higby Mountain to Lamentation Mountain. The pond and wetland system are ranked 2nd of the Top 25.

#### C. Higby Mountain

Another part of the traprock ridge system, this area, which also has numerous natural resources attributes, is highly valued for scenic vistas. It is also part of the City's reservoir watershed. The DEP Natural Diversity Database has documented the existence of rare species on the mountain and the Blue Blazed Mattabesset trail runs along parts of the ridgeline traversing City and Nature Conservancy land. The wetlands on Higby Mountain which drain to the west are ranked 62nd.

#### D. Richard's Brook Wetland System

This corridor consists of two major wetland systems. The southernmost wetland system is very highly rated in the Purcell Report. The stream which flows through the area, south to Saw Mill Brook, is named Richards Brook. It has valuable wildlife habitat. A rare species of swamp cottonwood has been noted in this area. Of the Top 25 wetlands ranked in the 1980 wetlands survey, this wetland was ranked 11th.

The other wetland system is part of Bradley Brook and East Bradley Brook which flow north and are tributaries of the Mattabassett River. It is one of Middletown's outstanding wetlands. As reported in the Purcell wetland survey, this

area is a diverse environment, with wet meadows, swamp, marsh and pond habitats. There is a high diversity of flora and an extensive area for wildlife travel. This wetland was ranked 14th of the Top 25.

#### E. Saw Mill Brook Wetland System

This area is one of Middletown's outstanding wetlands. It was ranked 19th of the Top 25. It is a wooded lowland brook with deep pools and very high aesthetic quality. It is part of Saw Mill Brook which flows into the Mattabasset River. It connects to Cucia Park by way of Saw Mill Brook.

#### F. T. J. Smith Park Open Space System

There is committed open space at T. J. Smith Park and Moody School. Active recreation is possible at the ballfields and through the park's hiking trails. The National Co-Champion largest Black Birch tree is located in this open space system. The remainder of this proposed open space is forested land and active agricultural land. The wetlands in this area are ranked 32, 49, 55 and 84.

#### G. Camp Property - Mile Lane Corridor

The Camp Property is an exceptional piece of committed open space. It is a forested hillside. The City-owned property on Mile Lane includes both a school and an extensive wetland system (ranked 16th) which includes parts of West Swamp Brook. This wetland system connects to the Mattabasset River, although there is a drainage divide near Tuttle Road. The remainder of the wetlands in this corridor carry various rankings from 2 to 106. The proposed open space corridor includes a very picturesque hillside and valley of forest and agriculture land. It is a good example of a diverse corridor of forested and open upland as well as an extensive and diverse wetland.

#### H. Old Trolley Right-Of-Way (R.O.W.)

This is a narrow piece of land along the Mattabasset River east of Route 217. This area serves as a buffer for the Mattabasset River as well as a passive recreation area. This wetland system is also one of Middletown's outstanding wetlands; being ranked 6th. The State Archaeologist has indicated that there may be significant archaeological sites in this area.

#### I. Coginchaug River Greenway

A management plan is being prepared for the watershed of this river under the auspices of a multi-town committee comprised of Guilford, Durham, and Middlefield. This is an urban river with a diversity of wetland and aquatic habitats. It provides a wildlife corridor to the Connecticut River from the rural areas outside Middletown. Wadsworth Falls State Park, Marzalek Park, Veteran's Park are within the corridor. The Coginchaug River wetlands are ranked 22nd.

#### J. Wadsworth Falls - Veteran's Green Corridor

This is an urban open space corridor providing landscape relief in a highly developed area. Within the corridor are at least four (4) wetland systems, two of which are highly ranked and two are not. There are also two major groupings of trees; at the Wadsworth\DeBoer Arboretum on Long Lane and at Veteran's Green on Washington Street. An urban walking trail is being planned which will connect this corridor with Harbor Park at the Connecticut River and with the Coginchaug River in the vicinity of Veteran's Park and Palmer Field.

#### K. Laurel Brook

The Laurel Brook Reservoir and watershed are part of the proposed open space area as committed land. Laurel Brook flows north from the reservoir into the Coginchaug River. This corridor contains a wide variety of open land, forest and wetlands (ranked 21).

#### L. Wesley School

This proposed open space area contains two (2) areas of committed land: Wesley School, and the Wesleyan Hills common land comprised of ponds, paths and the beech grove. This corridor also includes parts of the Long Hill Brook wetland system which was ranked 5th. The area is suitable for wildlife habitat and is part of a travel corridor to Laurel Brook Reservoir.

#### M. Guida Farm - Dooley Pond

Guida Farms Conservation Area is a City-owned open space and Dooley Pond is owned by the State of Connecticut. This area consists of active agriculture, forested areas and the pond. It is connected through utility owned and other corridors to the Crystal Lake and Sumner Brook area. The wetlands at Guida Farms is ranked 71st.

N. Kelsey Farm Open Space System

This proposed open space area is the scenic valley of West Round Hill Brook. Part of this area is already dedicated as open space within subdivisions. A good portion of it is wetland\stream habitat which is ranked 21st. Some of the land has traditionally been used for agriculture.

O. Crystal Lake Open Space Area

The focal point of this area is the City-owned Ron McCutcheon Park. The Park is currently being renovated and will include both active and passive recreation. There are known archaeological sites within the proposed open space areas. The remainder of the open space is wetlands (which are unranked), stream habitat and forested areas. It is in proximity to both the Guida Farm and the Sumner Brook open space areas.

P. Sumner Brook Valley Open Space Area

This stream flows north from its headwaters in Durham and Haddam to the Connecticut River at Harbor Park. There is abundant wildlife habitat in the southern sections, agricultural land uses in the central section and urban river characteristics in the northern portions. Scenic vistas are found throughout the corridor. Much of the corridor is comprised of wetlands (ranked 18th and 100) and floodplains and one parcel has been dedicated to the Middlesex Land Trust as open space. This corridor is the epitome of Middletown's rural character.

Q. Spiderweed - Connecticut Valley Hospital Corridor

This is a significant open space corridor. The Nature Conservancy owns a tract of land near Aircraft Road, called Spiderweed. Connecticut Valley Hospital owns the watersheds of their reservoirs and also significantly sized parcels of agricultural or forested lands near the Connecticut River. Another portion of the proposed open space is the connection to the river in the vicinity of Northeast Utilities' property.

There are known rare species in this corridor. Also, open fields and forested areas add to the diversity of the wildlife areas. The area has high aesthetic value and signifies Middletown's rural character. The wetlands within this corridor have various rankings.

#### R. "Laurel" Wetland System

According to the Purcell study, this is one of the few wetlands in the City developed over metamorphic rock. It is also one of the few bogs in Middletown. The wetland area is ranked 23rd of the Top 25. Mountain Laurel and bog species are quite abundant in this area. The corridor has high aesthetic value.

#### S. Hubbard Brook

This wetland system was ranked 24th out of the Top 25. This indicates that it is also one of Middletown's outstanding wetlands. There is a diversity of aquatic, wetland and upland habitats. The area has high aesthetic value. Because much of the area is undeveloped, this area serves as a wildlife travel corridor through Area U (described below) to the Connecticut River.

#### T and U. Connecticut River wetlands

The wetland lettered as T acts as a tidal marsh due to previous dredging. It is a valuable wildlife area, and serves as a buffer between the River and industrial areas along the River. The wetland lettered as U was ranked 7th of the City's Top 25. There is a diversity of habitats, both wetlands and uplands, which gives it a high wildlife value. The Mattabesock Audubon Society indicates that the area is a raptor habitat (including the Bald Eagle, the Northern Harrier) and the Northern Parula songbird feeds here during migration. The wetland also serves as a flood storage area.

### 3. Wetlands and Floodplains

The wetlands and watercourses, as shown on the Official Wetlands Map, are displayed on the Open Space Plan. Some of the more outstanding wetlands have been incorporated into the proposed open space areas. For the purpose of identifying less formal corridors, all the wetlands are shown on the map. This plan recognizes that regulatory protection exists for the wetlands and watercourses in the City and outright acquisition may not be necessary.

Also displayed on the map are the 100 year floodplains, as taken from the Federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps. These areas are also protected by local regulations which prohibit most development.

#### 4. Special Features

While not a formal part of this document the Conservation Commission has developed a separate overlay map and list (available in the Planning Department) which displays special features within Middletown. This list was researched and developed by the Conservation Commission to enhance their natural resource inventory in fulfillment of their statutory duties. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all the "special places" within Middletown and the Conservation Commission welcomes input to enhance the list. This mapping has been done for the education of the public and to make decision-makers more aware of the presence of these unique areas.

The list of special features has been grouped into four (4) categories and the mapping symbols indicate this fact. The categories are Hydrologic, Biologic, Geologic and Cultural (Prehistoric and Historic).

#### STRATEGIES\OBJECTIVES FOR OPEN SPACE PROTECTION

The final section of this open space plan is a presentation of strategies recommended to enhance existing open space and to create new open space areas.

The protection of these areas as permanent open space can be accomplished in many ways. Forms of protection may include the following:

- 1.) An outright fee simple purchase of a parcel by the City of Middletown using the Open Space Trust Fund, with possible state and federal matching grants;
- 2.) The purchase of development rights by the City;
- 3.) The voluntary placement of a conservation easement on the property which restricts the development rights;
- 4.) The voluntary placement of the property in life estate to be ultimately deeded to the City or a private land conservation trust;
- 5.) An outright gift of the land and all the rights going along with it to the City or a private land conservation trust with restrictions on the deed assuring that the land will remain undeveloped;

6.) Preferential tax assessment can also promote resource conservation and management. Therefore, the privately owned areas designated as proposed open space on the open space map and other undeveloped parcels in excess of twenty five (25) acres or active farmlands are strongly encouraged to participate in the Public Act 63-490 (Connecticut's Open Space Tax Law; G.S. Section 12-107a,b,c,d,e) program;

Ultimately, the plan recognizes that many of these privately held areas may be developed for residential purposes. But, the Public Act 63-490 contract, by allowing land to be re-assessed based on its current use rather than its highest and best use, is temporary and is used as a means of reducing undesirable taxation pressures on the land owner. It is often these taxation pressures which cause landowners to sell or develop their properties.

7.) Improve the management techniques utilized in the existing open space areas, including recreation, field, forest and wildlife management;

8.) Inform residents of Middletown of the many existing open space areas in the City available for passive recreation;

9.) Encourage the use of cluster development whenever possible, especially as a tool for the preservation of open space and other natural or visual resources;

10.) Conserve, using the strategies discussed in this chapter, those areas designated as proposed open space on the Open Space Map;

11.) Link existing open space areas with newly acquired areas, stream belts, flood plains, utility rights of way and environmentally sensitive areas;

12.) Require that the open space plan be consulted when proposed subdivision plans are reviewed for open space dedication;

13.) Seek and maintain public and private financial support to maintain a viable open space trust fund;

14.) Encourage state departments to designate portions of their undeveloped land holdings in Middletown as permanent open space;

15.) Work at the state level to make Public Act 63-490 program more responsive to the needs of the small farms;

- 16.) Amend the Subdivision Regulations to allow for a payment in lieu of open space as enabled by Public Act 90-239;
- 17.) Establish mechanisms for using proceeds from fees collected in lieu of open space dedications to acquire lands and easements for preservation of important open space and natural\visual resources;
- 18.) Establish other mechanisms for preserving land using the services of the Land Trust and other groups;
- 19.) Continue to maintain and update the City's Natural Resource Inventory;
- 20.) Identify and monitor activities which potentially threaten preservation of important open lands and natural\visual resources, both in magnitude and time frame;
- 21.) Encourage public involvement with the open spaces and create education opportunities through school programs, coordination with Audubon Society, etc.;
- 22.) Strengthen procedures for use and enforcement of conservation easements for development in environmentally sensitive areas;
- 23.) Establish management strategies for the Coginchaug River, Mattabassett River and Sumner Brook floodplains in matters of access, development, flood storage, wildlife habitat, water quality, and enhancement of the riverbanks;
- 24.) Establish conservation and development strategies for Lamentation Mountain in conjunction with Meriden and Berlin;
- 25.) Where practical, use services offered by federal, state, non-profit and other similar agencies to assist in meeting the goals and objectives of this chapter; and
- 26.) Encourage the coordination of Parks and Recreation Department, Planning and Zoning, Conservation Commission and\or other agencies in the acquisition, management and use of Open Space.

Adopted 6/23/93, effective 7/15/93

## CHAPTER 11 / 2

### LAND USE COMPONENT

To achieve its own unique potential, a community must be able to respond to changing trends and conditions. A key tool in formulating policy for the best responses is the land use component of a plan of development. This part of the overall municipal plan deals with quantities of land, and the arrangement of land uses throughout the community.

The land use component is the official, graphic representation of what the Planning and Zoning Commission visualizes as the best future for Middletown. It guides the orderly, efficient, and intelligent allocation of land. As a guide, it functions as a long term framework for decisions which must be made today. It does not by itself either permit or prohibit activity. The plan is based on careful analysis of local thoroughfares, utilities, community facilities, service areas, the anticipated population and economic structure of Middletown, topography, and general environmental factors here. More detailed community studies---such as reports on the central business district---are tied together by the land use plan.

Communities grow and prosper only if incremental, isolated actions are co-ordinated. Land must be set aside in rational arrangements and provided with appropriate services. Thus, the land use plan envisions a Middletown that might evolve in the coming years if certain policies are implemented: if zoning regulations are modified, if public and private efforts consistently work towards achieving the legally adopted community goals.

Middletown's land use plan is strongly influenced by the realities of Middletown today, reflecting the plans of the many diverse elements that make it a dynamic community. The plan recognizes continuing features of Middletown, while providing guidance for future growth. The land use component is designed to help Middletown reach one of the adopted goals of the plan of development: to encourage the appropriate, coordinated, and economic uses of land.

#### Land Use Categories

The land use component groups land uses in Middletown into four basic categories: residential, commercial, industrial, and city open space or environmentally sensitive areas. Within these broad categories there are further subcategories. All the uses are interdependent, integrated by the vehicular plan and the surface drainage system.

The underlying principle of these land uses categories is the scarce land and building resources of Middletown. Economically feasible adaptive uses of historic structures are to be encourage, as much as they meet Middletown's development goals.

### Residential

The plan shows three levels of housing density: high, medium and low. High density areas have sixteen or more dwelling units per acre. They are located on major thoroughfares, generally close to commercial areas.

Medium density areas have five and fifteen dwelling units per acre. They are near intensively developed lands, and have good access to the road system.

Low density areas have one to four dwelling units per acre. Most of the land in Middletown is recommended for this density level. In most cases they are now low density residential areas. Depending on characteristics of specific areas, there could be a relatively low one dwelling unit per acre, or there could be as many as four. The range could encourage a variety of kinds of residential neighborhoods. Truly, this density level is an effort towards meeting Middletown's housing goal:

"To provide and maintain a supply of high quality housing which can accommodate a population of diverse economic levels, ethnic backgrounds, and family sizes by providing ample freedom of choice in housing accommodation."

### Commercial

The land use component has five categories of commercial related development: central business, general commercial, corporate office, neighborhood service and mixed use development.

Activities which make a city a community take place in its central business district. Here are general merchandise, apparel and furniture stores, offices, major public buildings, entertainment, personal services, and related commercial functions. These activities must be concentrated in a compact area. Proximity to one another allows them to complement each other, so that specialization can be provided to the community.

The Central Business District has been expanded since the 1965 Plan of Development to include entire blocks rather than part of blocks. Maintenance of a strong central town is

an important goal of Middletown's comprehensive Plan of Development. It is the foundation of an economically sound community.

General commercial areas serve a special function. These areas have stores, restaurants, offices, perhaps entertainment or recreation facilities. General commercial areas are on major thoroughfares, so they are directly linked to their markets.

Corporate office areas would be the location of home or regional offices for large corporations, such as an insurance company. It is a specialized office use in that one firm would occupy nearly all the space in the building. Corporate office areas would be able to provide key support functions to the major user of the facility.

Neighborhood service areas are located to serve residential areas and are limited in scope to avoid undermining the Central Business District. Locations are interrelated with the thoroughfare system, providing convenient access from nearby residences. Before land is rezoned to allow commercial activity, all currently proposed new roads should be constructed. Major functions of neighborhood shopping areas would be the sale of commercial goods and personal services. Examples are: food stores, drug stores, laundries, dry cleaners, beauty shops, barber shops, and hardware stores.

Areas designated as mixed use are now a complicated mixture of activities, presenting unique land use problems to the community. They have in common a multi-functional character, and intensive use of land. The category would allow single family and multi-family residences, along with limited sales and services. Careful consideration must be given to the impact of uses on neighborhoods and surrounding areas. These areas require careful planning over extended periods of time.

#### Industrial

The land use component consolidates the three industrial land classifications of the 1965 plan into one category. Since 1965, general environmental standards mandated by state and federal regulations have minimized many of the distinctions between light, medium, and heavy industry. For city planning purposes, the one industrial classification suffices.

There are, however, important refinements to the inclusive industrial category. The first is that land held by a major utility company is recognized as a utility area. Should the

land not be used for this purpose, it should be low density residential. The other refinement is that an area where there is now a natural resource extraction activity could continue extraction and the required subsequent reclamation of the land. But, when the area has been reclaimed it is not to become industrial, but low density residential.

### Institutional

Adjacent to the central business district is an institutional area. Activities there are quasi-public: churches, hospitals, convalescent homes, recreational, and some commercial activity. The area must be close to the downtown, because its activities serve important support functions to the downtown. They bring people and vitality to the heart of Middletown.

Hopefully, designating an institutional category of the land use component of the plan of development would stimulate future growth of this segment of the economy.

### City Open Spaces and Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Municipal open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas are important in Middletown's total land use arrangement. They provide breaks in the urbanization pattern, enhance and protect resources, and influence the economic development of the City. Land is categorized as open space\environmentally sensitive based on several criteria.

Some of the land is a part of Middletown's official open space program. City open spaces are close to residential areas and near schools, so they are good locations for recreational activity.

Another reason for categorizing land as open space is because of its location or configuration. An example would be land surrounding interchanges of superhighways. For most purposes, these lands are undevelopable. Their future is in providing visual relief from other types of land uses.

Some of Middletown's land has natural and physiographic limitations which make most types of development on them not feasible. In some cases, land that has grades of fifteen percent or more has been categorized as environmentally sensitive. Generally, though, environmentally sensitive land is land that is in the flood plain, is in a flood prone or flood hazard area, is along a streambelt, or is in an inland wetland area. Locations were derived from detailed maps prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers (for the Federal

Insurance Administration of the Department of Housing and Urban Development) or the Soil Conservation Service. To continue the availability of subsidized flood insurance to Middletown and to local property owners, the City must have a sound flood plain management policy.

The environmentally sensitive category of the land use component is intended to preserve the natural process of the land, rather than to authorize or prohibit specific uses. The emphasis is on how the land functions, not on what is built on it. The designation provides a framework for local government involvement, by assuring that the Planning and Zoning Commission participate more actively in the development process. Options in implementing the environmentally sensitive category are to establish an overlay zone, or to create a separate zoning designation. Amendments to the Zoning Code would be required.

#### Miscellaneous

There are a few other categories of the Land Use Component: schools, cemeteries, quasi-public and the public facilities land.

The comprehensive plan of development is a proposal for the future direction of Middletown. The plan shows a community which continues its residential traditions but which carefully guides new growth in the most appropriate areas. Residential, commercial, and industrial land uses are tied together by City open spaces and the environmentally sensitive areas, significant elements in quality of life.

Underlying this idea for the best possible Middletown is the recognition of the finite character of its land. Only through responsive and responsible comprehensive planning can the potential of Middletown's land reserve be realized.

## CHAPTER 12

### IMPLEMENTATION

This plan is a collection of goals, objectives and recommendations aimed at providing the highest possible quality of live to as many of the city's residents as possible. Perhaps the most difficult portion of the Plan of Development process is the implementation phase. By state statute the next mandatory review and update of this plan will be in ten years. Ideally this plan will be reviewed and updated as frequently as the Planning and Zoning Commission and the professional city planning staff deem appropriate.

This plan should be an active one, it should be frequently referenced by the Planning and Zoning Commission and their staff as well as other city officials. It represents the official Plan for the future of the City of Middletown. This plan is not intended to be all encompassing, it should represent the skeletal framework upon which decisions are made and future studies and projects are initiated.

Considering that this is the official Plan of development for the entire city and not just the Planning and Zoning Commission it is essential that all actions and future studies and projects initiated be in general conformance with the goals, objectives and recommendations articulated in this plan.

However this is primarily a Planning and Zoning Commission document and therefore its implementation is the primary responsibility of the Planning and Zoning Commission. In implementing this plan the Planning and Zoning Commission has three primary tools at its disposal. These are the Zoning Code, the Subdivision Regulations and a Capital Improvements Planning Program.

#### Zoning

(Planning and Zoning Authority C.G.S. Title 8, Chapter 124)

The city's Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1927 and has been amended many times. To meet today's needs there should be a major update of the existing Zoning Code. The Zoning Code update must be coordinated with the Plan of Development and designed to carry out its goals and objectives. Zoning in Middletown is very different from that in the average urban community. Middletown contains both a compact downtown area and all degrees of development from urban to rural. The Plan

of Development provides for a continuation of the rural character in outlying sections of the city and the Zoning for these areas should be designed to carry out this objective. In other areas the Zoning should provide for and promote the varied kinds of development and re-development envisioned in this Plan of Development.

#### Subdivision Regulations

(Planning and Zoning Authority C.G.S. Title 8, Chapter 126)

The Subdivision Regulations are basically a technical guide which provide for the proper layout of lots, open spaces, sidewalks, drainage systems, water and sewer lines and streets in subdivisions. The existing City of Middletown Subdivision Regulations are also in need of major revisions. These regulations should be amended as soon as possible so as to conform to the goals and objectives of the Plan and to promote the orderly, efficient and the most aesthetically pleasing subdivision of land.

#### Capital Improvements Planning Program

(Planning and Zoning Authority C.G.S. Title 8, Chapter 126 and City Ordinance 26-2)

Community facilities and public services are an essential ingredient in the overall makeup of the community. These facilities contribute greatly to the overall quality of life for the residents of the City of Middletown. Community facilities can range from public schools to storm sewers to police stations. Nevertheless, whatever the facility may be it is essential that the future policy and requirements for each type of facility are well understood and anticipated well in advance.

Capital Improvements Planning is the multi year scheduling of public physical improvements. The scheduling is based on studies of fiscal resources available and the choice of specific improvements to be constructed for a period of five to six years into the future. A capital improvement is commonly defined as new or expanded physical facilities that are relatively large in size, expensive, and permanent. Capital Improvements should include only those expenditures for physical facilities with relatively long term usefulness and permanence.

This type of capital improvements planning will highlight, well in advance, future expenditures so that they can be budgeted for to insure that the fiscal position of the community is sound and that public facilities are provided in an efficient manner which maximizes the quality of life for the residents of Middletown.

The benefits of an effective capital improvements planning program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1.) A better scheduling of public improvements that require more than one year to construct
- 2.) Ensures that plans for community facilities are carried out.
- 3.) Provides an opportunity, assuming funds are available, to purchase needed land before the cost goes up.
- 4.) ~~Provides an opportunity for long range financial planning and management.~~
- 5.) Helps to stabilize tax rates through careful dept management.
- 6.) Helps avoid such mismanagement as paving a street one year and tearing it up the next to install a sewer line.
- 7.) Offers an opportunity for citizens and public interest groups to participate in decision making.
- 8.) Contributes to better overall management of city affairs.

Unfortunately, this type of Capital Improvement Planning is greatly under utilized in Middletown and, for the most part, all of Connecticut. Very few communities have an active, healthy and well financed capital improvement planning program in place.

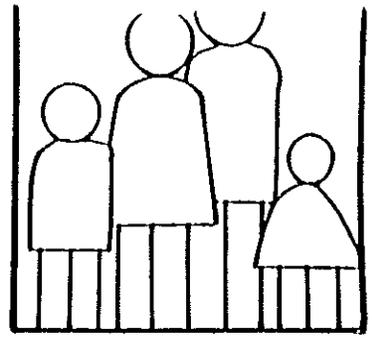
#### Planning and Zoning Commissions Authority to Initiate a Capital Improvements Planning Program

It is the opinion of the Planning and Zoning Commission as articulated in this Plan that there is a need for a resurgence of a Capital Improvements Planning Program in the City of Middletown. Presently there appears to be no truly organized mechanism for decision making. Every department and agency is on its own to achieve its interests without evaluation against any overall plan. The Planning and Zoning Commission is the Commission designated with the authority to plan for future needs. As mandated in the State Statutes section 8-23 the Plan of Development for the City of Middletown may include a schedule and budget for public capital projects. While the Capital Improvements Planning

Program is not presently proposed as a part of this Plan of Development it is strongly recommended that such a program be initiated in the City of Middletown. The Planning and Zoning Commission has the authority to enforce such a Capital Improvements Planning Program in both the State Statutes and the City Ordinances. It is required in the City Ordinances, Section 26.2 and the State Statutes Section 8-24, that all proposals for capital improvements must be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission for conformity with the Plan of Development and the proposals impact on the coordinated development of Middletown.

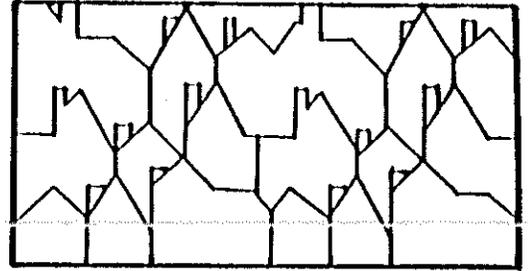
However, the focal point of the Capital Improvement Plan process is the Common Council. The Council has the ultimate decision on whether capital improvements are to be funded. In making these funding decisions the Common Council should refer to the proposed Capital Improvements Plan as a management review system and rely heavily on the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation.

DO YOU THINK...?



HOW MANY?

**MIDDLETOWN  
PLANNING &  
ZONING**



**SURVEY  
OF  
CITIZENS  
JULY 1989**

WHERE?

WHAT TYPE?

HOW OLD?



**City of Middletown**  
**PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Study was prepared by:

**MIDDLETOWN PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT**

George A. Reif, M.C.P., Planning Director  
William Warner, M.U.R.P., Planner  
~~George Lapadula, Zoning Enforcement Officer~~  
David Ziegman, B.S., Planning Technician

Hope Kasper, Admin. Secy.  
Ellen Stevens, Clerk Typist  
Kelly Riordan, Intern  
Sharon Skarb, Summer Assistant

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

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Francis Patnaude  
Vincent Loffredo  
Richard Thompson

## INTRODUCTION

Citizen participation in the planning process is an important step in adopting and implementing a comprehensive plan of development which is responsive to community needs. The delivery of community services can only be effective if it is based on perceived community needs. In order to learn about Middletown's needs as expressed by its residents, the Planning Department conducted a survey. The survey technique is familiar to planners. Scientific sampling is a useful instrument for obtaining information on a variety of urban issues. It facilitates public contributions to the planning process before the concluding stages of a comprehensive plan of developments preparation and subsequent adoption.

Survey data will be a significant input in formulating policy for the planned and coordinated future development of the City. The survey is a means of promoting information flow so the Planning and Zoning Commission can plan to assure that Middletown is truly designed and working for its citizens.

Specifically, in July of 1989, 3057 surveys were sent to households of registered voters throughout the city of Middletown. The purpose of the survey was to document public attitudes, for the Plan of Development for the Year 2000, toward the problems and prospects concerning future growth and other issues pertinent to the Plan of Development. More specifically, the survey asked for citizen input regarding choices and priorities concerning housing, the local economy, recreation, open space, urban problems, safety, traffic, community facilities, environmental concerns and neighborhood improvement. The Planning Department considers the survey results to be a strong and meaningful statement from the citizenry regarding our efforts to formulate a future direction for the city. We here in the Planning Department are pleased to present these findings to the citizens of Middletown.

A total of 949 or 32 % of the surveys were returned within the next month. By any statistical measure a citywide return of 32 % is indeed impressive. It shows that the people of Middletown have a genuine interest in helping to shape their communities future.

In an attempt to gain more neighborhood specific information, the Planning Department employed a stratified random sampling method of eleven voting districts within the city of Middletown. These voting districts are displayed spatially in Figure 1 and the response rates from each district are below in Table 1. While using a list of registered voters reduces the randomness of the sample, which otherwise was completely random, the Planning Department feels this technique helped increase the response rate and also caused the answers to better reflect the opinions of the most active and concerned portion of our citizenry.

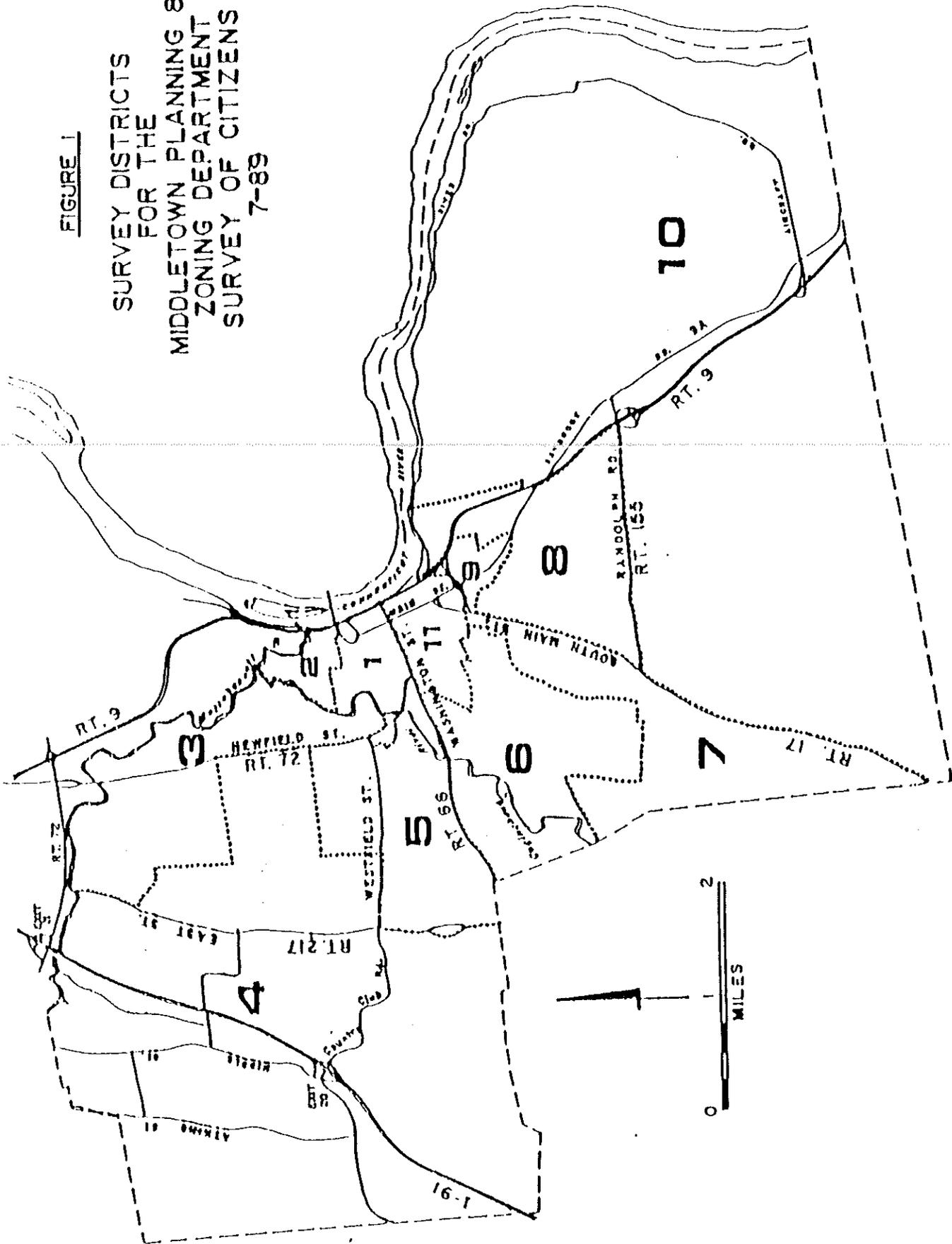
TABLE 1  
RESPONSE RATES  
% RESPONDING TO SURVEY

VOTING DISTRICT	% RESPONDING TO SURVEY
1	26 %
2	20 %
3	36 %
4	35 %
5	35 %
6	32 %
7	37 %
8	35 %
9	21 %
10	33 %
11	22 %
TOTAL	32 %

From the above table it can be recognized that lower response rates are found in voting districts 2, 9 and 11. These voting districts are the smallest voting districts, in terms of population, and are located in and around the downtown area. These three voting districts are known for their lower socioeconomic characteristics. These lower socioeconomic characteristics have been frequently correlated, in other cities, with lower survey response

FIGURE 1

SURVEY DISTRICTS  
FOR THE  
MIDDLETOWN PLANNING &  
ZONING DEPARTMENT  
SURVEY OF CITIZENS  
7-89



rates. While these voting districts were over sampled in an attempt to increase the anticipated low response rates, the rates were nevertheless low and therefore, there is some lack of statistical validity for these voting districts.

The other voting districts were sampled sufficiently so as to result in a 90 % confidence interval. This means that, if 50 % of the respondents gave the same answer to a question, there is a 90 out of 100 chance that the percent of the total population that would respond the same way falls between 41.8 % and 58.2 %. Several studies indicate that this 90 confidence interval is adequate for a general attitudinal survey of citizens conducted by a local governmental agency. (Houten and Hatry 1987) (Hatry and Blair 1977)

#### WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY?

The majority of those responding to the survey were long time residents of the city. The average number of years that survey respondents have lived in the city was 30 years. Voting district 4 had the least average number of years (18) living in Middletown and Voting District 9 had the greatest average number of years living in Middletown (36). This appears to be the "Westlake influence" in Voting District 4 and the influence of the older closely knit neighborhoods in voting district 9. The age distribution of the respondents was as follows:

<u>AGE DISTRIBUTION</u>	
18-30	16 %
31-45	31 %
46-64	25 %
65-up	30 %

The majority of respondents (54%) lived in single family homes with 33% living in apartments and 13% in condominiums. The low figure for condominiums is no doubt the effect of using a list of registered voters.

When asked where the respondents work 49 % indicated in Middletown, 40% indicated outside of the city and 11 % indicated retired.

The average household size in the city was 2.5 persons per household. This figure is the same as the average household size for the city in the 1980 U.S. Census of the Population. This figure strongly supports the Planning and Zoning Department population estimates for 1989 which were considerably higher than the State Office of Policy and Management estimates.

A detailed presentation, by voting district, of the responses to these general questions about the individuals completing the survey is shown below:

ALL FIGURES ARE PERCENTAGES UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

1.) How many years have you lived in Middletown?

(These figures are averages)

Voting District												TOTAL
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
29	28	29	18	39	33	26	34	36	30	34	30	

2.) What style house do you live in?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Single Family	41	40	31	61	85	68	13	79	65	83	34	54 %
Apartment	59	60	69	18	15	23	7	15	35	11	61	33 %
Condominium	0	0	0	21	0	9	20	5	0	6	5	13 %

3.) Where do you work?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Middletown	53	55	33	36	43	54	60	55	51	52	52	49 %
Outside	24	35	36	64	57	40	24	45	26	48	48	40 %
Retired	23	10	31			6	16	0	23			11 %

4) Your age group?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
18-30	21	27	13	26	10	10	13	14	15	14	22	15 %
31-45	31	36	30	44	16	25	33	31	39	31	33	30 %
46-64	27	12	24	19	47	27	28	23	22	33	22	25 %
65 and up	20	24	34	13	27	38	26	31	24	22	78	30 %

5.) What is your household type?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Single	47	16	32	24	11	28	22	28	36	17	43	27 %
Married	29	35	30	34	44	24	46	33	24	35	30	33 %
Married \ Child	16	35	24	37	37	36	28	27	38	42	14	30 %
Single Parent	7	13	14	5	8	11	4	13	2	6	13	10 %

6.) How many persons live in your household?

(These figures are averages)

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
	2.1	2.8	2.3	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.2	2.5

7.) What is your first source of information about Middletown?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Middletown Press	64	70	67	47	74	85	79	64	66	61	53	66 %
Hartford Courant	22	6	22	28	12	5	11	14	7	17	12	14 %
Television	6	12	7	15	8	5	7	9	16	9	16	10 %
Local Radio	5	12	4	8	6	4	3	13	11	13	19	9.7 %
Other	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.3 %

### NEIGHBORHOOD SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

The next few questions were in regard to the respondents dwelling and their neighborhood. As is clear in the tables below, the majority of the respondents were satisfied with their dwelling unit as well as their neighborhood. The largest percentage of respondents were satisfied living in their neighborhood because of its good location. It is also both useful and interesting to look at the percentages within the individual voting districts. In doing this we see that the respondents in voting districts which comprise the downtown area are somewhat less satisfied with their neighborhood and dwelling. Respondents in these districts also liked their neighborhood for somewhat different reasons. (ie. affordable home prices and proximity to community facilities). When the respondents were asked if their neighborhood needed improvement 51% responded YES and 49% responded NO. Once again, there are interesting variations within the voting districts.

8.) *Are you satisfied with your dwelling?*

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	86	73	92	87	93	90	88	87	86	94	92	88 %
No	14	27	8	13	7	10	12	13	14	6	8	12 %

9.) *Do you like your neighborhood?*

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	77	81	88	93	99	96	94	89	71	96	92	88 %
No	23	19	12	7	1	4	6	11	29	4	8	12 %

10.) Why do you like your neighborhood?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Close to Friends	11	15	24	20	15	16	19	17	26	21	26	19 %
Houses of Similar Value	7	18	49	23	33	20	36	35	19	35	11	26 %
Neighborhood Affordable	11	45	13	16	28	31	24	29	44	21	23	25 %
Attractive Area	12	24	34	25	54	54	69	47	26	68	35	40 %
Good Location	18	48	65	68	78	77	72	76	67	79	79	66 %
Close to Schools	15	30	15	20	27	16	23	25	42	17	5	21 %
Near Community Facilities	17	42	21	16	23	20	30	36	33	25	37	27 %
Good Housing Density	5	9	6	17	23	21	20	30	19	29	10	17 %
Rural Area	2	3	11	29	21	16	19	16	5	56	3	16 %
Other	3	24	6	12	4	7	5	2	9	18	5	9 %

11.) Does your neighborhood need improvement?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	63	73	53	53	37	45	33	52	69	38	39	51 %
No	37	27	47	47	63	55	67	48	31	62	61	49 %

**QUESTIONS IN REGARD TO NEIGHBORHOOD FACILITIES**

The next several questions inquire about specific community facilities in each of the 11 voting districts. The responses and additional comments for these questions will be particularly useful in compiling and preparing the Community Facilities and Capital Improvements portion of the Plan of Development. In this portion of the Plan of Development the city can prioritize and target projects and plan for the funding in order to address the concerns highlighted here in the survey as well other needs of the city.

**12.) Do you find significant traffic congestion in your neighborhood?**

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	77	64	85	71	76	49	38	38	63	39	51	59 %
No	23	36	15	29	24	51	62	62	37	61	49	41 %
Morning	2	0	0	10	1	0	0	0	2	6	10	2.8 %
Early Evening	17	3	8	8	11	7	3	8	5	2	17	8.0 %
Both	54	52	66	61	54	38	31	27	51	28	30	44 %

**13.) How would you rate the condition of street and road surfaces in your neighborhood?**

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Good Overall	30	12	29	22	36	27	36	35	26	25	37	28 %
Many Bad Spots	19	18	29	30	15	24	17	20	19	26	22	21 %
Mostly Good \ few bad	51	67	43	48	48	47	47	45	56	49	38	49 %
Don't Know	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	5	2 %

**14.) Would you say the street lighting at night in your neighborhood is:**

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
About Right	77	67	75	74	88	74	86	68	76	76	82	76 %
Too Bright	3	6	0	2	0	0	3	15	0	1	2	2.9 %
Too Low	18	27	21	24	12	22	11	17	24	23	14	19 %
Don't Know	2	0	4	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	2	2.1 %

15.) Would you say there are enough sidewalks in your neighborhood?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	82	77	58	31	36	27	42	27	66	29	94	51 %
No	15	10	30	33	24	34	29	40	34	24	6	25 %
None Exist, None needed	3	10	10	35	39	37	29	31	18	45	4	23 %
Don't Know	0	3	2	1	1	3	0	2	0	2	2	1 %

16.) How would you rate the park and recreation facilities in your neighborhood?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Excellent	4	0	2	0	5	13	11	5	0	0	10	4.5 %
Fair	30	29	25	25	26	21	22	20	29	20	23	24 %
Good	15	15	13	18	15	18	24	20	14	22	31	16 %
Poor	33	50	17	34	31	29	35	24	36	32	15	31 %
Don't Know	18	6	43	23	23	19	8	31	21	26	22	22.5 %

17.) How often do you use recreational facilities?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Weekly	19	25	12	15	10	12	11	12	13	8	10	13 %
few times a month	10	6	15	13	10	17	15	15	15	17	14	13 %
few times a year	52	63	56	40	60	49	56	52	46	44	39	50 %
Don't Know	19	6	17	32	20	23	18	21	27	31	37	24 %

18.) In terms of police and public safety, how would you feel walking alone at night in your neighborhood?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Very Safe	9	9	12	11	8	16	24	14	7	44	11	15 %
Reasonably Safe	36	33	25	25	20	20	19	30	30	11	30	26 %
Somewhat Unsafe	29	39	38	46	59	43	49	42	28	35	44	41 %
Very Unsafe	27	18	25	19	13	21	8	14	35	10	16	18 %

9.) *Would you say your neighborhood is?*

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Very Clean	27	20	26	40	38	36	57	35	12	42	20	32 %
Fairly Clean	41	47	70	54	55	54	42	59	73	55	66	56 %
Fairly Dirty	16	20	4	3	4	10	1	4	10	3	11	8 %
Very Dirty	16	13	0	3	3	0	0	3	5	1	2	4 %
Don't Know	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

20.) *Would you use public transportation, if available to your neighborhood?*

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	43	52	60	36	44	49	33	40	57	44	36	46 %
No	57	48	40	64	56	51	67	60	43	56	64	55 %

21.) *Should there be more police sub stations in your area?*

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	49	39	56	58	37	28	28	34	51	30	28	39 %
No	51	61	44	42	63	72	72	66	49	70	72	61 %

### ISSUES OF CITY WIDE CONCERN

The survey also asked several questions in attempt to understand the general consensus of the citizenry in regard to issues which have evolved to be of great interest and controversy here in the city. These questions are presented below.

22.) *Should Middletown provide more low and moderate income housing?*

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	57	66	68	49	56	65	52	55	60	52	82	60 %
No	43	34	32	51	44	35	48	45	40	48	18	40 %

(Note what districts are in favor of this type of housing)

3.) Where should multi family dwellings be encouraged?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Westfield	30	28	20	15	13	36	33	40	36	22	23	27 %
Central Middletown	14	33	30	33	29	21	20	32	27	40	25	27 %
South Middletown	45	23	32	31	44	29	20	9	21	15	37	28 %
Downtown	11	15	18	21	14	14	27	19	15	23	15	18 %

24.) Should Middletown actively pursue further Commercial and Industrial development?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	62	44	56	56	56	60	69	63	74	70	63	61 %
No	38	56	46	44	46	35	31	37	26	30	37	39 %

(Respondents clearly recognize the importance of the Commercial and Industrial portion of the tax base)

25.) Please rank, 1-6, the following environmental concerns. (1 being your highest concern)

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Air Quality	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Water Supply	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3
Noise Pollution	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5
Open Space & Habitat	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	4
Ct. River Access	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Solid Waste Disposal	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	2

(Clearly air quality is the number one concern and the Plan of Development addresses this concern accordingly)

( . . .) Should the city of Middletown acquire more open space land?

	Voting District											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	TOTAL
Yes	80	84	81	87	81	84	75	85	85	83	71	81 %
No	20	16	19	13	19	16	25	15	15	17	29	19 %

(Overwhelmingly the respondents are in favor of more open space.)

27.) In what part of the city should Middletown attempt to acquire more open space?

	Voting District											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	TOTAL
Westfield	13	14	36	39	36	7	8	14	0	13	9	17 %
Central Middletown	8	9	3	5	6	2	8	4	5	5	6	6 %
South Middletown	11	11	11	5	8	13	15	15	22	23	17	13 %
City Wide	68	66	50	51	50	86	69	68	72	59	68	64 %

(Future open space should be dispersed city wide as the Plan of Development recommends)

28.) When you drive downtown in the day time to shop or for personal business would you say finding a satisfactory parking space is?

	Voting District											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	TOTAL
Hardly Ever a Problem	20	16	29	17	23	15	10	20	21	18	11	18 %
Usually a Problem	40	59	39	36	35	31	39	46	35	42	32	39 %
Sometimes a Problem	33	25	29	40	37	51	48	34	42	39	49	38 %
Don't Know	7	0	3	7	5	3	3	0	2	1	8	5 %

29.) Would you be interested in the development of a city wide bike path, hiking trail or a jogging route?

Bike Path	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	74	70	67	74	70	66	75	73	72	66	65	70 %
No	26	30	33	26	30	34	25	27	28	34	35	30 %
Hiking												
Yes	73	63	61	68	66	61	64	68	65	69	61	65 %
No	27	37	38	32	34	39	36	32	35	31	39	35 %
Jogging												
Yes	70	67	55	66	62	62	67	72	70	67	56	64 %
No	30	33	45	34	38	38	33	28	30	33	44	36 %

30.) Do you feel the city should develop a municipal golf course?

Yes	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	30	47	57	48	45	35	46	44	49	52	33	46 %
No	70	53	43	52	55	65	54	56	51	48	67	55 %

31.) Are there some parts of the city where you would like to go at night but do not because you would not feel safe?

Yes	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	72	72	58	41	61	48	63	66	68	65	57	61 %
No	17	21	33	34	24	36	19	21	15	26	26	24 %
Don't Know	11	7	9	25	15	16	18	13	17	9	17	15 %

32.) Should Middletown have more cultural activities or facilities?

Yes	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	75	93	77	82	69	78	73	76	69	72	70	76 %
No	25	7	23	18	31	22	27	24	31	28	30	24 %

33.) Where do you do the majority of shopping?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
For Food?												
In Middletown	81	84	70	55	96	86	93	85	80	78	75	81 %
Outside of City	19	16	30	45	4	14	7	15	20	22	25	19 %
For Clothing?												
In Middletown	43	48	21	20	27	44	22	30	51	31	45	34 %
Outside of City	57	52	79	82	73	56	78	70	49	69	55	66 %

(Note the influence of the Super Stop and Shop in the Westfield area)

34.) How would you describe the cost of shopping in downtown Middletown?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Inexpensive	0	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	3	0	2	2 %
Affordable	44	38	63	40	44	67	73	43	45	30	54	49 %
Expensive	56	59	35	59	56	33	27	56	53	70	44	49 %

35.) Should there be more shopping areas than currently exist?

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	43	45	40	43	29	34	43	48	47	53	44	43 %
No	57	55	60	57	71	66	57	52	53	47	56	57 %

36.) Is there a lack of affordable child care facilities?

(Due to the low response to this question there is a lack of statistical reliability.)

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Yes	81	76	77	72	54	75	73	62	52	70	59	68 %
No	19	24	23	28	46	25	27	38	48	30	41	32 %

7.) Do you use the city's Russell Library?

	Voting District											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	TOTAL
Yes	80	91	66	63	62	66	71	73	71	74	73	72 %
No	20	9	34	37	28	34	29	27	29	26	27	28 %

(Based on the comments the library is an excellent facility with a parking problem)

MIDDLETOWN'S POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

The survey asked the final two questions in order to gain the consensus of the population in regard to what are the problems in Middletown and what are the attractive characteristics of the city. The ratings were intended to give some notion of the relative priorities of these issues. All items are clearly relevant to the coordinated development of Middletown. Both the positive and the negative aspects of the city which received the highest percentage of responses are highlighted in bold text. Once again, the within voting district variation could be analyzed extensively. This within voting district variation is quite interesting and will be of great value in making decisions and formulating policies to guide the future direction of the city.

URBAN PROBLEMS

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Congestion on Roads	65	73	68	64	58	49	35	52	61	51	27	55%
Poor Public Mass Transit	26	18	18	12	10	18	12	25	16	18	9	17%
Poor Appearance of Community	41	48	23	27	16	18	17	24	30	27	15	26%
Crime	69	67	53	52	42	40	35	51	84	54	34	53%
Little Recreation for Youth	34	64	41	34	28	26	20	32	47	41	17	35%
Middletown's Rapid Development	31	52	31	44	42	34	21	38	42	37	24	36%
Dirty Streets and Sidewalks	44	52	29	28	29	25	16	31	44	34	29	33%
Land Use	26	39	35	38	24	22	23	31	23	38	17	29%
Parking in the Downtown	51	57	50	45	42	47	36	55	53	59	27	48%
High Prices in Local Stores	44	45	36	27	34	24	17	33	44	34	21	33%
Housing	34	61	41	30	22	28	17	29	35	34	22	32%
Homelessness	60	61	33	39	41	44	37	31	56	55	30	44%
School System not Adequate	21	18	12	14	13	14	13	12	19	26	10	16%
Air Pollution	53	73	42	41	43	38	23	44	40	33	31	42%
Little Recreation for adults	37	55	51	36	33	24	26	36	42	33	21	36%
Too few Parks and Open Spaces	44	61	49	46	37	40	28	51	51	49	23	44%
Loitering in the Downtown	74	66	60	32	49	53	37	61	72	55	29	54%
Lack of Information\ programs	36	48	42	42	20	26	14	25	37	30	24	31%
Drug Use	69	58	58	51	50	53	38	51	74	56	41	55%
Too few job opportunities	21	18	13	17	10	15	7	20	19	18	9	15%
Low pay	26	24	18	16	11	14	5	31	26	21	6	18%
Not enough day care for children	33	48	21	20	13	22	18	24	33	25	12	25%
Neighborhood too noisy	41	30	13	11	1	9	5	11	42	8	13	17%

WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT MIDDLETOWN

	Voting District											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Both urban and Rural setting	56	69	58	56	48	54	52	61	65	66	64	59%
Diversity in housing type	19	42	31	28	25	28	29	40	35	31	26	30%
Diverse population	23	55	29	25	21	31	29	33	33	32	20	30%
Downtown	20	21	23	17	14	22	18	26	37	20	20	22%
Location within the state	66	79	63	66	58	55	57	67	58	75	44	63%
Active and concerned citizenry	21	33	24	16	13	22	19	14	23	19	19	20%
Cultural opportunities	20	27	21	9	11	12	16	18	16	17	13	16%
Affordable Housing	26	15	24	16	7	12	21	17	26	20	13	18%
Other	11	12	7	8	2	7	7	4	5	8	3	7%

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

In four of the questions citizens were also asked to write in their comments. Due to the fact that the comments were so varied, no true numerical or statistical analysis would be valid or useful. But, nevertheless, the reoccurring comments and suggestions are quite interesting and may prove useful in prioritizing particular projects and future policies. The comments to these questions are summarized below.

*What new programs and facilities would you like to see in Middletown ?*

When asked this question the most common responses, among those who responded, were as follows:

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| More Library parking    | Preschool programs        |
| Teen activities         | Adult recreation          |
| Movie theater in CBD    | More playgrounds          |
| Better ice skating area | Road improvements         |
| Development Moratoria   | Art programs              |
| Dance programs          | More tennis courts        |
| Improved recycling      | Improved park maintenance |

*What parts of the city would you like to go to at night but do not because you would not feel safe?*

For this question the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that they felt unsafe in and around the downtown area, particularly the north end, and the Harbor Park Area.

*How can the city improve it's appearance?*

The reoccurring improvements, from those who responded to this question, were as follows:

Remove vagrants from CBD	Remove soup kitchen from CBD
Clean up CBD	Increase tree plantings
Clean up river front	Address north end problem
Move soup kitchen to CVH	More flower beds citywide
Improve public housing areas	Improve access to the river
Widen Route 66	More open space
Less multi-family development	

*Other than price why would you not shop in downtown Middletown?*

The majority of those responding to this question indicated that a lack of variety was the major reason why they would not shop in the downtown area. The other reoccurring reasons for not shopping in the downtown were as follows:

Parking	Traffic congestion
Vagrants	Lack of quality stores
Unsafe feeling	Lack of a true department store
Not convenient	

