

## Acknowledgements

Development of this plan was funded through a planning services agreement with the Massachusetts Interagency Work Group (IAWG) under the Community Development Planning Program. Funding for this program was provided by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Economic Development, and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

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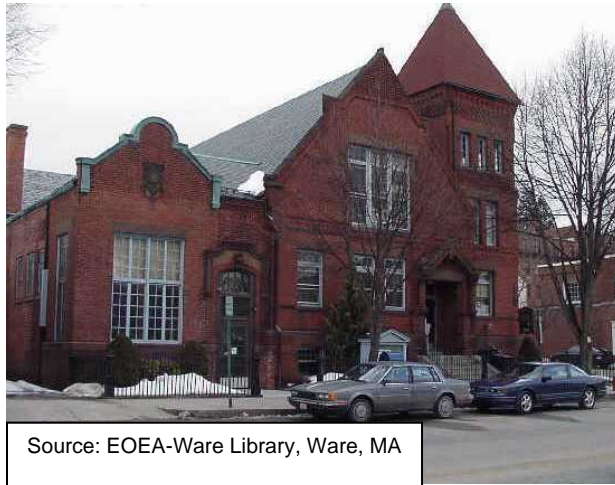
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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

In 1999, the Town of Ware completed an updated Strategic Plan for the community. This public planning process included an internal survey of town officials, a community survey, working meetings with a small steering committee, public visioning workshops focusing on key issues facing the Town of Ware, and creation of a final succinct and user-friendly report.

Ware's Community Development Plan is an extension of the 1999 Strategic Plan and many of the strategies chosen to protect open space and resources, provide affordable housing and create economic development opportunities are even more applicable to the growing community Ware in 2004. The following strategies were chosen as priorities to promote open space and resource protection, housing and economic development in Ware in the near future.



Source: EOE-Ware Library, Ware, MA

- **Adopt the Community Preservation Act**
- **Cluster Zoning Regulations**
- **Phased Growth Bylaw**
- **Site Plan and Site Design Approval**
- **Rezoning of Targeted Land Parcels for Business, Light Industrial or Industrial Use**
- **Provide Sewer Service to Targeted Areas**
- **Adaptive Reuse of Older Buildings**
- **Marketing and Promotion**

## 2002 Strategic Plan

In June 2002, the Town of Ware completed the process of developing an updated Strategic Plan for the community. The public planning process for ***Guiding the Future of Ware: A Strategic Plan for the Next Five Years***, included an internal survey of town officials, a community survey, working meetings with a small steering committee, public visioning workshops focusing on key issues facing the Town of Ware, and creation of a final report. Many of the goals, objectives and strategies identified in the strategic planning process reflected similar thoughts and ideas expressed in previous planning documents. The 1987 ***Ware Growth Management and Development Plan*** and the 2001 ***Ware Open Space and Recreation Plan*** were reviewed for consistencies with the recent strategic planning process.

Based on public input from the Community Survey, the Public Workshops, and analysis of past planning efforts, a list of Key Community Issues was presented as part of the Strategic Plan. Each issue represents current or potential positive and negative trends that will affect the community as it plans for the future.

The following section highlights the key community issues, strategies and Actions for the Town of Ware from their 1999 Strategic Plan.

## **Key Community Issues, Strategies and Actions**

### **Issue I**

Many of the assets valued by Ware residents, such as open spaces, historic buildings, water quality, working landscapes, and small-town character are not adequately protected or shielded from adverse impacts.

#### **Strategy 1**

Clean, Protect, Maintain & Monitor the Water Supply

- Action A.** Monitor the former landfill site, other known hazardous sites, and failing septic systems.
- Action B.** Enforce regulations preventing water contamination – and seek penalties for violators.
- Action C.** Hold annual, volunteer “Clean-Up Days” with assistance from businesses, clubs, & town departments.
- Action D.** Adopt a local Wetlands Protection Bylaw to enhance protection of local wetland resources.
- Action E.** Review existing Water Supply Protection and Groundwater Protection Bylaws for possible improvements to strengthen protection of town water resources.
- Action F.** Enhance Urban Stormwater Runoff Bylaw to protect quality of water resources and sensitive natural areas.
- Action G.** Consider amending parking regulations to allow for use of compact spaces in limited areas of required parking lots thus reducing amount of new impervious surface area.

#### **Strategy 2**

Conserve Land

- Action A.** Manage town forest lands by allowing some areas to naturalize and by providing additional opportunities for hiking, biking and logging.
- Action B.** Explore possibilities of permanently protecting Coy Hill land.
- Action C.** Encourage open space preservation through local tax incentives such as encouraging use of the Chapter 61 & Chapter 61A provisions.
- Action D.** Organize a local land trust.
- Action E.** Adopt a Creative Open Space Development Bylaw to allow clustered residential development that limits the amount of land area developed and results in new permanently protected open space.
- Action F.** Institute a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program that allows owners of farmland – or other land which is important to protect from development - to transfer (sell) development rights to areas more appropriate for development such as the town center or commercial areas.

#### **Strategy 3**

Improve and Maintain Grenville Park

- Action A.** Upgrade the existing facilities including picnic areas, band stand (and field for audience), tennis courts, playground, and ball fields.
- Action B.** Upgrade or repair roads within park.

- Action C.** Add new features to improve Grenville Park including boat launch, bike trails, enhanced landscaping (forest and plantings), and benches along the roads/trails for resting.
- Action D.** Ensure adequate staffing and resources to maintain Grenville Park and any new enhancements.
- Action E.** Review existing status of trust agreement for Grenville Park to ensure that the park is maintained for future residents of the town.
- Action F.** Install more waste containers and distribute them evenly around the park.
- Action G.** Keep the restrooms open for all park users.

#### **Strategy 4**

Provide a Broad Range of High Quality Recreational Programs

- Action A.** Develop passive recreation opportunities within lands administered by the town including development of trails and wildlife-viewing areas in the Town Forest along the Swift and Ware Rivers, and in future wetland conservation areas adjacent to the Quabbin Reservoir.
- Action B.** Develop recreation programs that cater to adult and elderly residents.
- Action C.** Secure space for indoor recreation activities.

#### **Strategy 5**

Manage Open Space and Recreation Cohesively and Effectively

- Action A.** Create an Open Space Committee comprised of individuals representing town boards and other public and private organizations concerned with open space and recreation. This will provide citizen input into management of existing open space areas as well as acquisition of potential town open space areas.
- Action B.** Consolidate all town recreation facilities' management and administration under one entity.
- Action C.** Hire a part-time Recreation Coordinator to provide professional support for town recreation programs and facilities.

#### **Strategy 6**

Acquire New Lands for Recreation and Open Space

- Action A.** Follow the Open Space and Recreation Plan's maps for possible land acquisition, working toward a town-wide greenway system. Pay particular attention to the Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project, which is already in progress.
- Action B.** Focus acquisition efforts on those lands that would house new recreation activities in town.
- Action C.** Inform the public about protection possibilities for their land such as land trusts, conservation restrictions, land gifts, APRs, etc.

#### **Strategy 7**

Increase Public Awareness of Open Space and Recreation Resources

- Action A.** Develop a town-wide signage program that describes and directs people to recreation facilities (such as trails, water bodies, and playgrounds).
- Action B.** Create innovative fund-raising projects or initiatives to raise money and increase awareness of open space and recreation programs and facilities.

- Action C.** Offer town-wide special event programs to foster a stronger sense of community within the Town and to make residents aware of the open space and recreation resources available to them.

## **Issue II**

Current land use policies and regulations do not support a community vision of a compact New England village favored by many residents.

### **Strategy 1**

Continue Revitalization Efforts in the Downtown Area (Including Main Street); Through Encouraging a Diversity of Business Uses and Removing or Rehabilitating Vacant Buildings

- Action A.** Continue to seek revitalization funding from varied sources in the public and private sector for infrastructure improvements including sewer & water lines, sidewalks & pedestrian amenities, & streetscape improvements.
- Action B.** Anticipate and address needs that will arise during and after revitalization efforts such as ADA accessibility, parking capacity, and other impacts of success.
- Action C.** Review buildout potential of downtown area to ensure adequate open spaces, enhanced pedestrian amenities, and appropriate services and facilities to provide for successful mixed use neighborhoods.
- Action D.** Establish a Downtown/Town Center Overlay District to include 'by-right' mixed uses and design standards.
- Action E.** Limit commercial uses in residential zoning districts to enhance viability of downtown commercial neighborhoods.
- Action F.** Adopt site design and performance standards for commercial uses in the HC (Highway Commercial District).
- Action G.** Adopt Traditional Neighborhood Development Option to allow new development to follow the form of traditional New England Town Center neighborhoods.

### **Strategy 2**

Maintain Small Town, Rural Character Including Personal Safety and Availability of Services

- Action A.** Advertise interesting local activities, such as seasonal and special events, to foster a strong sense of community among residents and to enhance the image of the community in the region.
- Action B.** Use all available tools (such as surveys) to help public officials determine the needs of local residents so that efforts and resources are spent wisely on improvements that enhance the small town character of Ware.
- Action C.** Promote Ware as a regional destination for visitors by actively marketing the natural and historic assets of Town through various media outlets (including the Internet). Use small town, rural character as one focal point of economic development effort.
- Action D.** Install interpretive markers in various areas around town to describe and explain Ware's place in the history of the region.
- Action E.** Include requirement for a traffic impact study for proposed uses generating 100 or more new vehicle trips a day.



### **Strategy 3**

#### Market “Old Time” Values

- Action A.** Maintain an up-to-date town bulletin board with current community information about the community and choose a location for the board that complements existing events board located at the school campus
- Action B.** Sponsor, coordinate, and encourage community events and encourage participation by all residents.
- Action C.** Sponsor a ‘Community Pride Day’ with competitions such as “best landscaped yard” or “best storefront display.”
- Action D.** Continue to provide ‘city-type’ amenities such as an active downtown business district, public water & sewer service, and professional emergency services, but within a ‘small town atmosphere.’
- Action E.** Promote the history of Ware and its place in national, regional, historic and cultural contexts by using local history as a focal point of economic development efforts. Examples might include regional tourism promotion, adaptive re-use of historic structures, use of historical images and icons in town documents and business logos, and the promotion of history-based local events and festivals.

### **Issue III**

Educational and recreational facilities, programs and activities for young people need attention to improve the livability of Ware.

#### **Strategy 1**

##### Increase Recreational Activities for Students Particularly Activities Outside School

- Action A.** Create a Task Force (including youth representatives) to prioritize recreational needs of young people in the community.
- Action B.** Develop detailed program or facility plans for a limited and manageable number of recreational projects based on the priorities of the Task Force and the Ware Open Space and Recreation Plan. Examples of projects might include: development of new or enhanced after school activities; development of amenities to the Ware River Valley Greenway Trails; and construction or reconstruction of improved facilities at Grenville Park.
- Action C.** Implement two or three key projects identified by the Task Force and in the Ware Open Space and Recreation Plan.

#### **Strategy 2**

##### Establish a major focus on Safe Homes, Safe Schools, and a Safe Public Environment for Our Youth

- Action A.** Enforce laws that protect personal safety of students and young people.
- Action B.** Survey youth to determine their safety priorities.
- Action C.** Work with school and community leaders to help young people feel safe in school, home, and public environments.

### **Strategy 3**

Create Opportunities to Increase Self Esteem and Pride in the Community

- Action A.** Develop local job programs for young people.
- Action B.** Sponsor and encourage youth activities outside of sports-related programs. Examples might include: sponsorship of science fairs; promotion of local music/dance events; use of hobbies to link older and younger generations in the community; promotion of poetry/writing events or contests; and development of local youth-oriented organizations built upon community action (river clean-up, youth dispute mediation, literacy programs, etc.).
- Action C.** Solicit and nurture youth involvement in as many town planning efforts as possible.
- Action D.** Study the demand for, and feasibility of, constructing an indoor swimming pool facility.

### **Issue IV**

Citizens have expressed concern over the adequacy of the current government structure to accomplish the goals of the community.

#### **Strategy 1**

Decrease Dependence on State Aid

- Action A.** Institute new user fees and increase current fees for public amenities.
- Action B.** Consider alternatives to increase local funding for public education (or other town services).

#### **Strategy 2**

Retain Residents and Students by Improving the Image of Our Community Schools

- Action A.** Heighten awareness of school system's strengths
- Action B.** Highlight student accomplishments & activities
- Action C.** All departments should work together to "show off" our schools and our community = UNITY.
- Action D.** Increase adult education and adult recreation programs.

#### **Strategy 3**

All Town Departments Should Participate in Setting Goals for the Community

- Action A.** Department Heads should meet monthly, or at least on some regular basis, to communicate and share information, issues, and solutions.
- Action B.** Increase community involvement in its local government by: providing alternative forums for citizen input; re-assessing local government structures to identify any potential changes; and engaging young people in the decision-making process.
- Action C.** Ensure that town department heads have the tools and other resources needed to succeed.
- Action D.** Encourage a higher level of public participation in the decision-making process by educating citizens and by demonstrating the immediate and long-term effects of these decisions on their community, neighborhoods, and families.

## **Issue V**

Ware must compete for economic viability in an ever-evolving economic environment while maintaining the character, livability, and level of services residents expect in the Town. The Town has increasingly become a 'bedroom community' to job centers outside of the town and has lost some of its perceived self-sufficiency.

### **Strategy 1**

Develop Industrial Park to Increase Local Jobs and the Tax Base

- Action A.** Educate citizens about the need to extend the sewer line to the site of the proposed industrial park at the Ware-Palmer town line. Provide a well-researched explanation of the benefits of such an investment.
- Action B.** Seek public and private funding to construct the Ware-Palmer Industrial Park.
- Action C.** Ensure adequate access to the proposed Industrial Park by rail and highway.

### **Strategy 2**

Identify, Improve, & Promote Local Tourism Assets

- Action A.** Identify likely tourism assets such as the historic mill complex, Quabbin Reservoir scenic and recreational areas, local river canoeing, and outlet shopping.
- Action B.** Increase marketing efforts by: creating an Internet website; sponsoring bus tours while coordinating local events that promote the town; and supporting local AWARE organization.
- Action C.** Educate public as to the value of tourism to gain support for utilizing local resources in tourism development.
- Action D.** Rehabilitate local historic sites including the Ware Center Meeting House.

### **Strategy 3**

Redevelop the Downtown including the Mill Yard Area

- Action A.** Create a formal downtown-oriented economic development organization.
- Action B.** Encourage new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses in the downtown and mill yard areas through tax incentives, loan funds, and regulatory streamlining.
- Action C.** Encourage shoppers in the downtown (both local residents and visitors) by providing adequate signage and direction to parking areas.
- Action D.** Continue to encourage use of crosswalks by pedestrians through marking and enforcement.

# Open Space and Resource Protection

## Introduction

The purpose of Ware's Open Space and Resource Protection element is to compare the Land Use Suitability map to the Developable Lands map from the town's Buildout Analysis to assess the compatibility of future growth patterns based on existing zoning with identified priorities for land protection and development. The Committee identified important areas for protection and strategies to ensure compatibility of the Town's vision with future growth patterns. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission also examined Ware's Open Space and Recreation Plan for findings and recommendations relevant to the open space element of the community development plan.

Ware is a community of 9,707 residents with an appealing rural character and many desirable natural attributes, including:

- The Swift and Ware Rivers, scenic rivers, with fishing and recreational opportunities ;
- Quabbin Reservoir, with its hiking trails, picnic areas, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities, and 118 miles of shoreline;
- Farmland and pasture lands;
- Grenville Park and Veteran's Park;
- Beaver Lake and Snow's Pond;
- Wildlife management areas, such as Herm Covey WMA;
- Forestlands.



Quabbin Reservoir – Ware, MA

The Ware Community Development Committee determined that open space and resource protection is important to the community in order to provide a wide range of high quality indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities in town. To provide greater recreational opportunities the Town of Ware will acquire and protect new key open space and recreation lands, through the establishment of a local trust or funding program. This will be accomplished by consolidating management under one entity and hiring a recreational director. It is also the intention of the Ware Community Development Plan to better inform residents of available recreational programs and opportunities.

Open Space and Resource protection goals include improving zoning and protection for the town's drinking water supply wells. This will be accomplished through revising and updating the town's zoning bylaw to encourage "smart growth". Smart growth practices in Ware will also address the following practices:

- Controlling suburban sprawl, including residential Approval Not Required (ANR) lots and commercial strip development;
- Better management the open space the town currently owns;
- Creating an updated Open Space Plan, in order to make the town eligible for open space grant funds;
- Promoting forestry management on town-owned land;

- Creating a town park and recreation area for water-based recreation and other passive recreational activities, and make improvements to Grenville Park for boating and waterfront use;'
- Providing better opportunities for biking and other passive recreation activities.



Ware Falls – Ware, MA

## Key Findings from the Open Space and Resource Protection Element

- There is strong public support, based on survey results for protecting water supplies, river corridors, forest and farmland in Ware;
- Forest cover is the most prominent land use, comprising 61% of the town's land area;
- Ware has lost 308 acres, or 14% of its farmland between 1971-1999;
- Ware has no protected farm parcels under the APR Program;
- The town's key natural resources include the Quabbin Reservoir and Reservation, the Swift and Ware Rivers, Grenville Park and Veteran's Park, Beaver Lake and Snow Pond, Wildlife management areas, farmlands and forestlands;
- 5,760 acres of land in Ware are permanently protected from development, but virtually all of this is Quabbin, with only 366 acres of town-owned land;
- There are 76 Chapter 61-enrolled parcels in Ware;
- Ware has relatively few recreational resources, for a town of its size;

- The town has no bike paths or greenways, although the Ware River Trail is proposed;
- There are 14 threatened and endangered species within the Town of Ware;
- Ware contains approximately 9,500 acres of NHESP BioMap core habitat, a very significant amount;
- Development suitability analysis shows there are 2604 acres of land suitable for compact development and 6759 acres suitable for protected open space;
- Ware has a municipal sewer system, which serves primarily the central business district;
- Ware's water supply system relies on two groundwater sources and serves approximately 70 percent of town residents;
- Ware currently has a water surplus of 1 mgd, and is projected to continue to have a surplus of .93 mgd in 2020;
- Urban sprawl has incrementally reduced open space and rural character;
- Ware is currently zoned to encourage large areas of rural residential development on large lots (i.e. suburban sprawl) and highway commercial strip development.
- Ware has not adopted the Community Preservation Act, stormwater bylaws or resource protection zoning overlays for farmland or forest land.
- Ware does have an updated Aquifer Protection District and good Floodplain bylaws.

## **Open Space and Resource Protection Strategies**

The following open space and resource protection strategies are presented in order of priority, as recommended to the town by the Ware Community Development Committee:

### ➤ **Adopt the Community Preservation Act**

- The Ware Community Development Committee determined that this is extremely important to funding open space acquisition, protecting the Town's historical resources and providing future affordable housing opportunities.

### ➤ **Acquire Open Space thru Grants and Local Appropriations**

- This will be accomplished by updating the Ware Open Space and Resource Protection Plan, which provides more opportunities to acquire state and federal funding.

### ➤ **Adopt Smart Growth Practices**

These include the following actions:

- **Control Commercial Strip Development**
- **Promote Compact, Mixed-use Development**
- **Discourage Residential Sprawl onto Farmland**
- **Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Developments**
- **Adopt Local Growth Caps or Building Permit Limits**
- **Preserve Farm Operations**
- **Encourage Dedicated Open Space in New Developments**
- **Preserve Public Waterfront Access**



## Housing



Source: Massachusetts EOE

The Town of Ware is currently the 5<sup>th</sup> fastest growing community in population in the Pioneer Valley region (The Republican, 7/10/2003, sec.A8, Miser Population Projections). Ware averages 36 building permits per year (1998-2003) and in 2003 issued 43 permits to homebuilders. The Beaver Lake area in Ware has seen a significant increase in new housing starts, including ANR lots and several subdivision proposals. The houses surrounding Beaver Lake presently depend on private septic and concerns about the environmental impact of increased housing development on the watershed are beginning to be raised. Several new homes are also currently being constructed along the Palmer town line and significant ANR development throughout the Town has been evident in the past few years. A consequence of the accelerated housing construction has been an increase in incidences of inferior driveway construction and curb cuts. Improperly constructed drive-ways have been an on-going concern of Ware's Department of Public Works (DPW), due to the amount of silt run-off affecting the Town's roadways. The Ware DPW has asked Town officials to address the need for a clearer regulatory process to help mitigate the problem.

According to interviews with real estate agents servicing the Ware region, 1 in 3 buyers purchasing homes in the Town of Ware are from eastern Massachusetts. High housing prices in the coastal area of the Commonwealth are causing buyers to look to the central and western regions of the state for affordable housing. Home-buyers in the Ware area are often willing to make longer commutes for more affordable housing. This trend is also being experienced by other communities in the Pioneer Valley region.

The Town of Ware is currently certified under Executive Order 418 for the year 2004. Twenty-four (24) of the 27 houses built during 2001 were considered affordable. The affordable price for home ownership in Ware is assessed in the range of \$110,000 - \$241,960. In 2003, construction began on 80 new units of affordable housing near Ware's Town center. As of 2002, Ware had 308 units of 40B housing comprising 7.2% of the total housing units in the municipality.

The Ware Planning Board is in the process of drafting and implementing a Cluster Zoning Regulation and a Phased Growth Bylaw, and will be drafting a Site Plan Review/Approval Process to manage the accelerated housing growth in their community.

## Summary of Key Housing Trends:

- Ware had 4,336 housing units in year 2000, an increase of 5.9% over the 4,095 housing units in 1990 (Source: 2000 U.S. Census). By 2003, housing units had increased by 241 to a total of 4577 units.
- In comparison to other communities in the region, there is a relative abundance of subsidized and public housing in Ware.
- In 2003, 39 of the 43 new single family homes constructed in Ware were within the affordable purchase price range for the Springfield Metropolitan Statistical Area (Source: PVPC Subregional Housing Plan, 2002).
- Also in 2003, construction began on 80 new units of affordable housing near Ware's Town center. As of 2002, Ware had 308 units of 40B housing comprising 7.2% of the total housing units in the municipality.
- The Town of Ware is currently housing certified for compliance with the housing creation goals of 2003 (Source: DHCD website).
- As detailed in the Subregion Plan, twenty-nine percent (29%) of Ware's developable land is constrained by environmental factors such as slope and wetlands.
- According to town records, the average number of single-family building permits issued per year during the period 1998-2003 was 36. There were no multi-family permits issued during that same time period.
- The town of Ware issued permits to a housing management corporation for the construction of approximately 80 units of low and moderate income rental housing in the greater downtown.
- In 2000, the median monthly housing cost for homeowners to own a home in Ware was \$1,110 and the median rental cost was \$508 (Source: 2000 U.S. Census).
- In year 2000, 29% of homeowners in Ware were paying more than 30% of their total household income for housing costs (Source: 2000 U.S. Census).
- During the years from 1997-2001, the median sale price for a house in Ware rose 4.5% from \$110,024 to \$114,950 (Source: The Warren Group). By 2002, the median sale price had risen to \$127,000 an increase of \$12,050 or 10%.
- The rate of single family home sales in Ware grew between 1990 and 2001, increasing 13% over that period.
- The median value for an owner occupied home in Ware is \$114,200. More than 32% of all homes in Ware are valued lower than \$100,000 (Source: 2000 U.S. Census).
- The median household income in Ware decreased 7% over the past decade, from \$39,699 to \$36,875 (both adjusted to 1999 dollars). Ware has 879 low-income households (incomes below \$30,916), or 22% of all households.



Source: Chris Curtis, PVPC



## **Housing Strategies:**

### **Zoning Strategies**

See Appendix B for a complete list of housing strategies offered to Massachusetts communities.

The Community Development Committee prioritized the following Zoning Bylaws as very important to manage future growth in the Town of Ware.

- **Cluster Zoning Regulations**
  - The Ware Planning Board is presently drafting a Cluster Zoning Regulation.
- **Phased Growth Bylaw**
  - This bylaw will help to manage the explosion of housing growth in Ware since 2000.
- **Site Plan and Site Design Approval**
  - This strategy will give the Planning Board more control when considering housing developments.
- **Village Center/Compact Growth Center Bylaw**
  - This bylaw will encourage infill in empty lots in the downtown area.
- **Planned Unit Development**
  - This PUD bylaw directs future growth and development to areas chosen by the Town of Ware.
- **Ridgeline and Hillside Protection Bylaw**
  - In order to protect important viewsheds, the Town of Ware will implement a bylaw to prohibit development in identified scenic places.
- **Affordable Housing Zoning Bylaw**
  - This bylaw will ensure that housing developments include affordable housing and Ware continues to meet the Massachusetts affordable housing mandate of 10%.

### **Future Zoning Strategies**

- **Transfer of Development Rights**

### **Non-Zoning Strategies**

- **Low Interest Loans for Septic Repairs**
- **Affordable Housing on Town-owned Land**
- **Congregate Care and Assisted Living Facilities**

## Economic Development

The Town of Ware has historically relied on a stable industrial economic base for jobs. Due to the decrease in the economic viability of manufacturing industries throughout the past century, Ware like other post-industrial milltowns, has been forced to pursue other economic initiatives. Although the textile mills are gone, the remaining factory buildings and their accompanying neighborhoods give Ware its architectural character. A number of the mill buildings have been converted to small manufacturing and retail spaces, which has created a thriving complex of factory outlets frequented by shoppers throughout the region. Manufacturing remains a strong industry providing nearly 1/4 of the Town's total employment.



Source: Massachusetts EOE, Shea Farm, Ware, MA

Businesses in Ware consist of industrial manufacturing and commercial, and services such as restaurants and automotive suppliers. Over 100 businesses are located within the community and provide employment for many of Ware's residents. There is a continued interest in retail development and the recent arrival of a Walmart is spurring economic growth in the southern part of Town along the Route 32 corridor. An extension of sewer and natural gas services to this part of Town is currently being considered, as well as a Planned Development District that would straighten, widen and improve the road shoulders of Route 32. Though the arrival of the Walmart has no doubt benefited many in the community, some small business owners are struggling to compete with the buying power of the superstore.

Ware's downtown commercial district has seen many improvements in the past few years and many businesses continue to occupy the storefronts. The rehabilitation of the movie theater in the center of Town would serve to act as a cultural anchor to the downtown district according to a survey of Ware business owners.

### Summary of Key Economic Development Trends:

- The number of employers in Ware increased by two (1%) from 1996 to 2000, compared to an 8% increase for the region during this same time period.
- Employees increased from 2,568 to 2,753 during the same time period, a 7% increase (compared to 8% for the region).
- From 1990 to 2000 the actual uniform tax rate in Ware increased by 34%, from \$13.86 to \$18.62.
- From 1991 to 2001, the total number of parcels of land increased 5%, from 2,778 to 2,921. Commercial parcels increased by 2 parcels (1.4%) from 140 to 142, and industrial parcels also increased by 2 parcels from 52 to 54 (Source: MA Department of Revenue).
- The single-family residential (76.9% of total) increased 11.4% during 1991 to 2001. The number of multi-family residential parcels (13.5% of total) during this period decreased 8.6% from 431 to 394.

- From 1990 to 2000, total expenditures in Ware increased by 61.9%, from \$10,933,035 (in 2000\$) to \$17,698,191. The highest percentage of municipal spending is for education, at 51% of the total budget in fiscal year 2002.
- From 1990 to 2000 total revenue in Ware increased by 61.5%, from \$12,116,937 (in 2000\$) to \$19,563,550 an increase of \$7,446,613. The difference between Ware's revenues and expenditures in 2000 was 1,865,359. State aid increased significantly during this ten year period from \$4,402,026 to \$9,660,997 for a total of \$4,833,836.
- Notable cohort decreases in Ware were in children under 10 years and young adults aged 20 to 34. The census data indicates that there are no young families moving into the community. The data also suggests that many of Ware's young adults have chosen to relocate in other communities during the 1990's.
- Another population cohort that has decreased significantly is adults aged between 60 and 74. This may indicate that residents are choosing to relocate to other areas for their retirement needs.
- Twenty percent (20%) of Ware residents (1 out of 5) did not complete high school, compared to 18% of the rest of the region (Source: U.S. Census Bureau).
- In 2000, 14% percent of residents were college graduates, compared with 25% for the region (Source: U.S. Census Bureau).
- The unemployment rates in Ware were substantially above the statewide rates during the 1980's. In the 1990's, the Town of Ware followed the statewide rates very closely. The average town unemployment rate over this time period was 5.91%. The average state unemployment rate for the same time was 4.89%.
- From 1989 to 1999, the median household income for Ware decreased significantly by 7% from \$39,699 to \$36,875 (in 1999\$).

## **Economic Development Strategies:**

### **Zoning Strategies**

See Appendix C for a complete list of economic development strategies offered to Massachusetts communities.

- **Rezoning of Targeted Land Parcels for Business, Light Industrial or Industrial Use**
  - A closer look at overlay zoning and target areas in the future is imperative.
  - Residential apartments in the Millyard could be a problem if industrial noise/activity were to interfere with those living there.
- **Site Plan Approval Bylaw**
  - This is an extremely important bylaw in that it eases the approval process for desirable economic development.
  - Ware presently has a special permitting process that deters business development, is not always approved at the expense of the applicant, and is overly restrictive.
- **Planned Industrial or Business Development Bylaw**
  - Best suited for vacant land.
  - Has a good return on light manufacturing, but not so great on warehousing for instance.
  - Important to establish incubator areas for start-up businesses.

## **Future Zoning Strategies**

- **Mixed Use Development Bylaw**
  - This is important to encourage multiple uses in the downtown area.
  - Important for redevelopment of the Millyard, with some restrictions on residential development possible.
- **Home Business Bylaw**
  - Adopt a more restrictive bylaw.
  - Begin to create places for home businesses to relocate from homes. Too many vehicles and employees are apparent at residential homes. The Town is missing out on an important revenue source.

## **Non-Zoning Strategies**

- **Provide Sewer Service to Targeted Areas**
  - Adopt an Enterprise Fund System to encourage development.
  - Maintain infrastructure in the ground especially older lines and systems.
- **Town Center Revitalization**
  - Ware needs to continue to improve and support its downtown business area by:
    1. Recruiting new businesses
    2. Rehabilitating existing buildings
    3. Expanding Parking
- **Massachusetts Economic Development Incentives Program**
  - Ware has already initiated many of these programs and is very successful at implementing this strategy. Ware will continue to utilize this strategy in the future.
- **Infill Development**
  - Important to fill in where sewer and water is already located, rather than expanding services.
- **Adaptive Reuse of Older Buildings**
  - Ware is presently adapting older buildings and will continue to do so.
- **Marketing and Promotion**
  - **Town Website**
    - ✓ Very important to the economic development of Ware.
    - ✓ The Town is presently reviewing successful local community websites and is in the process of setting up a Town Website.
    - ✓ The website will provide Town government documents on-line, important links to local businesses and other community news and information.
  - **Database of Commercial and Industrial Properties**
  - **Marketing Campaigns, Special Events and Activities**
  - **Community Signage Program**
  - **Business Recognition Awards**
  - **Economic Development Manager**
- **Infrastructure Development and Physical Improvements**

## **Transportation**

The transportation element examined existing transportation conditions with a particular emphasis on rail service. The rail infrastructure in the Town of Ware offers tremendous opportunities due to its key location to promote economic development and increase tourism. Industrial areas are well served by the railroad and there is good potential to expand service and attract new development. The transportation element inventoried the current conditions in order to isolate the different options available for existing freight rail service.

Unlike many of the Cities and Town's in Massachusetts the Town of Ware is served by an active rail carrier. The Massachusetts Central Railroad (Mass Central) has provided efficient and critical transportation services to businesses in the Town of Ware since 1979. Rail service can be an important asset that the Town of Ware can use to retain existing businesses and to promote economic and industrial development. New business will develop for the Mass Central, through either the expansion of existing customers or locating new customers along the railroad. The mix and type of businesses will likely be similar to the existing customers.

Working with the Mass Central officials a number of possible sites have been suggested as possible locations for new railroad served businesses in Ware. These locations are indicated are:

1. The area around Gibbs Crossing, particularly to the east and south of the railroads existing yard and transflow terminal.
2. The area along the railroad tracks north of Gibbs Crossing along the Ware River.
3. The area around the spur track to Kanzaki Paper.
4. Expansion of transflow operations in the Ware Yard.
5. The area north of the yard between Rt. 9 and the Ware River.

The area around Gibbs Crossing had previously been considered for development as an industrial park with adjoining land in Palmer. For this development to move forward certain infrastructure such as sewer and other utilities would have to be extended. In the near term however, this location could provide an opportunity to expand the existing transflow facility. This appears to be the largest potential development site if infrastructure issues can be addressed and is not developed for another purpose which is not rail related.

The Ware Yard and area surrounding Kanzaki Paper may provide areas for the expansion of existing businesses. The area along route 9 north of the Ware Yard has been under consideration for a transfer station of construction and demolition debris.

## **Recommendations**

Increased contacts between the Town and the railroad are suggested as a means to work together to expand existing businesses and locate new ones that use the railroad. Three particular areas are recommended for the town to consider when leveraging the presence of the railroad for town's benefit. These are:

## **Engagement**

Local Governments need to be engaged with both the railroad and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC). Residential involvement ensures that the present service is preserved and indicates local support for the online business. An advisory committee, established formally or informally, would provide a forum for community input regarding the railroad and the EOTC. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has proposed a task force concentrating on regional rail freight planning to assist communities and freight providers.

## **New Commonwealth Initiatives**

Smart Growth, “Fix it First”, and financial investments in urban centers have been at the forefront of the Commonwealth’s new transportation policies. Under these policies, the focus of state funding will be locating and expanding new and existing businesses that take advantage of local resources in established urban locations. New or ‘green field’ development will be a secondary consideration under this policy model. In particular, the current transportation bond bill is expected to contain a significant amount of funding for rail freight projects. This funding could conceivably be used for a project or projects on the Mass Central located in the Town of Ware.

## **Be strategic in future development**

There is limited number of opportunity sites where rail related business development can take place. Consider using the tools of zoning and permitting, to focus development that takes the fullest advantages of Ware’s resources and objectives. A number of potential economic development sites have been identified during this planning process that are either underutilized or undeveloped. If these sites are developed without examining the economic potential of rail, opportunities to attract new business for both the railroad and Town may be lost. Taking a strategic approach to development would encourage best and highest use of the rail sites.

## **Tourist Rail Opportunities**

From 1987 to 1997, the Mass Central hosted a tourist rail operation named the Ware River Railroad. At its height the service featured a two-hour round trip from the Granary Restaurant in Ware with vintage passenger cars hauled by a diesel locomotive.

Discussions with the current management of the Mass Central have indicated that they are not opposed considering a proposal for restarting tourist train operations, however they do not consider it principle part of their current business plan.

There might be an opportunity for a partnership between a tourist railroad proponent and the railroad. It is common in the short line/tourist railroad industry for a proponent to contract with a railroad to operate tourist trains. All aspects of the operation would be responsibility of the proponent.

Challenges to rail tourism along the Mass Central include competition from more established tourist railroad operations in nearby locations. Typically, the most successful tourist railroad operations work in unison with popular local tourist sites and activities that provide a critical mass of potential visitors/customers. The Town of Ware could address these challenges by sponsoring train trips connected to special events such as community gatherings. For example, a “Santa Train” is a popular tourist train event. A Turnpike Tourism Grant would fund a feasibility study to explore establishing a tourist train in the Town of Ware.

## Action Plan Table

Strategy	Responsible Group	Timeframe
<b>Open Space and Resource Protection Element</b>		
Adopt the Community Preservation Act	Select Board (SB ), Conservation Commission (CC), Planning Board (PB), CPA Committee	Ongoing
Acquire Open Space thru Grants and Local Appropriations	CC, PB, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)	1-3 years
Control Commercial Strip Development	Select Board (SB), PB, CC	1 year
Discourage Residential Sprawl onto Farmland	CC, PB, Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)	Ongoing
Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Developments	CC, PB, SB, Community Development Committee (CDC)	6-12 months
Adopt Local Growth Caps or Building Permit Limits	PB, SB, ZBA, CC	6-12 months
Preserve Farm Operations	CC	1-3 months
Encourage Dedicated Open Space in New Developments	PB, SB, ZBA	1-5 years
Preserve Public Waterfront Access	SB, CC, PVPC	5 year cycles
<b>Housing Element</b>		
Update Cluster Zoning Regulations to Allow By-right Cluster Developments	PB, CC	6-12 months
Affordable Housing Zoning Bylaw	PB	6-12 months
Phased Growth Bylaw	PB	1-3 years
Village Center/Compact Growth Center Bylaw	PB	1-3 years
Ridgeline and Hillside Protection Bylaw	PB, CC	1-3 years
Site Plan and Site Plan Approval	PB,CC, ZBA	1-3 years
Transfer of Development Rights	PB	1-3 years
Seek Low Interest Loans for Septic Repairs	Board of Health (BOH)	Ongoing
Affordable Housing on Town owned Land	CDC, SB, PB, Housing Authority	Ongoing
Adopt Zoning for Congregate Care and Assisted Living Facilities	PB	6-12 months

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible Group</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Economic Development Element</b>		
Rezoning of Targeted Land Parcels for Business, Light Industrial or Industrial Use	PB	6-12 months
Adopt a Site Plan Approval Bylaw	PB	6-12 months
Planned Industrial or Business Development Bylaw	PB	6-12 months
Mixed Use Development Bylaw	PB	1-3 years
Create a More Restrictive Home Business /Cottage Industry Bylaw	PB	1-3 years
Provide Sewer to Targeted Areas	SB, CDC, Investment of Businesses	1-3 years
Town Center Revitalization	CDC, SB, PB	1-3 years
Massachusetts Economic Development Incentives Program	SB	Ongoing
Infill Development	PB	Ongoing
Adaptive Reuse of Older Buildings	CDC, PB, SB	Ongoing
Marketing and Promotion Various Incentive Programs		
Create a Town Website	Contracted work or volunteer	1-3 years
Infrastructure Development and Improvements	SB, PB, Investment opportunities	1-3 years
<b>Transportation Element</b>		
Engagement between local government, Mass Central Railroad and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC).	Mass Central (MC), Rail Committee (RC)	6-12 months
New Commonwealth Initiatives	State grants, RC, PB, SB	1-3 years
Strategic Future Development	RC, PB, MC, SB	1-3 years
Tourist Rail Opportunities	RC, PB, MC, SB	1-3 years

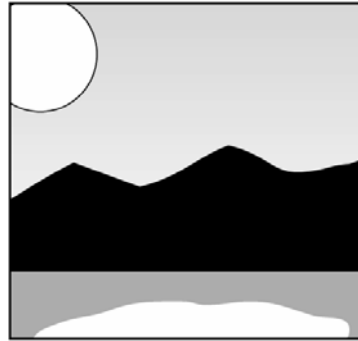




## Community Development Plan

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### OPEN SPACE ELEMENT



Town of  
Ware

Prepared by:  
The Pioneer Valley  
Planning Commission

This document was  
Developed using funds  
Pursuant to Massachusetts  
Executive Order 418 Program

# Element One: Open Space and Resource Protection

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Swift River – Ware, MA

## Introduction

Ware is a community of 9,707 residents with an appealing rural character and many desirable natural attributes, including:

- The Swift and Ware Rivers, scenic rivers, with fishing and recreational opportunities ;
- Quabbin Reservoir, with its hiking trails, picnic areas, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities, and 118 miles of shoreline;
- Farmland and pasture lands;
- Grenville Park and Veteran's Park;
- Beaver Lake and Snow's Pond;
- Wildlife management areas, such as Herm Covey WMA;
- Forestlands.

It is these attributes, combined with its proximate location, that make the town desirable for new development that may eventually alter its unique rural character. Most current development consists of single family homes; the remainder of land in Ware is hilly and forested, with some scattered open fields in agricultural use.

Ware does have an Open Space and Recreation Plan. It was updated 2001, but is not yet certified by the State of Massachusetts.

Several factors are currently at play which could change significantly the character and environment of Ware. These factors include: economic trends in Massachusetts and in the nation, including a shift in the economy toward service and information businesses and away from assembly and manufacturing; a nationwide demise of the family farm in favor of large economies of scale; large-scale flight from cities and large towns in favor of rural settings; and development pressures on undeveloped agricultural and forest land by the development community.

## **Planning Process**

The process by which we developed this element of the Ware Community Development plan was to:

- Research, collect, summarize and analyze open space and resource data from state, local, and regional sources
- Articulate goals for open space and resource protection;
- Analyze potential open space and resource protection strategies
- Summarize information gathered and prepare a list of recommendations on how the community can achieve its goals.

## **Public Survey Results**

A community survey, "Ware Speaks", was undertaken as part of the 2002 Ware Strategic Plan, Guiding the Future of Ware. Key findings of the survey include:

- The features residents value in Ware the most were: 1) the small town atmosphere; 2) proximity to Quabbin Reservoir; and 3) open spaces.
- 72% of respondents preferred a development scenario for Ware over the next 10-20 years that was described as "compact New England village pattern".
- Respondents ranked the fourth most important town goal over the next ten years to be "to protect natural resources and environmental quality".
- 91% of respondents felt Ware should become more actively involved in protecting water supply areas.
- 81% of respondents felt Ware should become more actively involved in protecting river and stream corridors.
- 80% of respondents felt Ware should become more actively involved in protecting forest land.
- 76% of respondents felt Ware should become more actively involved in protecting prime farmland.

## **Open Space Goals for Ware**

The Ware Community Development Committee agreed on the following open space and resource protection goals for the town and for this plan:

1. To provide a wide range of high quality recreational opportunities in town, including indoor and outdoor recreation;
2. To acquire and protect new key open space and recreation lands, through establishing a local trust or funding program;
3. To promote better management of recreational programs and facilities, including consolidating management under one entity and hiring a recreational director;
4. To better inform residents of available recreational programs and opportunities;;
5. To improve zoning and protection for the town's drinking water supply wells;
6. To revise and update the town's zoning bylaw to encourage "smart growth";
7. To control suburban sprawl, including residential Approval Not Required (ANR) lots and commercial strip development;
8. To better manage the open space the town currently owns;
9. To maintain an updated Open Space Plan, in order to make the town eligible for open space grant funds;
10. To promote forestry management on town-owned land;

11. To create a town park and recreation area for water-based recreation and other passive recreational activities, and make improvements to Grenville Park for boating and waterfront use;
12. To provide better opportunities for biking and other passive recreation activities.

## **Key Open Space and Resources Issues in Ware**

The following issues affect the town's open space, water resources and other natural resources:

1. Urban sprawl has incrementally reduced open space and rural character;
2. Farmland has been lost to urban development, including 309 acres in the past three decades;
3. The town has very limited town-owned protected recreational and open space lands;
4. New development threatens to degrade scenic roads and views;
5. Sensitive wildlife habitat areas along the Ware and Swift Rivers are unprotected.

## **Open Space and Resource Protection Strategies**

The following open space and resource protection strategies are presented in order of priority, as recommended to the town by the Ware Community Development Committee:

- **Adopt the Community Preservation Act**
  - The Ware Community Development Committee determined that this is extremely important to funding open space acquisition, protecting the Town's historical resources and providing future affordable housing opportunities.
- **Acquire Open Space thru Grants and Local Appropriations**
  - This will be accomplished by updating the Ware Open Space and Resource Protection Plan, which provides more opportunities to acquire state and federal funding.
- **Adopt Smart Growth Practices**

These include the following actions:

  - **Control Commercial Strip Development**
  - **Promote Compact, Mixed-use Development**
  - **Discourage Residential Sprawl onto Farmland**
  - **Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Developments**
  - **Adopt Local Growth Caps or Building Permit Limits**
  - **Preserve Farm Operations**
  - **Encourage Dedicated Open Space in New Developments**
  - **Preserve Public Waterfront Access**

## **The Land**

Covering about 40 square miles, the Town of Ware is located in Hampshire County, northeast of Springfield. Ware is situated east of the Connecticut River Valley, east of Amherst. The elevation ranges from approximately 370 feet to 1070 feet above mean sea level. Ware is bordered by the towns of Hardwick and New Salem to the north; Warren and West Brookfield to the east; Palmer to the south; and Belchertown to the west.

## **Forest Lands**

Forest cover is by far the most prominent land use in Ware. Ware's Existing Land Use Map shows the extensive range of these forestlands encompassing approximately 15,789 acres, which comprise 61% of the total land area in the Town.

Wooded areas are habitat for bears, coyotes, deer, grouse, woodpeckers, squirrels, porcupines, and deep wood songbirds such as wood thrush, scarlet tanager, and veery.

Ware is in the enviable position of having significant forest resources that can provide a benefit to wildlife and residents of the community. Protecting and enhancing these resources can provide long term economic benefits as well as providing protection for the diversity of wildlife species that are fully dependent on the forestlands.

The economic value and greater value of the forest resources to the community as a whole extends beyond lumbering and sale of Class I Prime forest species. Trees that are not harvested for their commercial application provide flood mitigation and water supply filtration, which benefits residents and businesses alike in Ware. Specifically, these important benefits include:

- Flood control in upland forested areas, where treed slopes can slow storm water runoff and minimize down-stream flood impacts on farms, residences, and businesses;
- Flood control in lowlands, where trees can absorb run-off before it reaches surface water sources;
- Water supply protection for public and private sources. Trees and shrubs can absorb and filter pollutants prior to absorption into aquifers, and surface water supplies;
- Air quality improvements;
- Erosion control, which benefits downhill farming, and water supply and surface water quality;
- Recreational opportunities for hiking, biking, skiing, hunting;
- Visual buffers between uses.

Though the public health benefits of maintaining forest resources identified above are extensive, these resources also provide habitat for wildlife in Ware. The extensive forestland in the hills and along riparian corridors provides vital resources for wildlife. These include:

- Protection and shelter for inland and water-based species such as bear, and duck;
- Nutrient and food source for land and water species;
- Nesting areas for indigenous birds such as osprey, duck, and heron;
- Seasonal shelter and food source for migratory birds;
- Protected breeding areas.

Without forested areas, floodwaters from heavy storms would runoff more rapidly, raising flood waters and causing more property and crop damage. Other environmental impacts such as air quality degradation, reduction of visual buffers from adjacent uses and elimination of habitat could ensue as well. Deforested areas in the hills also could cause impacts on down-gradient properties as the rapid runoff causes erosion of stream banks and hillsides, sending sediment onto farmland and other properties and potentially causing greater damage to homes and businesses during major storm events. Erosion causes streams and rivers to fill with silt resulting in oxygen deprivation to water plants and animal species killing them and causing down-slope wetlands to deteriorate. This in turn would eliminate food sources for migratory birds and land animals.

Finally, the loss of significant forested areas would visually alter the character of the community.

## **Farmlands**

Ware has a total of 1837 acres of cropland and pasture, as of 1999. This represents a decrease of 308 acres or 14% from the 2145 acres of farmland in Ware in 1971.

Ware has a moderate amount of farmland soils, including 723 acres of prime farmland soils and state and locally important farmland soils.

Ware has no farm parcels preserved under the Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program. The town has 33 land parcels protected under the Chapter 61A program, which provides agricultural land with limited protection from development. The town also has 31 land parcels protected under the Chapter 61B forest land protection program.

**Table 1-1: Ware Farmland Change 1971-1999**

Land Use	Acres 1971	Percent 1971	Acres 1999	Percent 1999	Percent Change
Cropland	1,154	4.5%	997	3.8%	-13%
Pasture	991	3.8%	840	3.2%	-15%
TOTAL	2,145		1,837		-14%

Source: PVPC

As of 2000, the U.S. Census showed 6 employers and 13 employees in agriculture, forestry or fishing in Ware.

## Geology, Soils, and Topography

The topography of Ware consists of moderate slopes with elevations ranging from 370 above sea level in the river valleys, to elevations of approximately 1,070 in the southeast mountains and 1026 feet at Quabbin Hill. Ware has two primary soil types:

### **Southern and Central Ware:**

Hinckley-Merrimac-Windsor soils, which are very deep and excessively drained.. These soils are well suited for farming, and for building site development, but have the problems of readily absorbing, but not adequately filtering effluent from septic systems.

### **Northern and Central Ware and areas around Quabbin Reservoir:**

Canton-Gloucester-Scituate soils, which are very deep, well-drained and formed in sandy glacial till, with most areas having stones and boulders on the surface. These soils are poorly suited to farming, but have moderate potential for woodland production and are quite well suited to building site development in upland areas. However, wetness is a limitation in low areas, and the soils readily absorb, but not adequately filter effluent from septic systems.

Ware has 723 acres of prime farmland soils.

## Open Space and Greenways

### Outstanding Features and Resources

Ware has many outstanding open space, water-related and natural resources, including:

- The Swift and Ware Rivers, scenic rivers, with fishing and recreational opportunities ;
- Quabbin Reservoir, with its hiking trails, picnic areas, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities, and 118 miles of shoreline;
- Farmland and pasture lands;
- Grenville Park and Veteran's Park;
- Beaver Lake and Snow's Pond;
- Wildlife management areas, such as Herm Covey WMA;
- Forestlands.

## **Town-Owned Open Space**

Ware owns 366 acres of permanently protected land, including Grenville Park, Veteran's Park, Snow's Pond Dam, the Town Forest. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts owns 5,510 acres of protected land in Ware.

## **Chapter 61 Lands**

There are 76 privately owned land parcels in Ware which are temporarily protected from development because they are enrolled under one of the Chapter 61 reduced property tax assessment programs. These parcels include:

- 33 parcels under Chapter 61A, Agricultural Assessment;
- 31 parcels under Chapter 61B, Recreational Assessment;
- 12 parcels under Chapter 61, Forestry Assessment.

Under these programs, landowners receive a property tax reduction on lands meeting criteria for farmland, forestry or recreational use, in return for agreeing not to develop their property for a specific number of years. If property is withdrawn from the Chapter 61 Program before the term of agreement is complete, the town has a right of first refusal to purchase the property.

## **Permanently Protected Open Space**

There are 5760 acres of land in Ware (plus 3300 acres of surface water at Quabbin Reservoir) are permanently protected from development because they are town-owned, state-owned or owned by other communities or conservation groups. Almost all of this land is owned by either the Metropolitan District Commission as part of the Quabbin Reservation (4868 acres plus 3300 acres of surface water), or the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (640 acres). There are 366 acres of town-owned land. Some of the more prominent protected open space parcels are shown in Table 1-2.

**Table 1-2: Recreational and Open Space Lands in Ware**

NAME	ACREAGE	OWNER	TYPE of PROTECTION	OPEN SPACE MAP #	LOCATION
Town Forest	87 acres	Town – Cons. Commission	Permanent	29-15, 29-46, 29-72, 23-8, 23-7	Greenwich Road, upper North Street
Snow's Pond	4 acres	Town	Permanent	62-44, 62-45	Pleasant St.
Swift River Wildlife Area	268 acres	Ma. Dept. of Fish and Game	Permanent	19-1, 19-4, 52-1, 3-8, 3-9, 3-10	Swift River
Quabbin Reservoir	8,180 acres	Metropolitan District Commission	Permanent	64-1	Quabbin Reservation
Nenameseck Park	.5 acres	Town – Park Commission	Permanent	57-91	Main Street
Veterans Memorial Park	.5 acres	Town – Park Commission	Permanent	60-140, 61-6	Main Street
Memorial Athletic Field	5 acres	Town – Park Commission	Permanent	57-62	
Grenville Park	75 acres	Town – Park Commission	Permanent	23-15	Church St.
South Street School	1 acre	Town – School Dept.		53-37	South Street
Ware Junior-Senior High	15 acres	Town – School Dept.		16-14	
DeSantis Property	66 acres	Private.			
Water Tower Field	11 acres	Town – Public Works Dept.			
Barnes Street Recreation Area, including Reed Pool	26 acres	Town- Water and Sewer Dept.		60-70	Barnes Street, Belchertown Rd.
The Pines		Town- Water Works Dept.			
Herm Covey Wildlife Management Area		Ma. Dept. of Fish and Game			
Ware River Wildlife Management Area		Ma. Dept. of Fish and Game			
Coys Hill Wildlife Management Area		Ma. Dept. of Fish and Game			

Source: Ware Open Space and Recreation Plan



## **Agricultural Preservation Restrictions**

The Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture purchases the development rights from farmers for properties which are then restricted from future development under the Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program. Unfortunately, there are no farms protected under the APR Program in Ware.

The APR Program is an excellent method for preserving both farmland and farming operations, because it protects farmland in perpetuity from development, while providing farmers with working capital to make improvements to farms.

## **Greenways**

There are no existing local or regional greenways in the Town of Ware. However there are several potential greenways, which could be implemented with further town support.

The Ware River Trail is proposed as a separate bikepath and linear park along the Ware River, using an abandoned Boston and Maine rail corridor, which provides opportunities for rails to trail conversion. The project will connect to neighborhoods, parks and recreational resources of the river. There are two proposed segments in Ware:

1. From Grenville Park to a covered bridge in Hardwick
2. From Ware's downtown to Palmer

The Grenville to Hardwick corridor has already been the subject of design and engineering plans for a bikeway/walkway, but the town has not been able to find funding for construction of this project. The recently passed new federal transportation bill (the Transportation Equity Act – TEAL-U) included funding for the Ware River Valley Trail from Grenville Park to Hardwick. The town would like to acquire land between the rail bed and the Ware River. Walmart has donated some riverfront land to the town already along this corridor.

The Pioneer Valley Regional Greenways Plan (PVPC 2003) identifies potential three river-oriented greenways which encompass parts of Ware. These include areas along the Ware River, Swift River and Flat Brook.

## **Recreational Resources**

Recreational resources in the Town of Ware include the following.

### **Trails and Bike Paths**

Ware has no bike paths currently. A proposed bike path, the Ware River Rail Trail, linking to Hardwick and Palmer, has completed the design process.

Hiking trails and areas in Ware include Quabbin Park trails and woods roads in Quabbin Reservation. Hiking opportunities include a number of unpaved roads, including: jeep trails off Coffey Hill Road, Cummings Road, Gilbertville Road, Old Belchertown Road, Old Stagecoach Road and Osborne Road.

## **Parks and Playing Fields**

The following parks and playing fields are available in Ware:

- ❖ Nenameseck Park; which offers passive recreation;
- ❖ Veteran's Memorial Park; which offers passive recreation, and which needs sidewalks re-set;
- ❖ Memorial Athletic Field, which offers field sports and basketball;
- ❖ Grenville Park, which offers field sports, basketball and passive recreation, and which needs new roads and bleachers;
- ❖ Barnes Street Recreation Area, which offers baseball and swimming;
- ❖ South Street School, which offers baseball fields;
- ❖ Ware Junior-Senior High, which offers field sports;
- ❖ Water Tower Field, which offers field sports;
- ❖ Desantis Property, which offers field sports.

## **Water-Based Recreational Opportunities**

The only town swimming area in Ware is at Reed Municipal Swimming Pool at Barnes Street Recreation Area. There is a beach area at Beaver Lake, but access is limited to members of the Beaver Lake Club Association who do not own beachfront property.

Fishing is offered, on a limited basis, at Quabbin Reservoir, Gate 43. Fishing access areas include the Swift River and Ware River, with access areas at:

- ❖ Swift River at Route 9 bridge;
- ❖ Ware River at Church Street;
- ❖ Ware River at Grenville Park;
- ❖ Ware River next to WalMart;
- ❖ Ware River at Susan Drive.
- ❖ Ware River at Banas Farm on River Road;\
- ❖ Ware River at covered bridge near Hardwick town line.

Residents have identified a need for a new boat launch on the Ware River, for example near WalMart at Route 32. This could be linked with the future Ware River Rail Trail in this area.

## **Historic Sites**

Ware has a number of historically significant sites, including:

- ❖ Church Street Historic District, which needs a new road, sidewalks, and wall repair at Grenville Park;
- ❖ Ware Center Historic District, which needs repair;
- ❖ Ware-Hardwick Covered Bridge, which needs repair;
- ❖ Millyard and Housing, Town Center;
- ❖ Town Hall.

## **Natural Resource Sites**

Sites of interest from a natural resource standpoint include:

- ❖ Quabbin Reservoir and Quabbin Reservation;
- ❖ Swift River Wildlife Area;
- ❖ Ware River;
- ❖ Snow's Pond.

## **Private Recreational Areas**

Ware has several recreational areas that are open only to members, including:

- ❖ Beaver Lake swimming beach and common area;
- ❖ Aspen Street Rod and Gun Club;
- ❖ Ware Foundry Athletic Club.

## Wildlife Habitat

### Threatened or Endangered Species Habitat

The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NEHSP) has mapped areas of critical concern for threatened and endangered species within the Town of Ware. These areas are shown on the Ware Natural Habitats Map.

Key areas of concern are the entire Quabbin Reservoir shoreline, Ware Center/Flat Brook area, upper Muddy Brook, Approximately 5,575 acres are identified as priority habitats for these species. The plants and animals that fall within this classification are identified in the following Table 1-3. A more extensive list of species known to exist in Hampshire County is in Appendix A.

**Table 1-3: Threatened and Endangered Species of Ware**

<b>Taxonomic Group</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Status</b>
Fish	<i>Notropis bifrenatus</i>	Bridle Shiner	SC
Amphibian	<i>Ambystoma laterale</i>	Blue-Spotted Salamander	SC
Reptile	<i>Clemmys guttata</i>	Spotted Turtle	SC
Reptile	<i>Clemmys insculpta</i>	Wood Turtle	SC
Reptile	<i>Terrapene carolina</i>	Eastern Box Turtle	SC
Bird	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	E
Mammal	<i>Synaptomys cooperi</i>	Southern Bog Lemming	SC
Mussel	<i>Alasmidonta undulata</i>	Triangle Floater	SC
Mussel	<i>Alasmidonta varicosa</i>	Brook Floater (Swollen Wedgemussel)	E
Mussel	<i>Strophitus undulatus</i>	Creeper	SC
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Gomphus borealis</i>	Beaverpond Clubtail	SC
Butterfly/Moth	<i>Cicinnus melsheimeri</i>	Melsheimer's Sack Bearer	T
Vascular Plant	<i>Liatris borealis</i>	New England Blazing Star	SC
Vascular Plant	<i>Pedicularis lanceolata</i>	Swamp Lousewort	E

Source: Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, (April, 2004)

**Notes on Table:**

Endangered" (E) species are native species which are in danger of extinction throughout all or part of their range, or which are in danger of extirpation from Massachusetts, as documented by biological research and inventory.

"Threatened" (T) species are native species which are likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future, or which are declining or rare as determined by biological research and inventory.

"Special concern" (SC) species are native species which have been documented by biological research or inventory to have suffered a decline that could threaten the species if allowed to continue unchecked, or which occur in such small numbers or with such restricted distribution or specialized habitat requirements that they could easily become threatened within Massachusetts.

These species are dependent upon habitat provided by riparian and wetland resources as well as forest resources. There are nearly 14,094 acres that provide productive habitat for wildlife species in Ware, including forest, open waters, and wetland. Approximately 9,500 of these acres include areas that are considered Biomap core habitat.

Preventing the extinction of these species is critical to maintaining bio-diversity in the Pioneer Valley. A biologically diverse native ecosystem is important to ensure stability of all plant and animal species. On a global scale, it is essential for human health as well. As the number of species within an ecosystem decline the remaining species become more dependent upon fewer resources for survival. In many cases, the elimination of one species leads to the demise of another or many others when such species cannot adapt to the reduction and change in their environment.

## **Biodiversity**

The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Natural Heritage Program developed the BioMap to identify the areas most in need of protection in order to protect the native biodiversity of the Commonwealth. The BioMap focuses primarily on state-listed rare species and exemplary natural communities but also includes the full breadth of the State's biological diversity (NHESP).

BioMap Core Habitats are areas with the highest priority for conservation and biodiversity conservation. They represent the sum total of viable rare plant habitat, viable rare animal habitat, and viable exemplary natural communities (NHESP). BioMap Supporting Natural Landscapes are the most intact lands adjacent to and near Core Habitat areas. These lands provide linkages between habitats, buffer Core Habitat, and may contain rare species not yet discovered.

Ware contains approximately 9,500 acres of NHESP BioMap core habitat and 4,594 acres of supporting natural landscape. The Core habitat is located primarily in the entire watershed for Quabbin Reservoir. The areas of supporting natural landscape include the Swift River corridor, upper Muddy Brook area and the southeastern upland area.

## **Vernal Pools**

Vernal pools are unique wildlife habitats best known for the amphibians and invertebrate animals that use them to breed. Vernal pools, also known as ephemeral pools, autumnal pools, and temporary woodland ponds, typically fill with water in the autumn or winter due to rising ground water and rainfall and remain ponded through the spring and into summer. Some vernal pools are protected in Massachusetts under the Wetlands Protection Act regulations, as well as several other federal and state regulations, and local bylaws (NHESP).

The NHESP serves the important role of officially "certifying" vernal pools that are documented by citizens. Finding vernal pools is the first step for protection. The Massachusetts Aerial Photo Survey of Potential Vernal Pools has been produced by the NHESP to help locate likely vernal pools across the state. According to NHESP, there are currently two certified vernal pools in Ware; however, there are 145 acres of potential vernal pools dispersed throughout the town.

## **Regional Links**

Many of the benefits offered by the rich natural resources of Ware are shared with adjacent communities surrounding the town. The town also benefits from the careful protection and stewardship of natural lands in these same communities. Open spaces and natural resources are regional assets whose boundaries do not necessarily respect municipal or state political boundaries. Some of the important regional resources that Ware shares with its neighbors, include:

- Quabbin Reservoir and Reservation, an extraordinary open space asset, with recreational opportunities, shared with many towns;
- Ware River, a scenic river extending into Palmer;
- Swift River, a scenic river running along Ware's shared border with Belchertown.

## **Water Resources**

### **Lakes and Ponds**

In addition to the huge Quabbin Reservoir, there are several ponds and small lakes in Ware including:

- Beaver Lake
- Snow Pond

Many other smaller bodies of water are scattered across the landscape of Ware primarily located along streams and in wooded areas. Quabbin Reservoir makes up most of the 3722 acres of open water in Ware, with the balance comprised of these small ponds and lakes. These water bodies offer valuable wildlife habitat, unique natural environments, and provide benefits to Ware's human inhabitants in the form of prime recreational opportunities and water supply.

### **Rivers and Streams**

Ware lies within the Ware River and Swift River subwatersheds of the Chicopee River watershed. There are 3,900 acres of land within MassGIS riparian corridors in Ware.

There are 1,322 acres of land in town within the 200 ft. Rivers Protection Buffer Area. The River Protection Act protects the following significant rivers and streams in Ware:

- Ware River
- Swift River
- Flat Brook
- Muddy Brook
- King Brook
- Penny Brook
- Beaver Brook

The Wetlands Act offers additional protection of lands in the area between 100 feet and 200 feet of the mean high water mark of a qualifying stream or river. However, this outer riparian zone is susceptible to limited development in certain instances. Development activity within the innermost 100' is limited by the Wetlands Protection Act and Rivers Protection Act. Ware currently has no local rivers protection bylaw.

Riparian areas are those vegetated lands adjacent to water sources. This juncture of land and water attracts a range of species and tends to mark a transition zone between habitats. As such, these corridors link one habitat to another.

The value in maintaining vegetative cover and uninterrupted riparian corridors goes beyond wildlife preservation. These corridors and wetlands provide many other significant public health benefits for the entire community. These benefits include:

- Flood mitigation for agricultural crops and structures by storing and slowing runoff;
- Water supply protection, through filtration of pollutants. (Studies by the Environmental Protection Agency show that over 75% of phosphorus and nitrogen can be filtered in riparian areas adjacent to farmland)
- Erosion control by absorbing and slowing down storm runoff, these storage areas reduce erosion that results from fast flowing water;
- Groundwater replenishment;
- Stormwater management and regulation of water levels in watersheds;
- Open space corridors and recreational opportunities, such as fishing, boating, and hunting.

A great diversity of species is dependent upon the wetlands and riparian areas in Ware. Maintaining the integrity of wetlands and riparian corridors with vegetated cover is important to:

- Provide shelter for various species;
- Provide protected corridors for movement between and among adjacent habitats;
- Provide food source;
- Provide permanently flowing water sources;
- Provide nesting and breeding places.

If these corridors are disturbed or interrupted, damage to habitat and species population will result. This holds true for common species as well as rare and endangered species. Man-made disruptions that have impacts on the habitat include:

- Roads
- Parking lots
- Residential lots, where domestic animals can threaten wildlife;
- Large commercial developments;
- Manicured lawns, which minimize protected cover and generation of food resources.

## **Wetlands**

There are approximately 396 acres of wetlands in Ware. Wetland habitats in town occur primarily along the streams and rivers as well as in lands adjacent to the major ponds in Ware. If open waters are included in this accounting, the total acreage of wetlands in Ware rises to 4,117. These wetlands and flood areas are shown on Ware's Water Resources Map.

Currently, development of some wetland areas in Ware is limited by the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. However, Ware currently has no local wetlands bylaw, and as a result, protection of these critical natural areas is not guaranteed.

Wetlands include rivers, ponds, swamps, wet meadows, beaver ponds, and land within the FEMA-defined 100-year flood area. Wetland areas are home to frogs, fish, freshwater clams and mussels, beaver, muskrats, great blue herons, waterfowl, and bitterns.

Wetlands are specialized habitat areas that are always wet or are wet for extended periods of time during the year. There are many types of wetlands including:

- Marshes – These are predominantly open, waterlogged areas
- Swamps – These are predominantly wooded waterlogged areas
- Vernal Pools – These are confined depressions that fill seasonally (at least 2 continuous months)
- Ponds – These are naturally water-filled areas or those areas created by dams
- Riparian Areas – The area where the water and the land meet
- Streams and River – These wetland areas include bordering vegetated wetlands identified and protected under the state law.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts regulates activities in and around wetlands in Ware through the Wetlands Protection Act – a state law enforced by the local Conservation Commission. Wetlands protected by the act are primarily those that border the streams, rivers and ponds in the town. These 'bordering vegetated wetlands' provide critical wildlife habitat and play a critical role in maintain water quality by serving as natural filters for nutrients, toxins, and sediment that would otherwise move directly into surface and ground waters. Isolated wetlands – at least 1000 square feet in size – are also protected by the state regulations.

Wetlands also serve as temporary storage areas for flood waters allowing the water to percolate slowly into the ground rather than run off into streams and rivers quickly and violently.

## **Groundwater Recharge**

Ware's primary wells at the Barnes Street wellfield are recharged from the Muddy Brook aquifer in east-central Ware. The Dismal Swamp well is recharged from the Ware River aquifer.

## **Water Supply**

Ware's water supply system relies on two sources and serves approximately 70 percent of town residents. The town relies mostly on one town-operated Barnes Street groundwater well and supplements this with groundwater from the Dismal Swamp well. The town has a wellhead protection bylaw, and it was updated to meet DEP requirements set forth in 310 CMR 22.21(2). The town performs regular inspections of land within the Zone I, but does not own or control all of the Zone 1 land and does not have a Wellhead Protection Plan.

The town has a Water Supply Protection zoning overlay district, which covers 8,430 acres, or 33 % of the town. This district includes the aquifer recharge areas for both the Barnes Street wells and Dismal Swamp well.

## **Non-community Water Systems**

The majority of the town is served by a public water supply system. Ware has one non-community water systems, a non-transient non-community (NTNC) system at a mobile home park, and no transient non-community water systems (TNC).

## **Sanitary Sewer and Wastewater Discharges**

Ware's wastewater treatment plant and public sewer system serve primarily the downtown and central business district. Sewers serve about 1500 homes and approximately 4500-5000 residents. According to the Water Superintendent, the wastewater treatment plant and most of the sewer system is aging and is in need of maintenance attention. The system has not experienced any major breakdowns recently, but is very old. Of particular concern are the old vitrified clay sewer pipes which still exist in some areas of town. There are also areas served by asbestos cement pipe and newer PVC plastic pipe.

All outlying areas of Ware are served by on-site septic systems. Ware has many areas of poorly draining soils, and consequently proper on-site sewage disposal is handicapped by this problem. Stormwater management is also handled on-site although in most cases stormwater management and erosion control has not been addressed formally, since the town has no stormwater bylaws.

In order to comply with federal Environmental Protection Agency Phase 2 Stormwater regulations, Ware should develop bylaws for regulating three areas of stormwater management and erosion control:

1. Construction-related runoff and erosion
2. Post-construction runoff
3. Illicit connections to the town's stormwater system

## Potential Pollution Sources

Very few areas in Ware possess soils that have good drainage characteristics required for proper on-site sewage disposal. Septic tank problems have been reported in the Beaver Lake area, on Kingsberry Lane and in the Anna and King Street area adjacent to Muddy Brook.

Other potential pollution sources include:

- the sand and gravel operation off Palmer Road on the banks of the Ware River;
- the municipal landfill site located off Robbins Road in the floodplain of the Ware River;
- urban runoff from large parking lots and other paved areas;
- highway road salting and salt storage areas.

## Floodplains

The 100-year floodplain is defined as an area with a 1% chance of flooding in a given year. The floodplain serves as a critical habitat for many plant and animal species and provides some of the most fertile soils in the region. Areas in the 100-year flood zone in Ware are primarily those lands adjacent to and including the open water areas at:

- Ware River
- Swift River
- Flat Brook
- Muddy Brook
- King Brook
- Penny Brook

Not including open water areas, there are 4,945 acres of 100-year floodplain in town. Protective regulations and disincentives that limit development in the floodplain exist at several levels:

- ⇒ Ware's zoning bylaw contains effective regulations that can control development in these critical areas. If properly enforced, Ware's Floodplain Overlay District should effectively prevent residential and commercial development in floodplains.
- ⇒ Lending institutions require flood insurance for those structures built in the 100-year flood zone. Although the consumer cost of this federally-supported insurance program is relatively inexpensive, some prospective homeowners simply do not want to take on this added burden. The town should, however, consider the role of the lender in guiding development in these areas and be proactive in its approach to educating the loan officers and boards of the effect of floodplain development.
- ⇒ The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act limits the impacts of construction and alteration activities in the floodplain through its local enforcement by the Conservation Commission.
- ⇒ The State Building Code requires the elevation of structures in the floodway—the floor of the lowest habitable area in the structure must be above the base elevation for floodwaters during a 100-year storm event. The code also reinforces the overlay district regulations by prohibiting any change in the flood storage capacity of the area.



## Water Supply Assessment

Protecting water resources is a key part of any long-range municipal planning effort that ensures the long-term environmental and economic health of a community or group of communities. The following six planning concepts outline a responsible approach to community water resources:

1. Use water efficiently.
2. Keep water near its point of withdrawal.
3. Protect current and future water supplies.
4. Protect natural water resource areas.
5. Develop a single plan for meeting water, wastewater and stormwater needs.
6. Use appropriate treatment for water, wastewater, and non-point source pollution, emphasizing pollution prevention as the best alternative.

## Water Supply Sources and Quality

Ware's primary source of water supply comes from groundwater sources at the Barnes Street wells and the Dismal Swamp well. The capacity of the Barnes Street wells have been upgraded. Approximately 6800 residents (70% of total) are served by public water supply in Ware, while the remainder of residents (30%) rely on private, on-site drinking water wells. There is a private well serving a mobile home park on Monson Turnpike Road.

**Table 1-4: Water Supply Sources in Ware**

Type/Name	Source ID #	Location	Pumping Rate	Safe Yield
Barnes Street – Driven Wells 1/2/3	1309000-01G	Barnes Street		1.5 mgd
Well #4 (02G) Snow Pond	1309000-02G	n.a.		n.a.
Well #1	1309001-01G	n.a.		n.a.
Dismal Swamp Well	1309000-03G	Gilbertville Road		.585 mgd
Great Lakes Camps – TNC well	2124007-01G	n.a.	2,000 gpd	n.a.
TOTALS				2.085 mgd

Sources: Pioneer Valley Water Action Plan and Ware Water Superintendent

Some water quality issues affect Ware's water supply system. The Barnes Street wells have experienced elevated coliform counts, due to unknown sources, and the town is now chlorinating that supply. Groundwater is high in iron and manganese at Ware's wells, resulting in corrosion problems and brown stains on dishes and appliances. The town is investigating possible solutions, including building a filtration plant. There is some concern about the multiple gas stations located downgradient from the Barnes Street wells, which may be using gasoline additives such as MBTE.

Previously, Ware's water system was limited by pipe size. However, in recent years, many of the older 6" mains have been upgraded, using Community Development Block Grant funds.

There are 2300 residential and commercial meters installed in Ware.

## Water Budget

Ware's public water supply system serves approximately 7,000 people, about 70% of the town's population. Individual on-site wells serve the remainder of Ware's population.

Ware currently has a substantial water surplus of 1.00 mgd, based on a safe yield of 2.10 mgd from both town wells, and an average day demand of 1.10 mgd. This water surplus is projected to continue through the year 2020, decreasing slightly to .93 mgd in 2020, based on projected population growth.

## Land Use Assessment

### Land Use Change and Development Trends

A brief discussion of land use trends in Ware is useful in understanding the impacts of development on the natural environment over the past three decades.

**Table 1-5: Land Use Change 1971 vs. 1999**

Land Use	Acres 1971	Acres 1999	Percent Change
Cropland	1,154	997	-13%
Pasture	991	840	-15%
Forest	16,673	15,789	-5%
Wetland	381	396	+3%
Mining	33	30	-9%
Open Land	416	389	-6%
Participation Recreation	153	164	+7%
Spectator Recreation	0	0	0%
Water-Based Recreation	2	2	0%
Residential (multi family)	9	44	<b>+388%</b>
Residential (high density < 1/4 acre lots)	256	284	+28%
Residential (medium density 1/4 to 1/2 acre lots)	530	708	+33%
Residential (low density, > 1/2 acre lots)	733	1607	<b>+119%</b>
Commercial	94	140	+49%
Industrial	93	100	+7%
Urban Open Land	265	267	+1%
Transportation	34	34	0%
Waste Disposal	28	52	<b>+85%</b>
Water	3722	3721	0%
Woody Perennial	10	12	+20%
Totals	25,586	25,586	

Source: PVPC, Mass GIS (1999 data)

Despite the continued land conversion in Ware, most of the land remains in forested and agricultural uses. Approximately 82% of the 18,525 acres of land consist of forest and agricultural lands. The remaining 18% of the land is consumed by residential uses and water resources. However, the 388% increase of residential multifamily residents and the 119% increase of low density residential parcels represent significant growth since 1971. The landfill has also grown 85% during the period 1971-1999.

### Current Zoning

Ware is currently zoned to encourage large areas of rural residential development on large lots (i.e. suburban sprawl). The vast majority of town (92%) is zoned Rural Residential or Rural Quabbin. Since zoning can be considered a snapshot of a community's future, the town is currently planned to build out in a low density pattern of residential sprawl.

The entire Route 32 corridor from downtown Ware to the Palmer town line is zoned Highway Commercial, which will promote development of an auto-oriented commercial strip along that area. The town should consider split-zoning the Route 32 corridor, to prevent an extensive commercial strip from evolving. Fortunately, most of the Route 9 corridor is protected from commercial strip development due to its residential zoning.

**Table 1-6: Ware Zoning**

<b>Zoning District</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Town</b>
RR1 Rural Residential 1	6,196	24.2%
RR2 Rural Residential 2	6,904	27.0%
RR3 Rural Residential 3	394	1.5%
RR4 Rural Residential 4	2,000	7.8%
RQ Rural Quabbin	8,200	32.1%
RB1 Rural Business 1	358	1.4%
RB2 Rural Business 2	296	1.2%
I Industrial	95	.4%
DTR Downtown Residential	590	2.3%
DTC Downtown Commercial	78	.3%
HC Highway Commercial	470	1.8%

Source: PVPC map of Ware Zoning

## Build-out Analysis

A build-out analysis was completed for Ware by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission in 2002. This analysis illustrates the impacts of “building out” all developable land in Ware to the maximum extent allowed under the town’s current zoning. Table 1-6 illustrates the results of this analysis.

**Table 1-7: Ware Build-out Analysis**

<b>Population Impacts</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Build-out</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Population	9,707	27,848	18,141
Students	1,350	3,866	2,516
Households	4,336	11,422	7,086
Additional Resources Needed			
Residential Water (gallons per day)		1,428,415	
Commercial and Industrial Water (gallons per day)		67,827	
Total Solid Waste (tons per year)		9,306	
Non-Recyclable Waste (tons per year)		6,618	
Recyclable Waste (tons per year)		2,688	
Roadway (miles)		115	

Source: Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and PVPC

## Brownfields

No sites in Ware are listed on the US EPA's *Waste Site Cleanup and Reuse in New England* list. Twenty-seven sites were listed on the Mass DEP Bureau of Waste Site Clean-up as of October 2002. Twenty of the sites were being actively managed and are not considered potential brownfields. Four sites were in default classification due to lack of submittal of required documentation, one site was unclassified due to timeliness problems, and one was unclassified due to lack of submittal of required documentation. These sites may be potential brownfields and their rehabilitation may provide the community with additional land for affordable housing or other uses (Source: US Environmental Protection Agency, MA Department of Environmental Protection).

**Table 1-8: Water Supply Supply and Demand - History and Projections**

Year	Popul.	Popul. Served	Per Capita Consump. (gpcd)	Avg. Day Demand (mgd)	Max. Day Demand (mgd)	Safe Yield (mgd)	Surplus or Deficit for ADD	Services
1980	8,953	8,416	116	.97	1.40	1.24	.27	2336
1990	9,808	7,704	140	1.08	1.60	1.24	.16	n.a.
2000	9,707	7,000	157	1.10	1.60	2.10	1.00	2300
2010	10,039*	7,238*	157*	1.13*	1.60*	2.10*	.97*	n.a.
2020	10,586*	7,484*	157*	1.17*	1.60*	2.10*	.93*	n.a.

\*Projected

Source: Pioneer Valley Water Action Plan, Southampton Water Superintendent, Discerning the Future (PVPC, 2003)

In the 1990's, Ware had a water supply deficit in times of maximum daily demand. However, with the development of a second town well, the Dismal Swamp well, the town has addressed this problem, and provided a secondary water supply source in the event of problems with the primary source.

## Existing Protection Measures

Ware has undertaken the following measures to protect its water supply areas:

- adopted a Aquifer Protection Overlay zoning district to protect both the aquifer recharge area for the town's wells;
- purchased 35 acres of land around Barnes wellfield;
- purchased 30 acres of land around Dismal Swamp well.

Ware has not adopted specific regulations to conserve water.

Ware has no existing regular or emergency interconnections to other municipalities, to provide water in the event of shortage. Potential connections exist with Palmer's Bondsville District. Lines extend from Ware to the town boundary with Palmer at two locations, Route 32 and Bacon Street.

Ware should set acquire and set aside some land for future water supply purposes, to address the town's future growth. The state Department of Environmental Protection's Aquifer Land Acquisition program can be helpful in purchasing lands to protect existing supplies.

## Open Space and Resource Protection Strategies

This section includes an assessment and ranking of strategies for protecting open space and natural resources in Ware, as well as a summary of recommendations made in previous plans for Ware.

## Recommendations from Previous Plans

The 2002 Ware Strategic Plan, Guiding the Future of Ware, included the following recommendations:

### Issue 1/Strategy 1: Clean protect and maintain the water supply.

Actions suggested:

- ⇒ Monitor the former landfill site, other known hazardous waste sites and failing septic systems;
- ⇒ Enforce regulations preventing water contamination and seek penalties for violators;
- ⇒ Hold annual, volunteer "Clean-up Days" with assistance from businesses, clubs and town departments;
- ⇒ Adopt a local Wetlands Protection Bylaw to enhance the protection of local wetland resources;

- ⇒ Review existing Water Supply Protection and Groundwater Protection Bylaws for possible improvements to strengthen protection of town water resources;
- ⇒ Enhance Urban Stormwater Runoff Bylaw to protect quality of water resources and sensitive natural areas.
- ⇒ Consider amending parking regulations to allow for use of compact spaces to reduce impervious surfaces.

**Issue 1/Strategy 2: Conserve land.**

**Actions suggested:**

- ⇒ Manage town forest lands by allowing some areas to naturalize and by providing opportunities for hiking, biking and logging;
- ⇒ Explore possibilities of permanently protecting Coy Hill land;
- ⇒ Encourage open space preservation through local tax incentives such as encouraging use of Chapter 61 and 61a provisions;
- ⇒ Organize a local land trust;
- ⇒ Adopt a Creative Open Space Development Bylaw;
- ⇒ Institute a Transfer of Development Rights program

**Issue 1/Strategy 3: Improve and maintain Grenville Park.**

**Actions suggested:**

- ⇒ Upgrade the existing facilities including picnic areas, band stand (and field for audience), tennis courts, playground, and ball fields.
- ⇒ Upgrade or repair roads within park.
- ⇒ Add new features to improve park including boat launch, bike trails, enhanced landscaping (forest and plantings), and benches along the roads/trails for resting
- ⇒ Ensure adequate staffing and resources to maintain park and any new enhancements
- ⇒ Review existing status of trust agreement for the park to ensure that park is maintained for future residents of the town.
- ⇒ Install more waste containers and distribute them evenly around the park
- ⇒ Keep the restrooms open for all park users

**Issue 1/Strategy 4: Provide a Broad Range of High Quality Recreational Programs.**

**Actions suggested:**

- ⇒ Develop passive recreation opportunities within lands administered by the town including development of trails and wildlife-viewing areas in the Town Forest, along the Swift and Ware Rivers, and in future wetland conservation areas adjacent to the Quabbin Reservoir.
- ⇒ Develop recreation programs that cater to adult and elderly residents.
- ⇒ Secure space for indoor recreation activities

**Issue 1/Strategy 5: Manage Open Space and Recreation Cohesively and Effectively.**

**Actions suggested:**

- ⇒ Create an Open Space Committee comprised of individuals representing town boards and other public and private organizations concerned with open space and recreation to provide citizen input into management of existing open space areas as well as acquisition of potential town open space areas.
- ⇒ Consolidate all town recreation facilities' management and administration under one entity.
- ⇒ Hire a part-time Recreation Coordinator to provide professional support for town recreation programs and facilities.

**Issue 1/Strategy 6: Acquire New Lands for Recreation and Open Space.**

**Actions suggested:**

- ⇒ Follow the Open Space and Recreation Plan's maps for possible land acquisition, working toward a town-wide greenway system. Pay particular attention to the Ware River Valley Greenway Trails Project, already in progress.

- ⇒ Focus acquisition efforts on those lands that would house new recreation activities in town.
- ⇒ Inform the public about protection possibilities for their land such as land trusts, conservation restrictions, land gifts, APRs, etc.

**Issue 1/Strategy 7: Increase Public Awareness of Open Space and Recreation Resources.**

Actions suggested:

- ⇒ Develop a town-wide signage program that describes and directs people to recreation facilities (such as trails, water bodies, and playgrounds).
- ⇒ Create innovative fund-raising projects or initiatives to raise money and increase awareness of open space and recreation programs and facilities.
- ⇒ Offer town-wide special event programs to foster a stronger sense of community within the Town and to make residents aware of the open space and recreation resources available to them.

**Ware's Open Space and Recreation Plan (October, 1997)** recommends the following Action Plan to conserve open space and promote recreation:

- Develop passive recreation. Create and maintain a trail network through town forest lands
- Develop recreation for adult and elderly residents.
- Develop indoor recreation activities.
- Create an Open Space Committee.
- Consolidate recreation administration under Ware Recreation Commission.
- Hire a full-time Recreation Director
- Acquire land, working toward a townwide greenway system, including acquiring the abandoned rail bed along the Ware River.
- Pursue acquisition of lands for new recreation activities;
- Inform public about land protection possibilities.
- Develop a town-wide recreation signage program.
- Create innovative fundraising.
- Offer townwide special event programs.

**The Recreational Facilities Plan (1994)**, included the following recommendations:

- Maintenance improvements to Water Tower Field, Ware High School fields, South Street fields;
- Appointment of a townwide Recreation Director;
- Improved communications between various recreation leagues;
- Acquisition of the Lincoln property adjacent to Ware Municipal Airport for recreation
- Expansion of Memorial Field to the Ware Gas Company;
- Expansion of Ware High School to the Desantis property.

## Evaluation and Ranking of Strategies

In assessing potential open space and resource protection strategies for Ware, the Ware Community Development Committee considered 31 potential strategies, including the following:

**Table 1-9: Potential Open Space and Resource Protection Strategies**

Acquire Open Space thru Grants and Local Appropriations
Adopt the Community Preservation Act
Create a Local Land Fund or Open Space Fund
Encourage Dedicated Open Space in New Developments
Adopt Natural Resource Protection Overlay Zones
Adopt Environmental Performance Standards
Encourage Participation in Chapter 61 Reduced Property Tax Assessment Programs
Preserve Public Waterfront Access
Adopt Transfer of Development Rights Bylaws
Discourage Residential Sprawl onto Farmland
Adopt By-right Cluster or Traditional Neighborhood Development Bylaws
Prioritize Farmland for Preservation
Adopt Local Growth Caps or Building Permit Limits
Preserve Farm Operations
Create Parks to Serve Neighborhoods
Secure Grants to Build Trails
Zoning for Bicycle and Pedestrian Features
Create Bike Lanes and Amenities
Adopt Water Supply Protection Zoning
Reduce Non-point Source Water Pollution
Adopt Stormwater Runoff Bylaws
Adopt Reduced Roadsalt Policies
Establish Underground Storage Tank and Hazardous Materials Bylaws
Develop Land Acquisition Programs for Watershed and Aquifer Recharge Areas
Adopt Subdivision Regulations for Water Supply Protection
Develop Spill Response Plans
Inventory Emergency Intermunicipal Water Connections
Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Developments
Promote Compact, Mixed-use Development
Control Commercial Strip Development
Improve Infrastructure in Town Center and Limit Infrastructure Expansions

See Appendix A for complete descriptions of these strategies.

## Top Ten Strategies for Ware

The following open space and resource protection strategies are presented in order of priority, as recommended to the town by the Ware Community Development Committee:

- 1) Adopt the Community Preservation Act
- 2) Acquire Open Space thru Grants and Local Appropriations
- 3) Control Commercial Strip Development
- 4) Promote Compact, Mixed-use Development
- 5) Discourage Residential Sprawl onto Farmland
- 6) Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Developments
- 7) Adopt Local Growth Caps or Building Permit Limits
- 8) Preserve Farm Operations
- 9) Encourage Dedicated Open Space in New Developments
- 10) Preserve Public Waterfront Access

A complete list of the 31 ranked strategies can be found in Appendix A.

## Description of Top Ten Strategies for Ware

### **Strategy #1: Adopt the Community Preservation Act**

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is probably the most powerful tool available to municipalities to preserve open space. CPA is enabling legislation designed to help communities plan ahead for sustainable growth and raise funds to achieve their goals. CPA allows towns and cities to approve a referendum allowing them to levy a community-wide property tax surcharge of up to 3 percent for the purpose of creating a local Community Preservation Fund and qualifying for state matching funds. (For example, a CPA surcharge of 1 percent on a real property tax bill of \$1,000 would be \$10, or 1 percent of \$1,000, per year. The surcharge can be in any increment up to 3 percent.) The state will provide matching funds to communities approving CPA. The Act provides that communities may exempt the first \$100,000 of Residential value, commercial or industrial properties or low-income housing, from this surcharge.

The Community Preservation Act provides new funding sources which can be used to address three core community concerns:

1. Acquisition and preservation of open space
2. Creation and support of affordable housing
3. Acquisition and preservation of historic buildings and landscapes

A minimum of 10% of the annual revenues of the fund must be used for each of the three core community concerns. The remaining 70% can be allocated for any combination of the allowed uses, or for land for recreational use. This gives each community the opportunity to determine its priorities, plan for its future, and have the funds to make those plans happen.

The CPA has been adopted by seven Pioneer Valley communities to date, including Agawam, Amherst, Easthampton, Hampden, Southampton, Southwick and Westfield.

A forecast of revenues that could be generated by the CPA surcharge in a typical suburban town, under several alternative scenarios is as follows:



**Table 1-10: Potential Annual CPA Revenues Generated**

Percent Surcharge	No Exemptions	Residential Exemption on first \$100,000 in value
1%	\$140,185	\$44,550
2%	\$280,371	\$89,101
3%	\$420,557	\$133,651

Note: Revenues above do not include state matching funds

Source: South Hadley CPA Exploratory Committee

The impact of CPA on the typical taxpayer is illustrated in the following table:

**Table 1-11: CPA Impact on a Typical Taxpayer**

Sample Assessed Housing Value	\$200,000		
Municipal Tax Rate	\$16.00		
Amount Subject to Surcharge	\$3,200		
CPA Surcharge	3%	2%	1%
<b>Amount Paid Toward CPA Fund</b>	<b>\$96</b>	<b>\$64</b>	<b>\$32</b>

Source: Mass. Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

*Lead Group: Community Preservation Act Committee, including representatives from the Conservation Commission, Historical Commission and Community Development Committee*

### **Strategy #2: Acquire Open Space Thru Grants and Local Appropriations**

Build a townwide greenbelts and blueways network, which are implemented through municipal open space acquisition programs, in cooperation with land trust and non-profit groups. Apply for grants from programs such as: Self-help; Urban Self-help, Land and Water Conservation Program, among others. Establish municipal open space acquisition funds with annual appropriations. Hire local or regional open space coordinators to oversee implementation of open space acquisitions.

*Lead Group: Parks and Recreation Department with support from Community Development Office and Conservation Commission*

### **Strategy #3: Control Commercial Strip Development**

- a.** Change zoning along major highway corridors to prevent commercial strips from developing, and encourage clustering of new commercial development in nodes.
- b.** Minimize automobile dependency by creating new commercial centers which are transit-friendly and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists and transit.
- c.** Replace highway business zoning districts which extend along the entire length of highways, and create multiple zoning districts for specific purposes. For example, districts can include a limited business district; historic village center business district, multi-family residential district, auto mall district, and light industrial research park district. Most retail uses should be clustered in compact, pedestrian-friendly nodes or centers.
- d.** Establish business zoning requirements to create a building streetline along arterials, such as maximum setbacks, parking in the rear of buildings, sidewalks and street trees in the front of buildings.
- e.** Focus new, large-scale development along highways in Planned business villages with on-site housing and pedestrian-friendly site plans
- f.** Establish commercial development performance standards for all highway business uses, including "big box" retailers. Create standards for landscaping, screening, signage, curb cuts, parking, pedestrian and transit access, architectural design, lighting and environment impacts.
- g.** Discourage drive-in services.
- h.** Adopt traffic management bylaws, including requirements for trip reduction plans and traffic impact statements for large-scale developments.
- i.** Adopt regulations to require businesses to include sidewalks, internal pedestrian circulation systems and stronger pedestrian connections to adjacent areas. Locate transit stops immediately adjacent to shopping and work entrances with covered waiting areas.

**Strategy #4: Promote Compact, Mixed-use Development near Existing Town Centers and in Designated New Growth Centers**

- a. Provide incentives for urban infill, clustered residential and mixed use villages within or immediately surrounding town centers or growth centers in order to increase pedestrian/bicycle access, jobs and affordable housing.
- b. Adopt mixed use commercial zoning for traditional Main Street shopping districts, with stores lined up along sidewalks and parking to the rear and along sidewalks and parking to the rear and along the curb. Building height should be 2-4 stories, with offices or apartments above first-floor shops.
- c. Encourage mixed use projects, which combine residential, retail, office, and public institutional uses in compact, pedestrian-friendly villages or clusters. Mixed use projects provide opportunities for people to live in close proximity to work, or to walk from the office to shopping or restaurants.
- d. Create density-based zoning incentives to encourage development in growth centers, such as smaller lot sizes and setbacks (or no minimum lot size or frontage requirements), and increased heights.
- e. Create use-based zoning incentives, which encourage uses such as institutions, museums, schools, public buildings and elderly and handicapped congregate housing to locate in growth centers, rather than in outlying areas.
- f. Retrofit suburban shopping centers to become community centers, by adopting zoning which requires new buildings at the street line, with pedestrian connections across parking lots, street trees and streetscaping.
- g. Control sprawl outside existing town centers and growth centers by creating disincentives for development.
- h. Establish lower land use zoning intensities and restrict uses which are not appropriate for rural areas.
- i. Commercial development should be located in centers, not in auto-dependent, stand-alone buildings.
- j. Establish policies restricting extensions of public sewer, water and other infrastructure.

*Lead Group: Planning Board*

**Strategy #5: Discourage Residential Sprawl onto Farmland**

The purpose of this strategy is to discourage urban sprawl, particularly large-lot residential development in farmland areas. Zoning regulations and town policies on infrastructure extensions can reduce large lot development in outlying agricultural areas and encourage more compact development in town or village centers. Large sprawl subdivisions can be discouraged on rural farmland by:

- Establishing special permit requirements for major residential developments over ten units in size;
- Adopting phased growth limits that favor compact village centers and cluster development over sprawling development in rural areas;
- Adopting by-right farmland cluster zoning bylaws as the development type of choice, if growth does have to occur on farmland;
- Limiting extensions of roads, sewer and water lines into rural and agricultural areas;
- Working with developers to identify and achieve shared goals by moving away from the "reactionary mode" of response to development proposals;

*Lead Group: Planning Board*

**Strategy #6: Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs)**

Create incentives in zoning and subdivision regulations to promote pedestrian-friendly TNDs, which have grid-like street patterns with sidewalks and street trees, medium to high density housing, nearby public open space and are walking distance to shops and services.

Adopt TND residential zoning regulations which permit lots of one-quarter to one-ninth acre with modest front yard setbacks of 15 to 20 feet. Homes are clustered around public open spaces, such as town commons, greenbelts, parks or playgrounds. Houses are predominantly single-family homes, with some row houses, apartments and accessory apartments mixed in. Garages or parking is to the rear or along alleys. Convenient corner stores should be allowed in residential neighborhoods, allowing residents to walk to the store.

Adopt TND subdivision regulations which encourage narrower streets with two ten-foot travel lanes for traffic calming, gridded streets for traffic flow improvements, sidewalks, shade trees planted at twenty-foot intervals between streets and sidewalks, and on-street visitor parking.

*Lead Group: Planning Board*

**Strategy #7: Adopt Local Growth Caps or Building Permit Limits.**

Growth moratoria or building permit limits can be effective tools for limiting development in farmland areas and giving communities time to plan for growth. Growth moratoria are temporary in nature, and allow a community to stop development for a limited period of time. In order to stand up to legal challenge, such moratoria are usually linked to resolving a specific community infrastructure need, such as expanding a sewage treatment plant, adding a new town well or adding school capacity.

Building permit limits or growth cap can be adopted on a longer-term basis to slow community growth. Hadley and Amherst have adopted building permit limits. Hadley's "Rate of Development" bylaw has been in effect since 1988, but it is currently being challenged in court. It limits the growth of subdivisions to 10 percent of their total available building lots per year. Amherst's "Phased Growth" bylaw limits town-wide residential growth to 125 units per year. It also established detailed criteria for evaluating and permitting development proposals that best meet community goals for affordable housing; open space and farmland preservation; mixed use; and aquifer protection.

*Lead Group: Community Development Committee*

**Strategy #8: Preserve Farm Operations**

Create economic and tax incentives to keep farms in business. Options include: "right-to-farm" districts; zoning to promote farm-related business; targeted marketing programs for locally-grown farm products.

*Lead Group: Community Development Committee*

**Strategy #9: Encourage Dedicated Open Space in New Developments**

Work with developers to strongly encourage dedication of protected open space, parks or recreational lands in close proximity to major residential developments, or a financial contribution to a municipal open space fund.

*Lead Group: Planning Board*

**Strategy #10 : Preserve Public Waterfront Access**

Preserve waterfront lands (or easements) for public access and open space to the maximum extent feasible, in order to provide waterfront trails, parks, boat and fishing access.

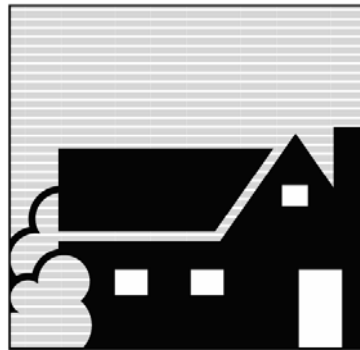
*Lead Group: Community Development Committee*



## Community Development Plan

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### HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT



Town of  
Ware

Prepared by:  
The Pioneer Valley  
Planning Commission

This document was  
Developed using funds  
Pursuant to Massachusetts  
Executive Order 418 Program

# Element Two: Housing

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## Introduction

This element is an assessment of existing data on current housing conditions in Ware, based on information from sources such as US Census (for income, housing units, specific conditions, age, household size, etc.), “Banker and Tradesmen”, DHCD, board of assessors, building inspector (for population trends, income levels, housing costs, vacancy rates, age and condition of housing stock, and building permit data, etc.) and Housing Authority (subsidized units). *Expected Product: Housing inventory*

The section also compares and analyzes the gap between housing supply and demand for low, moderate and middle-income households. The analysis will examine the affordability gap between people needing housing and the income required to purchase or rent homes in the community. It will include an assessment of trends in the number of households on waiting lists for subsidized housing, gaps in housing types (low-cost rental, first-time homebuyer, assisted living, etc.), and the types of people affected by housing gaps (elderly, municipal employees, entry-level professionals, handicapped, homeless, persons needing supportive services, teen mothers, etc.).

## Housing Strategies

### Zoning Strategies

See Appendix B for a complete list of housing strategies offered to Massachusetts communities.

The Community Development Committee prioritized the following Zoning Bylaws as very important to manage future growth in the Town of Ware.

- **Cluster Zoning Regulations**
  - The Ware Planning Board is presently drafting a Cluster Zoning Regulation.
- **Phased Growth Bylaw**
  - This bylaw will help to manage the explosion of housing growth in Ware since 2000.
- **Site Plan and Site Design Approval**
  - This strategy will give the Planning Board more control when considering housing developments.
- **Village Center/Compact Growth Center Bylaw**
  - This bylaw will encourage infill in empty lots in the downtown area.
- **Planned Unit Development**
  - This PUD bylaw directs future growth and development to areas chosen by the Town of Ware.
- **Ridgeline and Hillside Protection Bylaw**
  - In order to protect important viewsheds, the Town of Ware will implement a bylaw to prohibit development in identified scenic places.

- **Affordable Housing Zoning Bylaw**
  - This bylaw will ensure that housing developments include affordable housing and Ware continues to meet the Massachusetts affordable housing mandate of 10%.

### **Future Zoning Strategies**

- **Transfer of Development Rights**

### **Non-Zoning Strategies**

- **Low Interest Loans for Septic Repairs**
- **Affordable Housing on Town-owned Land**
- **Congregate Care and Assisted Living Facilities**

## **Description of housing stock and densities**

Ware had 4,336 housing units in year 2000, an increase of 5.9% over the 4,095 housing units in 1990 (Source: 2000 U.S. Census). This reflects only moderate growth in housing production as compared to the Commonwealth as a whole (6.0% increase) and the Pioneer Valley region (4.9% increase) over the same time period. By 2003, the Town of Ware's housing units increased by 241 to a total of 4,577.



Source: EOE: Multi-family Housing, Ware, MA

Most of the housing in Ware was constructed prior to 1990. Significant growth was experienced in the 1940's, 50's, and 70's, as well as prior to 1939. The age of the housing stock remains spread over a century and 32% of the homes in Ware are more than sixty years old (Source: 2000 U.S. Census). This contrasts with the Pioneer Valley region where only 7.3% of its housing stock was built after 1989 and over 29% of the units are more than sixty years old.

Ware has a relatively high housing occupancy rate, with 93% of all housing units occupied and only 7% vacant (Source: 2000 U.S. Census). Many of the vacant units were for rent (32%). Rental housing may therefore be adequately provided in the town since so many units are vacant.

**Table 2-1: Housing Characteristics and Vacancy**

	1990		2000		% Change
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	
Total Housing Units	4,095		4,336		
Occupied Housing Units	3,836	93.7%	4,027	92.9%	5.0%
Vacant Housing Units	259	6.3%	309	7.1%	19.3%
<b>Vacant Units</b>					
For rent	93	35.9%	99	32.0%	6.5%
For sale	39	15.1%	39	12.6%	0.0%
Rented or sold, but not occupied	12	4.6%	18	5.8%	50.0%
For seasonal or recreational use	40	15.4%	51	16.5%	27.5%
For migrant workers	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Other vacant	75	29.0%	102	33.0%	36.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

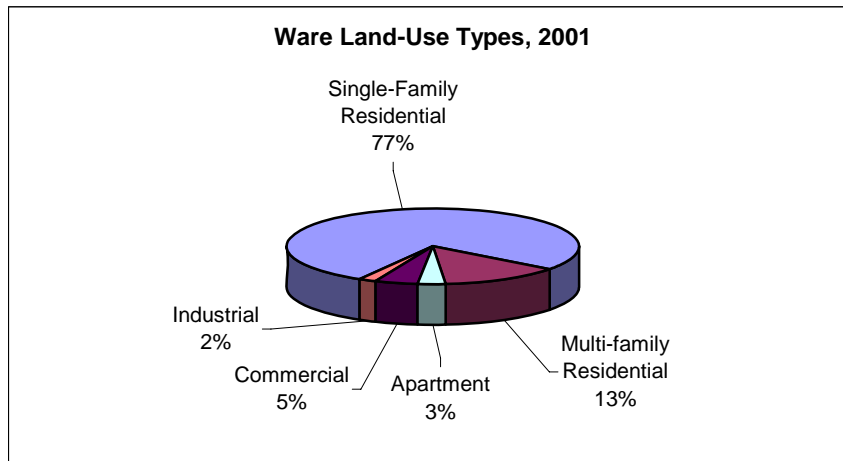
**Table 2-2: Age of Housing**

	Ware		Pioneer Valley Region	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Total Housing Units	4,337		244,520	
Occupied Housing Units	4,028		231,279	
<b>Year Structure Built</b>				
1999 to March 2000	30	0.7%	1,855	0.8%
1995 to 1998	143	3.3%	6,513	2.7%
1990 to 1994	216	5.0%	9,686	4.0%
1980 to 1989	587	13.5%	25,070	10.3%
1970 to 1979	791	18.2%	33,707	13.8%
1960 to 1969	339	7.8%	32,786	13.4%
1940 to 1959	832	19.2%	62,544	25.6%
1939 or earlier	1,399	32.3%	72,359	29.6%
<b>Year Householder Moved into Unit</b>				
1999 to March 2000	567	14.1%	38,593	16.7%
1995 to 1998	997	24.8%	60,181	26.0%
1990 to 1994	642	15.9%	33,415	14.4%
1980 to 1989	657	16.3%	37,819	16.4%
1970 to 1979	524	13.0%	25,429	11.0%
1969 or earlier	641	15.9%	35,842	15.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Considered by land parcels, 76.9% of Ware's land parcels are developed for single family residential uses, while 16.4% were used for multi-family residential or apartments (Source: Mass. Department of Revenue).

**Figure 2-1: Land Use**



Source: Mass. Department of Revenue

**Table 2-3: Housing Parcel Type**

	Parcels 1991	1991-2001 % Change	Parcels 2001	2001 % of Parcels
Total Parcels	2,778	5.1%	2,921	
Single-Family Residential	2,016	11.4%	2,245	76.9%
Multi-family Residential	431	(8.6%)	394	13.5%
Condominium	60	N/A	N/A	N/A
Apartment	79	8.9%	86	2.9%
Commercial	140	1.4%	142	4.9%
Industrial	52	3.8%	54	1.8%

Source: MA Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank



Most of Ware's housing units (56%) are single-family detached houses, followed by apartment complexes (22%) and duplex units (13%). The size of houses is highly variable, with the predominant size being 5 rooms (22%) or 6 rooms (20%). Almost all housing units (91.4%) in Ware have only one occupant per room.

**Table 2-4: Housing Types and Sizes**

	Ware		Pioneer Valley Region	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Total Housing Units	4,337		244,520	
<b>Units in Structure</b>				
1-unit detached	2,422	55.8%	137,915	56.4%
1-unit attached	131	3.0%	10,332	4.2%
2 units	581	13.4%	29,335	12.0%
3 or 4 units	683	15.7%	19,526	8.0%
5 to 9 units	164	3.8%	15,457	6.3%
10 to 19 units	69	1.6%	8,870	3.6%
20 or more units	56	1.3%	19,264	7.9%
Mobile home	231	5.3%	3,769	1.5%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0%	52	0.0%
<b>Rooms per Housing Unit</b>				
1 room	31	0.7%	4,212	1.7%
2 rooms	127	2.9%	10,611	4.3%
3 rooms	356	8.2%	20,520	8.4%
4 rooms	707	16.3%	41,127	16.8%
5 rooms	952	22.0%	58,567	24.0%
6 rooms	882	20.3%	47,074	19.3%
7 rooms	605	13.9%	29,125	11.9%
8 rooms	334	7.7%	17,785	7.3%
9 or more rooms	343	7.9%	15,499	6.3%
<b>Occupants per Room</b>				
1.00 or less	3,965	91.4%	224,302	91.7%
1.01 to 1.50	44	1.0%	4,584	1.9%
1.51 or more	19	0.4%	2,393	1.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Ware's housing is predominantly owner occupied (65.6%), with 34.4% renter occupied.

**Table 2-5: Owner versus Renter Occupancy**

	<i>1990</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent Change (1990 to 2000)</i>
Occupied Housing Units	3,836		4,027		
Owner Occupied	2,512	65.5%	2,642	65.6%	5.2%
Renter Occupied	1,324	34.5%	1,385	34.4%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## First-time homebuyer programs

Ware did not have any first-time homebuyer loans originated in 2001 administered by MassHousing under the MassAdvantage Program.

Ware participates in the Soft Second loan program, but no households in the town have utilized the program in 2001. The Soft Second program is sponsored by the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) and the Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund (MHP) and administered by HAP, Inc. The program subsidizes a second mortgage on a home to help cover interest on the first mortgage for lower income families. (Source: MHFA and HAP, Inc.)

The income limits for the Soft Second loan program in the town of Ware are as follows:

Household Size	Maximum Income
1	\$40,039
2	\$40,039
3	\$40,039
4	\$41,700
5	\$45,000
6	\$48,350
7	\$51,700
8+	\$55,000

(Source: Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund).

The price limits for the Soft Second loan program for the town of Ware are as follows:

Property Size	Maximum Purchase Price
Condominium	\$150,000
Single Family	\$150,000
Two Family	\$180,000
Three Family	\$200,000

(Source: Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund)

## Homelessness problems

Ware does not have a homeless shelter, and because it is a rural community without a staffed housing authority, there is little data available on homelessness in Ware.

According to the Donahue Institute's Needs Assessment Report for the Hampshire County Action Commission, homelessness is an issue in the Pioneer Valley Region. Of the 172,916 individuals serviced by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, over 16,000 people (9.4% of those served by the Food Bank) identified themselves as homeless. If we consider Western Massachusetts to include Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden Counties, the total population of the region according to the 2000 Census was 814,967 individuals. The homelessness rate, according to the statistics from the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, is therefore approximately 2% in Western Massachusetts. However, homelessness may be more pronounced in more urban areas such as Springfield and Holyoke –a plausible possibility that is not reflected in the rate of homelessness based on the Food Bank statistics. The Food Bank statistics are not encompassing of all homeless persons in western Massachusetts, meaning homelessness may be a real concern in the area.

In another measurement of homelessness, as part of the 2000 Census, researchers visited all known emergency and transitional shelters in counties with at least 100 shelter beds on the same day (March 27, 2000) to gauge the relative problems of homelessness by state and county. The shelter population for Massachusetts was 5,405 individuals, including the 163 individuals sheltered in Hampshire County (102 of whom were located in Northampton). Not included in the shelter population were individuals in shelters for victims of domestic violence, nor were waiting lists for shelter beds taken into account in the survey. As the Donahue Report points out, more comprehensive services for homeless people may be available in more urban areas such as Springfield and Boston, therefore attracting homeless individuals to those areas from more rural settings such as many found in western Massachusetts.

## **Fair Housing Plan**

The Town of Ware has endorsed and adopted the Quabbin Subregional Housing Plan (submitted by fax on 7/24/02) and will participate in its implementation. Through its endorsement of the Plan, the town is committed to "... make its best effort to create affordable housing units." To measure its success, the town will "... monitor the creation of affordable units on an annual basis." While the number of units to be created is not specific at this point, the town will work to see that the number of affordable units created will "... be a reasonable share of the total created." Within the Plan, the town identifies specific steps that it will take toward the implementation of its affordable housing goals. These steps include: seeking funding for housing rehabilitation; maintaining and modernizing public housing; identifying and seeking to access resources to address housing safety and accessibility needs for elders; to address the need for smaller units for older couples; as well as renewed investment in multi-family properties.

## **Chapter 40B goal, number, type and percent of subsidized housing**

In 2001, Ware had 308 units of subsidized housing meeting the criteria for M.G.L. Chapter 40B, or 7.2% of its total housing stock (Source: PVPC, Quabbin Subregional Housing Plan).

Chapter 40B is the Comprehensive Permit law, which authorizes a housing agency or developer to obtain a single comprehensive permit for the construction of subsidized low or moderate-income housing if less than 10% of its total year-round housing in the community is subsidized low or moderate-income housing. Chapter 40B counts units subsidized under 21 different state housing assistance programs, and 13 federal housing programs, toward the 10% goal.

State programs that are included under Chapter 40B include:

- DHCD Chapter 689 Special Needs Housing
- DHCD Chapter 167 Special Needs Housing
- DHCD Chapter 705 Family Low Income Housing
- DHCD 667 Elderly/Handicapped Low Income Housing
- DHCD Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program
- DHCD Affordable Housing Trust
- DHCD Housing Innovations Fund
- DHCD Housing Stabilization Fund
- DHCD Local Initiative Program
- DHCD Individual Self Sufficiency Program
- DMR Group Homes
- DMH Group Homes
- EOHHS Facilities Consolidation Fund
- DMR/DMH community based housing
- Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund
- MassHousing 80/20 Rental Housing
- MassHousing Elder 80/20
- MassHousing Elder Choice

- MassHousing Expanding Rental Opportunities
- MassHousing Housing Starts

Federal programs that are included under Chapter 40B include:

- FHLB Affordable Housing Program
- FHLB New England Fund
- HUD HOME Program
- HUD Section 811
- HUD Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program
- HUD Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly
- HUD Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy Program
- HUD Section 8 Project-based Rental Certificate Program
- HUD Shelter Plus Care
- HUD CDBG Housing Development Support Program
- HUD CDBG Community Development Fund
- HUD Enhanced Voucher
- USDA Rural Development Section 515 program

Ware is below the state's 10% Chapter 40B goal for subsidized housing, which makes the town vulnerable to a Comprehensive Permit application, unless the town undertakes efforts to expand its supply of subsidized housing.

## **Checklist for housing certification**

The Town of Ware is currently housing certified for compliance with the housing creation goals of 2003 (Source: DHCD website).

Housing certification is important because uncertified communities are not eligible to apply for certain key state grants, including:

- Massachusetts CDBG Ready Resource Fund (RRF)
- Massachusetts CDBG Community Capital Fund (MCCF)
- Community Development Action Grants (CDAG)
- Public Works Economic Development Grants (PWED)
- Affordable Housing Trust
- Capital Improvements Preservation Fund.

In addition, housing certification can also provide communities with bonus points for the following competitive grant programs:

- Massachusetts CDBG Community Development Fund
- Self-help Program
- Massachusetts Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program
- Massachusetts Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program
- Housing Stabilization Fund
- Soft Second Loan Program
- and other programs.

In order to access the incentives established pursuant to E.O.418, a community must be housing certified by either:

- completing a housing strategy and taking steps to implement the strategy by creating housing units (Category A);
- demonstrating that it has taken steps with respect to planning, removing barriers, and creating a positive atmosphere for housing development (Category B).

Ware: As identified in its Community Action Statement and in discussions with local officials, the following needs were identified:

- Housing rehabilitation, including correction of major code violations, septic system repairs or upgrade
- Housing safety and accessibility needs especially for elders
- Smaller units suitable for older couples
- Investment in multi-family properties
- Maintain/modernize public housing

(Source: Ware Executive Order 418 Housing Certification, 2002)

## **Town of Ware**

### **Amendment to Pioneer Valley Regional Housing Plan: Quabbin Subregion**

#### **Introduction**

This Amendment to the Quabbin Subregion Housing Plan 2002 was prepared in order to comply with the FY2003 Executive Order 418 requirements for a Community Housing Strategy. The requirements were made public in July 2002, after the completion of the Subregion Housing Plan. The Amendment includes the following requirements, which were missing or incomplete in the Plan that was endorsed by the Town of Ware: Development Constraints, Infrastructure Analysis, Building Permit Growth, 2000 Census Housing Data, Quantifiable Objectives and Action Steps.

#### **Source of Development Constraints/Limitations and Whether the Community has the Ability to Mitigate**

As detailed in the Subregion Plan, twenty-nine percent (29%) of Ware's developable land is constrained by environmental factors such as slope and wetlands due to the presence of the Ware and Swift Rivers, which have carved a valley into the hilly terrain adjacent to the Mt. Holyoke Range. The existence of the Quabbin Reservoir on land adjacent to Ware requires extensive protection from over-development. Twenty-two percent (22%) of Ware's land area is under permanent protection, the majority of it being along the Reservoir. The presence of steep slopes, ledge, two rivers and the Quabbin Reservoir in the town present severe limitations to housing development. The community has few or no options to mitigate this situation.

#### **Analysis of Infrastructure (school capacity, water, sewer)**

**School Capacity:** Within the past few years, the Town of Ware has upgraded its school buildings and properties. A new Jr./Sr. high school was completed in 1998 and the former high school was substantially renovated to accommodate the middle school population. In the early 1990's, the elementary school underwent major renovations and improvements due to roofing and structural concerns. As a result of these recent improvements, grades K-12 are all held in modernized facilities on one centralized campus. The elementary school is near capacity, but has been this way for many years. There is flexibility in programming should space become an issue. The middle and high schools have sufficient existing space within their respective buildings and can accommodate additional students and programs if necessary.

**Water:** The town's water distribution system which provides water to over 65% of the town's population, is served by the Barnes Wellfield and the Dismal Swamp Wellfield. The development of the latter wellfield was just completed within the past few years. The system is served by two water storage facilities and over 20 miles of water line. Both water tanks were recently rehabilitated. Many of the antiquated and undersized waterlines in the greater downtown area have been replaced through a combination of local and MA DHCD CDF monies. The town's present and future water needs are being met.

Sewer: The town's wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) and related sewer lines serve approximately 80% of the town population. The WWTF is presently operating below capacity and has the ability to undertake additional volume. The town has replaced problem or antiquated lines using local and MA DHCD CDF monies in the greater downtown area. The town's present and future water needs are being met.

Roads: Ware has over 117 miles of road, second only to Belchertown in the Quabbin Subregion. Over 72% of these roadways are owned and maintained by the town, with the balance owned and maintained by the Massachusetts Highway Department (portions of Routes 9 and 32), Metropolitan District Commission (Quabbin Reservation), and some in private ownership. Most of Ware's roads are functionally classified as local roads. However, 8.12 miles of road are functionally classified as principal arterials, 5.06 miles as minor arterials, 5.37 miles as major collectors, and 14.47 miles as minor collectors. Ware is a member of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVRTA), which runs a fixed route shuttle within the town. The PVRTA also offers paratransit services to the elderly and disabled through the Council on Aging. Sixteen bridges are located in Ware, including one historic covered bridge which spans the Ware River connecting Ware with the Village of Gilbertville in Hardwick.

### **Annual Growth in Building Permits**

According to town records, the average number of single-family building permits issued per year during the period 1998-2003 was 36. There were no multi-family permits issued during that same time period.

### **Additional Analysis of Housing Data**

Analysis of 2000 Census data for Ware indicates that housing unit growth (5.9%) has kept pace with household growth (5.0%) during the past ten years. Growth in year round ownership units from 1990 to 2000 was 5.2% while the number of rental units grew by only 4.6%. These numbers are consistent with vacancy rate statistics. The vacancy rate for ownership units was low and remained steady for the past decade at 1.5%. However, the vacancy rate for rental units remained high at close to 7% during the same time period. The need for ownership units is greater than the need for rental units in Ware and unit growth patterns indicate that the needs are being met through ordinary market mechanisms.

Two other factors in the 2000 Census indicate that affordable housing is available in the town of Ware. Seventy percent (70%) of owners use 30% or less of their household income for monthly owner costs. Another six percent (6%) pay between 30% and 35% leaving 24% paying owner costs of more than 35% of their household income. Similar statistics exist for rental housing. Forty-eight percent (48%) pay less than \$500 per month for rent. Another forty-five percent (45%) pay between \$500 and \$749 per month. The majority of renters (93%) in Ware pay less than \$750 per month for housing with about half of that number actually paying less than \$500 per month.

### **Other Notable Factors**

The town of Ware, through its ZBA, issued permits to a housing management corporation for the construction of approximately 80 units of low and moderate income rental housing in the greater downtown Ware area. The \$11.5 million development will consist of a few one-bedroom units with the balance being two- and three-bedroom units. Rents are estimated to be in the \$570 - \$800 per month range. Based upon the existing rent levels in Ware, it is presumed that many of these units will be occupied by moderate income households. Construction is expected to begin in the summer of 2003 and be completed by the spring of 2004.

### **Quantifiable Objectives for Producing Housing Which Meets the Community's Needs**

Based on an analysis of the housing needs identified in the Subregion Plan, the number of new affordable units created in the past three years (according to E.O. 418 Housing Certification), the number of Chapter 40B units in the town, and the housing unit growth during the past ten years, the Town of Ware states the following goals as targets that it will make a best effort to achieve:

- Create ten units of affordable housing units (single family, rental) per year
- Subject to availability of funding, rehabilitate up to five existing single family housing units per year, including correction of major code violations, septic system repairs or upgrade
- Address housing safety and accessibility needs especially for elders and single person households
- Address the need for smaller units suitable for older couples
- Identify resources for investment in existing multi-family properties
- Maintain/modernize public housing.

### **Action Steps and Timeline to Accomplish This Strategy**

During the next five years, the Town of Ware will carry out the following Action Steps to accomplish the goals of this Community Housing Strategy:

- Work with developers to assure the creation of units that are priced to meet the needs of citizens with a broad range of incomes
- Cooperate with subregion towns and financing institutions to sponsor first-time homebuyer seminars on an annual basis
- Investigate resources for technical assistance in areas such as zoning bylaws, homebuyer purchase assistance, state and federal housing programs, and infrastructure development and upgrading, and greenways
- Seek CDBG and federal funding for housing rehabilitation
- Identify resources to address housing safety and accessibility needs especially for elders
- Identify resources to address the need for smaller units suitable for older couples and single person households
- Identify public and private financing resources for investment in multi-family properties
- Obtain funding to maintain/modernize public housing

**Table 2-6. Housing Units Created in Ware**

Assessed Value range	Number of Units Created - 1999	Number of Units Created - 2000	Number of Units Created - 2001	Number of Units Created - 2002	Number of Units Created - 2003
\$80,000-\$89,999					
\$90,000-\$99,999					
\$100,000-\$109,999	2	1			
\$110,000-\$119,999	1	1	3	2	2
\$120,000-\$129,999	2	9		2	3
\$130,000-\$139,999	2	2	6	1	
\$140,000-\$149,999	2	1	6	1	3
\$150,000-\$159,999	2	1	5		2
\$160,000-\$169,999	3	1	2	1	6
\$170,000-\$179,999	1		2	1	2
\$180,000-\$189,999	1			2	4
\$190,000-\$199,999			1	2	3
\$200,000-\$209,999	1	1	2	5	3
\$210,000-\$219,999			1	3	5
\$220,000-\$229,999	1	1	1	4	3
\$230,000-\$239,999					3
\$240,000-\$249,999		1			
\$250,000-\$259,999			1		1
\$260,000-\$269,999			1		
\$270,000-\$279,999				1	
\$280,000-\$289,999					2
\$290,000-\$299,999					
\$300,000 and above				2	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>43</b>

Source: Ware Housing Authority

In 2003, 39 of the 43 new single family homes constructed in Ware were within the affordable purchase price range for the affordable ownership units assessed in the range of below \$90,000 - \$241,960. (Source: Executive Order 418 Housing Certification). Also in 2003, construction began on 80 new units of affordable housing near Ware's Town center. As of 2002, Ware had 308 units of 40B housing comprising 7.2% of the total housing units in the municipality.

**Table 2-7: New Affordable Housing Construction and Chapter 40B Housing**

Total New Single Family Homes Constructed (FY03)	43
Affordable Single Family Homes Constructed (FY03)	39
Percent of New Single Family Units that are Affordable (FY03)	90%
Number of Year-Round Residential Housing Units (2003)	4,577
Number of Chapter 40B Housing Units (2002)	308
Number of Chapter Affordable Housing Units permitted in 2003.	80
Number of Housing Rehabilitations (1999-2003).	37
Percent of Year-Round Units that are Chapter 40B (2002)	7.2%

Source: PVPC, Subregional Housing Plans 2002

## Public housing

As of 1999, Ware had 111 state and no federal public housing units. As of November 2002, Ware had 22 units receiving rental assistance through Section 8 federal rental assistance, 19 units receiving Section 8 Mod Rehab assistance, 34 units receiving state rental assistance through the Massachusetts rental voucher program, and 1 unit using state vouchers (Source: MA Department of Housing and Community Development and HAP, Inc.). In comparison to other communities in the region, there is a relative abundance of subsidized and public housing in Ware.



## Housing authority capacity (number and types of units, vacancy rate, waiting list)

The Ware Housing Authority currently has 5 members and is chaired by Paul E. Hills. In 2003, 308 units of Chapter 40B housing existed in the municipality. The Ware Housing Authority provides an application for both subsidized housing and section 8 units. The waiting lists for housing are currently short, but the Housing Authority will soon be utilizing Massachusetts National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) central state-wide list, while still giving preference to Ware residents.

The Chapter 40B housing inventory in Ware consists of units for the elderly and disabled, a DMR group home, one homeownership unit and a variety of unrestricted housing types in various Town neighborhoods.

**Table 2-7: Public and Subsidized Housing Capacity**

	Section 8	Section 8 Mod Rehab	MRVP	state vouchers
Leases in Community as of November 2002	22	19	34	1
Leases in Region as of November 2002	3,699	956	359	49
Community Leases as a Percentage of the Region	0.6%	2.0%	9.5%	2.0%
Conventional State Public Housing Units 1999	111			
Conventional Federal Public Housing Units 1999	0			

Source: HAP, Inc.; MA Department of Housing and Community Development, Community Profiles

## Handicapped/ADA Compliance in the Town of Ware

The 2000 Census reported 1,617 persons with disabilities in Ware (16.6% of the total population). The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) contracts with Hulmes Transportation for paratransit services with the Town of Ware. In their annual report, Hulmes Transportation reported 1,750 wheel chair transports during 2002.

Ware completed an ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan in 1994. The Town has done a great deal to make public facilities (Town Hall, schools, library, park facilities and restrooms, town pool, etc.) handicap accessible. Residents with other disabilities (impaired hearing and vision for example) have been assisted through CDBG supported housing rehabilitation, adult education and fuel assistance programs.

The Town of Ware has an active and vocal ADA Commission.

## Current housing costs

In year 2000, the median monthly housing cost for homeowners to own a home in Ware was \$1,110 and the median rental cost was \$508 (Source: 2000 U.S. Census).

In year 2000, 29% of homeowners in Ware were paying more than 30% of their total household income for housing costs (Source: 2000 U.S. Census). In general, 30% of income is used as a reasonable upper limit for housing costs, without a significant hardship. In addition, 31% of renters in Ware were paying more than 30% of their total household income for housing costs (Source: 2000 U.S. Census). This indicates that a significant percentage of low and moderate income homeowners and renters may be having difficulty affording their homes and apartments in Ware.

**Table 2-8: Monthly Housing Costs**

	<b>Owners*</b>		<b>Renters</b>	
Median Owner Costs or Gross Rent	\$1,110		\$508	
<b>Costs as a Percent of Household Income</b>	<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>	
Occupied housing units	2,004		1,385	
Less than 15.0 percent	713	35.6%	310	22.4%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	230	11.5%	231	16.7%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	259	12.9%	198	14.3%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	205	10.2%	136	9.8%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	111	5.5%	90	6.5%
35.0 percent or more	467	23.3%	343	24.8%
Not computed	19	0.9%	77	5.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

\* Monthly owner's costs are based on owners with a mortgage.

In the five years from 1997-2001, the median sale price for a house in Ware rose 4.5% from \$110,024 to \$114,950 (Source: The Warren Group). By 2003, the median sale price for a house had risen to \$127,000 or 10%. (See Table 2-10)

The rate of single family home sales in Ware grew between 1990 and 2003, increasing 9% over that period. The rate of sales over the past decade has varied between 57-110 homes (Source: The Warren Group). In 2003, 110 homes in Ware were sold.

**Table 2-9: Home Sale Prices**

<b>Home Sale Prices</b>	<b>Ware</b>		<b>County</b>		<b>Comparison</b>	
	<i>Median Sale Price of Single-Family Homes</i>	<i>Median Sale Price adjusted into 2001 \$</i>	<i>Median Sale Price of Single-Family Homes</i>	<i>Median Sale Price adjusted into 2001 \$</i>	<i>Difference in Median Sales Price in 2001 \$</i>	<i>Percent Difference in Median Sales Price in 2001 \$</i>
1997	\$100,000	\$110,024	\$122,000	\$134,229	(\$24,205)	(18.0%)
1998	\$97,000	\$105,216	\$129,000	\$139,927	\$34,711	24.8%
1999	\$90,750	\$96,451	\$130,000	\$138,167	\$41,716	30.2%
2000	\$114,553	\$117,746	\$143,000	\$146,986	\$29,240	19.9%
2001	\$114,950	\$114,950	\$149,900	\$149,900	\$34,950	23.3%
2002	\$128,000	\$128,000	\$165,000	\$165,000	\$37,000	22.4%
<b>Standard Deviation 1997-2002</b>	\$13,947	\$10,857	\$15,980	\$11,077		
<b>Percent Change 1997-2002</b>	28.0%	16.3%	35.2%	22.9%	N/A	N/A

Source: The Warren Group

**Table 2-10: Number of Sales**

<i>Number of Sales</i>	<b>Ware</b>			<b>County</b>			<b>Comparison</b>
	<i>Single-Family Home Sales</i>	<i>Single-Family Land Parcels</i>	<i>Percent of Parcels Sold during Year</i>	<i>Single-Family Home Sales</i>	<i>Single-Family Land Parcels</i>	<i>Percent of Parcels Sold during Year</i>	<i>Difference in Percent of Parcels Sold</i>
1990	101	1,982	5.1%	1,244	30,246	4.1%	1.0%
1991	73	2,016	3.6%	1,231	19,197	6.4%	(2.8%)
1992	79	2,047	3.9%	1,324	31,889	4.2%	(0.3%)
1993	88	1,886	4.7%	1,387	30,790	4.5%	0.2%
1994	107	2,062	5.2%	1,682	31,880	5.3%	(0.1%)
1995	83	2,085	4.0%	1,362	32,347	4.2%	(0.2%)
1996	96	2,092	4.6%	1,566	32,680	4.8%	(0.2%)
1997	57	2,206	2.6%	1,031	32,903	3.1%	(0.5%)
1998	65	2,218	2.9%	1,169	33,282	3.5%	(0.6%)
1999	70	2,242	3.1%	1,183	33,680	3.5%	(0.4%)
2000	78	2,225	3.5%	1,142	34,143	3.3%	0.2%
2001	104	2,245	4.6%	1,350	34,620	3.9%	0.7%
2002	87	2,267	3.8%	1,302	33,855	3.8%	(0.0%)
2003	110	2,316	4.7%	N/A	34,235	N/A	N/A
<b>Percent Change 1990-2003</b>	8.9%	16.9%	N/A	8.5%	13.2%	N/A	N/A
<b>Percent Change 1997-2003</b>	93.0%	5.0%	N/A	30.9%	4.0%	N/A	N/A

Source: The Warren Group; MA Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank

The median value for an owner occupied home in Ware is \$114,200. More than 32% of all homes in Ware are valued lower than \$100,000 (Source: 2000 U.S. Census).

**Table 2-11: Value of Owner-Occupied Housing**

	<b>Ware</b>		<b>Pioneer Valley Region</b>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Owner-occupied Housing Units	2,004		119,692	
Less than \$50,000	28	1.4%	1,504	1.3%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	628	31.3%	33,984	28.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	985	49.2%	47,500	39.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	274	13.7%	21,486	18.0%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	74	3.7%	11,581	9.7%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	15	0.7%	3,187	2.7%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0.0%	377	0.3%
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0.0%	73	0.1%
<i>Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units</i>	114,200		\$135,928	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Most home mortgage applications for home purchases in Ware are approved. About twenty-one percent of all home financing applications in Ware were denied, including 20% of conventional home purchase loans applications that were denied (Source: Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council).

**Table 2-12: Mortgages and Home Financing**

Mortgages and Home Financing									
	Total Applications	Loan Originated*	Percent of Loans	Loan Approved, Not Accepted**	Percent of Loans	Loan Denied	Percent of Loans	Loan Closed for Other Reasons***	Percent of Loans
Federal Home Purchase Loans	24	19	79.2%	0	0.0%	1	4.2%	4	16.7%
Conventional Home Purchase Loans	183	118	64.5%	14	7.7%	37	20.2%	14	7.7%
Refinancings	339	203	59.9%	16	4.7%	68	20.1%	52	15.3%
Home Improvement Loans	56	25	44.6%	1	1.8%	21	37.5%	9	16.1%
Loans on Dwellings for Five or More Families	3	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	1	33.3%	1	33.3%
All Loans	605	366	60.5%	31	5.1%	128	21.2%	80	13.2%

Source: Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data

\* Loan executed.

\*\* The borrower was approved but elected not to proceed.

\*\*\* Includes applications withdrawn by the borrower and files closed for incompleteness.

## Areas where housing stock does not meet health or sanitary standards

Almost all of Ware's housing stock meets health and sanitary standards. Only 15 of 4,336 total housing units in Ware (0.4%) had inadequate facilities for plumbing and kitchen.

**Table 2-13: Housing Characteristics**

	Ware		Pioneer Valley Region	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Occupied housing units	4,028		231,279	
<b>House Heating Fuel</b>				
Utility gas	38	0.9%	91,215	39.4%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	617	15.3%	8,169	3.5%
Electricity	706	17.5%	37,453	16.2%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	2,504	62.2%	88,381	38.2%
Coal or coke	7	0.2%	338	0.1%
Wood	132	3.3%	4,009	1.7%
Solar energy	0	0.0%	60	0.0%
Other fuel	24	0.6%	1,075	0.5%
No fuel used	0	0.0%	579	0.3%
<b>Inadequate Facilities</b>				
Lacking complete plumbing	0	0.0%	1,692	0.7%
Lacking complete kitchen	15	0.4%	1,678	0.7%
No telephone service	48	1.2%	3,017	1.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Extent of vacant and abandoned housing

In year 2000, Ware had 4,028 occupied housing units (93%) and 309 vacant units (7%) including seasonal units. Not including seasonal rental units, the rental vacancy rate was 6.7% in year 2000 (Source: 1990-2000 U.S. Census).

**Table 2-14: Vacancy Rates**

	Ware Rate	Pioneer Valley Region Rate
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.5	0.9
Rental Vacancy Rate	6.7	4.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Length of vacancy for owner and rental occupied

The average time on the market was 100 days for single-family new construction priced over \$200,000. Residential property, both single-family and multi-family homes, priced under \$200,000 sells very quickly in the Town of Ware. The average time for homes on the market ranged from days to only a few hours for multi-family houses in good shape and affordably priced. The real estate agent interviewed noted that the majority of the buyers were from the eastern part of Massachusetts seeking affordable housing and investment property in the Ware area. Houses in poor condition and historical properties priced over \$500,000 sold very slowly and often remain on the market for over a year.

The housing market in Ware has been accelerating steadily since 2000 and all indications are that sellers are receiving 97% or 98% of the asking price. New housing construction makes up approximately 50% of the total housing for sale in the Town of Ware. Many of the home buyers are first time buyers, however the real estate agent said that affordable housing (\$100,000-\$125,000) for this demographic is scarce and much of the housing market is priced beyond their income means. Ware also has very little housing for elderly residents and the real estate agent indicated that condos, residential housing or elderly trailer parks may be necessary for Ware residents in the future.

The population migration moving to the Town of Ware is predominately from the eastern part of Massachusetts and the neighboring Worcester region. High housing prices in regions to the east are motivating factors driving the residential housing boom in the Town of Ware. (Interview with Gravel Real Estate Associates, Inc. 1/26/04)

## Percent of units on market

For the year 2000, 78 single family homes sold, or 3.5% of all total single family land parcels in town. This is a general indicator of the percent of units on the market.

## Housing factors unique to the community

Ware has a moderate number of seasonal or recreational housing units, totaling fifty-one.

## Description of recent housing trends

From 1999 to 2003, Ware had 180 new housing units constructed, an average of 36 new units per year. The town ranked 5th in the region for population growth (U.S. Census, MISER). The majority of Ware's housing development is Approval Not Required (ANR), with new houses being built along available frontage on the Town's roadways.

## Numbers and types of subdivisions

Ware had 9 approved residential subdivisions from 1987 to 2002. Of the approved subdivisions, a 3 lot subdivision approved in 1989 was undeveloped and dissolved and a 10 lot property developed in 1994 was modified by the new owner in 2003. As of 2004, a 27 lot subdivision and 9 lot property had only the preliminary plans approved by the planning board.

## Household Size

One and two person households are the predominant household size in Ware, with 37% of all owner-occupied households as two person households and 42% of all renter-occupied households as one-person households. Nearly 60% of all owner-occupied households and nearly 70% of all renter-occupied households in Ware are one or two-person households. Almost ninety-two percent of all households in Ware are four-person households or smaller.

**Table 2-15: Size of Household**

	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Households	2,642		1,385	
1-person	586	22.2%	586	42.3%
2-person	986	37.3%	377	27.2%
3-person	448	17.0%	191	13.8%
4-person	376	14.2%	137	9.9%
5-person	183	6.9%	66	4.8%
6-person	44	1.7%	18	1.3%
7-or-more-person	19	0.7%	10	0.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Age composition and distribution

The largest age group in Ware's population is the 35-49 age group, with 2,295 residents in year 2000. The second largest group is age 5-19, with 2,054 residents (Source: 2000 U.S. Census). Unlike most towns in the region, Ware has a decreasing population of elderly residents, but also has an increase in persons approaching retirement age. Looking forward, the town will need to maintain housing opportunities for these groups. Detailed population changes between 1990 and 2000 are discussed in Element Three: Economic Development.

**Table 2-16: Population Projections**

	<b>1990 Actual</b>	<b>2000 Actual</b>	<b>2005 Projection</b>	<b>2010 Projection</b>	<b>2000-2005 % Change</b>	<b>2000-2010 % Change</b>
Under 5	744	590	744	847	26.1%	43.6%
5 to 9	737	642	796	847	24.0%	31.9%
10 to 14	591	723	941	896	30.2%	23.9%
15 to 19	639	689	822	792	19.3%	14.9%
20 to 24	664	538	722	864	34.2%	60.6%
25 to 29	832	554	551	771	(0.5%)	39.2%
30 to 34	890	697	902	711	29.4%	2.0%
35 to 39	717	772	933	947	20.9%	22.7%
40 to 44	649	822	1,005	906	22.3%	10.2%
45 to 49	543	701	889	1,037	26.8%	47.9%
50 to 54	405	668	663	827	(0.7%)	23.8%
55 to 59	389	497	642	688	29.2%	38.4%
60 to 64	427	349	516	652	47.9%	86.8%
65 to 69	498	331	364	466	10.0%	40.8%
70 to 74	447	331	285	307	(13.9%)	(7.3%)
75 to 79	329	346	242	219	(30.1%)	(36.7%)
80 to 84	188	267	253	193	(5.2%)	(27.7%)
85 and over	119	190	167	168	(12.1%)	(11.6%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,808</b>	<b>9,707</b>	<b>11,437</b>	<b>12,138</b>	<b>17.8%</b>	<b>25.0%</b>
Available to Participate in the Labor Force *	N/A	6,287	7,645	8,195	21.6%	30.3%
Likely to Participate in the Labor Force **	N/A	5,127	5,150	5,520	0.4%	7.7%

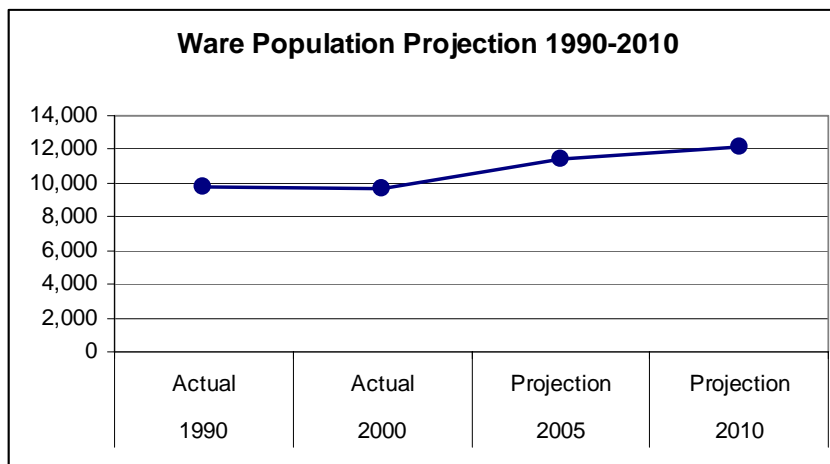
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; MISER Population Projections

\* Available to participate in the labor force is the population from 15 to 64 years old.

\*\* Likely to participate in the labor force is an estimate based on labor force participation rates in 2000.

## Current and projected population through 2010

Ware's population decreased 1% from 9,808 residents in 1990 to 9,707 residents in 2000 (Source: 2000 U.S. Census). As shown in Table 19 below, Ware's population is projected to increase by 25% by the year 2010 to a total of 12,138 residents (Source: MISER population projections).

**Figure 2-2: Population Projection**

Source: U.S. Census, MISER

## Number and type of households

Ware has some special needs households, including 438 households with single parents and children under 18 years old.

**Table 2-17: Household Composition**

	Ware		Pioneer Valley Region	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<b>Total households</b>	4,027		231,279	
<b>1-person households</b>	1,172	29.1%	65,772	28.4%
<b>Male householder</b>	475	11.8%	26,616	11.5%
<b>Female householder</b>	697	17.3%	39,156	16.9%
<b>2-or-more person households</b>	2,855	70.9%	165,507	71.6%
<b>Family households</b>	2,598	64.5%	149,592	64.7%
Married couple-family	1,885	46.8%	106,925	46.2%
With own children under 18	762	18.9%	46,345	20.0%
No own children under 18	1,123	27.9%	60,580	26.2%
<b>Other family</b>	713	17.7%	42,667	18.4%
Male householder, no wife present	217	5.4%	9,268	4.0%
With own children under 18	116	2.9%	4,415	1.9%
No own children under 18	101	2.5%	4,853	2.1%
Female householder, no husband present	496	12.3%	33,399	14.4%
With own children under 18	322	8.0%	21,036	9.1%
No own children under 18	174	4.3%	12,363	5.3%
<b>Nonfamily households</b>	257	6.4%	15,915	6.9%
Male householder	150	3.7%	8,504	3.7%
Female householder	107	2.7%	7,411	3.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

Ware has 1,012 households where the head of household is over age 65 and 595 households where the head of household is over age 75. This data indicates another special needs group. Ware will need to consider housing options for elderly residents who may want to remain in their community as they age.

**Table 2-18: Age of the Head of Household**

	Family Households		Nonfamily Households	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Total households	2,598		1,429	
15 to 24	105	4.0%	89	6.2%
25 to 34	407	15.7%	212	14.8%
35 to 44	686	26.4%	198	13.9%
45 to 54	571	22.0%	233	16.3%
55 to 64	346	13.3%	168	11.8%
65 to 74	253	9.7%	164	11.5%
75 to 84	190	7.3%	266	18.6%
85 and over	40	1.5%	99	6.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Income data

The median household income in Ware decreased 7% over the past decade, from \$39,699 to \$36,875 (both adjusted to 1999 dollars). Ware has 879 low-income households (incomes below \$30,916), or 22% of all households.



**Table 2-19: Household Income**

	1989		1999		Percent Change in Number of Households
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
<b>Total Households</b>	3,836		4,020		
<b>Less than \$10,000</b>	652	17.0%	331	8.2%	(49.2%)
<b>\$10,000 to \$14,999</b>	263	6.9%	340	8.5%	29.3%
<b>\$15,000 to \$24,999</b>	725	18.9%	604	15.0%	(16.7%)
<b>\$25,000 to \$34,999</b>	650	16.9%	651	16.2%	0.2%
<b>\$35,000 to \$49,999</b>	765	19.9%	571	14.2%	(25.4%)
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	500	13.0%	944	23.5%	88.8%
<b>\$75,000 to \$99,999</b>	161	4.2%	342	8.5%	112.4%
<b>\$100,000 to \$149,999</b>	55	1.4%	205	5.1%	272.7%
<b>\$150,000 or more</b>	23	0.6%	32	0.8%	39.1%
	<b>1989</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>% Change</b>		
<b>Median Household Income (1999 \$)</b>	\$39,699	\$36,875	(7.1%)		
	<b>Thresholds (1999)</b>		<b>Estimated Number of Households *</b>		
	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>			
<b>Low income households</b>	\$0	\$18,438	879	21.9%	
<b>Moderate income households</b>	\$18,806	\$29,500	667	16.6%	
<b>Middle income households</b>	\$29,869	\$55,313	1,106	27.5%	
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; PVPC					
*Estimate is based on assuming that households are evenly distributed within each income range reported by the Census Bureau.					

Ware has 667 moderate-income households (incomes between \$30,916 and \$49,465), or 17% of all households. Ware has 8.4% of its families below the poverty rate.

**Table 2-20: Poverty Rates**

	Ware Total Number	Ware Number Living Below Poverty Line	Ware Poverty Rate	Pioneer Valley Region Rate
Families	2,598	219	8.4%	8.3%
Families with a female head of household and no husband present	496	127	23.8%	25.7%
Individuals	9,707	1,082	11.2%	12.1%
Individuals 65 years and over	1,465	101	6.9%	8.2%
Children under 18 years	2,307	390	16.8%	15.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Affordability gap

The following table illustrates the affordable purchase price for a home in Ware for households in three income categories: low, moderate and middle incomes.

**Table 2-21: Housing Affordability**

	Upper Limit of Income Category <sup>1</sup>	Income as a Percentage of Median Single Family Home Price <sup>2</sup>	Percent of Income Necessary to Purchase the Median Single Family Home <sup>3</sup>	Most Expensive House Price Affordable <sup>4</sup>	Maximum Number of Owner-Occupied Housing Units Affordable <sup>5</sup>	Percent of Owner-Occupied Housing Units Affordable
All Households	\$36,875	32.2%	27.0%	\$110,625	1,641	81.9%
Low income households	\$18,438	16.1%	<b>54.0%</b>	\$55,313	656	32.7%
Moderate income households	\$29,500	25.8%	33.7%	\$88,500	656	32.7%
Middle income household	\$55,313	48.3%	18.0%	\$165,938	1,915	95.6%
Median sale price, single-family home (2000)	\$114,553					

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; The Warren Group; PVPC

1 - Based on thresholds established by the MA Department of Housing and Community Development. Upper limits of each category are determined as follows: low income=50% of median household income; moderate income=80% of median household income; and, middle income=150% of median household income.

2 - Median income, or upper limit for each income category, divided by the median single-family home price in 2000.

3 - Percent of income necessary to make monthly mortgage and property tax payments on the median single-family home with the following assumptions: a) 10% down payment; b) 7.0% annual percentage rate; c) 30 year fixed rate mortgage; d) no points; and, e) \$15 per thousand property tax assessment. No homeowners insurance is included in this calculation.

4 - Median income, or upper limit for each income category, multiplied by three.

5 - The total number of owner-occupied housing units valued within the range of the maximum affordable house.

The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has determined that for purposes of Housing Certification, (in Category A), qualifying ownership units or rental units are defined as, “newly created units affordable to low and moderate-income individuals and families (making less than or equal to 80% of the median income for the MSA in which the unit is created)”.

These figures are based on Ware’s median income (All Households) of \$36,875 and assume 5% down payment, 7.5% APR mortgage for 30 years, 30% of income for housing costs and \$300/month for taxes and insurance.

Based on DHCD’s definition of affordable housing, the table above illustrates that in 2000:

- Ware has a total of 656 existing housing units assessed at under \$55,313 that are affordable to low income households with incomes under \$18,438;
- Ware has a total of 656 existing housing units assessed at under \$88,500 that are affordable to moderate income households with incomes under \$29,500.

However, it is important to note that, while these units exist, they are not necessarily on the market for sale.

For Fiscal Year 2004, the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has determined that:

- The housing supply in Ware increased by 27 ownership units in the period 1/1/2002 - 12/31/2002.
- Affordable ownership units assessed in the range of \$110,000 - \$241,960
- Of the 27 units built in 2002, 24 were considered affordable (under \$241,960).

It is important to note that the affordable house price of \$241,960 is based upon the median household income of the Springfield Metropolitan region and does not accurately reflect individual town median household incomes. This threshold resides at the high-end of affordability. For households earning in the lower ranges of the middle-income bracket and below, this “affordable” price of \$241,960 is unsupportable.

## Quantification of Need by Comparing Housing Supply and Demand

### Identification of unmet housing needs (i.e. gaps between supply and demand) at all stages of the housing continuum

Though housing in Ware is predominantly owner-occupied single family homes, the community also has a great diversity of housing types available in town. Housing for the elderly may be a concern in the future. Increasing housing prices across Massachusetts are beginning to impact housing prices in Ware. Looking to the future affordable housing for low and moderate income families may be more difficult to secure if housing sales and new starts continue to increase.

For those Ware residents under 25 and 65 and over the ratio of their median monthly housing cost to median monthly income is strikingly high. Residents under 25 they pay nearly 50% of their monthly incomes towards housing, while residents 65 and over pay 60% of their monthly incomes towards housing.

**Table 2-22: Housing Stock Affordability Overview**

	Rental Housing Market		Owned Housing Market	
All households	Median monthly cost (gross rent)	\$508	Median monthly cost (with mortgage)	\$1,110
	Median monthly income	\$3,073	Median monthly income	\$3,073
	Ratio	0.165	Ratio	0.361
Under 25	Median monthly cost (gross rent)	\$508	Median monthly cost (with mortgage)	\$1,110
	Median monthly income	\$2,314	Median monthly income	\$2,314
	Ratio	0.220	Ratio	<b>0.480</b>
65 and over	Median monthly cost (gross rent)	\$508	Median monthly cost (with mortgage)	\$1,110
	Median monthly income	\$1,821	Median monthly income	\$1,821
	Ratio	0.279	Ratio	<b>0.609</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

**Table 2-23: Analysis of All Housing Stock**

	Rental Housing Market			Owned Housing Market		
<u>Affordable Units by Percent of Income</u>	Number	Percent		Number	Percent	
All households	Total units rented and occupied	1,308		Total units owned and occupied	1,344	
	Rent less than 30.0 percent of income	875	66.9%	Costs less than 30.0 percent of income	837	62.3%
	Rent 30.0 percent or more of income	433	33.1%	Costs 30.0 percent or more of income	507	37.7%
65 and over	Total units rented and occupied	250		Total units owned and occupied	403	
	Rent less than 30.0 percent of income	173	69.2%	Costs less than 30.0 percent of income	308	76.4%
	Rent 30.0 percent or more of income	77	30.8%	Costs 30.0 percent or more of income	95	23.6%
<u>Affordable Units by Income Category</u>	All	Under 25	65+	All	Under 25	65+
Affordable rent				Affordable costs		
Low income	\$461	\$347	\$273	Low income	\$461	\$347
Moderate income	\$738	\$555	\$437	Moderate income	\$738	\$555
Middle income	\$1,383	\$1,041	\$820	Middle income	\$1,383	\$1,041
Affordable threshold				Affordable threshold		
Low income	\$499	\$349	\$299	Low income	\$499	\$399
Moderate income	\$749	\$599	\$449	Moderate income	\$799	\$599
Middle income	\$1,499	\$1,249	\$899	Middle income	\$1,499	\$1,249
Total rental units	1,317	1,317	1,317	Total owned units	1,344	1,344
Affordable for:				Affordable for:		
Low income	653	229	181	Low income	33	8
Moderate income	1,230	929	469	Moderate income	359	159
Middle income	1,317	1,301	1,291	Middle income	1,115	874
Percent affordable for:				Percent affordable for:		
Low income	49.6%	17.4%	13.7%	Low income	2.5%	0.6%
Moderate income	93.4%	70.5%	35.6%	Moderate income	26.7%	11.8%
Middle income	100.0%	98.8%	98.0%	Middle income	83.0%	65.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

**Table 2-24: Survey of the Housing Market**

	Price	Mortgage	Year Built	Rooms	Bedrooms	Bathrooms	Total Assessed Value	Property Tax	Insurance Estimate	Monthly Payments with Mortgage	Lot Size
Average	\$120,816	\$107,195	1959	6.3	2.9	1.5	\$109,765	\$2,044	\$1,646	\$1,111	45,411
Median	\$118,500	\$97,065	1973	6.0	3.0	1.0	\$108,900	\$2,028	\$1,634	\$1,081	22,216

**Table 2-25: Current Housing Market Analysis**

<b>Owned Housing Market</b>			
<u>Cost to Income Ratios</u>	<b>All</b>	<b>Under 25</b>	<b>65+</b>
Median monthly cost of units on market	\$1,081	\$1,081	\$1,081
Median monthly income	\$3,073	\$2,314	\$1,821
Ratio	0.352	0.467	0.594
<u>Affordability Analysis</u>			
Total homes for sale	74	74	74
	<b>All</b>	<b>Under 25</b>	<b>65+</b>
Affordable for:			
Low income	9	4	3
Moderate income	19	13	9
Middle income	56	46	28
Percent affordable for:			
Low income	12.2%	5.4%	4.1%
Moderate income	25.7%	17.6%	12.2%
Middle income	75.7%	62.2%	37.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.

## Future Build-out

Ware has 9,227 acres of land, without environmental constraints, which are available for the provision of housing, and in particular, affordable housing. The Future Housing Map illustrates locations recommended for housing development. The map is based on PVPC's Build-out Analysis, which considers environmental constraints and the availability of public infrastructure and services.

**Table 2-26: Potential Land for Residential Development**

	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Developable Land</b>
Total Land Area	25,587	N/A
Remaining Developable Land	13,025.0	N/A
Developable Land with Constraints	3,798.0	29.2%
Developable Land without Constraints	9,227.0	70.8%
Constraint-slope	2,589.0	19.9%
Constraint-river	N/A	N/A
Constraint-wetlands	184.0	1.4%
Constraint-floodplain	N/A	N/A
Constraint-multiple	1,025.0	7.9%

Source: PVPC, Subregional Housing Plans 2002, EOE A



## Community Development Plan

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT



Town of  
Ware

Prepared by:  
The Pioneer Valley  
Planning Commission

This document was  
Developed using funds  
Pursuant to Massachusetts  
Executive Order 418 Program

# Element Three: Economic Development

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## Introduction

The following element is an assessment of the current economic base in the community including an inventory of major employers and number of jobs provided, demographic and income data, unemployment rates, labor force statistics, commercial vacancy rates, and space available in existing industrial parks.

## Previous Planning Efforts

The Town of Ware has completed numerous planning efforts in the past several years including:

- *The Ware Growth Management and Development Plan*, Land Use, Inc., Fall 1987
- *Town of Ware Downtown Improvements Plan*, Ware Community Development Department, March 22, 1996
- *Town of Ware Local Partnership Program Comprehensive Market Analysis and Business Assessment for Downtown Ware*, Cullinan Engineering Co. Inc. with Northern Economic Planners, April 25, 1996
- *Town of Ware, Massachusetts, 1997 Open Space & Recreation Plan*, Justin M. Berthiaume and Vera Kolas, 1997
- *Ware River Valley Economic Target Area Action Strategy*, Ware Community Development Department, August 26, 1998
- *Ware Millyard Site Assessment and Economic Development Plan*, Lake Hitchcock Development Corporation Architectural Insights, Inc., June 2001

## Economic Development Strategies:

### Zoning Strategies

See Appendix C for a complete list of economic development strategies offered to Massachusetts communities.

- **Rezoning of Targeted Land Parcels for Business, Light Industrial or Industrial Use**
  - A closer look at overlay zoning and target areas in the future is imperative.
  - Residential apartments in the Millyard could be a problem if industrial noise/activity were to interfere with those living there.
- **Site Plan Approval Bylaw**
  - This is an extremely important bylaw in that it eases the approval process for desirable economic development.
  - Ware presently has a special permitting process that deters business development, is not always approved at the expense of the applicant, and is overly restrictive.
- **Planned Industrial or Business Development Bylaw**
  - Best suited for vacant land.
  - Has a good return on light manufacturing, but not so great on warehousing for instance.
  - Important to establish incubator areas for start-up businesses.

## **Future Zoning Strategies**

- **Mixed Use Development Bylaw**
  - This is important to encourage multiple uses in the downtown area.
  - Important for redevelopment of the Millyard, with some restrictions on residential development possible.
- **Home Business Bylaw**
  - Adopt a more restrictive bylaw.
  - Begin to create places for home businesses to relocate from homes. Too many vehicles and employees are apparent at residential homes. The Town is missing out on an important revenue source.

## **Non-Zoning Strategies**

- **Provide Sewer Service to Targeted Areas**
  - Adopt an Enterprise Fund System to encourage development.
  - Maintain infrastructure in the ground especially older lines and systems.
- **Town Center Revitalization**
  - Ware needs to continue to improve and support its downtown business area by:
    4. Recruiting new businesses
    5. Rehabilitating existing buildings
    6. Expanding Parking
- **Massachusetts Economic Development Incentives Program**
  - Ware has already initiated many of these programs and is very successful at implementing this strategy. Ware will continue to utilize this strategy in the future.
- **Infill Development**
  - Important to fill in where sewer and water is already located, rather than expanding services.
- **Adaptive Reuse of Older Buildings**
  - Ware is presently adapting older buildings and will continue to do so.
- **Marketing and Promotion**
  - **Town Website**
    - ✓ Very important to the economic development of Ware.
    - ✓ The Town is presently reviewing successful local community websites and is in the process of setting up a Town Website.
    - ✓ The website will provide Town government documents on-line, important links to local businesses and other community news and information.
  - **Database of Commercial and Industrial Properties**
  - **Marketing Campaigns, Special Events and Activities**
  - **Community Signage Program**
  - **Business Recognition Awards**
  - **Economic Development Manager**
- **Infrastructure Development and Physical Improvements**



## Economic Statistical Profile

### Location and number of businesses, employers, employees

The number of employers in Ware increased by two from 1996 to 2000. This represents a 1% increase in employers, compared to an 8% increase for the region during this same time period. Employees increased from 2,568 to 2,753 during the same time period, a 7% increase (compared to 8% for the region). The average weekly wage decrease 5% compared to a regional increase of 5% (Source: MA Department of Employment and Training). This decrease in the weekly wage by Ware residents is unusual in that most other communities in the Pioneer Valley region experienced weekly wage increases during the period between 1996 and 2000.

**Table 3-1: Town Profile**

<b>Town Profile</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>PVR</b>
<b>Employers - 1996</b>	204	14,211
<b>Employers - 2000</b>	206	15,394
<b>Percent Change</b>	1.0%	8.3%
<b>Employees - 1996</b>	2,568	239,936
<b>Employees - 2000</b>	2,753	260,197
<b>Percent Change</b>	7.2%	8.4%
<b>Average Weekly Wage - 1996 (calculated into 2000 \$)</b>	\$538.65	\$579.65
<b>Average Weekly Wage - 2000</b>	\$536.17	\$608.12
<b>Percent Change</b>	(0.5%)	4.9%

Source: MA Department of Employment and Training, ES-202

Note: 1996 average weekly wages are adjusted into 2000 \$ using the Consumer Price Index for the Northeast (all urban consumers).

### Results of Business Survey

The Town of Ware's downtown commercial area is struggling to draw and retain adequate business according to the business survey results. The Ware Community Development Committee has determined that Town Center Revitalization Projects would serve to improve the conditions of the central business district. This would include façade improvements and economic incentives to attract viable long lasting commercial venture to Ware's downtown area. Other initiatives would be to encourage infill development, reuse the abandoned mill complexes, and provide incubator space for start-up businesses.

In January 2004, a business survey was conducted by phone to a total of 16 businesses in the Town of Ware. Of the businesses surveyed, the majority defined themselves as a local or regional business. Two of the respondents serve national and global customer needs. A significant number of the businesses in Ware have been established for more than 15 years. Four of the businesses surveyed had been established for 100 or more years. The respondents operate their businesses from a variety of venues including homes, commercial strip centers, office complexes, the downtown commercial district, industrial mill sites and along the roadside.

Employers in Ware supply a variety of employment opportunities for the residents of Ware and the surrounding region. Ware businesses employ anywhere from 1 to hundreds of workers. Several of the respondents have seasonal businesses and with fluctuating employee count. The majority of those surveyed said their employees live in Ware and neighboring towns. Only two of the businesses interviewed indicated that their workers have trouble affording housing in the town of Ware.

The survey asked if Ware business owners had trouble hiring competent employees. Nine of the respondents did not have trouble hiring productive workers, but seven of Ware's business owners answered that they did have trouble hiring competent employees and cited several reasons including:

- Employees with a poor work ethic;
- Inadequate educational, professional or skilled training;
- An inability to compete with the pay scales of bigger business operations and therefore difficulty in maintaining a consistent employee base;
- Due to the seasonal nature of some of the businesses they often had to hire and retrain employees each year.

Nine of the business owners interviewed did not know of any workforce development programs in the area that might provide consistent employee training. Six respondents knew of workforce development programs in the area including:

- The Department of Employment and Training (DET) (though no center is located in Ware.)
- Valley Human Services, Inc.
- The Quabog Chamber of Commerce, providing loans, constructive business advice and tools, and cross-training services.
- Pathfinder, a regional technical school located in the Town of Palmer.

Of the sixteen businesses surveyed in January 2004, 8 project that they will grow 25% in the next five years, 4 project growth of 50% and 2 project growth of 100% or more. Various expansion plans include capital projects such as expanding or renovating existing floor space, building structural additions, opening new businesses at other locations and purchasing additional machinery. Other expansion plans involve strategies to increase the number of customers and sales through advertising or expanding service offerings. When asked if their business were to outgrow their present site would they remain in Ware, 6 of the respondents indicated they would relocate to another site outside the Town of Ware. Most of the surveyed businesses would not relocate to a central downtown business site. Those businesses that might consider downtown sites, would relocate only if drive by traffic and parking was sufficient to support them. Only one business thought that transportation of goods would become a problem if they expanded due to the large amount of trucking already employed by the company.

The surveyed respondents located their businesses in Ware for a variety of reasons including the incentive of purchasing inexpensive property with ample opportunity to develop, little direct same business competition, and buying existing and established businesses located in the community. When asked if they considered Ware a "business friendly" place a variety of responses were noted.

Business owners responding that the Town of Ware is business friendly gave the following reasons:

- Good relationships with Town Hall and its elected Town officials;
- A number of businesses already exist in the Town of Ware;
- The rail transportation is convenient;
- A large number of residents available for the labor force with many people willing to work;
- Ware's continued mill rehabilitation draws regional shoppers and business prospects;
- Businesses are not over-regulated by the Town;
- Ware's central location between Worcester and Springfield was an asset, as well as its location on Routes 9 and 32.

Business owners who felt Ware was not business friendly cited the following reasons:

- Town officials are adverse to certain businesses, creating legal and financial hardship in some cases;
- Walmart has negatively impacted small businesses who find it difficult to compete with the buying power of large chain stores;
- Better management of economic development by Town government including advertising the Quabbin Reservoir and Ware's covered bridge as tourist attractions.

Businesses were asked to describe Ware's economic character including the assets and limitations influencing the Town's economic development. The following lists are compiled from the survey of Ware's business community concerning the economic status of Ware.

**Ware's Assets:**

- Tough - but resilient in bad economic times
- Has good schools and hospitals
- Large number of Town residents available to work and employed locally
- Central location between the urban centers of Springfield and Worcester
- Fortunate to have large businesses for employing the local workforce and contributing to the tax base
- Many family businesses in existence for many years and passed from generation to generation
- Affordable and available real estate for business development
- Attractive rural qualities such as the Quabbin Reservoir and the Ware/Hardwick covered bridge
- The rehab of the Mill District and the stability of the industrial base
- The railroad and the nearby turnpike provide transportation opportunities
- Residents in the Town of Ware tend to be non-transitional, family oriented, and supportive of local business.

**Ware's Limitations:**

- Distance from MassPike
- Lack of cohesive long term progressive planning for economic development
- Legal issues around zoning
- Limited skilled labor pool and a need to promote higher education in the residential population
- Big box stores create negative economic impacts on small businesses
- Lack of adequate parking in downtown commercial district
- Funds needed to extend municipal sewer system for future business ventures
- Lack of public transportation for elderly and low-income residents
- Becoming a bedroom community of commuters

In an assessment of needed technological and physical infrastructure improvements, new business start-up space and parking in the downtown commercial district ranked highest with 10 or more respondents naming them as a priority. Other important infrastructure improvements for the Town of Ware are streetscape (sidewalks, streetlights, street trees and plantings), improved cell phone service, high-speed internet access, and traffic signals.

The business owners surveyed in Ware provided the following list of comments regarding economic development in Ware.

- Ware's parks' maintenance is under-funded. The respondent suggested implementing a reliable funding system, especially for athletic fields used by the children.
- Need for more comprehensive land use/environmental planning to assess the impact of rapid housing development on Town services and increased traffic.
- A need for a professional Town Administrator to advise non-professional elected officials.
- The planning board is biased towards contractors and developers.
- Encourages the continuation of the hard work towards economic development and community development.
- Political battles in Town government are wearing on the community.
- Support new initiatives.
- Need for the Town to pool resources for Ware's aid agencies, creating a collective team and primary funding source.
- Amount of section 8 and low-income housing is putting a strain on services such as the need to build new schools.
- Need to extend the sewer system to attract new business ventures.
- Need to rehabilitate the movie theater in the downtown district.

## Recent business growth trends

From 1990 to 2000, the actual uniform tax rate in Ware increased by 34%, from \$13.86 to \$18.62.

**Table 3-2: Ware Tax Rate**

	<i>FY 1990</i>	<i>FY 2000</i>	<i>FY 2003</i>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b>Residential</b>	13.86	18.62	34.3%	13.86
<b>Open Space</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Commercial</b>	13.86	18.62	34.3%	13.86
<b>Industrial</b>	13.86	18.62	34.3%	13.86
<b>Private Property</b>	13.86	18.62	34.3%	13.86

Source: MA Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank

From 1991 to 2001, the total number of parcels of land increased 5%, from 2,778 to 2,921. Commercial parcels increased by 2 parcels (1.4%), from 140 to 142 and industrial parcels also increased by 2 parcels, from 52 to 54 (Source: MA Department of Revenue).

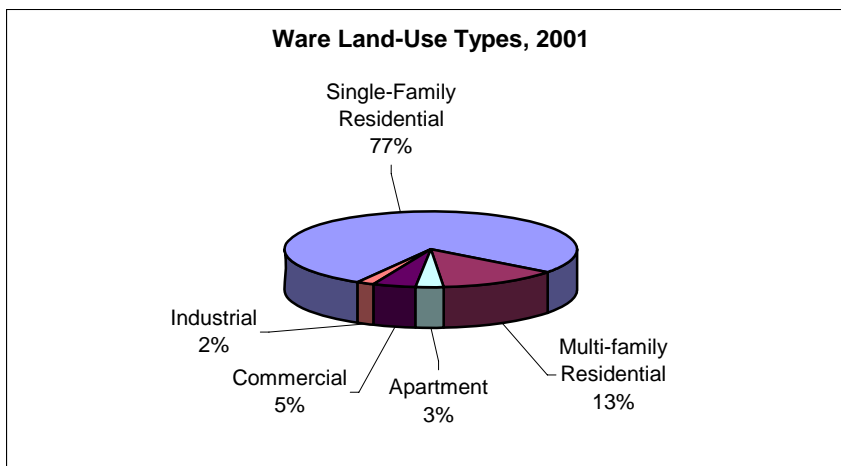
From 1991 to 2001, single-family residential parcels (76.9% of total) increased 11.4%. The number of multi-family residential parcels (13.5% of total) during this period decreased 8.6%, from 431 to 394. This may be a source of concern to the Town of Ware in that multi-family parcels are a source of affordable housing for low and moderate income households.(Source: MA Department of Revenue).

**Table 3-3: Parcel Summary**

	1991	% Change	2001	% of Parcels
<b>Total Parcels</b>	2,778	5.1%	2,921	
<b>Single-Family Residential</b>	2,016	11.4%	2,245	76.9%
<b>Multi-family Residential</b>	431	(8.6%)	394	13.5%
<b>Condominium</b>	60	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Apartment</b>	79	8.9%	86	2.9%
<b>Commercial</b>	140	1.4%	142	4.9%
<b>Industrial</b>	52	3.8%	54	1.8%

Source: MA Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank

**Figure 3-1: Land-Use Types**



Source: U.S. Census 200

## Revenue generation and service demands

From 1990 to 2002, total expenditures in Ware increased by 84%, from \$10,933,035 (in 2000\$) to \$20,120,723. The highest percentage of municipal spending is for education. Education spending has decreased slightly from the FY2000 percentage of 51% to 50% of the total budget in FY2002. Spending for education has increased on an average \$400,000 a year since 1990. In 2002, Ware spent \$4,752,959 more on education than in 1990. The next highest expenditures for the Town are in fixed costs (\$2,275,814) and debt service (\$2,265,242). Debt service has increased 354% since 1990 and public works/highway increased 237% since 1990. All other municipal expenditures increased with public works/highway (8% of total services) and police (6% of total services) utilizing a significant portion of Ware's total expenditures.

A significant expenditure decrease since 1990 was noted in other public works (less \$713,864 or 100%), perhaps due to the completion of a special project.

**Table 3-4: Municipal Expenditures**

	FY 1990			FY 2000		FY 2002			Percent Change in Amount 1990-2002
	Amount	Amount (in 2000 \$)	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Change in Amount 2000-2002	
<b>General government</b>	\$525,879	\$576,667	5.3%	\$671,711	3.8%	\$778,265	3.9%	\$106,554	35.0%
<b>Police</b>	\$559,011	\$612,999	5.6%	\$942,967	5.3%	\$1,226,941	6.1%	\$283,974	100.2%
<b>Fire</b>	\$461,100	\$505,632	4.6%	\$564,002	3.2%	\$643,109	3.2%	\$79,107	27.2%
<b>Other public safety</b>	\$133,054	\$145,904	1.3%	\$244,064	1.4%	\$350,664	1.7%	\$106,600	140.3%
<b>Education</b>	\$5,259,642	\$5,767,603	52.8%	\$9,057,109	51.2%	\$10,012,601	49.8%	\$955,492	73.6%
<b>Public works/highway</b>	\$371,547	\$407,430	3.7%	\$1,372,427	7.8%	\$1,678,912	8.3%	\$306,485	312.1%
<b>Other public works</b>	\$650,993	\$713,864	6.5%	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	\$0	(100.0%)
<b>Health and welfare</b>	\$114,518	\$125,578	1.1%	\$208,802	1.2%	\$243,516	1.2%	\$34,714	93.9%
<b>Culture and recreation</b>	\$145,356	\$159,394	1.5%	\$194,689	1.1%	\$323,178	1.6%	\$128,489	102.8%
<b>Debt service</b>	\$449,688	\$493,118	4.5%	\$2,239,842	12.7%	\$2,265,242	11.3%	\$25,400	359.4%
<b>Fixed costs</b>	\$1,225,143	\$1,343,464	12.3%	\$1,980,280	11.2%	\$2,275,814	11.3%	\$295,534	69.4%
<b>Intergovernmental</b>	\$68,534	\$75,153	0.7%	\$222,298	1.3%	\$322,481	1.6%	\$100,183	329.1%
<b>Other expenditures</b>	\$5,683	\$6,232	0.1%	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	\$0	(100.0%)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	\$9,970,148	\$10,933,035		\$17,698,191		\$20,120,723		\$2,422,532	84.0%

Source: MA Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank

From 1990 to 2002, total revenue in Ware increased by 84%, from \$10,933,035 (in 2000\$) to \$20,120,723, an increase of \$9,187,688. The difference between Ware's revenues (\$21,900,699) and expenditures in 2002 (\$20,120,723) was \$1,779,976. State aid increased significantly during the twelve year period, from \$4,402,026 per year in 1990, to \$10,306,082 per year in 2002. Due to the state fiscal crises arising after 2000, state aid is expected to decrease for all communities in the Commonwealth. This reduction of an important revenue source may pose a future fiscal crisis for the Town. Reduction of state aid will cause the Town of Ware to rely more heavily on property tax revenues to balance the Town budget.

In 1990, residential property taxes made up 32% of the total tax levy in Ware. By 2004, the total tax levy for residential property taxes had increased to 37%. Ware's revenues from state aid during this period increased from 40% (1990) to 50% (2000) of the total tax levy. Increases in commercial, industrial and personal property taxes helped to reduce reliance on residential property tax. Future actions to increase commercial, industrial and personal property taxes will be important to supplement Ware's municipal revenue as state aid becomes less available.

**Table 3-5: Municipal Revenue**

	<b>Amount in 1990</b>	<b>Amount (in 2000 \$)</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>Amount in 2000</b>	<b>Amount in 2004</b>	<b>Amount Change 2000-2004</b>	<b>Percent of Total 2004</b>	<b>Change in Amount 1990-2004</b>
<b>Total tax levy</b>	\$4,108,087	\$4,504,834	37.2%	\$7,274,034	\$8,636,687	\$1,362,653	44.1%	91.7%
<b>Residential</b>	\$3,512,163	\$3,851,357	31.8%	\$5,962,160	\$7,136,414	\$1,174,254	36.5%	85.3%
<b>Open space</b>	\$0	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Commercial</b>	\$355,821	\$390,185	3.2%	\$766,438	\$826,266	\$59,828	4.2%	111.8%
<b>Industrial</b>	\$156,432	\$171,540	1.4%	\$302,382	\$324,404	\$22,022	1.5%	89.1%
<b>Personal Property</b>	\$83,671	\$91,752	0.8%	\$243,054	\$349,603	\$106,549	1.8%	281.0%
<b>State Aid</b>	\$4,402,026	\$4,827,161	39.8%	\$9,660,997	\$9,856,239	\$195,242	50.4%	104.2%
<b>Local Receipts</b>	\$1,431,575	\$1,569,832	13.0%	\$1,683,505	\$2,215,125	\$531,620	11.3%	41.1%
<b>All Other</b>	\$1,108,094	\$1,215,110	10.0%	\$945,014	\$2,456,762	\$1,511,748	12.6%	102.2%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$11,049,782	\$12,116,937		\$19,563,550	\$31,801,500	\$12,237,950		162.5%

Source: MA Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank

During the period 2000 to 2004, though the actual dollar amounts of state aid to the Town of Ware increased, the average rate of increase was much less than the previous decade 1990-2000. Average yearly increases during the 1990's were \$483,384 per annum. Since 2000, state aid increased \$475,267 in 2001, but only \$169,818 in 2002. In FY2003, the predicted reduction of state aid occurred when the state decreased the Town of Ware's annual grants by \$91,501. By FY2004, Ware received approximately \$360,000 less than 2003. This is the expected trend for the next few years.

In 2000, state aid contributed to almost 50% of the total municipal revenue collection for Ware, while the total tax levy met almost 37% of the Towns total revenues. By 2004, state aid as a revenue source had decreased to 43%, while Ware's Tax levy (36%) remained constant. Innovative measures to bolster diminishing state aid resources will be an important part of determining Ware's economic future.

**Table 3-6: Revenue Comparison**

<b>Fiscal Year 2000 - 2004 Revenue Components</b>						<b>As Percent of Total</b>			
<b>WARE</b>	<b>Tax Levy</b>	<b>State Aid</b>	<b>Local Receipts</b>	<b>All Other</b>	<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>Tax Levy</b>	<b>State Aid</b>	<b>Local Receipts</b>	<b>All Other</b>
<b>2000</b>	\$7,274,033	\$9,660,997	\$1,683,505	\$945,014	\$19,563,549	37.18	49.38	8.61	4.83
<b>2001</b>	\$7,524,985	\$10,136,264	\$1,788,000	\$1,741,100	\$21,190,349	35.51	47.83	8.44	8.22
<b>2002</b>	\$7,822,220	\$10,306,082	\$1,955,772	\$1,816,625	\$21,900,699	35.72	47.06	8.93	8.29
<b>2003</b>	\$8,157,797	\$10,214,581	\$2,080,225	\$1,831,411	\$22,284,014	36.61	45.84	9.34	8.22
<b>2004</b>	\$8,636,687	\$9,856,239	\$2,215,125	\$2,456,762	\$23,164,813	37.28	42.55	9.56	10.61

## Current and projected job growth, including workforce characteristics and changes

### Workforce Characteristics

From 1990 to 2000, the total population of Ware decreased 1%. Ware's population decrease is unusual in that most Pioneer Valley communities grew, especially suburban and rural communities surrounding the Greater Springfield Metropolitan region. Notable cohort decreases were in children under 10 years and young adults aged 20 to 34. The census data indicates that there are no young families moving into the community. The data also suggests that many of Ware's young adults have chosen to relocate in other communities during the 1990's. Young adults are a crucial part of Ware's economic community and incentives such as job creation and affordable housing are important to maintaining a diversely aged municipal population.

Another population cohort that has decreased significantly is adults aged between 60 and 74. This may indicate that residents are choosing to relocate to other areas for their retirement needs.

Ware did see population growth for adults aged between 35 and 59 and small growth in those residents aged 75 and older. This older and aging population may indicate the need for elderly housing or assisted living in the near future for the Town of Ware.

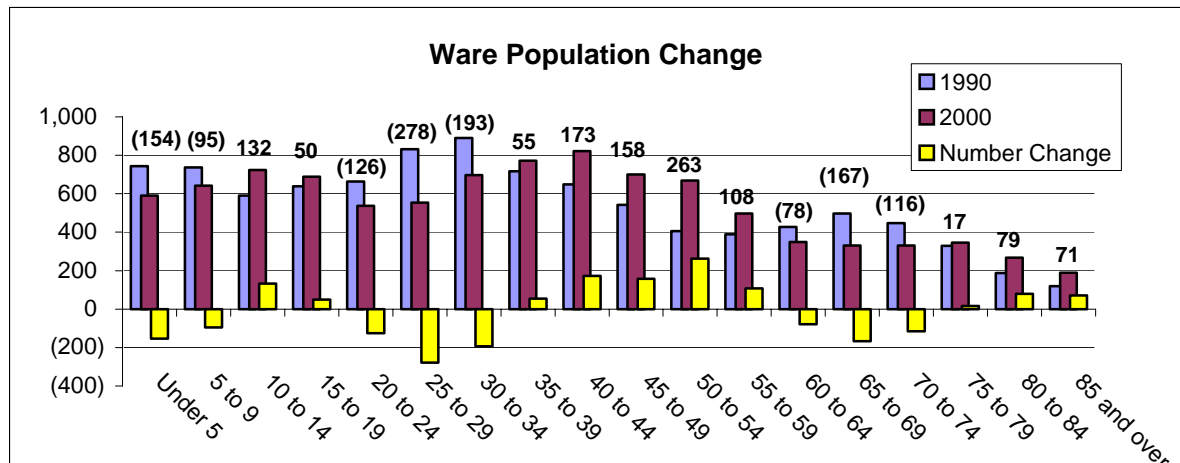
**Table 3-7: Ware and Regional Population Change**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Town Population</b>		<b>Number Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>PVR Population</b>		
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>			<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Under 5</b>	744	590	(154)	(20.7%)	41,678	36,688	(12.0%)
<b>5 to 9</b>	737	642	(95)	(12.9%)	41,104	42,112	2.5%
<b>10 to 14</b>	591	723	132	22.3%	37,205	43,947	18.1%
<b>15 to 19</b>	639	689	50	7.8%	48,572	50,175	3.3%
<b>20 to 24</b>	664	538	(126)	(19.0%)	56,720	46,926	(17.3%)
<b>25 to 29</b>	832	554	(278)	(33.4%)	49,305	35,383	(28.2%)
<b>30 to 34</b>	890	697	(193)	(21.7%)	49,822	40,338	(19.0%)
<b>35 to 39</b>	717	772	55	7.7%	46,377	46,802	0.9%
<b>40 to 44</b>	649	822	173	26.7%	41,281	47,802	15.8%
<b>45 to 49</b>	543	701	158	29.1%	31,496	44,167	40.2%
<b>50 to 54</b>	405	668	263	64.9%	24,628	39,184	59.1%
<b>55 to 59</b>	389	497	108	27.8%	24,112	28,792	19.4%
<b>60 to 64</b>	427	349	(78)	(18.3%)	26,144	21,585	(17.4%)
<b>65 to 69</b>	498	331	(167)	(33.5%)	26,449	20,081	(24.1%)
<b>70 to 74</b>	447	331	(116)	(26.0%)	22,315	20,567	(7.8%)
<b>75 to 79</b>	329	346	17	5.2%	16,137	18,966	17.5%
<b>80 to 84</b>	188	267	79	42.0%	10,431	13,712	31.5%
<b>85 and over</b>	119	190	71	59.7%	9,102	11,252	23.6%
<b>Total population</b>	9,808	9,707	(101)	(1.0%)	602,878	608,479	0.9%

U.S. Census Bureau



**Figure 3-2: Population Change**



## Educational level of workforce

Twenty percent (20%) of Ware residents (1 out of 5), did not complete high school compared to 18% for the rest of the region. In 2000, 14% percent of residents were college graduates, compared with 25% for the region (Source: U.S. Census Bureau).

**Table 3-8: Ware Educational levels**

Educational Attainment of the Population over 25 in 2000	Town Percent	PVR Percent
Did not complete high school	19.5%	18.3%
High school graduate	80.5%	81.7%
College graduate (BA)	13.6%	24.7%
Graduate or professional school graduate	3.9%	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

The number of residents completing high school decreased 4% during the period 1990 to 2000, while the rest of the Pioneer Valley Region experienced only a .3% decrease in high school graduates. Ware residents completing an associate degree increased 40% compared to an 8% increase for the region. Residents who also completed a bachelor's degree grew to 47% during the ten-year period, while the region experienced only an 18% increase. Ware residents lagged behind the rest of the region in graduate and professional degrees, with only 17% of its residents completing post secondary education programs compared to 27% in the Pioneer Valley.

There is an educational imperative in Ware to raise the declining totals of residents graduating from the local high school program. Conversely, the rising numbers of residents graduating from higher educational programs is a positive growth indicator. Using the Census data, there is an apparent schism developing between Ware residents not completing basic educational requirements and those residents pursuing higher education. Identifying the causal relationship between income, class and educational levels may help to clarify the widening gap.

**Table 3-9: Ware Educational Level**

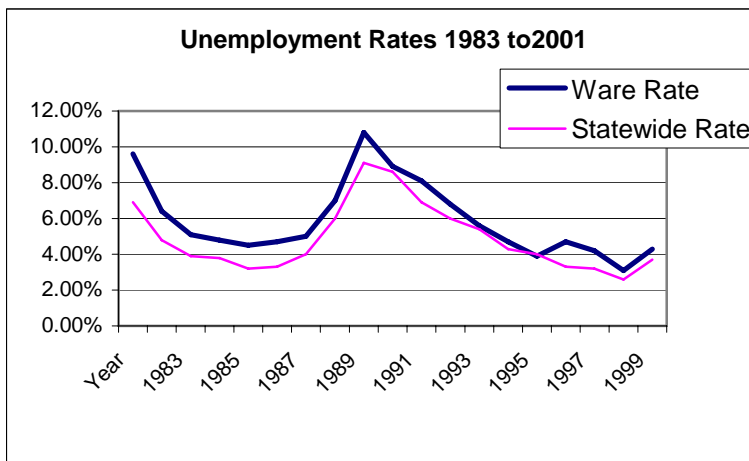
	Town Educational Level			PVR Educational Level		
	1990	2000	Percent Change	1990	2000	Percent Change
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	6,433	6,519		378,269	389,030	
<b>Less than 9th grade</b>	680	396	(41.8%)	35,027	25,242	(27.9%)
<b>9th to 12th grade, no diploma</b>	1,158	875	(24.4%)	56,798	46,140	(18.8%)
<b>High school graduate</b>	2,685	2,583	(3.8%)	120,823	120,503	(0.3%)
<b>Some college, no degree</b>	882	1,242	40.8%	57,950	70,006	20.8%
<b>Associate degree</b>	379	535	41.2%	28,831	31,220	8.3%
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	434	636	46.5%	47,228	55,747	18.0%
<b>Graduate or professional degree</b>	215	252	17.2%	31,612	40,172	27.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Unemployment Data

The unemployment rates in Ware were substantially above the statewide rates during the 1980's. In the 1990's, the Town of Ware followed the statewide rates very closely. The average town unemployment rate over this time period was 5.91%. The average state unemployment rate for the same time was 4.89%.

**Figure 3-3: Unemployment Rates**



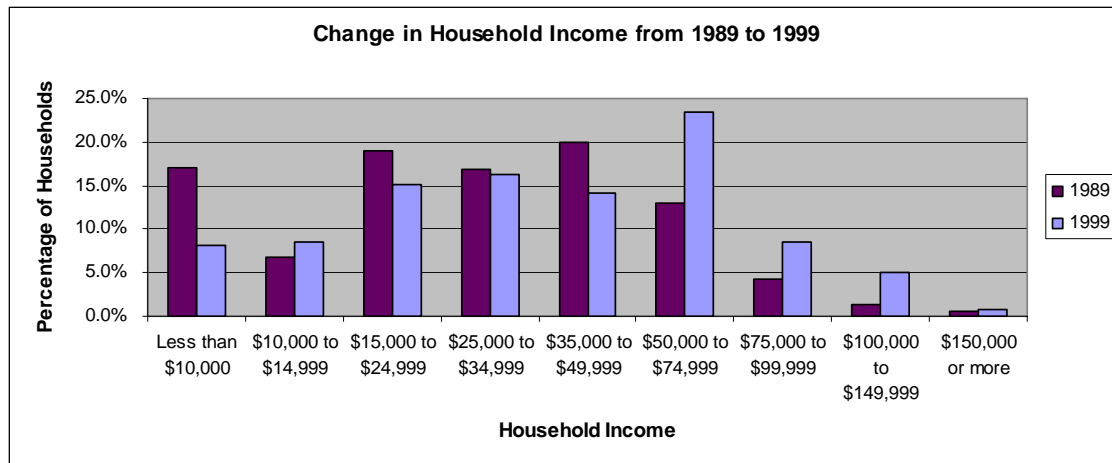
Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Division of Employment and Training

## Household Income

From 1989 to 1999, the median household income for Ware decreased by 7% from \$39,699 to \$36,875 (in 1999\$). During this time households earning less than \$10,000 decreased by 321 households (49%), while households earning \$10,000 to \$14,999 increased by 77 households or 29%. Households earning less than \$25,000 also decreased by 121 units. Also, those households in Ware considered to be in the middle-income levels (\$35,000 to \$50,000) also decreased by an overall total of 94 households. Taken together the data suggests that a significant proportion of the Town of Ware's low, moderate and middle income earners have either relocated to other communities or increased their annual household incomes enough to put them in the higher income categories.

Like other communities in the Pioneer Valley Region, Ware is experiencing notable increases in households earning over \$50,000. During the ten year period between 1989 and 1999, households in Ware earning between \$50,000 to \$99,999 increased by 625 households and households earning over \$100,000 increased by 159 units. This trend may be a result of the relatively prosperous economic markets of the 1990's or may be a reflection of high-income earners moving into homes in the hilltown communities.

**Figure 3-4: Change in Household Income**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau  
Median household incomes in 1999\$

## Local Employers and Economic Base

This section presents the Town of Ware's economic base, employment patterns, and major local employers. It is important to assess which sectors and businesses provide employment in order to plan for future economic development. The Department of Employment and Training (DET) releases community-level data regarding the number of employees working in a community on an annual basis. Because of confidentiality issues, some of the sectors cannot be displayed. Despite the data's limitations, Ware's total employed grew by 185 jobs with the majority of these jobs in trade, finance and public administration. All other reported sectors experienced job losses.

Compared to the Pioneer Valley region, Ware is experiencing an erosion of its economic base. While the region grew in nearly every job sector except manufacturing, Ware lost jobs in the majority of the surveyed sectors. Because Ware can no longer depend on manufacturing jobs to sustain its economic base, the Town will need to seek economic stability in other areas, particularly in the fast growing services sector.

## Predicted workforce and job availability

The MA Division of Employment and Training projects state wide increases of 7% in trade employees by 2008, a 24% increase in service employees and a 7% increase in public administration employees. The number of construction and mining employees is expected to increase 3% by 2008.

Table 3-10: Employment Sector Data

	Employers	Employees			Average Weekly Wage	PVR Employers	Pioneer Valley Region Employees			PVR Average Weekly Wage
	2001	1996	2000	% Chg.	2001	2001	1996	2000	% Chg.	2001
<b>Agriculture, fishing, and forestry</b>	6	N/A	13	N/A	\$460	348	1,814	2,141	18.0%	\$402.83
<b>Mining and construction</b>	23	68	53	(22.1%)	\$939	1223	7,446	9,037	21.4%	\$967.50
<b>Manufacturing</b>	8	700	609	(13.0%)	\$1,009	955	38,414	38,299	(0.3%)	\$792.48
<b>Transportation, communications, and utilities</b>	3	22	5	(77.3%)	\$350	459	9,329	10,682	14.5%	\$803.08
<b>Trade</b>	78	724	950	31.2%	\$304	4149	57,198	61,713	7.9%	\$495.85
<b>Finance, insurance, and real estate</b>	10	155	176	13.5%	\$952	1077	12,126	13,403	10.5%	\$1,199.13
<b>Services</b>	70	565	562	(0.5%)	\$614	7000	71,066	79,252	11.5%	\$684.56
<b>Public Administration</b>	N/A	322	385	19.6%	N/A		40,908	45,017	10.0%	N/A

Source: MA Division of Employment and Training (ES-202)

Table 3-11: Employment Projections

	2008 Employment Projections			
	2000 Employment	2008 Projected Employment	2000-2008 Projected Percent Change	2008 Percent of Total Employment
<b>Construction and mining</b>	53	54	2.8%	1.9%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	609	542	(11.1%)	18.6%
<b>Transportation, communications, and utilities</b>	5	5	5.0%	0.2%
<b>Trade</b>	950	1,013	6.7%	34.8%
<b>Finance, insurance, and real estate</b>	176	191	8.4%	6.6%
<b>Services</b>	562	696	23.9%	23.9%
<b>Public administration</b>	385	411	6.8%	14.1%
<b>Total (does not include agriculture)</b>	2,740	2,913		

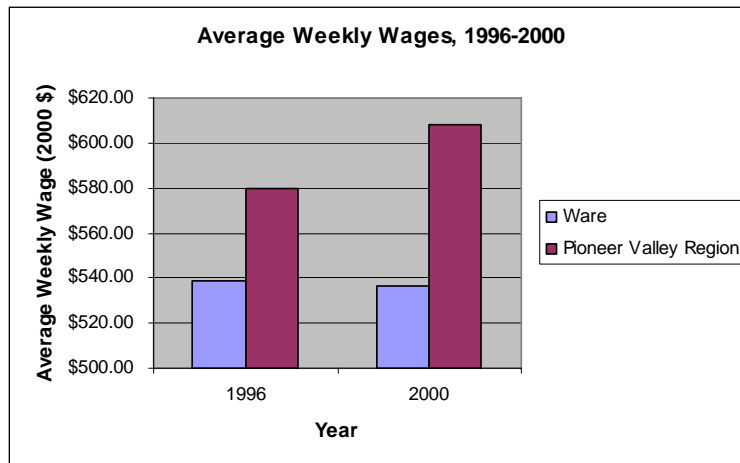
Source: MA Division of Employment and Training, Massachusetts Employment Projections through 2008; PVPC

Note: Projections are derived by using 1998-2008 industry projections developed by the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training for the state as a whole.

## Wages

The average weekly wage in Ware decreased 0.5% from \$538.65 (adjusted to 2000\$) in 1996, to \$536.17 in 2000. The Pioneer Valley experienced a 5% wage increase during the same time period. Weekly wages for Ware residents also lag behind the regional average of \$608. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau). The decrease in weekly wages is most likely a reflection of the loss of higher paid manufacturing and mining and construction jobs in the Town of Ware.

**Figure 3-5: Average Weekly Wage**



Average weekly wage -1996 calculated into 2000\$

## Poverty Rate

From 1989 to 1999, the median household income for Ware decreased significantly by 7% from \$39,699 to \$36,875 (in 1999\$). There are 219 families (8.4%) in the community living below the poverty level. Ware's poverty rate closely reflects the regional rate of 8.3% (Source: U.S.Census Bureau).

**Table 3-12: Poverty Rate Summary**

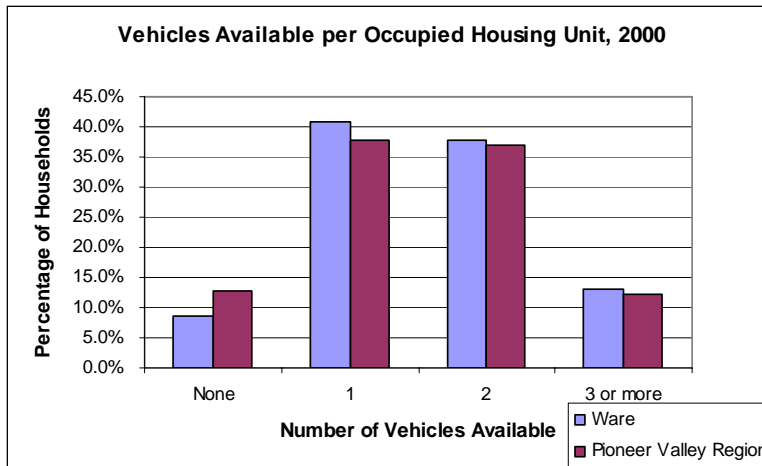
	Total Number	Number Living Below Poverty Line	Poverty Rate	PVR Rate
<b>Families</b>	2,598	219	8.4%	8.3%
<b>Families with a female head of household and no husband present</b>	496	127	23.8%	25.7%
<b>Individuals</b>	9,707	1,082	11.2%	12.1%
<b>Individuals 65 years and over</b>	1,465	101	6.9%	8.2%
<b>Children under 18 years</b>	2,307	390	16.8%	15.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Access to a vehicle

Of the 4,028 occupied housing units reported in the 2000 census, 345 or 8.6% have no vehicle, compared to 13% of vehicle-less households in the region. Households having one vehicle numbered 1,641 or 41%, compared to 38% across the region. Households having two vehicles, numbered 1,520 or 37%, compared to 37% for the rest of the region, and 13% (522) have 3 or more, compared to 12% for the region (Source: U.S. Census Bureau). If vehicle ownership reflects economic well-being, it seems that Ware residents are close to the average for the region. The lack of public transportation in town and long commutes may also lead to higher levels of vehicle ownership.

**Figure 3-6: Available Vehicles**

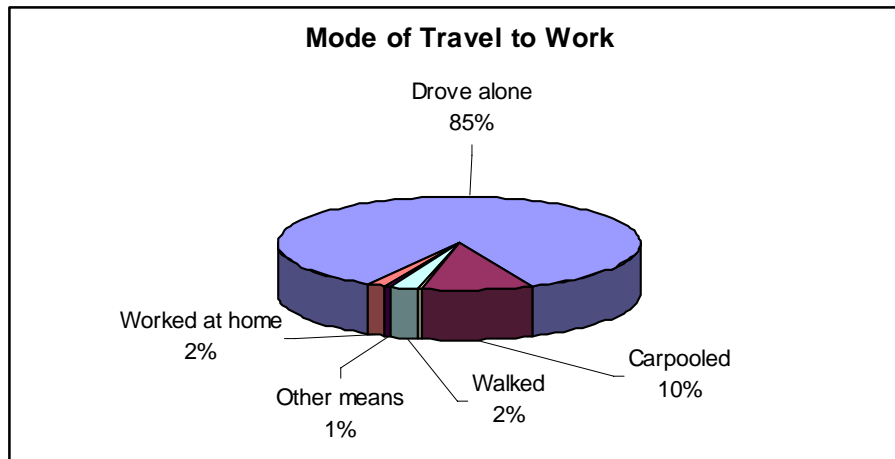


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Travel time to work

The mean travel time to work for Ware residents increased 10% from 1990 to 2000, from 23 minutes to 26 minutes. This commute time is 1 minute shorter than the Pioneer Valley average time of 27 minutes. Of those residents commuting to work, 4,118 (85%) of residents drive alone to work. Four-hundred and eighty people (10%) carpool, which compares to the regional average of 10%, while 120 people reported walking to work. Seventy-nine people (2%) reported working at home compared with the regional average of 3% (Source: U.S. Census Bureau).

**Figure 3-7: Mode of Transportation**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Inventory and Assessment of infrastructure for Economic Development

The following section summarizes and assesses Ware's current infrastructure to support economic development, including water, sewer, transportation, and telecommunications.

## **Water Infrastructure**

By definition, a public water system has 15 or more service connections, or regularly provides water to at least 25 people daily for at least 60 days per year. The two main types of public water systems are community systems and non-community systems. Community water systems are typically publicly owned, and serve community residents year-round. Non-community systems are privately owned and include workplaces that provide water to their employees, such as community centers, restaurants, and other businesses.

The town's water distribution system, which provides water to approximately 65% of the town's population, is served by the Barnes Wellfield and the Dismal Swamp Wellfield. The development of the latter wellfield was just completed within the past few years. The system is served by two water storage facilities, over 20 miles of water line and both water tanks were recently rehabilitated. Many of the antiquated and undersized waterlines in the greater downtown area have been replaced through a combination of local and MA DHCD CDF monies. The town's present and future water needs are being met.

## **Sewer Infrastructure**

The town's wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) and related sewer lines serve approximately 80% of the town population. The WWTF is presently operating below capacity and has the ability to undertake additional volume. The town has replaced problem or antiquated lines using local and MA DHCD CDF monies in the greater downtown area. The town's present and future water needs are being met.

## **Transportation Infrastructure**

Ware has over 117 miles of road, second only to Belchertown in the Quabbin Subregion. Over 72% of these roadways are owned and maintained by the town, with the balance owned and maintained by the Massachusetts Highway Department (portions of Routes 9 and 32), Metropolitan District Commission (Quabbin Reservation), and some in private ownership. Most of Ware's roads are functionally classified as local roads. However, 8.12 miles of road are functionally classified as principal arterials, 5.06 miles as minor arterials, 5.37 miles as major collectors, and 14.47 miles as minor collectors. Ware is a member of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVRTA), which runs a fixed route shuttle within the town. The PVRTA also offers paratransit services to the elderly and disabled through the Council on Aging. Sixteen bridges are located in Ware, including one historic covered bridge which spans the Ware River connecting Ware with the Village of Gilbertville in Hardwick.

## **School Capacity**

Within the past few years, the Town of Ware has substantially upgraded its school buildings and properties. A new Jr./Sr. high school was completed in 1998 and the former high school was substantially renovated to accommodate the middle school population. In the early 1990's, the elementary school underwent major renovations and improvements due to roofing and structural concerns. As a result of these recent improvements, grades K-12 are all held in modernized facilities on one centralized campus. The elementary school is near capacity, but has been this way for many years. There is flexibility in programming should space become an issue.

The middle and high schools have sufficient existing space within their respective buildings and can accommodate additional students and programs if necessary.

## Telecommunications Infrastructure

As more business to business transactions occur electronically, telecommunications capabilities are essential for effective and efficient business communications. Ware currently has limited telecommunications infrastructure and services available throughout the community. High-speed Internet service and cell phone reception are fundamental technologies necessary to remain competitive with other regional businesses.

## Future Economic Profile

### Availability of land and buildings for economic development

According to the PVPC Subregional Housing Plan, a total of 13,025 acres of developable land remain in Ware. Of this amount, 9,227 acres (71%) remain potentially unconstrained to development. A complete buildout of all developable land in Ware could potentially increase the town's population to approximately 27,848 people from the current population of 9,707, a difference of 18,141 people. Community officials acknowledge that the buildout summaries do not take into consideration soil type and other constraints that might affect the amount of land that is developable in Ware.

**Table 3-13: Land Availability**

	Acres	Percent of Developable Land
<b>Total Land Area</b>	25,587	N/A
<b>Remaining Developable Land</b>	13,025.0	N/A
<b>Developable Land with Constraints</b>	3,798.0	29.2%
<b>Developable Land without Constraints</b>	9,227.0	70.8%
<b>Constraint-slope</b>	2,589.0	19.9%
<b>Constraint-river</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Constraint-wetlands</b>	184.0	1.4%
<b>Constraint-floodplain</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Constraint-multiple</b>	1,025.0	7.9%

Source: PVPC, Subregional Housing Plans 2002, EOEA

### Availability of needed services

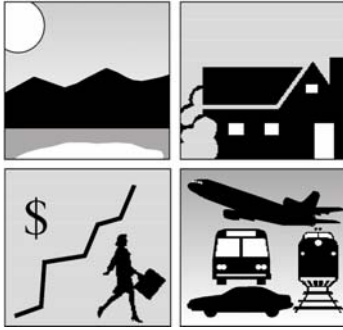
The Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) sponsored the creation of a set of buildout maps and analyses for all 351 cities and towns within the Commonwealth. The maps and analyses depict currently protected and developed land within each community and what it would look like if remaining undeveloped land was completely developed in accordance with current local zoning. The EOEA buildout analyses allow each community to see current and potential future development. The EOEA Buildout Analyses project the following for Ware:



**Table 3-14: EOEA Buildout Summary**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>Buildout</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Population</b>	9,707	27,848	18,141
<b>Students</b>	1,350	3,866	2,516
<b>Households</b>	4,336	11,422	7,086
<b>Total Water Use (gallons/day)</b>	1,149,449.32	2,645,691.32	1,496,242
<b>Additional Resources</b>		<b>Buildout</b>	
<b>Residential Water (gallons/day)</b>		1,428,415	
<b>Commercial &amp; Industrial Water (gallons/day)</b>		67,827	
<b>Total Solid Waste (tons/year)</b>		9,306	
<b>Non-Recyclable Waste (tons/year)</b>		6,618	
<b>Recyclable Waste (tons/year)</b>		2,688	
<b>Roadway (miles)</b>		115	

Source: MA Executive Office of Environmental Affairs



## Community Development Plan

### TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT



Town of  
Ware

Prepared by:  
The Pioneer Valley  
Planning Commission

This document was  
Developed using funds  
Pursuant to Massachusetts  
Executive Order 418 Program

# Element Four: Transportation

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## Introduction

*Developed using funds pursuant to Massachusetts Executive Order 418. Prepared in cooperation with the Massachusetts Highway Department and the Federal Highway Administration.*

The transportation element examined existing transportation conditions with a particular emphasis on rail service. The rail infrastructure in the Town of Ware offers tremendous opportunities due to its key location to promote economic development and increase tourism. Industrial areas are well served by the railroad and there is good potential to expand service and attract new development. The transportation element inventoried the current conditions in order to isolate the different options available for existing freight rail service.

Unlike many of the Cities and Town's in Massachusetts the Town of Ware is served by an active rail carrier. The Massachusetts Central Railroad (Mass Central) has provided efficient and critical transportation services to businesses in the Town of Ware since 1979. Rail service can be an important asset that the Town of Ware can use to retain existing businesses and to promote economic and industrial development.

This report serves as the transportation component of the Ware Community Development Plan. It is a primer to guide the Town of Ware's engagement with the railroad that serves the town to better leverage opportunities and preserve resources. The report has four sections. The first provides a historical background to railroad line in Ware. The second provides an overview of current railroad operations, customers, and existing conditions. Next, follows a discussion of different business opportunities for the railroad and community. Finally the report concludes with a number of recommendations for the Town to consider when attempting to leverage the railroad presences for economic development.

Often the public perception of railroading can be years out of date from the current conditions. In the 1970s railroad service significantly deteriorated with the bankruptcy of many of the eastern railroads. Significant cutbacks in routes and service coupled with deregulation and public sector support in the late 1970s set the stage for an incredible rebirth of the industry that continues up until the present day. The railroad industry as a whole has gone through incredible changes over the past 30 years. As a result a stronger transportation system has evolved that efficiently serves select industries as the Mass Central does in Ware.

The North American Railroad system is made up of many different individual carriers that combined provide an efficient means to move freight across the country. The different railroads in the system are commonly referred as being in one of three groups; Class 1 carriers, Regional Railroads or Short Lines. The Mass Central falls under the short line category. Short Lines over the past 30 or so years have often been able to succeed in operating sections of railroad where larger carriers are unable to do so profitably. Their lower cost structure combined with the ability to provide attentive service and innovation has produced many short line success stories.

## Historical Background

Construction of the Ware River Railroad began in 1868 after the railroad received its second charter from the commonwealth. By 1870 16 miles of track between Palmer and Gilbertville had been opened. The railroad however was out of cash and was leased to the New London Northern for the next 18 years. The east-west Boston & Albany Railroad, concerned that the new line would fall under the control of one of it's competitors, gained control of the line in an attempt to develop north-south

traffic between Concord New Hampshire and Palmer. The connecting railroad, Monadnock, in the north did not provide the overhead traffic to make it a profitable acquisition for the Boston & Albany.

Typical of the regional competition between different railroads which left most of Southern New England over built with railroads in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Central Massachusetts constructed it's own parallel line between Barre Junction and Forest Lake. During the great Depression the Central Massachusetts Line was abandoned in favor of trackage rights on Ware River Line negotiated by the Boston and Maine which controlled the Central Massachusetts since 1887.

The Boston & Albany Railroad operated the Ware River as branch off of the latter's main line in Palmer. Passenger service remained until World War II and the line was not formerly merged into the parent New York Central until 1961. In 1968, the New York Central joined in a disastrous merger with the Pennsylvania railroad to create Penn Central. Around the time of the merger the northern most portion of the line between South Barre and Winchendon was abandoned. In June of 1970, Penn Central went into bankruptcy eventually taking with it ever major northeastern railroad.

Faced with the threat of economic calamity if the northeastern railroads completely failed, the Federal Government seized and reorganized the bankrupt carriers creating the Consolidated Rail Corporation, or Conrail. One of the contributing factors in the Penn Central failure was the very difficult regulatory system that prevented railroad from reducing costs by abandoning unprofitable branch lines. In the process to create Conrail, 9,600 miles of track of light density was considered for abandonment or sale to states. The Ware River Secondary Track was included in this category.

In 1976, the Ware River Secondary Track was excluded from Conrail and under provisions of 3R Act subject to abandonment or sale. Railroad lines that were not initially included into Conrail were eligible for a limited time federal subsidy under 3R Act provisions and Conrail served as the designated operator of the line until 1979. The Mass Central Railroad assumed the role as designated operator in December 1979 and has remained in that position since then.

The 3R Act provided funding and a mechanism for state transportation departments to acquire railroad property as well as initially fund operating subsidies and rehabilitation programs. Under these programs a \$1,599,000 rehabilitation program using state and federal funds was completed in 1979. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts's Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC) acquired the line in 1982. A further rehabilitation of the entire line began in 1992 with goal of reaching FRA Class 2 track for freight service. This program included major tie replacement, ballasting, resurfacing, brush clearance and drainage improvements and was completed in 1999.

## **Existing Conditions and Current Operations**

The Mass Central operates the 26 mile Ware River Secondary Track under contract with EOTC. In addition, the Mass Central owns a number of track segments outright. This physical description of the Mass Central is based on the 2001 bid documents created by EOTC and subsequent conversation with the Mass Central officials.

The railroad right of way is generally 66 feet wide for the majority of the of the single track main line, portions however can vary between 30 and 100 feet. Most of the Mass Central's business and operations take place on the section of the track between Palmer and Ware.

During some point before 2001, the Mass Central purchased the track connecting the EOTC owned Ware River Secondary track and CSX, as well as the yard tracks and intermodal terminal in Palmer. The EOTC section begins at Mile Post (MP) 1.7 and continues to the end of track at approximately MP 25 in South Barre. A connection with the New England Central Railroad exists at MP 1.7. At MP 7.1 there is a junction where the Mass Central owned former B&M Bondsville Branch splits off. Gibbs Crossing, one of railroads transloading facilities, is at MP 8.0. The track and siding to Kanzaki Paper is located at MP 11.5. The Ware yard and another transloading facility are located at MP 12.0. A transloading facility is also located at MP 24.7 in South Barre.

As mentioned during the period of Mass Central operation the main line has been the subject of two rehabilitation programs. The 2001 Bid documents make reference to the fact that neither of these programs included rail replacement and further raise concern that in future the main line between Ware and Palmer will need rail replacement within the next five years. Much of the rail was rolled between 1915 and 1927. It would appear that a rail replacement program may be required in the near term.

Under its agreements with the Commonwealth the Mass Central is required to maintain the railroad infrastructure to FRA Class II track standards. Mass Central management asserts that all sections of track meet this criteria and is regularly inspected by State and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) inspectors. Mass Central management has stated that while the age of rail can be a concern, it is far more important to focus on the tie, sub grade conditions (stone ballast), ditching for drainage and brush cutting to ensure a safe and efficient track structure. Mass Central management has committed to EOTC to make regular annual investments in track structure to ensure that the assets of both Mass Central and the Commonwealth. When during inspections, if specific sections of rail show excessive wear, Mass Central will replace rail as needed to ensure track integrity.

The current Mass Central management has upgraded the track and bridge structures to allow heavier railcars of 286,000 lb. gross weight, which are now becoming the standard rail equipment used by customers for the transportation of bulk commodities. This upgrade was completed for the portion of track between Palmer and Ware in August 2003.

During the more than 25 years of its operation of the Ware Secondary Track, the Mass Central has seen considerable success and innovation. The railroad has increased traffic and built up considerable business from its first years of operation. Cars handled by the railroad in its first years of operation ranged between 250 to 450 cars per year. Carloading peaked during 1999-2000 with over 3200 cars per year, currently the railroad has been handling over 2000 cars per year.

Two areas where the railroad has been innovative is intermodal and transflow transportation. Intermodal is where either shipping containers or highway trailers are placed on railroad cars for movement by rail. Intermodal traffic provides a service with similar to over the road trucking at a lower cost. Transflow traffic is typified by bulk commodities transported by rail to a site near an end user facility and then off loaded for final delivery by truck.

Intermodal service is one of the fastest growing segments of railroad traffic. In the 1980s, the Mass Central developed an intermodal terminal for international shipments. While international intermodal operations have ended at the Palmer terminal the Mass Central has recently started jointly marketing new regional intermodal services with other railroads. The first route of this service brings intermodal trailers from Maine to Palmer.

Developing steady transflow business is another area where the Mass Central has been very successful. With the ability to provide a central location in New England and good service the Mass Central has developed considerable transflow traffic to the two terminals in Ware. Customers in the plastics industry use these terminals for a number of different activities. Plastic Pellets can be unloaded for final delivery and others may be stored in rail cars for later deliveries. Railcars are often used as the storage facilities for the plastics industry.

## Connections With Other Railroads

The Mass Central connects with two other railroads in Palmer, CSX and New England Central. CSX Transportation (CSXT) is the largest class one carrier in New England and the New England Central (NECR) provides connections to CN, CP and Norfolk Southern. These connections provide the Mass Central with inbound and outbound traffic from the North American railroad system. The Mass Central is in the enviable position of having more than one connecting railroad. This provides competition for freight rates which typically provide lower prices and can be a significant advantage in locating new customers.

## Current Customers

The Mass Central has 7 primary online customers/Facilities. Five are located in Ware, 2 in Palmer and one in Barre. The majority of the current freight traffic on the Mass Central is generated by the five Customers in Ware. They are:

<i>Advanced Drainage Systems</i>	<i>Gibbs Crossing, MA</i>
<i>A&amp;R Transport</i>	<i>Gibbs Crossing, MA</i>
<i>Kanzaki Paper</i>	<i>Ware, MA</i>
<i>Hardwick Kilns</i>	<i>Hardwick, MA</i>
<i>Wildwood Development</i>	<i>South Barre, MA</i>

## Business and Industrial Development Opportunities

New business will develop for the Mass Central through either the expansion of existing customers or locating new customers along the railroad. The mix and type of businesses will likely be similar to the existing customers.

Working with the Mass Central officials a number of possible sites have been suggested as possible locations for new railroad served businesses in Ware. These locations are indicated on figure 4-1:

1. The area around Gibbs Crossing, particularly to the east and south of the railroads existing yard and transflow terminal.
2. The area along the railroad tracks north of Gibbs Crossing along the Ware River.
3. The area around the spur track to Kanzaki Paper.
4. Expansion of transflow operations in the Ware Yard.
5. The area north of the yard between Rt. 9 and the Ware River.

The area around Gibbs Crossing had previously been considered for development as an industrial park with adjoining land in Palmer. For this development to move forward certain infrastructure such as sewer and other utilities would have to be extended. In the near term however, this location could provide an opportunity to expand the existing transflow facility. This appears to be the largest potential development site if infrastructure issues can be addressed and is not developed for another purpose which is not rail related. The A&R Transport operations have specific community impact in that most of the truck drivers employed live in the local area with their families, and therefore contribute to economy of the community as a whole.

The Ware Yard and area surrounding Kanzaki Paper may provide areas for the expansion of existing businesses and rail infrastructure. The area along route 9 north of the Ware Yard has been under consideration for a transfer station of construction and demolition debris.

**Figure 4-1: New Business Locations for the Mass Central**

## **Tourist Rail Opportunities**

From 1987 to 1997, the Mass Central hosted a tourist rail operation named the Ware River Railroad. At its height the service featured a two-hour round trip from the Granary Restaurant in Ware with vintage passenger cars hauled by a diesel locomotive.

Discussions with the current management of the Mass Central have indicated that they are not opposed to considering a proposal for restarting tourist train operations, however they do not consider it a principle part of their current business plan.

There might be an opportunity for a partnership between a tourist railroad proponent and the railroad. It is common in the short line/tourist railroad industry for a proponent to contract with a railroad to operate tourist trains. All aspects of the operation would be responsibility of the proponent.

Challenges to rail tourism along the Mass Central include competition from more established tourist railroad operations in nearby locations. Typically, the most successful tourist railroad operations work in unison with popular local tourist sites and activities that provide a critical mass of potential visitors/customers. The Town of Ware could address these challenges by sponsoring train trips connected to special events such as community gatherings. For example, a "Santa Train" is a popular tourist train event. A Turnpike Tourism Grant would fund a feasibility study to explore establishing a tourist train in the Town of Ware.

## **Recommendations**

Increased contacts between the Town and the railroad are suggested as a means to work together to expand existing businesses and locate new ones that use the railroad. Three particular areas are recommended for the town to consider when leveraging the presence of the railroad for town's benefit. These are:

### **Engagement**

Local Governments need to be engaged with both the railroad and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC). Residential involvement ensures that the present service is preserved and indicates local support for the online business. An advisory committee, established formally or informally, would provide a forum for community input regarding the railroad and the EOTC. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has proposed a task force concentrating on regional rail freight planning to assist communities and freight providers.

### **New Commonwealth Initiatives**

Smart Growth, "Fix it First", and financial investments in urban centers have been at the forefront of the Commonwealth's new transportation policies. Under these policies, the focus of state funding will be locating and expanding new and existing businesses that take advantage of local resources in established urban locations. New or 'green field' development will be a secondary consideration under this policy model. In particular, the current transportation bond bill is expected to contain a significant amount of funding for rail freight projects. This funding could conceivably be used for a project or projects on the Mass Central located in the Town of Ware.



## Be strategic in future development

There is limited number of opportunity sites where rail related business development can take place. Consider using the tools of zoning and permitting, to focus development that takes the fullest advantages of Ware's resources and objectives. A number of potential economic development sites have been identified during this planning process that are either underutilized or undeveloped. If these sites are developed without examining the economic potential of rail, opportunities to attract new business for both the railroad and Town may be lost. Taking a strategic approach to development would encourage best and highest use of the rail sites.

## Future Build-out

It is important to consider the impact of zoning regulations and future growth in employment, population and residential development on the existing transportation system. Zoning regulations may permit large developments with high trip generation rates in primarily residential areas. Site specific developments can be expected to impact the existing flow of traffic and add to delay throughout the study area. Growth in surrounding communities can also result in an increase in commuter traffic through the Town of Ware. Many potential future deficiencies and problem areas can be eliminated by identifying the problem before it happens.

## Future Forecasts

The Bureau of Transportation Planning and Development (MassHighway Planning) developed the future forecasts of population, households and employment for the state of Massachusetts and regional planning agency. Their procedures and preliminary estimates were reviewed by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and modifications were made based on our comments. A complete summary of the forecasts for population, households, and employment data for the Town of Ware is shown in Table 4-1.

**Table 4-1: Population, Household and Employment Forecast Data**

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
<b>Population</b>	9,808	9,707	9,680	9,913	9,964	10,015	10,063
<b>Households</b>	3,836	4,027	4,155	4,216	4,279	4,339	4,398
<b>Employment</b>	2,504	3,042	3,140	3,228	3,235	3,241	3,233

MassHighway Planning utilized several sources, such as the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER), Woods & Poole Economics (WPE), and the U.S. Census to forecast population for the state. To determine the number of households at the state and regional level, population in households is divided by average household size. This data was estimated for the Town of Ware based on past trends.

Both population and households are projected to modestly increase in the Town of Ware from 2000 to 2025. The total population increases by 4% from 2000 to 2025 and the total number of households increases by 9% over the same time period. The average occupancy per household is expected to reduce from 2.41 residents in 2000 to 2.29 residents in 2025.

Total employment is defined as the number of employed residents plus non-residents who commute into the community to work minus residents who commute out of the community to work. Employed residents are forecast by multiplying persons 16 years and over by the labor force participation rate. Employment was allocated at the community level by regressing past decades with a non-linear growth function, then the proportion of jobs to population is examined as a check for reasonableness.

Employment has been forecast to increase in the Town of Ware from 2000 to 2010 and then remain fairly consistent between 2010 and 2025. This is due in part to past trends reflected in the 1990 and 2000 Census data, and is compounded in later years by the projected retirement of the “baby-boomer” generation as increases in population are not projected to immediately offset the anticipated loss in the number of eligible workers.

## Travel Demand Model

Travel demand models are developed to simulate actual travel patterns and existing transportation conditions. Traffic is generated using socioeconomic data such as household size, automobile availability and employment data. Once the existing conditions are evaluated and adjusted to satisfactorily replicate actual travel patterns and vehicle roadway volumes, the model is then altered to project future year conditions. The preparation of a future year socioeconomic database is the last step in the travel demand forecast process. Forecasts of population and socioeconomic data are used to determine the number of trips that will be made in the future.

Travel demand forecasting is a major step in the transportation planning process. By simulating the current roadway conditions and the travel demand on those roadways, deficiencies in the system are identified. This is an important tool in planning future network enhancements and analyzing currently proposed projects. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) uses the TransCAD software to perform transportation forecasts for its base year of 2000 and analysis years of 2010, 2020, and 2025. All 43 communities within the boundaries of Hampden and Hampshire Counties are included in the PVPC regional transportation model. Roadway networks are constructed using current information for the higher classified roads. Most local streets are not included in the travel demand model and are represented by centroid connectors that link the major routes to areas of traffic activity.

## Future Volumes

Estimates of average weekday traffic volumes were obtained from the PVPC regional transportation model for the 2003 and 2025 analysis years and are shown in Table 4-2.

**Table 4-2: Future Traffic Volume Forecast**

Location	20 03	20 25
Route 32 at the Palmer Town Line	10,	12,
Route 9 at the Belchertown Town Line	4,8	6,7
Route 32 south of Route 9	12,	18,
Route 9/32 east of Church Street	8,7	12,
Route 9/32 at the West Brookfield Town Line	4,8	7,3

As can be seen from the Table, traffic volumes are expected to continue to steadily increase as based upon the forecasted increases in population and employment for the Town of Ware. Traffic volumes along Route 32 south of Route 9 are projected to approach 18,500 vehicles per day in the 2025 analysis year. This is an increase of 45% over current levels. Large increases in future traffic were also projected for Route 9 at the Belchertown Line and Route 9/32 at the West Brookfield Town Line where traffic was projected to increase by 39% and 52% respectively between 2003 and 2025.

## Regionally Significant Projects

Major roadway improvement projects such as the widening of an arterial roadway from two lanes to four lanes of travel can have a significant impact on future traffic volumes in the region. Improvements identified in the Short and Long Range Elements of the current Regional Transportation Plan for the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization were incorporated into PVPC's regional transportation model. The roadway projects for each analysis year are listed in Table 3. No site specific major improvement projects in the Town of Ware have been included in the regional transportation model.

**Table 4-3: Projects Included in the Regional Transportation Model**

<b>Analysis</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
2003	Hadley,	Calvin Coolidge Bridge widening from 3 lanes to 4 lanes
2003	Hadley	Route 9 widening to four lanes - from Calvin Coolidge Bridge to West Street
2003	Springfield	Reversal of 4 existing I-91 ramps
2003	Chicopee	Memorial Drive signal coordination
2003	Hadley	Route 9 signal coordination
2003	Westfield	Route 20 signal coordination
2003	Springfield	Reconstruction, widening, and signal coordination on Parker Street
2003	Holyoke, W.Springfield	Route 5 signal coordination. Construct a new collector road to showcase cinema.
2010	Chicopee	Deady Memorial Bridge – widen to 5 lanes.
2010	Chicopee	Traffic coordination and improvements along Broadway
2010	Holyoke	Improvements to Commercial Street corridor
2010	Westfield	Route 10/202 Great River Bridge - two bridges acting as one-way pairs.
2010	Springfield	New slip ramp from I-291 to East Columbus Avenue
2010	Northampton	Road widening on Damon Road from Rte 9 to King St.
2010	Chester	Maple Street bridge restoration as a one-way bridge.
2010	E. Longmeadow	Improvements to the East Longmeadow Rotary.
2020	Agawam	Route 57 Phase II new limited access highway from Route 187 to Southwick Line.
2020	Holyoke	Elmwood Bypass - new roadway from I-391 to Lower Westfield Road, Holyoke
2020	Agawam, Longmeadow, Springfield	Improve the South End Bridge, construct a direct ramp from the South End Bridge to Route 57, fix existing lane reduction problem on I-91 between Exits 1-3.
2025	Northampton	Connector roadway between Route 10 and Route 66 from Old South Street.
2025	Ludlow, Springfield	Route 21 bridge reconstruction (possible to be widened as well)

## Impact of Rail Orientated Development on Future Traffic

Rail orientated development can be expected to result in slight increases in future traffic volumes in the Town of Ware. While rail service can reduce the overall number of trucks required to serve a major development, trucks are still required to pick up and drop off freight from the facility. As a result, it will be important for the Town of Ware to develop measures to limit the impact of truck traffic on residential neighborhoods. It is recommended that all new developments that are expected to have a high volume of truck traffic be required to develop a preferred truck routing plan using Route 9 and Route 32 whenever possible in order to minimize the impact of truck traffic on local roadways.

Large trucks attempting to access the northeastern section of Ware from the Massachusetts Turnpike Exit 8 in Palmer may encounter difficulties due to the tight turning radii and clearance issues (13' 10" posted height) in the vicinity of the Route 9 underpass to the Mass Central Railroad. This could force many trucks to utilize Church Street and Upper Church Street, both local roadways, to access this area. It will be important for the Town of Ware to address existing vertical clearance issues in some areas prior to the approval of new development that is expected to generate a high volume of truck traffic. The Town of Ware should require that information on the estimated number and size of trucks associated with the development be provided to the Town.

Route 32 is currently under design by the Massachusetts Highway Department for roadway and safety improvements between Stimpson Street in Palmer and the Ware/Palmer Town Line. This project is expected to have a positive impact for traffic in this area by improving existing curves and installing truck climbing lanes where appropriate. As a result, this project could improve access to the Town of Ware from the Massachusetts Turnpike and increase the future development potential of the Route 32 corridor.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Open Space and Resource Protection

### Results of Survey to Prioritize Open Space Strategies – Ware Community Development Committee Members

The following 31 strategies were ranked and prioritized by 11 members of the Ware Community Development Committee.

Instructions: Please rank your top fifteen strategies for Ware 1 through 15, with “1” being your top priority and “15” being the fifteenth most important. Leave all unranked strategies blank.

STRATEGY	PRIORITY RANK	Total Points
1. Acquire Open Space thru Grants and Local Appropriations	2	95
2. Adopt the Community Preservation Act	1	111
3. Create a Local Land Fund or Open Space Fund	10	54
4. Encourage Dedicated Open Space in New Developments	8	55
5. Adopt Natural Resource Protection Overlay Zones	12	48
6. Adopt Environmental Performance Standards	30	4
7. Encourage Participation in Chapter 61 Reduced Property Tax Assessment Programs	20	28
8. Preserve Public Waterfront Access	10	54
9. Adopt Transfer of Development Rights Bylaws	26	19
10. Discourage Residential Sprawl onto Farmland	5	63
11. Adopt By-right Cluster or Traditional Neighborhood Development Bylaws	14	43
12. Prioritize Farmland for Preservation	23	23
13. Adopt Local Growth Caps or Building Permit Limits	7	60
14. Preserve Farm Operations	8	55
15. Create Parks to Serve Neighborhoods	15	41
16. Secure Grants to Build Trails	18	38
17. Zoning for Bicycle and Pedestrian Features	28	12
18. Create Bike Lanes and Amenities	19	31
19. Adopt Water Supply Protection Zoning	16	40
20. Reduce Non-point Source Water Pollution	25	20
21. Adopt Stormwater Runoff Bylaws	17	39
22. Adopt Reduced Roadsalt Policies	30	9
23. Establish Underground Storage Tank and Hazardous Materials Bylaws	29	10
24. Develop Land Acquisition Programs for Watershed and Aquifer Recharge Areas	24	22
25. Adopt Subdivision Regulations for Water Supply Protection	13	44
26. Develop Spill Response Plans	27	15
27. Inventory Emergency Intermunicipal Water Connections	22	24
28. Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Developments	6	61
29. Promote Compact, Mixed-use Development	4	78
30. Control Commercial Strip Development	3	94
31. Improve Infrastructure in Town Center and Limit Infrastructure Expansions	21	25

## Complete Menu Of Potential Open Space and Resource Protection Strategies

The following is a full list of the strategies that were considered and prioritized by the Ware Community Development Committee in selecting their top ten action priorities for this plan.

### **Strategy #1: Acquire Open Space Thru Grants and Local Appropriations**

Build a townwide greenbelts and blueways network, which are implemented through municipal open space acquisition programs, in cooperation with land trust and non-profit groups. Apply for grants from programs such as: Self-help; Urban Self-help, Land and Water Conservation Program, among others. Establish municipal open space acquisition funds with annual appropriations. Hire local or regional open space coordinators to oversee implementation of open space acquisitions.

### **Strategy #2: Adopt the Community Preservation Act**

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is probably the most powerful tool available to municipalities to preserve open space. CPA is enabling legislation designed to help communities plan ahead for sustainable growth and raise funds to achieve their goals. CPA allows towns and cities to approve a referendum allowing them to levy a community-wide property tax surcharge of up to 3 percent for the purpose of creating a local Community Preservation Fund and qualifying for state matching funds. (For example, a CPA surcharge of 1 percent on a real property tax bill of \$1,000 would be \$10, or 1 percent of \$1,000, per year. The surcharge can be in any increment up to 3 percent.) The state will provide matching funds to communities approving CPA. The Act provides that communities may exempt the first \$100,000 of Residential value, commercial or industrial properties or low-income housing, from this surcharge.

The Community Preservation Act provides new funding sources which can be used to address three core community concerns:

1. Acquisition and preservation of open space
2. Creation and support of affordable housing
3. Acquisition and preservation of historic buildings and landscapes

A minimum of 10% of the annual revenues of the fund must be used for each of the three core community concerns. The remaining 70% can be allocated for any combination of the allowed uses, or for land for recreational use. This gives each community the opportunity to determine its priorities, plan for its future, and have the funds to make those plans happen.

The CPA has been adopted by seven Pioneer Valley communities to date, including Agawam, Amherst, Easthampton, Hampden, Southampton, Southwick and Westfield.

A forecast of revenues that could be generated by the CPA surcharge in a typical suburban town, under several alternative scenarios is as follows:

#### **Potential Annual CPA Revenues Generated**

Percent Surcharge	No Exemptions	Residential Exemption on first \$100,000 in value
1%	\$140,185	\$44,550
2%	\$280,371	\$89,101
3%	\$420,557	\$133,651

Note: Revenues above do not include state matching funds  
Source: South Hadley CPA Exploratory Committee

The impact of CPA on the typical taxpayer is illustrated in the following table:

**Table Twenty-eight. CPA Impact on a Typical Taxpayer**

Sample Assessed Housing Value	\$200,000		
Municipal Tax Rate	\$16.00		
Amount Subject to Surcharge	\$3,200		
CPA Surcharge	3%	2%	1%
<b>Amount Paid Toward CPA Fund</b>	<b>\$96</b>	<b>\$64</b>	<b>\$32</b>

Source: Mass. Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

**Strategy #3: Create a Local Land Fund or Open Space Fund**

Communities can create local land funds or open space funds, dedicated to be used only for open space acquisition. Such funds can be capitalized through annual town meeting appropriations, contributions from the Community Preservation Act property tax surcharge, from contributions under a Transfer of Development Rights bylaw, and from voluntary donations.

**Strategy #4: Encourage Dedicated Open Space in New Developments**

Work with developers to strongly encourage dedication of protected open space, parks or recreational lands in close proximity to major residential developments, or a financial contribution to a municipal open space fund.

**Strategy #5: Adopt Natural Resource Protection Overlay Zones**

Create blueways along rivers, lakes and streams by adopting River Protection Overlay Zones, to supplement provisions in the Massachusetts River Protection Act. Adopt Scenic Upland overlay zoning to protect ridgelines and hilltops from development impacts. Adopt as Sensitive Natural Areas Zoning Overlay District to protect wetlands, wildlife habitat areas, and other sensitive natural areas. Adopt Floodplain Overlay Zones to regulate development in 100-year floodplain areas.

**Strategy #6: Adopt Environmental Performance Standards**

Adopt zoning regulations with environmental performance standards for commercial, industrial and residential developments. Performance standards can address stormwater runoff, non-point water pollution, air quality and emissions, land stripping, erosion and sedimentation. Encourage adequate vegetated buffer strips between developed areas and wetland areas. Adopt an Environmental Impact Analysis requirement in the zoning bylaws.

**Strategy #7 : Encourage Participation in Chapter 61 Reduced Property Tax Assessment Programs**

Increase use of the Chapter 61 programs, which provide reduced property tax assessment for farmlands (Chapter 61a), forest lands (Chapter 61) and recreational lands (Chapter 61b) which are kept in an open, undeveloped condition. These programs also offer communities the “right of first refusal” to purchase lands for open space which are proposed to be withdrawn from Chapter 61 status.

**Strategy #8 : Preserve Public Waterfront Access**

Preserve waterfront lands (or easements) for public access and open space to the maximum extent feasible, in order to provide waterfront trails, parks, boat and fishing access.

## Farmland Preservation Strategies

### **Strategy #9: Adopt Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) bylaws.**

This strategy seeks to preserve farmland and working farms while promoting compact residential and commercial development near town and city centers. It is intended to steer development away from farmland targeted for preservation and toward centers targeted for growth. A typical bylaw creates two new zoning districts: a Farmland Preservation District (a Sending Area) and a commercial or Compact Residential District (a Receiving Area). Development rights are purchased in the Farmland Preservation District and transferred to the Receiving Area District for use in residential, commercial or industrial development projects. Benefits of TDR include:

- The bylaw provides another option for preserving farmland, with no downside for farmers;
- A win/win situation results for the town and farmers who both benefit;
- Farmland involved in TDR transactions can be exempt from certain local regulations such as building permit caps, thus protecting farm property values;
- No state or federal government intervention needed;
- Developers may benefit from the bylaw because they could purchase development rights to expand developments beyond existing zoning requirements;
- Farmers benefit because development rights can be sold at fair market value to any person or development entity. In exchange, farmers place APRs on their property.

### **Strategy #10: Discourage Residential Sprawl onto Farmland**

The purpose of this strategy is to discourage urban sprawl, particularly large-lot residential development in farmland areas. Zoning regulations and town policies on infrastructure extensions can reduce large lot development in outlying agricultural areas and encourage more compact development in town or village centers. Large sprawl subdivisions can be discouraged on rural farmland by:

- Establishing special permit requirements for major residential developments over ten units in size;
- Adopting phased growth limits that favor compact village centers and cluster development over sprawling development in rural areas;
- Adopting by-right farmland cluster zoning bylaws as the development type of choice, if growth does have to occur on farmland;
- Limiting extensions of roads, sewer and water lines into rural and agricultural areas;
- Working with developers to identify and achieve shared goals by moving away from the “reactionary mode” of response to development proposals;

### **Strategy #11: Adopt By-Right Cluster or Traditional Neighborhood Development Bylaws.**

“By-right cluster,” “creative open space community zoning” and “traditional neighborhood development” regulations provide residential developers with alternatives to homogenous, large-lot subdivisions that devour farmland and open space. Such bylaws encourage residential development like that found in typical New England villages, with homes clustered in groups and surrounded by permanently preserved open space.

Incentives for creative open space, cluster development and traditional neighborhood development (TND) can be provided by:

- Adopting by-right zoning and creating density bonuses for cluster or TND projects;
- Using de facto urban growth boundaries (i.e. zoning districts) to encourage compact growth in town or village centers and to discourage growth in rural areas based on zoning district incentives and disincentives;
- Establishing smaller frontage and lot size requirements in town center areas.

**Strategy #12: Prioritize Farmland for Preservation.**

Create a series of maps (computer-generated or Geographical information System) with a land parcel database that can be used to map and prioritize farmland parcels for protection. Map themes might include:

- Farmland value (a comparison of soils data, contiguous acreage and proximity to protected areas or other farm acreage)
- Farm productivity (a comparison of farm operation values including revenue data)
- Threat to farmland (existence of development infrastructure, surrounding inappropriate land uses, pending sale status, proximity to highway corridors/interchanges and current zoning)
- Farm protection priorities (a visual prioritization of farmland to be protected)

**Strategy #13: Adopt Local Growth Caps or Building Permit Limits.**

Growth moratoria or building permit limits can be effective tools for limiting development in farmland areas and giving communities time to plan for growth. Growth moratoria are temporary in nature, and allow a community to stop development for a limited period of time. In order to stand up to legal challenge, such moratoria are usually linked to resolving a specific community infrastructure need, such as expanding a sewage treatment plant, adding a new town well or adding school capacity.

Building permit limits or growth cap can be adopted on a longer-term basis to slow community growth. Hadley and Amherst have adopted building permit limits. Hadley's "Rate of Development" bylaw has been in effect since 1988. It limits the growth of subdivisions to 10 percent of their total available building lots per year. Amherst's "Phased Growth" bylaw limits town-wide residential growth to 125 units per year. It also established detailed criteria for evaluating and permitting development proposals that best meet community goals for affordable housing; open space and farmland preservation; mixed use; and aquifer protection.

**Strategy #14: Preserve Farm Operations**

Create economic and tax incentives to keep farms in business. Options include: "right-to-farm" districts; zoning to promote farm-related business; targeted marketing programs for locally-grown farm products.

## **Recreation Strategies**

**Strategy #15 : Create Parks to Serve Neighborhoods**

Access to parks and recreational opportunities is important for all neighborhoods in the community. Parks can be created through a variety of means: public grants; dedicated municipal funds; voluntary dedication by subdivision developers; and, mandatory dedication in major residential developments.

**Strategy #16: Secure Grants to Build Trails**

Take advantage of public grant opportunities to build a local or regional trail system for bicycling, walking, and running. Grant sources for trails include: ISTEA Enhancement Program; Recreational Trails Act Program; Land and Water Conservation Fund; and Urban Self-help. This trail system should provide linkages between key regional destinations, such as employment and shopping centers and residential areas.

**Strategy #17: Zoning for Bicycle and Pedestrian Features**

Use zoning to require that new developments provide bicycle and pedestrian-friendly features, such as linkages to bikepaths, sidewalks, and transit access features.



**Strategy #18: Create Bike Lanes and Amenities**

Create bike lanes on key routes by striping outer lanes or building separate trails. Require new residential developments to get aside space for bike paths or lanes separate from auto traffic. Seek grant funds to develop bicycle amenities such as safe and secure bicycle racks and lockers in key heavy use areas, such as downtowns, town centers and transit stops. Massachusetts state law, M.G.L. Chapter 90 requires the addition of bike lanes with any state-funded highway reconstruction or new construction.

**Environmental and Water Supply Protection Strategies****Strategy #19: Adopt Water Supply Protection Zoning**

Protect drinking water sources by adopting water supply protection zoning overlay districts for reservoir watersheds and aquifer recharge areas. Bylaws should prohibit hazardous land uses, establish environmental performance standards, and require recharging of aquifers. Intergovernmental compacts should be developed to ensure complete protection of aquifers which cross municipal boundaries.

Communities with municipal water supplies should adopt zoning to protect designated Zone II areas for public water supply wells and watershed areas for public water supply reservoirs. Communities with private wells have the following zoning options for water supply protection:

- Adopt a water supply protection zoning overlay district which covers the entire town;
- Adopt a water supply protection zoning overlay district which protects the Interim
- Wellhead Protection Area (IWPA) for all non-community wells. The minimum IWPA radius to be protected around wells is 400 feet.

**Strategy #20: Reduce Non-point Source Water Pollution**

Prevent pollution to rivers and lakes by requiring non-point source pollution best management practices, such as no-cut vegetated buffers along water bodies, erosion and sedimentation controls, and on-site stormwater recharge.

**Strategy #21: Adopt Stormwater Runoff Bylaws**

Create urban stormwater runoff bylaws, using measures to recreate natural filtration processes, such as constructed wetlands, drainage swales, and extended time detention basins. Require that impervious surfaces be minimized and on-site infiltration be maximized. Federal Phase Two Stormwater regulations require communities to adopt local bylaws to address:

- Illicit connections to the municipal stormwater system;
- Construction related erosion and sedimentation;
- Post-construction runoff, including volumes and pollutants.

**Strategy #22: Adopt Municipal Combined Sewer Overflow Policies**

Adopt municipal policies for correction of combined sewer overflows. Seek innovative CSO correction strategies and funding sources.

**Strategy #23: Adopt Reduced Roadsalt Policies**

Communities should adopt municipal policies on highway salt application and storage, which:

- Designate environmentally sensitive areas adjacent to highways and roads to protect aquifers, reservoir watersheds and private wells;
- Identify “best management” practices for salt application;
- Prohibit road salt storage in critical areas.

**Strategy #24: Establish Underground Storage Tank and Hazardous Materials Bylaws**

Communities should establish municipal Underground Storage Tank bylaws to require registration, with the Fire Department or Board of Health, of underground fuel storage tanks not registered under state law. Communities should also establish municipal Hazardous Materials bylaws to require registration of the storage of commercial quantities of hazardous materials, and to establish safe storage standards.

**Strategy #25: Develop Land Acquisition Programs for Watershed and Aquifer Recharge Areas**

Communities should support and apply for funding in the state Aquifer Land Acquisition program, as well as creating local programs or enterprise accounts for the purpose of purchasing watershed and aquifer recharge lands.

**Strategy #26: Adopt Private Well Regulations**

Communities should establish private well regulations, water quality monitoring programs for private wells, and septic system maintenance programs. Boards of Health can adopt private well regulations to require proper well installation, well testing for water quality, and safe distances from septic systems.

**Strategy #27: Adopt Subdivision Regulations For Water Supply Protection**

Communities should establish strict drainage requirements to control drainage and urban runoff impacts on water supplies. Review subdivision regulations to add performance standards for watershed and critical areas.

**Strategy #28: Develop Spill Response Plans**

Communities should develop monitoring and response plans for hazardous chemical spills and emergencies so that contamination can be avoided and damage limited. Spill plans should provide for early detection, notification and coordinated response to spills.

**Strategy #29: Develop Intermunicipal Water Supply Protection Districts And Compacts**

Where aquifer recharge areas and reservoir watersheds extend across municipal boundaries, communities should cooperate in the following areas:

- Communities should coordinate zoning and other municipal bylaws for water resource protection;
- Communities should consider establishing Intermunicipal Memorandum of Agreements which create a process for intermunicipal review of development proposals of regional impact and establish water supply protection advisory committees to monitor and plan for the protection of water supplies.
- Communities should establish cooperative emergency response plans.

**Strategy #30: Signage for Water Supply Areas**

Increase public recognition of the water supply protection areas by installing signs along public roads as they enter water supply areas, with the message, "Water Supply Area, Please Protect It!".

**Strategy #31 : Inventory All Potential Emergency Intermunicipal Water Connections**

In order to prepare for water supply shortages and emergencies:

- Each municipality should prepare an inventory of potential interconnections based on the location of the lines, physical aspects of the line, pipe size, system pressure, adequacy of supply, and water quality compatibility. Municipalities should review and assess this material and select potential interconnections to develop and formalize;
- Interconnections should be made to intersecting lines from adjacent municipal systems whenever lines are improved, replaced, or expanded.
- Municipalities should adopt a policy to extend lines to town boundaries whenever lines are improved, replaced, or expanded, consistent with long term planning goals for that area.

- Designs for future system improvement or expansion should plan for intermunicipal connections.
- Capital planning should include costs for interconnections.

## **Growth Management Strategies**

### **Strategy #32: Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs)**

Create incentives in zoning and subdivision regulations to promote pedestrian-friendly TNDs, which have grid-like street patterns with sidewalks and street trees, medium to high density housing, nearby public open space and are walking distance to shops and services.

Adopt TND residential zoning regulations which permit lots of one-quarter to one-ninth acre with modest front yard setbacks of 15 to 20 feet. Homes are clustered around public open spaces, such as town commons, greenbelts, parks or playgrounds. Houses are predominantly single-family homes, with some row houses, apartments and accessory apartments mixed in. Garages or parking is to the rear or along alleys. Convenient corner stores should be allowed in residential neighborhoods, allowing residents to walk to the store.

Adopt TND subdivision regulations which encourage narrower streets with two ten-foot travel lanes for traffic calming, gridded streets for traffic flow improvements, sidewalks, shade trees planted at twenty-foot intervals between streets and sidewalks, and on-street visitor parking.

### **Strategy #33: Promote Compact, Mixed-use Development near Existing Town Centers and in Designated New Growth Centers**

1. Provide incentives for urban infill, clustered residential and mixed use villages within or immediately surrounding town centers or growth centers in order to increase pedestrian/bicycle access, jobs and affordable housing.
2. Adopt mixed use commercial zoning for traditional Main Street shopping districts, with stores lined up along sidewalks and parking to the rear and along sidewalks and parking to the rear and along the curb. Building height should be 2-4 stories, with offices or apartments above first-floor shops.
3. Encourage mixed use projects, which combine residential, retail, office, and public institutional uses in compact, pedestrian-friendly villages or clusters. Mixed use projects provide opportunities for people to live in close proximity to work, or to walk from the office to shopping or restaurants.
4. Create density-based zoning incentives to encourage development in growth centers, such as smaller lot sizes and setbacks (or no minimum lot size or frontage requirements), and increased heights.
5. Create use-based zoning incentives, which encourage uses such as institutions, museums, schools, public buildings and elderly and handicapped congregate housing to locate in growth centers, rather than in outlying areas.
6. Retrofit suburban shopping centers to become community centers, by adopting zoning which requires new buildings at the street line, with pedestrian connections across parking lots, street trees and streetscaping.
7. Control sprawl outside existing town centers and growth centers by creating disincentives for development.
8. Establish lower land use zoning intensities and restrict uses which are not appropriate for rural areas.
9. Commercial development should be located in centers, not in auto-dependent, stand-alone buildings.
10. Establish policies restricting extensions of public sewer, water and other infrastructure.

#### **Strategy #34: Control Commercial Strip Development**

1. Change zoning along major highway corridors to prevent commercial strips from developing, and encourage clustering of new commercial development in nodes.
2. Minimize automobile dependency by creating new commercial centers which are transit-friendly and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists and transit.
3. Replace highway business zoning districts which extend along the entire length of highways, and create multiple zoning districts for specific purposes. For example, districts can include a limited business district; historic village center business district, multi-family residential district, auto mall district, and light industrial research park district. Most retail uses should be clustered in compact, pedestrian-friendly nodes or centers.
4. Establish business zoning requirements to create a building streetline along arterials, such as maximum setbacks, parking in the rear of buildings, sidewalks and street trees in the front of buildings.
5. Focus new, large-scale development along highways in Planned business villages with on-site housing and pedestrian-friendly site plans
6. Establish commercial development performance standards for all highway business uses, including "big box" retailers. Create standards for landscaping, screening, signage, curb cuts, parking, pedestrian and transit access, architectural design, lighting and environment impacts.
7. Discourage drive-in services.
8. Adopt traffic management bylaws, including requirements for trip reduction plans and traffic impact statements for large-scale developments.
9. Adopt regulations to require businesses to include sidewalks, internal pedestrian circulation systems and stronger pedestrian connections to adjacent areas. Locate transit stops immediately adjacent to shopping and work entrances with covered waiting areas.

#### **Strategy #35: Improve Infrastructure in the Town Center and Limit Infrastructure Expansions**

1. In urban areas, target public funds for improvement and upgrading of infrastructure, such as sewer and water facilities, streets and roads, to promote private reinvestment.
2. In rural areas, limit infrastructure expansions to prevent urban sprawl.
3. The availability and adequate capacity of infrastructure is a key factor guiding the timing and location of new development.
4. Communities can establish policies limiting extension of sewer and water lines beyond designated growth areas.

## **Appendix B: Housing**

### **Menu of Housing Strategies**

#### **Accessory Apartments**

Accessory apartments can provide improved rental housing opportunities by allowing “mother-in-law” or accessory apartments in single family homes, without altering the character of neighborhoods.

#### **Formation of a local Affordable Housing Trust**

An Affordable Housing Trust can receive tax-deductible, charitable and other donations that would be used to develop or rehabilitate housing.

#### **Affordable Housing Zoning Bylaw**

The adoption of an Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw for Affordable Housing would promote the construction of affordable housing for low and moderate-income residents. Inclusionary housing bylaws promote the private market development of affordable housing by offering developers residential density bonuses. In return, the developer must set aside a percentage of housing units in the development for low and moderate-income residents. In existing inclusionary bylaws, the percentage of affordable units generally ranges from 10 to 25% of the total units being developed. As alternatives, communities may allow developers to construct some of the required affordable units off-site, or allow the developer to make a cash payment to the community equal to the value of the affordable units to be used by the community to develop affordable units. Inclusionary zoning allows the integration of all levels of income and allows for a balance between housing and employment. This is done by allowing equal opportunities to all types of developments.

#### **Affordable Housing on Town-owned Land**

Ware could search for town-owned land suitable for development of affordable housing. The town could provide land at no-cost or below market-cost to a housing developer for the purpose of creating low- and moderate-income housing (for example Habitat for Humanity or other non-profit organizations).

#### **Cluster Zoning Regulations**

Ware has not yet adopted Open Space Preservation Zoning regulations, and since Massachusetts has now amended the State Zoning Act, Chapter 40A, to allow by-right “cluster” development, Ware could update its Zoning Regulations to allow this use by right, rather than by Special Permit. The town could give a density bonus to a developer for preserving additional open space, smaller lots, and affordable housing, among others.

#### **Co-housing**

Co-housing projects are grouped residential units with some shared facilities, such as dining or recreational facilities, with cooperative management.

#### **Congregate Care and Assisted Living Facilities**

There are several forms of elderly housing, such as life care facilities, senior apartments and congregate elderly housing, which are not addressed in many community bylaws. These are vital housing opportunities for elders and can be allowed by Special Permit in most residential areas.

## **Conversion of Vacant Mills or Unused Buildings into Multi-family Housing**

Conversion of vacant buildings can provide affordable apartments or rental housing units.

## **Cottage Industry**

An intensive form of home occupation allowing a greater portion of the home and other buildings, relative to home occupations, to be used for the cottage industry. A cottage industry bylaw would allow these businesses to grow to a defined extent within their residential space. This would allow businesses to increase their value and tax assessment, and assist in retaining growing businesses in the community.

## **Duplexes, Multi-family Housing, Accessory Unit Zoning to Allow Development**

Accessory apartments are another possibility that could serve to increase housing options, especially for singles and/or elders. Ware could consider making some of these by-right uses..

## **Financing for Affordable Housing Secured through Work with Banks**

Support first time homebuyer purchase assistance by working with local or regional banks or other financial service establishments to make available concessionary financing or other mechanisms that improve housing affordability.

## **Phased Growth Bylaw**

The purpose of this bylaw is to promote a manageable rate of residential growth that is consistent with historical development patterns, to limit strain on the community's ability to provide services to such development, and to protect and enhance the character of the town and its natural resources utilizing a planned growth rate and development schedule.

## **Home Occupations Bylaw**

An accessory use advancing home businesses that delineates the type and size of business that can be carried on in a residence.

## **Housing Rehabilitation Programs Funding**

Continue to seek funding for housing rehabilitation programs especially for low and moderate income families

## **Live-and-Work Units Zoning**

Live-and-work units can include artisan studios, housing for seasonal employees and dormitories. They can provide an affordable housing alternative to owner-occupied single family homes.

## **Local Housing Partnership Formation**

The formation of a Local Housing Partnership would make Ware eligible for DHCD technical assistance grants and other programs. The partnership should include, or report to, the chief elected municipal official.

## **Low Interest Loans for Septic Repairs**

Ware's Board of Health could apply for additional loans under the State Revolving Fund Pollution Abatement Trust Program to enable the Board of Health provide low-interest loans for needed septic system repairs to keep homes affordable. (Source: DHCD Website)

### **Mixed Use Village Center Development**

Mixed Use Village Center Development can include a variety of uses, such as retail, office, and housing in a single planned development. Housing options could include second story apartments, townhouses or multi-family complexes.

## **Parking Bylaw**

This would set appropriate standards for providing parking for all uses in line with the needs of the town.

## **Planned Unit Development**

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) provide opportunities for developing a mix of housing types within a single clustered residential development. PUDs can include single family homes, townhouses, apartments and other residential uses. Further, they can include some limited commercial uses, such as services, medical, and retail on a scale to serve the PUD.

## **Ridgeline and Hillside Protection Bylaw**

This strategy protects natural resources and views, controls clear-cutting, without interfering with forest management practices.

## **Site Plan and Site Design Approval**

A means of reviewing a development plan for one or more parcels for existing and proposed conditions, and providing for adequate open spaces, vehicle and pedestrian circulation, screening devices, and landscaping among other amenities.

## **Transfer of Development Rights**

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is a tool which is employed primarily to protect open space and farmland. But it can also promote creation of affordable housing. This is because development rights are transferred to a receiving area near a village center, where greater density can be allowed due to the availability of town services. This receiving area could be targeted for affordable housing.

## **Village Center/Compact Growth Center Bylaw**

The intent of such a bylaw is to provide a community or neighborhood with a focus area for activity that would include a higher intensity of land use than is typically allowed with a unique identity providing commercial, residential and civic uses within easy, safe walking distance of each other, and it should provide for day and evening attractions. Vehicular circulation should be well organized, yet the use and visual impact of cars should be minimized. There should be a variety of parks for people to gather. The Center should be designed as an interrelated unit with strong pedestrian, automobile, and visual links between land uses.

## Appendix C: Economic Development

### A Strategic Framework for Economic Development

The State of Massachusetts' report *Toward a New Prosperity: Building Regional Competitiveness Across the Commonwealth* outlines policy options that are designed to promote a healthy debate around the economic future of the Commonwealth and its regions. Knowledge-intensive production, high-tech innovation, and global trading characterize the "New Economy" of Massachusetts. New economic conditions present Massachusetts with a new set of challenges. Continued progress will require well-targeted educational and infrastructure investments. The report proposes a strategic framework composed of six competitive imperatives for the economic development of the Commonwealth designed to meet the challenges of the "New Economy". In addressing these imperatives, the Commonwealth can achieve its proposed vision for economic development.

#### Six Imperatives:

- 1. Improve the business climate to support all industry clusters.**  
Vibrant and innovative export industry clusters are the primary engines of economic growth today. In traditional, as well as knowledge-based sectors of the economy, such clusters support and motivate innovation, which enhances the Commonwealth's competitive position. We need to support the development of strong export clusters in all regions of the Commonwealth.
- 2. Support entrepreneurship and innovation.**  
Strengthening the Commonwealth's innovation infrastructure will give entrepreneurs better access to the resources they need by improving channels of communication and coordination. We must take aggressive action to reduce disparities in business resources that support innovation and improve access to capital in all regions of the Commonwealth.
- 3. Prepare the workforce of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**  
A well-educated and highly skilled workforce is essential to competitiveness in today's economy. Our firms must have access to talent they need to succeed and our workers must have skills that match the opportunities emerging in this constantly evolving competitive marketplace.
- 4. Build the information infrastructure of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**  
The Commonwealth has made enormous transportation investments, most visibly in roads, bridges, and air transportation. The rise of the information economy requires a renewed focus on our information infrastructure. The Commonwealth must facilitate improved access to affordable broadband options throughout the Commonwealth.
- 5. Ensure that economic growth is compatible with community and environment.**  
Housing affordability is fundamental to accommodating a growing economy. At the same time, we must be a leader in implementing sustainable growth strategies that ensure a high quality of life in our cities and towns.
- 6. Improve the outcomes of government action.**  
Massachusetts is widely perceived as having significantly improved its business climate over the past decade. We must continue to reduce regulatory burdens and provide more coordinated services and resources to businesses- particularly small business. State government must also help collaborate with the private sector and the federal government to effectively respond to the emerging terrorism threats. State government must also maintain confidence in basic infrastructure linking global production, communication, and transportation networks.



## Menu of Economic Development Strategies

### **Strategy #1: Rezoning of Targeted Land Parcels for Business, Light Industrial or Industrial Use**

Your Community currently has very little available land zoned for Industrial or Commercial use. After identifying land parcels targeted for economic development, Your Community could re-zone selected areas or create new zoning districts which could help achieve the town's economic development (and housing) objectives, such as the following districts:

**Light Industrial District** – could include lighter, non-polluting industries that could be developed without public sewer, on septic systems, such as light manufacturing, business, professional or medical offices, printing, agricultural product processing, etc.;

**Town Center Business District** – could help to establish a working town center for Your Community, with more densely clustered uses and pedestrian access;

**Industrial District** – could include areas near neighboring communities with potential for sewer extension agreements;

**Mixed Use District** – could accommodate retail, office, and multi-family housing uses in one district.

Rather than simply changing the zoning map for land parcels, Your Community should create new zoning districts and regulations. This will help to ensure that, in return for the economic value the property owner receives in upgraded zoning, the town receives value as well in quality development that meets town goals.

### **Strategy #2: Provide Sewer Service to Targeted Areas**

Perhaps the most significant constraint to economic development in Your Community is the lack of a public sewer system in town. Your Community could negotiate with neighboring communities, to provide wastewater treatment and sewer extensions to selected areas of town.

### **Strategy #3: Home Business Bylaw**

A carefully crafted home business bylaw can allow for small home-based businesses in residential areas, while protecting the character and quality of life in the neighborhood. Home business bylaws should establish standards for business types, maximum number of employees, parking, screening, noise levels, and similar issues.

### **Strategy #4: Site Plan Approval Bylaw**

Site plan approval can promote attractive, well-designed commercial and industrial development, by setting standards to reduce impacts on traffic, neighboring properties and community character. Plans are carefully reviewed by a town board and must meet standards for landscaping, architectural design, layout, parking, traffic and access, screening, environmental quality and other related issues.

### **Strategy #5: Public Works Economic Development Grant**

A Public Works Economic Development Grant could help Your Community build a new access road for industrial development or make improvements to existing roadways.

**Strategy #6: Planned Industrial or Business Development Bylaw**

A planned industrial and/or business development is a development built under single ownership, consisting of light industrial and/or business sites that are simultaneously planned and built. The purpose of a bylaw to cover this type of development is:

- To attract light industries
- To encourage diversity in the community tax base through appropriate industrial development
- To minimize potentially adverse environmental conditions, such as pollution and noise, associated with such developments
- To encourage the creation of flexible industrial space for small and emerging businesses
- To encourage business development that is clustered to reduce adverse traffic, aesthetic, and environmental impacts on a community

**Strategy #7: Mixed Use Development Bylaw**

The purpose of a mixed use bylaw is to foster a greater opportunity for creative development by providing guidelines that encourage a mix of uses compatible with existing and neighborhood properties; to provide housing and business uses in locations where a variety of town services are available; to promote utilization of existing buildings and property, and to encourage the provision of open areas. The intent is to enhance business vitality, reduce vehicular traffic, provide employment opportunities for residents close to home, ensure the compatibility with each other of the commercial, industrial, and residential uses, and ensure that the appearance and effects of the buildings and uses are harmonious with the character of the area in which they are located.

**Strategy #8: Massachusetts Economic Development Incentives Program**

To stimulate business growth and foster job creation, Massachusetts has created the Economic Development Incentive Program, designed to attract and retain businesses. The program is administered by the Massachusetts Office of Business Development, and includes three main steps:

1. Designation of “economic target areas” or ETAs. The western portion of the state has been designated one such area.
2. Designation of “economic opportunity areas” (EOAs), or specific areas within a designated ETA of particular need or priority for economic development. Your Community may not be participating in this program, although many of its neighbors are, such as Amherst, Chicopee, Easthampton, Holyoke, Springfield, and Westfield.
3. Approval of “certified projects”, which is a business that is expanding or relocating its operations, or building new facilities to create permanent new jobs within an EOA. Certified projects in these communities that may receive a five-percent investment tax credit for qualifying tangible, depreciable assets. There also is a ten-percent abandoned building tax deduction for costs associated with the renovation of an abandoned building. In addition, businesses qualify for municipal tax incentives, including special property tax assessments and Tax Increment Financing.

For more information on this program, see the attached information or go to the Dept. of Economic Development website at [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov).

### **Strategy #9: The Main Street Program**

Since 1980, the National Main Street Center has been working with communities across the nation to revitalize their historic or traditional commercial areas. The Main Street Program is designed to improve all aspects of a downtown or central business district, producing both tangible and intangible benefits. Improving economic management, strengthening public participation, and making downtown a fun place to visit are as critical to Main Street's future as recruiting new businesses, rehabilitating buildings, and expanding parking. The Main Street approach has rekindled entrepreneurship, downtown cooperation and civic concern. It has earned national recognition as a practical strategy appropriately scaled to a community's local resources and conditions. And because it is a locally driven program, all initiative stems from local issues and concerns. For more information, see the attached information or get in touch with the National Main Street Center at [www.mainst.org](http://www.mainst.org).

### **Strategy #10: Infill Development**

Conventional development patterns have led to suburban sprawl, destroy open lands, and create gridlocked lifestyles. A major solution to these problems is infill development, or the creative recycling of vacant or underutilized lands, such as vacant lots, parking lots, and empty shopping malls. Successful infill can offer these rewards:

- Provide housing near job centers and transit
- Increase the property-tax base
- Preserve open space
- Create new community assets, such as child-care centers, arts districts, and shopping areas

For more information, see the book *Strategies for Successful Infill Development*.

### **Strategy #11: Adaptive Reuse of Older Buildings**

Similar to infill development, adaptive reuse is creating new uses for buildings that have outlived their original purpose. While historic preservation is often associated with adaptive reuse, the practice is far larger and involves a much wider range of property. As funding for new construction has diminished during the current recession, adaptive reuse has taken off as building owners have found it necessary to recycle old buildings. For more information, see the Adaptive Reuse website at [www.propsolve.com](http://www.propsolve.com).

### **Strategy #12: Marketing and Promotion**

Marketing and promotion of your community for economic development can be a low cost and high impact strategy. Some options include:

#### **12a: Town Website**

Create a town website if not already up. The website should include the following options, links and information:

- Apply for permits online and check status of permit application
- Zoning bylaws and other town regulations
- Be able to search for parcels to find zoning, location, and map
- Links to civic organizations/schools/recreation/events/tourism (places to stay, eat, shop, entertainment)
- Link to community newsletters
- Community's cable TV station with schedule & listing of programs
- Demographic information and summaries
- Pictures and description of projects that have recently been completed, approved, or are under construction in town.
- Promote unique community and economic characteristics

**12b: Database of Commercial and Industrial Properties**

Develop a database of available commercial/industrial properties leasable space that can be accessed through the Internet. It should be updated monthly. It provides a list of available properties and vacant land; location of property; proximity to major highways, cities, rail, air; square footage of property; zoning; special facilities; internet access and other available infrastructure; name of management firm & contact name and phone number, pricing information, traffic count, whether or not its divisible.

**12c: Marketing Campaigns, Special Events and Activities**

Conduct regular marketing campaigns for the town to promote town's image and any special events, activities, and businesses. Host special events and activities in town center that help create a sense of identity and community with partnerships with local businesses (farmer's market, cows on parade, cruise nights/car show, concerts, outdoor movie nights).

**12d: Community Signage Program**

Create a community signage program (provide directions to and information on notable landmarks, places, recreation, and industrial/business districts in town).

**12e: Business Recognition Awards**

The town's Economic Development Committee could issue annual Business Recognition Awards. Examples of awards could include:

- "Distinguished Developer"
- "Property Improvement"
- "Property Stewardship"
- "Major Milestone".

**12f: Economic Development Manager**

Establish an economic development "point person" for the town and market/advertise this so that interested developers/businesses know who to contact first. This person should know all the properties in town and knowledgeable about potential funding and business assistance programs.

**Strategy #13: Infrastructure Development and Physical Improvements**

Making physical improvements to the town's appearance and its infrastructure can enhance economic development. Options include:

- Expand fiber optics/broadband internet and cell phone services
- Incubator space and business startup funding
- Façade improvement grant program

**Strategy #14: Special Districts and Incentive Programs**

There are many state laws and programs that town's can participate in to promote economic development including:

- Tax Increment Financing – a 5-year to 20-year property tax exemption, based on the increased value of the project property due to new construction or significant improvements;
- Special Tax Assessment – a phased-in assessment of the total value of the project property, over a 5-year to 20-year period;
- Special Service District;
- Special Assessment Area to extend infrastructure ;
- Small Business Loan Program;
- Business Improvement District;
- Streamline permitting/approval processes;
- Establish Public/Private/Non-profit partnerships;
- Create public/private partnerships for workforce development programs (also, be sure to get the word out to those who'd be most interested);
- Brownfield Grant Program.

**Strategy #15: Town Center Revitalization**

Revitalizing an existing town center can improve the community overall image and enhance economic development. Components of this strategy can include:

- Create “gateway” into the community
- Encourage higher densities
- Create a central civic space or park
- Public art
- Encourage mixed uses
- Streetscaping: decorative lamp posts, brick-lined sidewalks, parkway trees, planter boxes, trash cans, seating, etc)
- Design and signage criteria
- Create a development review board (e.g. Town of Amherst)
- Allow outdoor café/restaurant seating
- Allow zero lot lines and require buildings to locate close to the street
- Require parking to be placed in back
- Allow on-street parking
- Marketing just for the downtown businesses
- Forming a special organization just for the downtown businesses

## **Ware Economic Development Survey**

### **Survey Questions**

- 1. What type of business do you run?**
- 2. What type of business do you consider yourself?**
  - ☐ Local
  - ☐ Regional
  - ☐ National
  - ☐ Global
- 3. How long has your business been located in the Town of Ware?**
  - ☐ Less than 2 years
  - ☐ 2 to 5 years
  - ☐ 6 to 10 years
  - ☐ 11 to 15 years
  - ☐ 16 to 25 years
  - ☐ 26 to 50 years
  - ☐ Over 50 years
- 4. From where do you operate your business?**
  - ☐ Home
  - ☐ Commercial strip center
  - ☐ Office complex
  - ☐ Industrial park
  - ☐ Downtown commercial district
  - ☐ Other
- 5. How many people, beside yourself, does your company employ?**
- 6. Where do most of your employees live?**
  - ☐ Ware
  - ☐ Neighboring towns
  - ☐ The Pioneer Valley region
  - ☐ Other
- 7. Do your employees have trouble affording housing in Ware?**
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
  - ☐ Don't Know
- 8. Do you have trouble hiring competent employees? Explain. Yes, No**
- 9. Do you know of any workforce development programs in the area?**
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
- 10. Do you feel that workforce development programs are compatible with the needs of your business? Why or why not?**
- 11. How much do you project that your business will expand five years from now?**
  - ☐ 0%
  - ☐ 25%
  - ☐ 50%
  - ☐ 100%
  - ☐ More than 100%

- 12. What are your expansion plans over the next five years?**
- 13. If your business were to outgrow your present site would you remain in Ware?**
- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
  - ☐ Don't know
- 14. Would you locate to a village center business site if it were available? Yes , No**
- 15. Would transportation of goods become more of a concern if your business expanded?**
- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
- 16. Why did you locate your business in Ware?**
- 17. Do you think Ware is a “business-friendly” place? Why or why not?**
- ☐ Yes, why?
  - ☐ No, why not? -
- 18. How would you describe Ware’s economic character?**
- 19. In your opinion, what are some of the assets in Ware that contribute to its economic character?**
- 20. Is there anything that limits Ware’s economic development? Explain.**
- 21. What type of technology infrastructure and physical infrastructure is needed to help you stay competitive in Ware?**
- ☐ Greater access to the internet
  - ☐ Improved high-speed internet access
  - ☐ Improved cell phone service
  - ☐ Improved public transportation
  - ☐ Improved parking
  - ☐ Improved road networks
  - ☐ Improved streetscape (i.e. sidewalks, streetlights, parkway trees and plantings)
  - ☐ Traffic signals
  - ☐ More incubator space
  - ☐ Other- explain.
- 22. Are there opportunities to build partnerships with other businesses...**
- ☐ in Ware?
  - ☐ in nearby towns?
  - ☐ with the local government?
- 23. Do you have any comments that you would like to add regarding the economic development of Ware?**

## Map Appendix:

### Land Use Suitability Analysis

The Land Use Suitability Analysis is a process by which PVPC planners and the Ware Community Development Planning Committee can identify those lands that are most appropriate for development and those areas that need some form of protection from development.

Development of the Ware Land Suitability Map and the subsequent discussions with the Community Development Planning Committee will lead to a clear set of geographic priorities that can guide future land use decisions in this plan and, more specifically, in the development of a Future Land Use Map for the town.

### Land Use Suitability Map

The Land Use Suitability Map is created by combining and comparing various digital layers of information developed from federal, state, and local sources. Overlays of the GIS mapping data identify those lands that are the most environmentally fragile and thus most desirable to protect, and those areas that are well suited for new residential and commercial development. Table 1-7 summarizes the findings of the Land Use Suitability map.

**Table 1-7: Land Use Suitability in Ware**

Land Use Type	Acres Suitable
Suitable for Commercial or Industrial	2.6 acres
Suitable for Compact Development	2,602.4 acres
Suitable for Farmland	254.6 acres
Suitable for General Development	2,330.4 acres
Suitable for Low Density Development	2,855.0 acres
Suitable for Protected Open Space	6,759.9 acres

Source: PVPC, Ware Land Use Suitability Map, 2004

To aid in the visualization of these future land use priorities, PVPC has developed a range of categories for all lands in the town. Every acre of land in Ware will fall into one of these categories. A brief description of each land use category follows, including the list of mapping data or characteristics used to create the category:

#### ***Category 1a: Protected from Future Development***

This category includes lands that are most likely to remain undeveloped in the future. In some cases this is because the identified lands are protected from development or are in government or institutional ownership and are unlikely to be developed in the near future. Also included in this category are lands that are already developed. In articulating future land use strategies in Ware, the community may wish to identify some previously developed lands as being appropriate for future redevelopment. However, for the purposes of this analysis the developed lands may remain in this first category.

#### Data Layers

- B. Open Water
- C. Existing Open Spaces
  - Protected Lands
  - Government-owned Lands
  - Institutional Lands
  - Private Lands



**Category 1b: Existing Developed Lands**

This category includes lands that are currently shown as developed on the most recent McConnell Land Use Maps from UMASS.

Data Layers**A. Existing Developed Lands****Category 2: Land Suitable for Compact Development (Mixed Use, Affordable Housing, Commercial Development)**

This category includes lands that are currently served – or could be potentially served – by the infrastructure that supports the most intensive development. Many times, these lands will occur around village centers, along developed commercial corridors, or in more intensively developed residential and mixed use neighborhoods.

Data Layers

Unprotected, unconstrained lands within any of the following simple buffers to be established showing lands within:

Services

- ¼ mile of water line
- ¼ mile of sewer line
- ¼ mile of public transit line
- ½ mile of an interstate (or turnpike) exchange

Places

- ¼ mile of major employer/employment center
- ½ mile buffer of town center/s
- ¼ mile buffer of village centers
- ¼ mile buffer of other community-designated growth node
  - Does not include active farmlands
  - Commercial/Industrial zoned land not included (these lands appear in Category 6)

**Category 3: Land Suitable for Protected Open Space**

This category includes lands that provide some valuable benefit to the natural or human environment in Ware and that should be protected from future development.

Data Layers

All lands not in Category 1 or 2 but including:

**A. Resource Areas**

- 100-year Flood Plain
- DEP Zone 1
- Outstanding Water Resource Watershed
- Wetlands (plus 100-foot buffer)
- Rivers Protection Act (100-foot buffer, inner riparian zone)
- BioMap Core Areas
- Certified and Potential Vernal Pools (point designations only)
- Steep Slopes (over 25%)
- NHESP Rare & Endangered Species Habitat

**B. Existing Open Space with Limited Protection from Development**

- Government-owned Lands
- Institutional Lands
- Private Lands
  - Can include active farmland
  - Does not consider existing zoning designations

#### ***Category 4: Farmland Suitable for Protection or Low Intensity Use***

This category includes all undeveloped and unrestricted farmland not in Categories 1, 2, or 3.

##### Data Layers

Active Farmland

#### ***Category 5: Sensitive Lands Suitable for Low Intensity Use***

This category includes environmentally-sensitive lands that are most appropriate for low intensity uses such as low density residential housing, active recreational uses, or scattered, low-impact commercial activity. When appropriate, some of these areas may also be appropriate for long-term protection from development such as in the case of active agricultural lands.

##### Data Layers

All undeveloped and unrestricted lands not within Categories 1, 2, 3, and 4, but within:

- Active Farmland
- DEP approved Zone 2
- Aquifer Protection Overlay Zones
- Interim Wellhead Protection Areas
- NonTransient/NonCommunity Water Supply Buffers
- Steep Slopes (15% - 25%)
- Pioneer Valley Regional Greenways Priority Areas
- Planned Municipal trails or greenway corridors

#### ***Category 6: Land Suitable for Potential Economic Development (High Intensity)***

This category includes lands that may be suitable for high intensity commercial or economic development in Ware. Not all communities have areas in all of these categories, but it is likely that at least some areas in town will fall into this category.

- Data Layers  
Undeveloped, unprotected, unconstrained lands within:
- Existing Industrial Park
- Designated Economic Opportunity Area
- Brownfield Sites
- Existing Vacant/Underdeveloped Industrial/Commercial Sites
- Lands Currently Zoned for Commercial or Industrial Use

#### ***Category 7: Remaining Lands – Suitable for Local Designation***

These lands are those that offer neither prime development opportunities nor particularly valuable environmental assets. The Community Development Planning Committee may choose whether or not to include specific strategies regarding future uses of these lands.

##### Data Layers

All remaining lands not included in Categories 1 through 6

## **Future Land Use Map**

The goal of the Future Land Use Mapping exercise (see “Putting It All Together”) is to identify the best places in Ware to site future development. As the Committee and PVPC develop the Housing, Economic Development, and Transportation elements of this Ware Community Development Plan, decisions will be made in each of these policy areas regarding the best use of land resources in the town. Town regulations, policies, and other community efforts should be implemented in a way that reinforces the preferred land use pattern developed in the Future Land

Use Map for Ware.