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Perspectives on Growth

Excerpts from Local Growth Policy Statements

Likes Being Rural' Growth policy panel formed Watch grow
residents invited to give their views on fur
Some say grow, some say no
Growth policy seeks business, balance
groups topics at public
Go easy on growth
hears everything
opts for hc
taxes,

About the Cover: The cover for this report has been put together from newspaper headlines from stories dealing with the various stages of the Growth Policy Act.

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Perspectives on Growth

Excerpts from Local Growth Policy Statements

**An Interim Report on
The Massachusetts Growth Policy Development Act
Chapter 807 of the Acts of 1975**

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Michael S. Dukakis, Governor**

**Assembled by
The Office of State Planning
Frank T. Keefe, Director**

January, 1977

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Introduction

About one year ago, a unique piece of legislation was enacted in Massachusetts. That legislation has resulted in a process whereby literally thousands of citizens throughout the Commonwealth have devoted themselves to a critical examination of where we have been and where we are going. That legislation was Chapter 807 of the Acts of 1975, the Massachusetts Growth Policy Development Act. The Growth Policy Act set in motion a process designed to generate widespread participation in the development of future growth policies, for cities and towns, for regions, and for the state as a whole. Local Growth Policy Committees, comprised of key local officials as well as citizen representatives, were established earlier this year in 330 communities, representing over 98 percent of the state's population. These Committees have been hard at work, articulating local growth problems and priorities, and advising state government on how it might best foster that future which its citizens desire.

Perspectives on Growth is a progress report on that process, and yet it is a part of the process itself. For a clear goal of the process is devoted to the sharing of information, the sharing of perceptions, the sharing of values — so that we may learn from one another's experiences, and so that we may better understand one another's points of view. Some may disagree with the opinions expressed herein. But that is an important element of the process as well. These differences must be understood in order to be addressed (or respected and left alone). State government must certainly learn how it can be more responsive to and supportive of the needs and values of its citizenry. As you will see, many of the excerpts are critical of how well state government has done in the past. Local governments can also learn from this self-examination how they can best address their own needs. And, we all can continue to learn to better anticipate future problems and opportunities, and together to better control our collective destinies.

The Growth Policy process is based on a notion of "bottom-up" participation, rather than a "top-down" imposition of standards (as attempted in other states). This document attempts to emulate that philosophy. It was assembled by the Office of State Planning, but it is truly the product of the deliberations of the citizens of the Commonwealth. In selecting excerpts for inclusion here, we have attempted to choose those which are representative and which stand on their own. It must be remembered, however, that each of these excerpts comes from a much longer and more substantial Local Growth Policy Statement (typically 30 pages or more), and that a complete understanding

of a community's position can only come from reading that statement in its entirety. The Office of State Planning apologizes to any community if we inadvertently may have lifted an excerpt out of context.

The statewide policy development process is not yet completed. There are several key next steps to be undertaken based, in large part, on the Local Growth Policy Statements. First, the state's thirteen regional planning agencies are now completing Regional Growth Policy Reports. Each of the regional agencies has prepared a Draft Report, which includes an analysis of the respective local statements within their region, an identification of regional issues and opportunities, and finally recommendations to state government. After additional citizen involvement through public hearings at the regional level, and adoption by the regional Commissions, the Regional Reports will be forwarded to the Office of State Planning.

The next step will then involve the preparation of a statewide growth policy report to summarize the proceedings that have developed up to this point, and to make specific draft recommendations for consideration by the Special Commission on Growth. The Special Commission on Growth will then be sponsoring a series of public hearings throughout the state in order to provide local officials and citizens with an opportunity to discuss and comment upon the draft recommendations contained in the statewide report.

All of this — the work of the Local Growth Policy Committees, the regional reports, the statewide report, and the public hearings of the Special Commission — must ultimately result in action if the process is to have meaning. That action may take the form of legislative initiatives from the Special Commission to the Massachusetts General Court, or administrative policy changes for state government implemented by Executive Order, or both. The important thing is that the dialogue between state government and its member communities should continue.

In the Statewide Growth Policy Report, the Office of State Planning will be attempting to summarize the results of the process in a more thorough fashion than is possible here. But, in many respects, the Local Growth Policy Statements stand on their own. In analyzing the Local Statements, we have found that reading them is the only reasonable way to get a true sense of local views on various issues. If we have learned anything to date, it is that communities are individual and distinct from one another, and that these differences must be respected. We have been extremely impressed with the candor and thoughtfulness of these Local Statements, and concluded that it

2 Introduction

was incumbent upon us to share some of the thoughts contained therein. We only regret that we could not have "excerpted" more.

To date, we have received statements from about 300 communities, and we expect to receive at least 30 more. In this report, at least one "excerpt" from each community has been selected for inclusion (see index). Further, we have attempted to structure the report by clustering the excerpts along the lines of major issues raised by communities (see table of contents). It is likely that some of the excerpts do not fit neatly within a particular topical heading. But that is a reflection of the individuality of the Local Growth Policy Statements, as well as an indication of the range and diversity of opinions by the citizens of Massachusetts on the issues of growth confronting all of us.

We hope that you will agree with us and find the statements included here both interesting and controversial. We are impressed by the quality of the statements, the work that went into preparing them, and the intelligence and concern they represent. It is the citizens of the Commonwealth who have made this process work. This document illustrates but a small part of that contribution.

Chapter 1

The Growth Policy Process

Some of the most candid and interesting statements made by the more than 300 Local Growth Policy Committees concerned their experiences with this unique process itself. While many communities found the process to be valuable, some of the excerpts included here are critical of that process. Their inclusion is no accident: state government can — and must — learn from such criticism.

*By using the phrase "growth policy process" we simply mean the procedures set in motion by the Growth Policy Act. That Act specified a number of steps to be accomplished within a set timetable. Based on a questionnaire from the Office of State Planning, each Local Committee was to develop a Local Growth Policy Statement, after holding two public hearings. (For more information, see the **Local Growth Policy Handbook** prepared by the Office of State Planning.)*

It is altogether appropriate that this process — designed to evaluate the most desirable future growth for the cities and towns of the Commonwealth — should itself be evaluated by the participants of that process.



We do not see the completion of the questionnaire as the end of the Growth Policy process. We hope that the elected and appointed officials of the Commonwealth will see the need for better relations between the state and local governments and that this is only the first step in closing the gap that exists between state and local government.

North Andover

The Growth Policy Act can be described as too much grass and too little roots.

Longmeadow

In reading Groveland's response to the Local Growth Policy Questionnaire, you probably have noticed the rather harsh language in particular sections. The language has, in fact, been toned down. We ask you to accept the message of this report in the spirit in which it was intended — that spirit being one of good intention and a sincere belief in the values which have made our country great. THE SILENT MAJORITY HAS FINALLY SPOKEN.

Groveland

As a general "next step," it is hoped that this Growth Policy booklet along with those from other communities will be carefully read and the recommendations heeded.

Rochester

We were deeply disappointed by the public apathy towards our group, but understood why; as we ourselves sometimes wondered what this was all about.

Dracut

The town should consider appointing some kind of committee similar to the Growth Policy Committee that is representative of the community at large. This committee would be responsible for monitoring growth trends and attempting to inform townspeople and officials of significant changes.

Auburn

After many hours of tedious labor, the committee agreed to abandon the questionnaire in favor of individual statements. The reason for this decision is that many questions simply did not fit Hancock, while others were vague and difficult if not impossible to understand. This left us with the fear that our answers might be misconstrued by individuals with the most honorable intentions. It is sincerely hoped that our thoughts will be beneficial in the formation of the Regional Growth Policy Statement.

Hancock

We trust that you will receive these documents as an initial step in the dialogue to which we look forward with positive expectations. Together we may represent a new source of energy which can be directed toward the challenges confronting our Commonwealth in this Bicentennial Year.

Belchertown

The Town of North Attleboro has arrived at a crucial point in its development. Establishment, then implementation of a total growth policy will encourage the planned, meaningful, effective growth that a community with its face to the future must have.

North Attleboro

In 1976 at the request of the State Legislature and the Governor, the City of Boston along with the other cities and towns in Massachusetts is stopping to take a look at its prospective and its desired future. What is our future? What can it be? How can Boston change its relationship with its surrounding cities and towns and with the State to make the future what we want it to be? These are the main questions that the Committee addressed and which we will try to answer in this report.

Boston

Our committee was organized in mid-February and met weekly throughout the spring months and the early summer ones. We found . . . the kinds of discussions we had the most valuable part of the study, and we are richer for the experience. We hope that Lenox will be too.

Lenox

We were pleased to participate, in the spirit of this Bicentennial event, with the Office of State Planning in preparing our Growth Policy Statement. It is hoped that surrounding communities will all join us in local and regional planning for the future. Communities should have grounds to explore each other for common or different needs.

Blackstone

The members of the Growth Policy Committee, in completing their study and filing this Statement, are unanimous in the opinion that an on-going activity of the kind they have begun would be in the best interests of the town. . . . The committee recommends that there be initiated a twelve person ad hoc committee to be known as the Ten-Year Planning Committee.

Groton

The Special Commission on Growth should, after careful review of area Local Growth Policy Questionnaires, take timely steps to initiate legislation that would benefit each town. Legislation should be passed with consideration to the population, economic and fiscal condition of each town.

Medway

Despite the lack of numbers at the public hearing, the enthusiasm of those citizens who did attend extended the meeting into a lengthy session during which many factors and conclusions coincided closely with those which have been discussed by the committee over the past several months.

Duxbury

We appreciate the opportunity to fill out the State Planning Office's questionnaire and hope that our positions are clear, appreciated and accepted. We hope and pray that the Almighty will bless your efforts and ours to a greater understanding of the issues, of each other, and of our common destinies.

Sudbury

This questionnaire has enabled us to take a specific inventory of ourselves and our town. The reality is that we are small, and are feeling the impact of being such. Everything that applies to cities does not automatically apply to small towns, and this should and must be recognized by the Great and General Court.

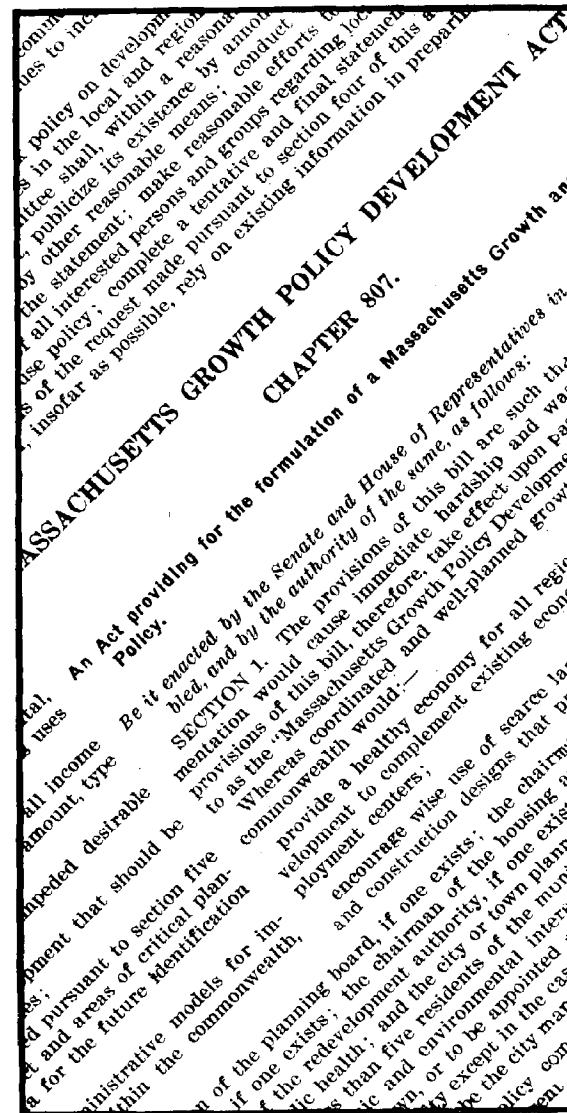
Halifax

One concern that the Committee has had with Chapter 807 is that the Act appears to be founded on the premise that the State does not know what cities and towns want. Framingham has repeatedly expressed its concerns about various aspects of growth to the Governor, the various Secretaries, the Legislature, and the several regional organizations to which it belongs. Despite evidence that the State is not paying attention, the Committee has prepared this statement with the expectation that it will be carefully reviewed by the State.

Framingham

The Local Growth Policy Committee of Worcester is aware that nearly all of our recommendations for regional and State aid to help facilitate growth in our City will be dependent upon favorable action by the State Legislature. Therefore, we strongly recommend that if the cities in our state are going to continue to support the survival of the Commonwealth, the Legislature must be committed to this issue as a top priority.

Worcester



Unfortunately there has been a great deal of skepticism in our Local Growth Policy Committee regarding the completion of this Questionnaire. The general feeling that pervades the group is that it doesn't matter what the townspeople want — "the State" will do what it wants anyway. For a project such as this to be helpful, staff would be needed to educate and guide the communities. That approach has been successful in the planning process for other state departments. In other words, a trust level has to be established before citizens will put a great deal of effort into an exercise such as this. As a committee we would appreciate periodic progress reports regarding regional and state policies developed from the Questionnaire.

Wilmington

The State Legislative body must take this questionnaire seriously and respond with appropriate legislation for reform and help.

Westfield

A growth policy must have an effect on land use decisions. Although the committee has attempted to make recommendations that would limit conflicts in land use, there are clearly legitimate and competing interests regarding the use of certain lands. When these competing interests arise in the form of major decisions, the committee believes that such decisions can best be made by the people of the community.

Chelmsford

This report (i.e., the Questionnaire) prepared by the Office of State Planning is certainly an example of non-responsive government. It is written in a nebulous manner as if someone needs research material for a doctoral thesis. The questions are written in such a way as to promote answers which are definitely biased toward greater State control of the cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The preparation and costs for this project far outweigh the expected advantages. It is a good example of trying to force more government down the throats of the citizens of the Commonwealth, rather than the better government, which we expect with the increasing deficit we keep receiving. We do not wish to surrender Burlington's individualism to State jurisdiction during this Bicentennial Year (or any other year for that matter).

Burlington

The work of the Growth Policy Committee in planning and defining the issues comes at an appropriate time. Being the only citizens' group, the Committee feels its work should continue as long as this kind of input is needed by the Selectmen, appointed and elected boards, and by consulting firms who are now charged with dealing with sensitive local issues. The Committee has performed a further function. As an example, the Growth Policy Committee, working with the Committee on Town Government and the Selectmen, have brought the issue of more efficient town government before the Special Town Meeting in the form of an article on the warrant.

Merrimac

In many cases, legislation goes into effect without a funding scheme, or the burden is placed on the local community. Case in point — Massachusetts Growth Policy Act has requirements for advertising of public hearings, holding hearings, and naturally requires secretarial help, etc. Each community is expected to absorb the cost. In this case, they are minor, but, in the case of other programs, they are much more expensive.

Pittsfield

If the work and thought which has gone into growth policy on state and local levels is to mean anything, the communication should continue — within the town and between the town and state boards.

Warren

We applaud the State for the purpose and intent of the Growth Policy Act. . . . The public apathy towards your efforts was completely underestimated.

Dracut

The committee has come to the realization that the scope of the questionnaire is irrelevant and possibly wholly non-applicable to a community such as ours. The questionnaire is over burdened with opinions and hypothetical possibilities but very few questions dealing with our problems.

West Newbury

This Committee wishes to express its eagerness to work with other related groups in the region and the state to the end that the general quality of life for all citizens will be improved in the future.

Shrewsbury

The Office of State Planning must now assimilate and pay careful attention to the views and recommendation of each local growth policy committee in developing a responsive and responsible growth policy for the Commonwealth.

Westhampton

A citizen's committee should prepare a recommended growth plan, which would indicate those areas that are suitable or desirable for development and those that present moderate or serious problems in terms of soil and rock conditions, topography, and the availability of public services.

Princeton

Chapter 2

Growth: Past Trends and Future Implications

One of the most important tasks facing Local Growth Policy Committees was to respond to a number of questions critical to any growth policy. What has been the impact of past growth and change in the community over the past ten to fifteen years? Based on the community's own values, has that impact been good or bad? Based on past trends, how can the city or town be expected to grow and change in the future? What is the "desired future" of the community?

Many Growth Policy Committees made a distinction between where their community was headed and where they would like it to go. The various descriptions of the difference between the most likely future and desired futures of the cities and towns across the Commonwealth underscore an increased awareness and sensitivity to the complex growth issues facing Massachusetts. The statements included in this chapter reflect a growing concern among our citizens regarding the social, economic, and environmental costs and benefits associated with growth and change.

Finally, the descriptions of the "desired futures" of the communities included in this chapter can be viewed, in one sense, as the "growth policy" of those particular cities and towns.

Past Growth and Its Impact

A "status quo" condition . . . has been in effect for about 25 years. There is every indication that this trend will prevail into the indefinite future. The continuing protective attitude and desires of the residents, with their attendant political power, will tend to protect the status quo, encourage upgrading of some blighted areas and prevent change in the town from its single family/two family character.

Belmont

Obviously, the task of lumping together the entire list of development changes, both good and bad, which have impacted upon the City with the intent of ascertaining the net effect of these changes will at best produce only a subjective determination. Given this limitation, it is suggested that the overall impact of past development changes would be perceived as moving the City in a positive direction. This is not to say Quincy has experienced a boom. Rather, that the City as a mature urban area has been able to maintain a stable base which, in itself, is an accomplishment. The balance, is however, tenuous. Without a constant monitoring of the condition in areas such as apartment unit development, local employment opportunities and CBD development, or without an immediate response to problems such as Quincy Bay pollution and the declining quality of housing in certain sections of the City, this balance could easily shift the City, overall, to a negative direction.

Quincy

The character and face of the town have undergone dramatic changes over the last fifteen years. The town has prospered and developed remarkably well during this period. However, the rapid growth pattern of our community has shown us some of the problems which can occur if that growth is not monitored by long range goals which consider the overall best interests of the community.

North Attleborough

Open space has decreased but land controlled by the Town has increased. Generally our services and programs have not kept pace with our growth. Cultural aspects are not as good as they should be due to the poor political climate.

Swansea

The influx of building of costly homes has brought with it a more affluent, mobile population who formerly dwelt in metropolitan areas and who expect more town services.

Norfolk

The most important result of past growth is that it has left very little land vacant which is truly suitable for future building.

Maynard

Shutesbury is a rural town with a current population of 788 residents. In looking back over the last 10 to 15 years, the most startling fact is that our population more than doubled in the last 10 years.

Shutesbury

Past growth has created a middle and upper middle class bedroom community with most residents working outside of the Town. Development of business and service industries has been discouraged. The reputation of the school system (deserved or otherwise) and other attractive features of the Town greatly increased the demand for housing raising property values and screening out low-income residents. Rapid growth resulted in large capital outlays for increased Town services and caused an escalating tax rate. As growth threatened environmental quality, the character of the Town, and the maintenance of open space, the community responded by becoming increasingly conservation minded. Although more open land has been preserved in Lexington than in most communities inside Route 128, development has progressed too rapidly for a really successful preservation program as has occurred elsewhere in this region. Lexington is now approaching the end of its growth as available, buildable land is nearly used up. Further significant growth can occur only if zoning permits more multiple-unit housing.

Lexington

The north migration of non-whites in the lower economic income into Boston caused an outward migration of higher income middle class ethnic groups, largely Jews and Irish. Better highways improved access to Canton. The median income rose as more professional middle class moved in. Quality schools followed the entrance of the professional class, and the schools then attracted more people.

Canton



Rapid growth in almost all facets of our community can best describe what has been happening in Westfield for the past fifteen years.

Westfield

What's been happening in terms of growth and development: There has been very little residential or commercial growth in the last 5 years in Colrain. Most of the growth has been the expansion of the Kendall Mills, the major industry in town. The mill is now planning to construct a waste disposal plant in Colrain which would be favored by town officials.

Colrain

From 1754 when this area was bought from the Stockbridge Indians, the population rose to a peak of 474 in 1810. Then a long period of decline set in; The 1860 U.S. Census showed that there were 350 residents. . . . In 1970 there were 45 year round residents.

Mount Washington

At first, it was a colony of summer residents, attracted by the lake, the pleasant summer weather and the town's quiet scenic beauty; then, as time went on and commuting to distant cities became less of a consideration for many, the town took on the additional aspect of a bedroom community; there was a dramatic increase in the number of retirees who found Ashfield's quiet rural atmosphere an ideal spot to enjoy their life of retirement; and finally, expansion of nearby University of Massachusetts contributed many faculty, employees and students as the town became something of a dormitory extension of the campus.

Ashfield

Lifestyles have changed in Brookline as they have throughout the country. More elderly, single persons, both students and working people and single-parent families, fewer and smaller families. The impact has been on housing demand, retail mix, school renovation program.

Brookline

Then came the Wachusett Reservoir and the taking of mills and homes for its construction. The M.D.C. now owns 4,000 acres of land, or approximately 1/3 of the land area of Boylston. The mills never returned, and many of the people displaced moved away. It was many years before the town recovered.

Boylston

The principal growth in the community has been residential and has occurred near the Town center, along existing roadways, and around the major lakes.

Spencer

The town of Leyden is a small populated hill town. Its major asset is an environment of open space, farm and woodland resources which we would like to preserve. The land is suitable for planting and grazing as well as growing apples. While Leyden's residents enjoy (and treasure) the rural way of life, we find it difficult, if not impossible, to control orderly use of timberline and agricultural land.

Leyden

Uxbridge remains a quiet New England town and enjoys the benefits of such. The town still has abundant open space, a relatively clean environment and has many aesthetic features which are attractive and contribute to the character and quality of life which its residents value. However, the stagnation and disinvestment which have occurred have had negative impacts.

Uxbridge

Monson has enjoyed steady growth at the rate of 1% annual increase in population for the past 100 years. This rate of growth has remained unchanged during the 10 years between 1965 and 1975.

Monson

In general, growth is viewed in negative terms with regard to impact on the previously rural atmosphere of the community. This is true of impacts on natural resources and tax rate as well. However, the growth which has occurred is viewed as providing better schools and services, as well as improving the mix of people in Marshfield.

Marshfield

Business and industry has played a minor role in the growth of the town. Growth has resulted from increased residential building, predominantly apartments. Since 1970, for every five residences built, at least four were apartment units. This apartment growth has accounted for over 70% of the new residents in town over the last five years.

Boxborough

The establishment of Hanscom Field in 1942 introduced probably the greatest change for Bedford. After World War II, Lincoln Lab, and the forerunner of the Air Force Electronic System Division moved to Hanscom. Together with the construction of Rt. 128, this helped to touch off a boom in electronics related industrial development that continued well into the 60's. This "spin off" from Hanscom Field had a major impact on the economy.

Bedford

There has been an influx of high income white-collar people to live in the new higher income apartments such as Granada Highlands. More elderly people are moving to the city to take advantage of programs and housing for them. Young families of moderate income are moving out to find adequate housing within their means, and are being replaced to some extent by low income families from Everett, Chelsea, Somerville, and Boston.

Malden

The scattered development result of uncontrolled growth led to a scattered and costly response to deliver municipal services.

Millbury

It is possible that more extensive planning could have attracted industrial and commercial use to broaden the tax base without sacrificing the "character" of the town. Planning long ago, could have avoided the difficulty which the town faces with respect to Plum Island, that is, erosion, lack of water, lack of sewerage and general overcrowding.

Newbury

Tewksbury's past rapid growth has changed the character of the community. The town's facilities and services have not been able to keep up with its population growth.

Tewksbury

Nahant is a water-oriented community that depends upon clear water and clean beaches for our municipal survival. An oil slick-prone, semi-industrial aura would ruin this. We are not adverse to the development of non-polluting industry, which would help the economic health of the entire area, but we are deeply concerned about oil-related developments.

Nahant

The biggest negative impact of past growth to the town is the fact that all the land has been used up and the amount of open space is insufficient.

Watertown

Holden has changed from a quiet, picturesque New England town surrounded by dairy farms, open fields, and woodlands to a traffic-burdened suburb of Worcester.

Holden

Growth: Costs and Benefits

For Barnstable in particular and the Cape as a whole, its assets breed problems. Its attractive environment and abundant recreational water bring tourism which sustain the economy. But they also bring people who desire to move here. . . . The tourist and immigrants cause great stresses to be applied to the fragile water-edge environments, destroying the goose that lays the golden eggs.

Barnstable

While there is still room for more residents, uncontrolled growth at anything like this rate over the next ten years would ruin the town's rural character (its most precious asset), pollute the water table by overtaxing the facilities for waste disposal, and so increase the demand for schools and municipal services that the tax rate would rise more rapidly than the tax base could support or the summer residents could continue to accept on their second homes.

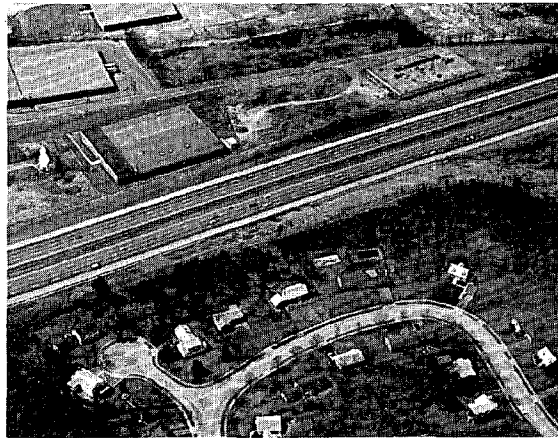
West Tisbury

We associate increased costs with growth more than increased benefits because of lack of control over growth. We hope the town can control its growth which means the town has to offer more than its neighbors so we can exercise control over, for example, type of industry we accept.

Plainville

Rutland is a vanishing resource — a unique "quality of life" which is highly vulnerable to encroachments.

Rutland



Now that Ashfield has become conscious of what uncontrolled growth can do to a community, there is significant concern for its future. Many fear that we may be on the verge of a massive burst of adverse growth and development which the town would be helpless to control, much less prevent. There is mounting pressure for further By-law revisions and other restrictive measures to insure that the community's atmosphere and environment be preserved.

Ashfield

If the present growth continues there will be deterioration of our older business districts and ethnic neighborhoods. . . . There will be a loss of wetlands through illegal fill and building (commercial and road) unless the laws are enforced. There will be an influx of apartments, gas stations and strip joints unless the zoning laws are enforced.

Revere

The Town of Chelmsford over the last 15 years experienced a rate of growth second to none in the Commonwealth. This tremendous growth over a relatively short period of time effected change in the socio-economic structure of the town. No longer was the town considered only a *suburb* of the City of Lowell, it had become a bedroom community of the sprawling Route 128 industrial/technological complex.

Chelmsford

A low tax rate, low population density, plus much open space are producing a relatively uncontrolled growth that is potentially harmful to the continuation of Charlton's rural charm.

Charlton

Chatham expects residential growth to taper off which will cause trade opportunities to decline which will cause younger people to leave causing a decline in school population causing per pupil cost to rise.

Chatham

In the last few years, Hawley's residents have come to appreciate more clearly the rapidity with which some of these changes are occurring, largely as the result of decisions taken outside Hawley. Therefore, certain steps have already been taken to ensure that the residents of the Town have a say in these decisions. In 1974, a Special Town Meeting authorized the Town's Selectmen to act as the Hawley Planning Board. This year (1976), the Town has begun the process of instituting subdivision control, to ensure that further real estate developments in the town meet minimum standards.

Hawley



The positive aspects — the influx of new people and ideas, and the increased involvement of citizens in town government, while substantial, do not equal the price paid by the community. Unless we recognize that our past growth has had a negative impact, it will be difficult to form the commitment necessary to prevent a recurrence in the future. Such changes are neither inevitable nor uncontrollable.

Milford

The impact of growth, the transition from rural to suburban character was accelerated, tax burdens increased by larger school populations, and the social fabric (formerly small town and tight knit) unraveled and was replaced by separate family units acting more independently.

Richmond

Growth has brought a broader social and economic base to the community — good for Longmeadow and the area.

Longmeadow

A positive side of the recent growth is that it has enabled the community to become more aware of the factors of growth and what it means to the future development of the community. The citizens have taken an active interest in planning for the future of the Town, and during the recent recession the Town's growth rate has slowed slightly and has given the Town the opportunity to examine the growth and control the growth once the Town returns to a normal level.

Mansfield

The overall impact appears bad, because the quality of life has not improved, growth has been improperly supervised, and the overcrowding of land has not been addressed properly.

Lowell

The major negative impact of growth has been the change in the character of the community. Growth has increased the gap between the "haves" and "have nots" and the result has been a polarization of the residents that did not exist in the past.

North Andover

There is a widening certainty that growth does not measure health or happiness, dignity, compassion, beauty or delight and that these are certainly worthy aspirations.

Somerville (Tentative Statement)

The rapid growth rate brought in a highly sophisticated and well educated electorate which in turn raised the social-economic factors of the Town. A greater import was placed on education, conservation, recreation and cultural activities. The new home buyers were primarily young couples with growing families and caused overcrowding in the school plant. The building of schools rapidly increased the Town's bond indebtedness.

Holliston

Increase in population has brought new and increased demands on municipal services which in turn has caused an increase in taxes. As the general region has expanded, with new job opportunities and shopping facilities outside of Town, the result has been increased through traffic on the Town's arteries, and a shrinking of downtown businesses. The latter means a loss of competition and decreased employment in Town.

Hopkinton

Open land has been at a premium. Apartment conversions from older homes have increased the number of "singles" in the population. Stable character of residential development has stabilized school needs. Tax rate is gradually climbing as the growth of the tax base lags. Cost of homes increases at a high rate. Older residents and younger couples have trouble finding housing in their price range.

Marblehead

With rapid commercial, industrial and housing growth during the past 10 years, Burlington is experiencing an identity crisis as a community. Is this community evolving into a Boston bedroom community or another commercial and industrial city in its own right? It cannot be both.

Burlington

Newburyport's population growth has been small in terms of numbers but significant in its new found diversity. . . . Overall impacts of growth, change, and development in Newburyport are positive with community experiencing renewed sense of pride and spirit in the city's character. Some problems still exist (i.e., high unemployment) but the community feels confidence in its ability to overcome them. . . . Growth in the last decade has had a positive effect on the quality of life in Newburyport, (and has clearly planned pressures on low income people).

Newburyport

Loss of employment opportunities, population loss (primarily in the young adult population), lack of investment in property, and declining tax base has increased community problems while reducing the resources to deal with the problems.

Haverhill

There have been no significant changes in existing physical conditions. There has been substantial rehabilitation and reinvestment in older residential and commercial-industrial structures, helping to stabilize old and aging areas of the town (e.g., the CBD/in-town area and Shawsheen).

Andover

The most important factor in determining Saugus' future is the level of services the citizens are willing to pay for, coupled with programs and/or legislation that are mandatory upon us. As demands rise, costs will also rise. This leaves two courses of action: either expand the base upon which the revenues are generated or reduce some of the Town's services. If expansion is the course followed at some point Saugus may lose its residential flavor. Population growth can be influenced by the community through zoning.

Saugus

The natural and environmental resources of a town are undeveloped woodlands and green areas. These have been reduced by home building on large tracts. The character of the town is now more suburban than rural. Family housing generally results in a fiscal disadvantage to the town because the costs of municipal services for police, fire, highway, sewer, and particularly schools, are more than the taxes the municipality can levy on the land receiving the benefits.

Westwood

The Town of Marion has experienced a slow and constant growth rate, which has allowed it to maintain its character as a rural seacoast community. It has been able to maintain a stable tax rate because the demand for increased services have been well-planned and astute financial planning has permitted the Town to increase its productivity.

Marion

It has been said by some in Carlisle that the Town has a schizophrenic outlook on what is good or bad for the Town, or, at the very least, an inconsistent outlook. For example, residents dislike higher local taxes yet much of the tax increase in past years has been due to the unwillingness of the townspeople to settle for fewer "services" (schools, conservation land acquisitions, etc.). In the same vein, there is a desire often expressed for a pub/tavern type facility in Town to serve as a place where people can get together to socialize informally on a day-to-day basis, yet zoning to permit such a facility would probably not be passed in a Town Meeting. Therefore, in this sense, one would have to say that some of the negative effects of the past are acceptable in light of other community goals. . . . It is possible that some of the negative effects of the past could have been avoided with better foresight and planning. Examples of this are the loss of our farmland, undesirable pressures which will be imposed by 100% valuation, and the necessity to purchase conservation land in large quantities to protect the Town's character and environment.

Carlisle

The broadening of the tax base is the best feature about our most likely future and the loss of open space and the rural atmosphere are the worst features.

Auburn

There are definitely costs and benefits associated with growth and development, which would spill over municipal boundaries. However, the town of Essex desires to remain as independent as possible. We feel that due to the small size of the town and the method of our government, we are able to react much better to the needs of the townspeople and are able to provide these needs on a much more economical basis.

Essex

In all this growth, the homeowner needs and wants more services and he presently finds he can no longer afford to pay for these services (negative). The cost of streets and drainage, etc. make Billerica an expensive town in which to live (negative). We have lost industry over the years, e.g., mills and B. & M. (negative). High costs of schools, town services, drainage, streets, etc.; no conception of future generation needs (negative). Better mix of people, ethnic, financial, educational; schools, sewer, police and fire protection is on the way to becoming adequate (positive). High taxes to pay for the services (negative). Town grew like "topsy" (negative).

Billerica

Not long ago, one dragged a useless machine into the back pasture and it mouldered down into the ground. Now it is illegal to have more than one junk car on the premises.

Peru

By being naive the town has made mistakes. However, the concern of the town to preserve its assets and minimize or eliminate its liabilities has resulted in improving policies (Zoning, Conservation, Wetland restrictions, Board of Health) that will help insure quality development. If we continue to generate concern, our policies and town will continue to improve.

Boxborough

The impact of commercial growth, development and change has been both positive and negative: along with a desirable increase in the availability of consumer services has come in some instances a negative impact on water quality and the environment (increased traffic problems, encroachments in the flood plain, for example) and an increased demand for town services. At this point, fiscal costs to the town of this commercial growth may have outstripped revenues generated by this development.

Acton

The change from a rural vacation/farming community into a suburban bedroom community of Boston with a substantial economic base of its own (i.e., Mall, Industrial Park, Clinic), and the regional clean industries from towns (e.g., Bedford). It has been positive in terms of development of the town and providing a broader economic base, service facilities, and job opportunities for an expanding populace. Negative aspects are the encroachment on the environment, and the overdevelopment of the rural New England atmosphere endemic to us all.

Burlington

Principal failure was the town's inability to control the rate at which it grew; this was governed largely by state, not local, decisions. This failure was offset by successes in areas more immediately within town jurisdiction.

Amherst

Growth in Amherst has upset the historic balance of social and economic forces in the town and that it has served better the needs and interests of the economically well off than it has those of other residents.

Amherst

The proposed nuclear power plant in Montague would have both adverse and beneficial effects on Wendell: possible rapid growth would be bad; possible rise in property values would be good.

Wendell

We would like a fair amount of industry to alleviate the tax burden which is borne solely by the residential home owner (for all practical purposes).

Norfolk

The lack of much conspicuous protest may indicate that the majority of Maynardites are reasonably content with most of what's happened hereabouts. . . . Maynardites are probably most worried about keeping the good things we already have.

Maynard

Future Growth and Its Consequences

The prospects of "uncontrolled" growth in terms of natural resources is especially frightening for a seaside community such as Duxbury.

Duxbury

The people of Cheshire do not want rapid growth — they like the rural characteristics and they want to see them maintained. There are not, however, adequate regulations in effect at this time to insure meeting this goal. It is felt the best vehicle at this time would be improved and more restrictive zoning laws. These would include larger lot size to insure independence from municipal water and sewage; expansion of present trailer parks by permit coupled with restrictions on mobile homes on individual lots; and laws which would allow a maximum number of new home building permits per year to restrict the rate of growth.

Cheshire

Newly arrived residents see Bolton as a fresh, unspoiled country town. They revel in its simplicity and countryness. Almost unanimously, however, they envision Bolton becoming just like those towns to the East from which many of them have emigrated, a town burdened with major suburban problems. These people feel that the more attractive they try to make the town, the more others will want to move in. The constant question is, why does Bolton have to be like its neighbors to the East? What can Bolton do to preserve its own image, and still contribute to the general benefit of the region?

Bolton



Pressures for growth will probably be modest in Princeton. Owing to lack of water and sewer utilities it is unlikely that large business/industrial establishments will be attracted to the community.

Princeton

Extensive suburban development would destroy the small town "feeling" of Shirley, and would help turn people off from involvement in town affairs. Many things could be improved without spoiling the character of the town.

Shirley

The comparatively higher tax rate in surrounding towns is already forcing pressure for new growth in the town. Similar attractions that also produce demand for new growth are the more pleasant surroundings and environment and the reputedly better schools. Sewerage becoming available (should it be forced upon the town) would also make possible a denser development and raise taxes considerably. Perhaps the most important single factor to influence the future development of this community will be its ability to mobilize and empower a committee to take on the responsibility of doing some long range planning in view of the questions and responses given herein.

Hamilton

The local Conservation Commission, along with State and Federal beefed-up legislation, flood control, etc., have a tremendous effect on growth. This is not necessarily negative. Eventually, it will result in more responsible and more valuable development.

Fairhaven

The construction of apartments is almost universally opposed. Urbanization of the town and subsequent loss of rural character is decried by old-timers and newcomers alike.

Agawam

We are a "rural island" in danger of being rapidly submerged by uncontrolled growth and development. With the economy the way it is, it is hard to assess the overall pattern and shape of development in the area.

Berkley

Growth in Somerville has to be identified with rejuvenation. The city has no vacant land on which development can take place, but cities, eventually developed, continually change Growth must be concentrated on arresting decay and stabilizing neighborhoods, on modernization, on maximizing the use of open space and injecting new life to an old city. The focus must be on the elimination of blight, first by detecting the blighted areas, and then by drawing up a realistic program for eliminating the blight, for removing the influences which produce blight, and for strengthening all neighborhoods in the city.

Somerville

It is difficult to determine whether there will be any growth whatsoever. There are many factors which the town cannot control; perhaps a major highway will go through the town or an industry will decide to relocate here.

Hanson

We believe that with proper controls the town of North Andover can accommodate balanced growth without appreciable adverse effects on the economy or the ecology of the town. New planning techniques must be employed and future planning must continually take into account the effects of growth on equity, the economy, and ecological factors.

North Andover

In view of these circumstances the current trend seems to be to gloss over the problems, build too much on too little, and intrude into the harbor-front open space.

Provincetown

If we realize now that we are growing and plan now for future growth, this impact will not be shocking. It is important to elect and appoint people to positions in town government who realize where we are and where we are going. All assets can be protected if the growth is steady, reasonable, and planned.

Northbridge

Growth does not have to mean industrialization, pollution, or increasing our population. It can mean a growth more desirable — aesthetically, ecologically and economically. This is a direction, it is hoped, that the town would take in future planning.

Charlmont

There are some people in town who are satisfied with the present conditions in Colrain and are therefore content to see it remain the same. There are others who would like to strengthen the town's economic base and believe that Colrain will not be able to survive without economic development. If growth is kept to a minimum, then the ever-increasing burden of town expenses will be laid on a small town population who will soon be unable to bear that burden.

Colrain

Quality life for individuals should be maintained or enhanced in a way that treats all citizens equitably, but is still efficient. Include in quality of life — natural world, man-made world, and social organizations, whereby people work together in business and government.

Petersham

Drastic changes are not expected in Melrose. Change is occurring but it is occurring imperceptibly. Increasing traffic such as on Main Street is an example with particular problem spots such as Wyoming Station, downtown, and at the hospital. Many of the changes are caused by outside factors and there is a belief that the city now has less ability to control its destiny. The ability of the State Housing Appeals Committee to override local zoning is an example.

Melrose

The town will become more heavily populated, and also will see a further increase in business establishments within the town, with many of these gradually encroaching upon presently zoned residential districts. Also, a fairly large increase in the number of multi-dwelling units, greater traffic (especially if the MBTA's rapid transit line is brought into town) and even further erosion of home or local rule can be anticipated but not welcomed.

Needham

Woburn most likely is becoming more and more of a center surrounded by towns and performing many services to most of these towns as well as the County, State, and Federal governments. If we had a professional planner, priorities could be set, for example, as to types and extent of regionalization, while keenly mindful of other values among the people.

Woburn

Unless certain steps are taken, Rochester will continue to have increased residential growth with some very spotty commercial development based on individual variances or permits from the Board of Appeals.

Rochester

The probable impact of the most likely future is bankruptcy. A small town such as Rowley could not support rapid expansion without some sort of tax base other than personal property taxes. Multi-family apartments will give us a transient population uninterested in the future of the town, while it depletes our resources.

Rowley

Factors influencing future growth, development, and change will most likely come from regulations, both state and federal, which will make public low-cost housing a definite future with individual communities having little to say on such regulation.

Bellingham

There has been a continuous trend toward urban sprawl and spread-out activities within the city of Chicopee. It results in the lack of support for city-wide projects and the continuation of the strong neighborhood system.

Chicopee

The amount of time consumed in policy-making by the legislature is detrimental to all concerned. In most cases, programs lack administrative capabilities such as in welfare where a few benefit, and others are left behind, such as the elderly as far as housing and medical care.

Tewksbury

Because of the restrictive zoning practices, as well as general economic conditions, the high costs of construction and land, it has been very difficult to encourage new industry to locate within the City. For the same reasons, it has been very difficult to encourage the development of housing that would satisfy all of the needs of the City. Open land now available for development is too expensive for the development of single family homes or low and moderate income multi-unit housing. The only open land potentially available for development is on the fringe of the City where facilities such as public transportation, shopping areas, playground areas and schools are not convenient.

Newton

The Town of Bridgewater is no different than other small communities and we are very well aware of this. In talking with other communities such as ourselves and being world observers, we realize that we cannot afford any type of large home building under the present conditions. Being a bedroom type community, so to speak, wishing to retain some of our rural atmosphere, the tax base would not exist to allow the multiplicity of municipal services that would be demanded; schools, fire, police, highway, water, sewer, etc. To expect that this would be funded by individual property owner taxes is ridiculous. It is expected that within the next fourteen years that there would be an increase of about 6,000 people in our population.

Bridgewater

Our natural environment is a temperate, well watered, green habitat for wildlife as well as ideal for low density suburban residences. But as development continues, especially at current rates, this natural environment will be compromised. To reject future development is unrealistic, but to control the direction and pace of development is a wise course.

Walpole

Most members of the present Planning Board express doubts about the town's capacity — in terms of existing building codes — to keep development at a reasonable level. In other words, Rutland is, to a certain extent, at the mercy of developers. A long-range growth plan and goals for the town are desperately needed.

Rutland

We will be overbuilt; all public facilities "over expanded." Unattractive, unplanned mixture of housing, commercial business, and industry.

Freetown

As the town is still only partially developed, sensitive long-range planning can avoid the pitfalls posed by unchecked growth, as seen in nearby communities.

Rehoboth

The impact of the most likely future is one of spiraling taxes and a loss of identity as a rural community.

Oakham

The Desired Future

We would like whatever growth comes to blend into what is here and not to show at all. There are ways to encourage future growth to do just that. We recommend that the town offer incentives to developers who are willing to reuse existing buildings and landscapes. If we really care about keeping our castles from other eras, we must use every available tool at our disposal to make their reuse attractive to those with the means for providing it.

Lenox

Residential growth should be encouraged to progress at a moderate pace so that the community may gradually absorb the cost of expanding services, such as education, fire and police protection. The rate of residential development can be controlled and monitored by increasing the minimum size for a residential lot. This may be indirectly accomplished by tightening the regulations for subsurface sewage disposal.

North Attleborough

Based upon our survey of the town, the one vastly overriding issue and desire of the citizens of West Newbury is to maintain its existing rural atmosphere. The people of West Newbury want to maintain the character of the town exactly as it is today.

West Newbury

For Monterey, the best growth policy is a no-growth policy. Aside from small growth in the present business district and construction of a Community center, the desired growth of Monterey is to keep its open spaces, farms, forests and land lakes just as they are.

Monterey

Slow growth of the town was cited as being a good way to insure the preservation of our scenic beauty.

Florida

Our present growth committee favors non-growth. The term is a poor one for in the United States it has negative connotations. We wish we could coin a new word but it means we do not want to grow in population, have shopping centers, attract industries, etc., but to maintain and improve the quality of life that we now have.

Stockbridge

The desired future for this community would be one in which residential, agricultural, and limited light industry could harmonize together in keeping with the rural character of the community.

South Hadley

In the end (if there is one) Boylston will remain a bedroom community, but will simply have many more bedrooms.

Boylston

In conclusion, the Newton Local Growth Policy Committee is in favor of moderate growth, development and change in an imaginative well-planned manner which insures that the trade-offs of decisions are clearly articulated.

Newton

Town has time to determine future direction of growth. Town officials simply have to recognize this as an opportunity and then take advantage of it.

Colrain

One "fact" should clearly emerge from our report, we might disagree on the list of six problems, and exactly how to cross the t's and dot the i's, but we are in agreement that we should remain a small, rural, residential, unique community for at least until this century is done. A new growth committee can meet in 2000 A.D. to map the next 25 years.

Stockbridge

Our goal is to perpetuate our open, rural community, our system of values and our honesty and integrity. The state and region, in collusion, should not attempt to bend our ideals and values to their perspective. However, we would suggest that our ideals of honesty and integrity be applied to the state government.

Douglas

The desired future that many people in Gloucester see is one that they themselves can achieve. Many of the problems which confront the City are ones to which there is an answer — the solution is in the hands and within the power of the local government, if the Council, the Boards and staff could work to one end. There is a general lack of direction and a lack of day-to-day executive staff who can work within the laws of the Commonwealth. Many tasks are done, but few goals are achieved. The future is ours alone if we will take it.

Gloucester

The worst possible future impact would result from an influx of transient people causing residential growth without industrial growth.

Salisbury

The desired future would include an increased awareness of the potential inherent in existing structures for adaptive reuse, the potential of the Merrimack River as an aesthetic and recreational resource, and the stabilization of neighborhoods. The significant difference between the most likely future and the desired future is the aggressive revitalization of the "downtown" area of the city for a mixture of commercial, residential, and light industrial uses.

Haverhill

We would like to see Groveland remain a bedroom community with no change in its basic character. The addition of some commercial establishments and light industry would be beneficial.

Groveland

Active efforts to cooperate with nearby towns to solve problems so that state involvement will not be necessary.

Cohasset

We will continue to be a "Bedroom Community" until we have proper water, sewerage and a better tax base.

Acushnet

A healthy community requires a blend of young and old, native and newcomer, all of whom have something to contribute to the community in solving the problems of today.

Hancock

Most people who live in Middlefield do so because it is a small rural town and they like it that way and want to keep it that way.

Middlefield

If we exercise local controls and take effective part in regional decisions, the most likely future can be the desired future. . . . We are a suburb. We like it. Most residents, rather than being born here, chose Wellesley. The Desired Future is like the likely future because of the desire of the citizens.

Wellesley

The overwhelming desire would be to not have the town grow in population. As this is unrealistic, the difference between the most likely future and the most desired future or growth pattern could be in the areas of redevelopment of the center of town, the improvement in the appearance of Rt. 1, lack of increased industrial zoning and loss of autonomy. The more esthetically attractive a community is, the more it attracts people and industry and the stronger the town can be in enforcing zoning which in turn gives the community more control over its future. Long range planning is essential to the future and should help a town retain its identity in spite of the pressures which could leave it unnoticed in the Boston to Washington megalopolis.

Plainville

The desired future would have Dedham utilize its resources including its location, talents of a diversified middle class, leadership of its skilled professionals, commitment of its historic heritage, pride and energy of its working class citizenry, to seek to eliminate sectional one-upmanship and try to work together to provide a fair, adequate and just solution to the very real issues that are interwoven in the fabric of our society today.

Dedham

Our community needs good open space and recreational opportunities. The development of the Merrimack River so it's enhanced not downgraded as a recreational resource. The Heritage State Park and Urban National Cultural Park should be developed for tourism. There should be more community use of the University of Lowell facilities, including the swimming pool, opera house, tennis courts, gym, baseball fields, etc. There should be established a reputation for public safety where everyone would feel free to come. Work study programs should be initiated to assist city in image, improved educational systems.

Lowell

The objective is to provide a healthy community that embraces the elderly and young facilitated by housing and employment for all the citizens of the town.

Wilmington

Direction: The town should take positive steps to guide its future rather than leave it to chance. Whatever happens to Plymouth in the years to come should be controlled by the town rather than by external forces. Town government has moved a long way in this direction, but it still has a long way to go. *Balance:* There is no doubt that balance should be considered the underlying theme to growth policy decisions. Balance of land uses such as housing, industry, commerce, and open space should have as its goal a town which has broad appeal in terms of economic, social and recreational opportunities.

Plymouth

This desired future is preferable due to aesthetic reasons and for planning for those who "come after." We have this beautiful town, and those who come after have a right to enjoy it as we do. We have the power to preserve it as it is, and this is our deep responsibility.

Leverett

Our vision of "desired future" for Tyngsboro would include a partial revival of farming, and the location of a number of manufacturing or assembly-type plants that would add perhaps 500 salary and wage jobs full time in the plants and maybe 50 to 100 summer jobs for young people of farms and in plants.

Tyngsboro

Although one could interpret the response to our Growth Policy Questionnaire as indicating a strong desire on the part of the Townspeople to be "left alone" or that we do not desire growth, the big problem is the affordability of growth with its increase in the expense of all services. Phillipston has a very limited tax base and the taxpayer is very conscious of every proposal that will cost him more money. Perhaps in the future, as well as now, State and Federal grants, more distribution of State and Federal funds to small communities, or any other form of "outside" help will permit our desired future without excessive burdens on the local taxpayer.

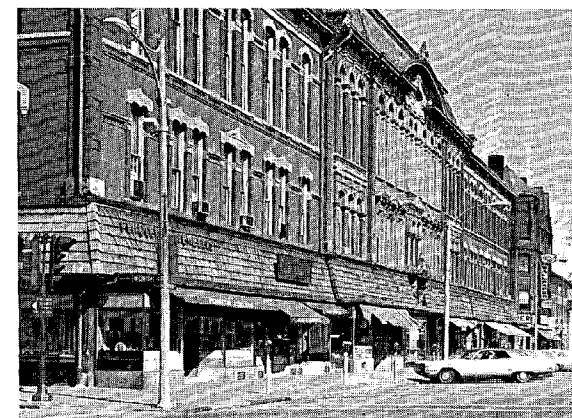
Phillipston

Bolton needs a more diversified population to make it a genuine and interesting town. It needs to keep its older citizens and its younger couples with moderate means. . . . To keep the population from exploding would insure an adequate water supply, open spaces, recreation, and refuge for the metropolitan area towns to the East. . . . To allow more apartments in existing large residences would help the problem of broad diversification — provide housing for the elderly, as well as for singles and young couples.

Bolton

If continued suburbanization is inevitable, we must seek sound management on town, regional, and state levels. We would like to see the process of suburbanization slowed down, so that the pressure on our assets is relieved, and the character of the town preserved. We would seek strong Town government, and support from the state.

Manchester



The growth policy and implementation recommendations should be regarded as only the first stage in a continuing effort to restrict further development in Swampscott. The town is now all too familiar with the consequences to date of a failure to design and achieve a desirable future: dense urbanization, high costs and taxes, loss of irreplaceable natural open space. The town also is familiar with the consequences of dense growth in neighboring communities (e.g., heavy through-traffic, congestion, hazards, and noise) and of the state's failure to provide corrective facilities. The town is urged to act decisively and promptly to end the deterioration by adopting the policies and initiating the measures advocated above.

Swampscott

Town must continue to have good leadership and good government.

Somerset

The over-riding goals, objectives and values of any future growth are freedom of choice, retention of the democratic process, effective and responsive government and a physical environment beneficial to life. Basic constitutional rights, freedom of choice in housing, employment, educational and recreational opportunities, and world-wide peace and co-operation between nations, states, regions and communities must be guaranteed. The desired future shall be free from strife. We should live in peace and harmony with ample job opportunities, a variety of housing choice for persons of all ages, races and creeds. Public transportation should be accessible within and beyond the community. The cost of living should be stable; the tax rate equitable. We should be able to live in freedom from fear. Crime should be non-existent. Open space and recreational opportunities should be ample, as well as areas for wildlife refuge and solitude. Medical care should be a right without being a financial burden. Natural resources and room for growth should be preserved for future generations. Food should be abundant. Racial strife should no longer exist. There should be more opportunities for leisure to enjoy life, pursue happiness and enjoy inter-relationships with each other.

Weymouth



In the long run, the cheapest, least wasteful, most beneficial, healthiest way to live is according to life-styles that are as much in harmony with the natural order of things as is feasible. Certainly the land must be used to support our lives, but use does not have to result in destruction or depletion of land value (actual or potential value). In fact man can improve the land by wise and knowledgeable land use practices.

Berkley

The desired future is for Boston not only to continue to serve the central city function, not only to be the cultural center, the medical center, the educational center, the governmental center, but to expand and develop and improve these services and make them more available and more desirable. Boston is the urban magnet that makes it worthwhile to live in Waltham or Peabody or Arlington instead of living in East Orange or Kansas City or Utica. The successful development of this alternative requires a new relationship between Boston and its neighbors, between Boston and the Commonwealth. It requires an appreciation of the services that Boston taxpayers have been providing for the citizens of this region for so many years. Most important, it requires a new sharing of these costs. We speak not only of cost in dollars and cents terms, or in terms of the tax rate. We speak of costs in terms of air pollution, water pollution, noise pollution, traffic congestion. We speak of services to low income and minority families. We speak of harborfront land that pays no taxes. We speak of the airport and aircraft noise. We speak of tourists and their impact on residential neighborhoods. All of these are costs now borne by Boston city residents that provide great benefit to all the residents of the region.

Boston

No change. We like it the way it is. Because we feel that people in the community are satisfied with the community the way it is.

Chester

The town lacks a set of carefully thought out goals and a committee is needed to make and revise them as required and to annually measure progress toward them. Such a committee on goals and their achievement should report annually to the town meeting and work with the parallel to the Finance Committee in reviewing each year the town's operation and in responding to articles in the warrant.

Petersham

Our "Desired Future" includes: (1) limited controlled growth; (2) preserved water quality; (3) sewerage system (around lake first); (4) preserved open space/agricultural land; (5) utilization of town and state land town forest management; (6) limited industry; and (7) strict zoning laws-controls.

Wrentham

The all-encompassing objectives are to maintain the present rural atmosphere and the spirit of the community. These can best be achieved by recognizing use of voluntary regionalization when appropriate; and developing better and more flexible planning tools — e.g., zoning, etc.

Dover

To see that the desired future of Watertown is realized, we must force the developer to think of the good of the community not as an afterthought, but as the most important factor in his plan.

Watertown

Desired future: No change. We like it the way it is. This desired future is preferable: Because we feel that people in the Community are satisfied with the Community the way it is.

Westfield

The Town of Russell expects to grow, and we feel that we have adequate controls for the future. We expect that the desired future and the most likely future will be the same.

Russell

The vast majority of Franklinites favor a "No Growth" or "Slow Growth" policy. Typical of this is the report of our Residential Growth Task Force, who earlier this year, after exhaustive study recommended a slow to no growth policy for the town, until the services have time to catch up with the people.

Franklin

We need the dollars and desire of local government officials to make it happen. Better cooperation between town boards and an informed citizenry.

West Stockbridge

The major goal that the town of Leicester faces is the unity of the people for the good of the town as a whole. The separate Sewer and Water Districts, separate Postal Zip Codes and even a Fire Company located in each district stop this goal from being a reality.

Leicester

The committee generally agreed they would like to see Conway stay the way it is. The taxes must be kept down. The town cannot provide city services and people cannot expect to receive them.

Conway

No big new industries are wanted. The small town atmosphere and all of its benefits are desirable. Growth would only eliminate them. Current local attitudes and control will help to maintain this in the future.

Shelburne

It is probably desirable to stay nearer to negative growth than to favor rapid growth.

Lancaster

There should be a revitalization of Medford as a core community and encouragement of this by means of state resources which will, in effect, discourage suburban sprawl.

Medford

Chapter 3

The Community and Growth

As mentioned previously, the Growth Policy Act allowed an opportunity for communities to tell state government about their growth priorities. An overall theme of "enhancing community character" emerged as the cities and towns began to take that opportunity. This strong sentiment was expressed repeatedly by all types of cities and towns. Our older urban centers often pointed with pride to the vitality of their ethnic neighborhoods. Suburban towns noted a "special feeling" of community identity or expressed confidence in their local governments. Rural communities identified quality of life and lifestyles as important priorities. Small towns cherish their "town atmosphere." Coastal communities noted deep historical traditions as valuable assets. Each community repeatedly emphasized its own uniqueness as an asset that should be preserved and maintained. In order to plan for orderly growth and development and thus to enhance "community character," Local Growth Policy Committees have most often cited local zoning as a key land management tool available to local governments.

The tradition of a strong local government and vigorous "home rule" in Massachusetts has long been established. But the vigor with which communities view the protection of these powers has been underscored through this process. In this chapter we have included local perceptions and priorities concerning community pride and character, their assets and liabilities, zoning, and home rule.

Community Character

It was noted that character had to be defined before a meaningful response could be given to this answer. If character is open rural community then the factor has changed some from recent development. The character of the community has definitely been improved because the recent development has made the community more accessible to surrounding areas.

Mansfield

In general, we believe Plainfield partakes of the economic ups and downs of the immediate and larger regions of which we are a part. We may, however, be able to weather the downs better: many home freezers and cellars are packed with locally grown produce and meat; many residents never were "hooked" on the conspicuous consumption, throw-away economy of the nation as a whole. Members of our committee remember the experience of friends who lived in the cities during the Depression — people really were cold and hungry; others on the committee remember Plainfield then — there was almost no money, but there was plenty of food, and houses were warmed by wood. The question, in Plainfield's past, has been: what do we really need? The answer, usually, has been: if one needs it, one puts it together with what one has at hand.

Plainfield

Perhaps the most significant aspect of East Brookfield's growth in the past to its present has been the Positive Character of its people; its inhabitants exhibit all the human frailties and strengths. The character of its people has continually emphasized their willingness to compromise when necessary to reach a common goal.

East Brookfield

There was debate on whether the strong neighborhood system or the central business district system was the better concept for the City of Chicopee. The concern related to issues such as having to go outside the city for social and cultural activities while preserving a good distribution of all income groups throughout the city, without the concentration of any one type of people or one type of activity.

Chicopee

A less tangible, but very real, concern felt by residents is the loss of the "small town atmosphere" that was here as recently as 10 years ago.

Auburn

Pride in the community should not be overlooked as an important tool in attaining the goal of visual improvement. Incentives such as public recognition could be the basis for a re-emergence of developer-architect pride in the visual aspect of their project not just the functional aspect.

Chelmsford



Granville has not participated in the programs of the "Commonwealth's Special Commission on the Effects of Growth Patterns on the Quality of Life in the Commonwealth" because of the unique patterns of land ownership in our community and the environmental considerations that accompany them.

Granville

There is evidence of more than average interest and pride on the part of a majority of Falmouth residents, both in their town and in their particular village or area. Individually and collectively, people in the main work to maintain what makes their property, their street, their town attractive, often at considerable cost, in time and money, to themselves.

Falmouth

The environmental quality of the town and the region have been high, and each wave of newcomers has been attracted by the pastoral beauty, the low price of land and the low taxes and has resisted the advent of the groups that followed.

Charlton

In large measure the town's remoteness, rugged topography, and difficult access are the very essence of its continuing appeal. The general feeling by the majority of residents is to leave it as it is, and to resist invasion by "outsiders" who think of growth only in terms of concrete and steel.

New Marlborough

Pelham citizens want to maintain the character of their town — its rural atmosphere, healthful environment, beautiful countryside, and cooperation among its citizens. At the same time, they look forward to limited growth within the framework of the aforementioned goals. While recognizing its responsibility to cooperate with its neighbors and the authority of the State, the town of Pelham values its independence and identity.

Pelham

The rural atmosphere and way of life in West Tisbury must be maintained; the open fields and woodlands must be preserved. The public, social value of open, unused land is great and must be protected.

West Tisbury

Cambridge has two of the major universities in the country. This brings a constant influx of cosmopolitan people. As a result, Cambridge is one of the densest cities in the country with a high percentage of transients. While this makes a sense of community difficult to attain, it brings a singular social diversity.

Cambridge

West Brookfield has a large, extremely attractive Common which serves as the focal point for most of the town's outdoor social activities which include ball-playing, music concerts, antique and church fairs, and other formal and informal gatherings. The Common is surrounded by a large number of well-maintained and attractive 18th and 19th Century homes which will probably be included in an Historical District in the future. The sense of history runs deep in the conscience of the people and many protected sites involve memories of the Commonwealth's early beginnings.

West Brookfield

Holliston has changed from a small agricultural town with bluecollar workers to a white collar middle class suburban community. The educational level has risen; more churches have been built; there are many more social organizations in the town. Impact on the community has been that its character has changed.

Holliston

There has been a change in the easy, natural relationship with the heritage which so richly surrounds Concord. Under the encroachment of growth and development and of progress which combine to threaten this heritage, we have organized to formally preserve this heritage by "establishing" historic sites, paving accompanying parking areas, installing brass plaques and reproducing former curios. Much that was enjoyed in quiet casual respect is now being set apart for official regulated observance.

Concord

Merrimac looks back with pride upon a heritage of craftsmanship, when commerce and rural life coexisted with a prosperous focus on the manufacture of horse-drawn carriages.

Merrimac

Carlisle has more than doubled its population since 1960, yet in general the rural, small-town character of the town has been maintained. As mentioned previously, in time, given existing zoning, there is the danger of losing this "ruralness" and becoming simply a nice subdivision. More recent zoning (floodplains and wetlands) will prevent overdevelopment in many areas of the town which should not be developed for both environmental and aesthetic reasons. Carlisle zoning has prevented urban "blight" or "sprawl" along its main roads. Until recently, this along with subdivision planning has been the crux of the town's zoning policies.

Carlisle

There is a major problem in this city to maintain and protect a sense of community on a small town basis; shared values, personal intimacy, high commitment to the very sort of social situation upon which the country was based.

Westfield

Conservation of the built environment, most particularly those buildings, sites, and areas which are important to its political, economic, social, cultural or architectural history, is an important goal for Boston. . . . Perhaps most important is that in conserving buildings and historic areas we are conserving much of the character and flavor that make Boston Boston. In today's world of ever-increasing interchangeability, a city with character has a valuable asset both in financial and social terms. The new Quincy Market is an excellent example of financial return to the State for historic preservation. Much of Boston's character comes from its well-designed and expertly crafted older buildings, its winding narrow streets, its beautiful open spaces and parks, and the inter-relationships of these in our downtown and neighborhoods. These are our irreplaceable heritage which we are determined to protect and enhance.

Boston

Middleborough lacks unity and pride. The streets are a mess with litter, and local crime is just about out of control. Nobody "seems to give a damn" about anybody except themselves and it seems that some of our citizens don't even go that far.

Middleborough

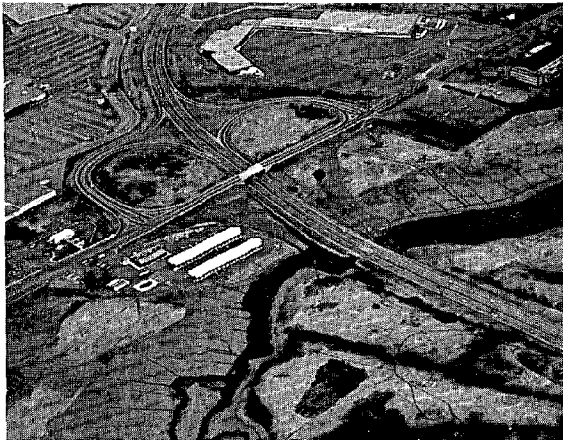
Middleton is unique in its rural, semi-agricultural character and in the attitudes of its people. It is often stated that New Englanders, as opposed to other parts of the country, are cold and aloof. We like to feel that our people are warm, friendly, and gregarious — perhaps an out-growth of clean air and open green spaces — factors not found in concrete jungles. We appreciate and have worked diligently to attain and preserve our rural character and when considered that it is located within the populous suburban North Shore, this can be considered no small accomplishment. We, its citizens, have a legacy for our children in a world that is at times growing faster than its ability to mature.

Middleton

We have a variety of natural barriers to development in Newbury; wetlands, the ocean and distance from Boston. In turn, Newbury has basically continued as a rural town for over three centuries. Most people have become aware of what happens when poorly controlled residential, commercial and industrial development take place in such a setting. The character of the town can change drastically and irreversibly in a very short time. For this reason the great majority of the people here prefer to have controlled growth to preserve our town's basic character.

Newbury

Assets and Liabilities



Like other Cape towns our assets also tend to create our liabilities. Our environment attracts persons who desire to remain, but it also attracts visitors who sustain the economy. Together the tourist and the "new citizen," have caused great stresses to be applied to our natural environmental, social and commercial resources, endangering the attributes which are the backbone of the economy.

Provincetown

Franklin is the largest town in area in the Norfolk County. This fact confronts the town with several dichotomous situations. Although this vast land area can be a valuable resource, it can also cause the town many serious problems.

Franklin

Assets: location on the coast and abundance of rivers, marshes and beaches. Liabilities are obvious and not unique.

Marshfield

Whether it is particular or peculiar to Salem, this city of only 7.99 miles and about 40,000 people, because of its diverse mix of population and attendant mix of goals, problems and solutions, is in a state of "becoming" or "striving" rather than "being" or "finally achieving," which accounts for its assets and liabilities.

Salem

One of the town's assets is: The willingness to be small.

Cumington

The liabilities have, in fact, helped to preserve the assets of New Braintree.

New Braintree

Rather than list separate assets and liabilities, we are listing six significant assets and, as liabilities, we will present the negative aspects of each of these. The attempt is to show that all that glistens is not gold.

North Andover

Open woodland is an asset but taxwise it has become a liability. Landowners who preserve open land for hunting, fishing and development of wildlife should not be penalized thru taxation for such land. Town taxation should not be levied the same as Boston, industrial cities or exclusive above average income areas.

Charlemont

As an inner suburban community, our assets and liabilities are similar to other like communities. However, the quality of government is considered a distinct asset.

Arlington

The town will continue to struggle with the issues which have governed its development, in the attempt to chart a conscionable course for the town's future. It is this committee's opinion that Lincoln's greatest asset is its green areas and natural systems, and that these linked to Lincoln's cultural centers are the tangible and intangible benefits that the town should continue to support and that will continue to serve as an open space and cultural resource for Greater Boston.

Lincoln

The listed assets above improve the quality of life in our community. All those listed as assets have contributed to the economic, educational and cultural growth of our city. Special attention should focus on the availability of land for development and a deep water harbor which are the main ingredients for economic growth because of the possibility of oil and gas production both on Georges Bank and the Baltimore Trough. Liability: Local property tax is a liability which has been created by the State Legislature in enacting laws, but in not providing the money to fund implementation of those laws. The State should absorb the total cost of education enabling Massachusetts to provide equality in education and relieve property owners of the expense of paying through property tax.

Fall River

Our assets became liabilities because they attract further development. The impact of growth has meant higher taxes, less open space, change of community "character" from rural to more suburban.

Stow

What we do not provide in the way of services and location appears to be what has drawn many here. We consider our "lacks" to be an asset to our quality of life and essential to the town's character. A change would attempt to make Plympton "all things for all people" and would, most likely, destroy it.

Plympton

Our community is primarily an upper-middle class residential area with attendant social problems. High degree of volunteer participation in local government and retention of small town characteristics based upon three centuries of historical evolution have been assets to the community, but there has been a lack of professional help available to local boards.

Medfield

Rockport is truly unique — distinct from the countless other communities that surround Boston. Our prime asset is our character. 750,000 people visit the Town each year, which is testimony to the uniqueness of Rockport. Our very success threatens our prime asset, however. The overwhelming trend toward shops which cater to tourists at the expense of Town residents, artist and artisans should be stopped or at least discouraged.

Rockport



Liability: "Honky-Tonk" image: Amusements area in conjunction with MDC beach and too many bars and lounges in relation to size of town and needs of local population.

Hull

The historical, archaeological, architectural, and cultural heritage of Great Barrington is among its most important environmental assets. Because the rapid social and economic development of contemporary society threatens to destroy the remaining vestiges of this heritage, it is strongly recommended that the town in the public interest, engage in a comprehensive program of historic preservation.

Great Barrington

Items which might have tended to discourage growth were identified as a shortage of local jobs, the limited capacity of the immediately local highway network, and the absence of cultural opportunities.

Spencer

Assets: Cohesive community, rural environment, visual amenities, rolling topography, high quality environment, clean water and air, and agricultural land patterns. Liabilities: Lack of broad tax base, rapid turnover of people, state interference, solid waste management.

Conway

The greatest asset available to any community is the degree of public involvement. The Committee and citizens involved in the development of this statement feel that the degree of public involvement has been and will continue to be the most effective determining force and control over Northborough's future growth.

Northborough

Our assets as a community can be listed as follows: good people, character of the town, clean environment, low taxes, good schools, friendly atmosphere.

Florida

One of the community's liabilities is: economic liabilities inherent in being a town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

South Hadley

Sherborn's desire to maintain its rural and environmental character make these assets and this is what makes Sherborn unique.

Sherborn

Hubbardston's assets and liabilities are thought of in relation to our desire to remain a small, rural New England town.

Hubbardston

Zoning

We must give consideration to people of all economic levels in our future zoning regulations. It is apparent that excessive zoning inflicts a hardship on the less affluent members of our community, yet development continues for those who can afford the price.

Hancock

There is a growing awareness of the need for Flood Plain Zoning, wetlands protection, application of the Scenic Mountains Act, conservation easements, cluster zoning, and planned unit development zoning, along with other benefits now possible under the new zoning act.

Richmond

Policy to influence commerce and employment development would largely be applied to zoning. Our zoning is fairly tight, yet we have seen there has been development. In that light, we would not loosen our zoning and might recommend a slight tightening.

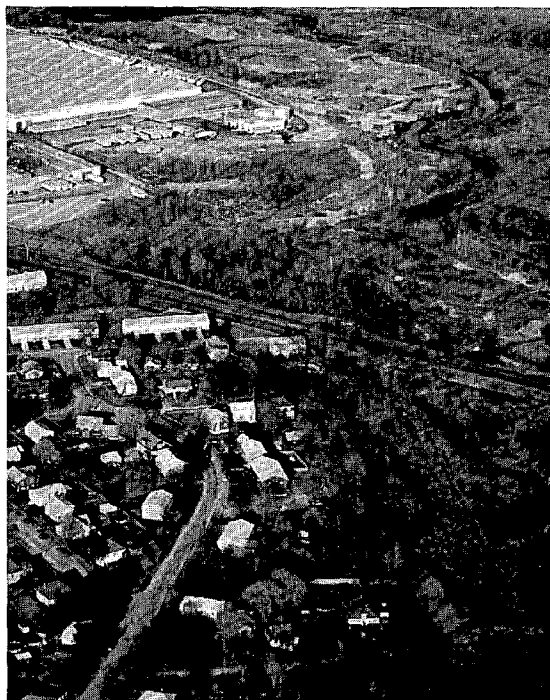
Wellesley

The idea of using zoning to solve local problems and to capitalize on opportunities was discussed with the opinion expressed that zoning was not feasible for this town.

Florida

The subdivision rules and regulations have exerted little control on the type of development in the town. They have, however, insured a uniformly high quality of subdivision development where it has occurred.

Acton



We are over-regulated at all levels of government, and probably not the least bad effect of all of this regulation, is the cost of enforcement. Traditional zoning has outlawed many uses, which because of technological innovation, are no longer undesirable. When a way is found to eliminate the noise or odor, what logic is there to the continued ban of the use? There is an alternative to regulating land use. The alternative is simple and it is just. Regulate the effect of the use rather than the use itself. This is sometimes called "performance" or "impact" zoning.

Westford

After being inundated with apartments, we prohibited (through zoning by-law changes) any further use of land for apartments in Boxborough. . . . Within Massachusetts our town is the only one (with 10,000 or less people) to have apartment units accounting for more than 50% of all residential units. While our town has refused to accept any more plans for apartments, between what has been constructed (750) and what could be constructed (another 1000) our town will always have a higher rate of apartment units to homes than other towns in Massachusetts. We expect to see some deterioration of current apartment buildings as they get older. We also feel the overbuilding of apartments in neighboring communities combined with decreasing job opportunities (closing of Fort Devens) will lower demand for current apartments.

Boxborough

The Committee has concluded that the areas of the town presently zoned for industry are far from attractive to such endeavors, for example, being located in flood plain areas, or impervious soil, unsuitable for development, thus creating unnecessary land use conflicts.

Chelmsford

The Town must maintain strong local controls to keep the growth rate at a manageable level. By following existing planning and zoning the Town should meet most of its needs without creating any regional problems. The only exceptions would be regional considerations for solid waste disposal and schools.

Sherborn

Through stringent zoning regulations, the Town could restrict residential and industrial development, everyone in town appears to want orderly development, and the implementation of a Master Plan and Zoning appears to be the solution.

East Brookfield

The consensus of the Committee is that growth of the planned-unit-development variety should be discouraged. That type of land use would be out of keeping with the aesthetic and historic character of Hingham. In addition, there is great skepticism about the fiscal implications. All zoning and conservation regulations should be enforced to further this objective.

Hingham

Yes, our community's zoning has been relatively successful in avoiding high density housing, and lessening sewerage problems.

Otis

Fifty Years ago, in 1926, the present zoning ordinances were enacted by the City of Everett. Since then, Everett has become a fully developed City with changes and problems. We are of the opinion that many of these zoning ordinances and building zoning restrictions are antiquated and some revision must be made.

Everett

Warren does not favor land use regulation. . . . A minimum zoning by-law was passed providing some protection for homeowners.

Warren

Issue: Above and beyond Avon's attempt to determine the nature of its future growth is the more practical problem of whether Avon can properly *influence the shape of its future growth* at all. *Comment:* Despite a phalanx of land use controls embodied in the zoning by-law, the subdivision regulations, wetlands administration, building code, etc., there are numerous factors that hinder local land use administration. Regional influences, such as employment and shopping facilities and major transportation investments, exert a tremendous influence on local land use. The large number of local regulatory agencies, sometimes working at cross purposes, in Avon also results in complex land use administration. Over-reliance on the zoning ordinance also does not enable Avon to influence the timing and staging of development. Controlling land use in Avon should be characterized by an attempt to guide development rather than merely to respond to it.

Avon

Experience tells us that local zoning boards are not as responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens as they should be. In Norwell, business pays approximately 8% of the total tax bill each year. This means the residents carry this town and should be given proper consideration at any public zoning matter hearing. Recently, over two hundred residents appeared at a Zoning Board of Appeals hearing to register their objection to a proposed business expansion. Permits allowing the expansion were granted. We don't think that the will of so many people should be disregarded in such fashion. We would like to see the Zoning Board of Appeals become an elected body. Members elected by precinct would be more receptive to the thoughts and intentions of neighborhood groups. When large numbers of people appear at a hearing to protest a particular site plan, variance request or other issue, more attention would be paid to the residents that have to live next to the action.

Norwell

The rate of growth in the future could quite possibly be at a slower pace particularly in the areas of residential growth because of better control in terms of local zoning and subdivision control. The overall control of the future of the Town of Mansfield could be a local responsibility that rests with the control of the Town Meeting. If at some time the Town Meeting form of government is changed, then the whole trend towards a balanced growth within the community could also be changed.

Mansfield

Home Rule

Pepperell may therefore have been given, through no action on its part, a second opportunity to formulate a much better local policy within which to attempt to attain its desired future. This, as opposed to the future that was being rapidly forced upon it by the essentially irresistible forces for development resulting from its many community assets inherent in its rural character. The time is short to formulate a strong growth policy, and decisive actions to control land use will require special efforts by the townspeople.

Pepperell

We do not want the neighborhood concept destroyed; we want housing programs that, if possible, will rehabilitate, restore, and strengthen neighborhoods and reinforce the feeling of "community." We are mindful, however, of the need for subsidized housing for the poor, working, lower-middle class, and even the middle class people who are priced out of the housing market.

Chelsea

Participation in Ashfield's civic affairs by those new to the community has increased, and town meetings are invariably well-attended and very active. There is a strong desire by all segments of the community to be a part of something small in size where each individual counts. Conversely, there is active and growing hostility toward State and National Government interference in local affairs, and this open resentment is reflected in what the people want for Ashfield in the future.

Ashfield

Regional and statewide solutions, regulations, and laws are not a substitute for local government responsiveness to a community's needs and desires, and . . . to have healthy and meaningful communities, they must have their full measure of autonomy and self-determination with a minimum of externally imposed interference.

Windsor

The question of Home Rule vs. state mandate is interesting to note that there is no unanimity. A compromise that appeared to have some merit would be a limited control from the state level subject to an override at the local level perhaps with that same two thirds majority (needed for zoning by-law amendments).

Sheffield

We used a restoration of the concept of Home Rule in state government, coupled with a respect for — and trust in — Town Meeting and localized, representative government to serve as a viable alternative to the ill-advised prospect of any centralized "regional" bureaucracy.

Dedham

Local communities must commit themselves to long-range planning including methods to achieve the long-range goals. The state might help through an offering of funds to defer costs of technical assistance (such as planning consultants) in a voluntary program for local community planning.

Holland

The Interstate highway system has had a mixed impact upon the city. Aiding accessibility on a statewide level, but causing dispersement of industrial, residential, and commercial growth at a regional level. State aided corridor improvements have been negligible as has mass transit development.

Haverhill

Four large shopping areas have been built in the last 15 years, including a large shopping mall, changing the character of the town's commercial establishments significantly. The commercial growth has been throughout the community but mostly in five areas.

Methuen

Newburyport has escaped the few benefits and massive costs of uncontrolled strip and shopping center development.

Newburyport

Downtown Southbridge has already felt the loss of business by neighboring shopping centers. Continued commercial development will add to this loss. Continued residential development in neighboring communities without an equal amount in Southbridge will take the Southbridge worker out-of-town to pay taxes and shop.

Southbridge

There has been minimal new industrial development in the city during the past 15 years. Commercial development has been in the form of sprawling shopping centers.

Pittsfield

The values of home rule have been whittled away as more and more public and private services and activities have shifted to regional centers or to larger market centers outside Hawley. This deficiency has become more severe as the population has shown signs of expanding in the 1970's. There is a demand for greater home rule and less interference from outside — while at the same time there is continued support for effective regional methods of dealing with larger problems.

Hawley

This is the first time 351 towns have been asked what they want! We might be committing fiscal suicide. We question use of monies returned to towns with stipulations by State as to how returns are to be used. It makes it difficult to give property taxpayers relief. We are a town, act as a town — live as a town — and we'll die as a town. We would like to ask the General Court, or be asked what we would like and appreciate. We, speaking as a town, prefer to govern ourselves, control our own growth, protect our assets, and, generally, provide for our own welfare. If we could assist other towns, then the question of how and why would be decided by us. The town is strangled by State regulations, policies, etc. which are mandated rather than suggested.

Halifax



Whatever the view held by the committee or by members thereof in reference to the questionnaire, as I read the document I see it as a form of self-evaluation — an attempt to have each community look sharply at itself, to identify what it is, and further to identify the causative factors involved. Therefore objective evaluation is essential. I feel that many items, the findings (or the statements) of the Committee have been less than objective, and that the evaluation has become a grinding stone for the committee's philosophical axe of home rule. A more objective appraisal, free of philosophic considerations, would seem to be in order.

Ashburnham

The needs and interest of the smaller communities should be given more serious attention.

Westfield

The state taxes us and takes money out of the community, establishes rules and regulations usually more appropriate to larger towns, and then dictates under what circumstances the town can get some of the money back. This policy often works to the detriment of New Salem.

New Salem

State interference may result in environmental damage and/or economic problems as by overruling local growth controls or imposing major mandatory programs while failing to provide adequate funding to carry them out. The locations of a major State facility nearby may affect adversely property values and cause deterioration. Otherwise no major changes are anticipated other than an act of God, such as an earthquake, major war or discovery of oil deposits in Needham Town Forest.

Needham

We do not want nor need the assistance of regional or state planning groups to tell us how to plan for the growth of our town. We can and will do all planning needed.

Monson

We favor less control by the state. We would like to see planning and decision making more at the local level realizing full well the state's responsibility to the Commonwealth as a whole must at times be considered. We would favor regional approaches if the local approaches are not adequate and, only as a last resort, would we favor state control.

Auburn

The Committee believes that recent trends have been toward increased regulation by outside bureaucrats which limits local government and self-determination. The result has been the creation of extensive, multi-layer government with duplication of effort and function. A policy to reverse this trend is a prerequisite to developing responsible local decision-making.

Westhampton

We feel that the state little by little is taking important decisions out of the hands of local governments. The theory of Home Rule is becoming more of a vague ideal than a goal to be achieved. With such a prospect looming in the near future it remains the duty of all towns to band together in an effort to stop this threatening trend.

Oxford

All of the above have a wide range of possibilities. What does occur will depend on the degree of local control the town is allowed by the state and federal governments to retain. The less control we have, the faster we can expect to see unwelcome, uncontrolled growth and the rapid erosion of the community's character.

Plympton

The citizens of Hatfield wish to maintain continued well-balanced controlled growth if left under local supervision. Existing state laws have a significant impact on the community, region and Commonwealth. Laws are all too restrictive and deprive us of local control. Return to "Home Rule."

Hatfield

The people of West Newbury would prefer to handle matters of growth and future development on their own initiative, through the democratic process of town meetings and ballots rather than be subjected to legislation promoted by persons located geographically distant, not fully understanding or appreciating the problems of a small community.

West Newbury

The alienated rights of self determination will influence future growth in this town and the state. If current trends in government continue, the only local control will be that required to raise taxes to support liberal programs sponsored at the state and federal level.

Groveland

The positive public attitude toward local growth is an optimistic indication. The committee implies, however, that more general public participation is necessary for the stimulation of local growth. In short, more direct involvement by the local public.

Adams

The major attitude to be conveyed is the desire of the community to retain its present rural residential character by controlled growth through continued and reinforced home rule. Wenham is of major benefit to the region in its maintenance as a green belt and a barrier to the creeping megalopolis. Regionalization is to be avoided since it is felt that more layers of government would be counterproductive. Joint effort, shared services or mutual aid are supported only at local initiative for specific activities and only if affected communities are willing to relinquish some degree of local control in favor of economy or efficiency for their mutual benefits.

Wenham

Correction or easing of these problems is essentially a local problem and can only be successfully achieved locally not by "big brother" in Boston or Washington. . . . No matter how well our community plans, how frugal we are, how carefully we prepare our town for growth in short and long-term ranges it does little or not good if various programs are mandated with restrictions and/or costs from the state or federal level.

Harwich

The quality of life is diminished when people are collected, directed, collated, and bussed to satisfy social planning goals. The unique form of government provided people by the town meeting should be encouraged and expanded within the state because it is the most direct representation of the growth policies desired by the people.

Brimfield

Chapter 4

The Economy and Taxes

In developing and articulating a growth policy for their communities, citizens and local officials first had to come to grips with how they defined "growth." Not surprisingly, it is apparent from the local statements that to many communities growth means, at least in part, economic growth. (In this sense, "growth" might mean better, rather than more.)

The excerpts included here give an indication of the level of concern over economic issues in the state. For many communities, the top priority consideration to be addressed is to create (or retain) well-paying jobs, and to stabilize the unemployment rate. Other local committees cited the need to provide tax incentives for businesses and to improve the overall economic climate of the state. Many communities also addressed the revenue side of the economic issue, and called for alternatives to the property tax as a means of alleviating the state's economic development problems. The excerpts indicate that to many in Massachusetts economic growth is the most critical "growth" issue of all.

Jobs

The Town is dependent upon the continued availability of continued high-paying professional jobs in the core of the Boston metropolitan region. Those jobs in turn are dependent upon both the national economy and the New England and Northeast share of that economy.

Brookline

By revitalizing the deteriorated and obsolete industrial/commercial areas, the City can become more self-sufficient in providing the opportunity for its residents to work within the community in which they live.

Newton

It is interesting to note that of the 24,341 jobs available in Framingham about 54% are held by Town residents, and that of the 28,013 residents who form part of the labor force, 48% work in Framingham. This means that roughly half of Framingham's labor force works in Framingham, and that half the jobs in Framingham are filled by Framingham residents.

Framingham

Revere as a city has too many of the lower hierarchical service industries, e.g., gas stations, strip joints; conversely they need a higher type of industry such as banks, hospitals or clinics, and offices.

Revere

With 1450 Hingham residents working within the town, our reputation as a "bedroom community" for Boston is being changed, as more and more people opt to have offices here and to find jobs locally rather than face the commute to Boston.

Hingham

Industry has added to the character of the town by building attractive buildings on planned sites with appropriate landscaping, and such development has caused no significant disruption of natural resources and systems. By broadening the tax base, providing job opportunities, and requiring relatively few municipal services, industrial growth to date has contributed to the Town's assets. One negative aspect of such development, though, as in other areas, has been increased traffic at certain times within the Town. Additional industrial development may add to this problem as well as stimulating additional residential and commercial development.

East Longmeadow

The town, however, cannot live on service businesses alone. Someone must produce hard goods or creative ideas, otherwise we will all end up just doing each other's dirty laundry and selling each other hamburgers.

Lenox

Increased housing growth without corresponding industrial growth has had an adverse impact on job opportunities.

Oxford

The availability of jobs is a major problem in Fitchburg. It can only be addressed adequately if jobs become available in many different types of industries and enterprises.

Fitchburg

Plainfield has never been a land of great job opportunities.

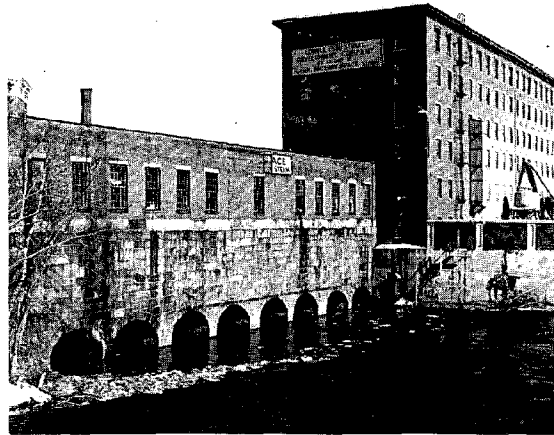
Plainfield

The successful establishment of industrial parks by the City has increased business opportunities and jobs, and has added to this industrialized center in that Attleborough provides an impressive share of jobs to the area communities. A recent survey by A.I.M. vividly points Attleborough's leadership out. A revitalization of the railroad service could shift area development more toward the Attleborough central line.

Attleborough

The major impact of the lack of recent commercial growth, development, and change has been the continuance of a lack of job opportunities within the Town. As farming has declined and the population increased through immigration, and as local commerce and industry has remained virtually unchanged (as if preferred by most Carlisle residents), the composition of the job force as a whole has become increasingly dependent upon commerce and industry elsewhere in the region for their employment. This lack of employment opportunities in Carlisle, while of no consequence to the majority of the labor force (most people move to Carlisle after they have secured a job), does pose a problem for both the young and elderly in Town who might seek or need part-time employment. Additionally, decisions not to increase the area zoned for business in a clearly defined area could result in the request for and granting of variances eventually causing undesirable "spot" zoning.

Carlisle



The overall impact (of past growth, development and change) in economic terms, has been negative — loss of major industries, loss of blue collar jobs, etc. This trend, however, has been countered by a determined effort on the part of the people to stay in North Adams and keep it a good place to live.

North Adams

There is a problem in terms of the lack of economic opportunities for all levels of employment, especially the young. It was noted that Palmer has produced many natives trained for all walks of life, but there has been an alarming exodus of these citizens.

Palmer

Reading's future development as well as that of our region as a whole have much the same trends. That is, the employment picture is not particularly bright.

Reading

More jobs for our citizens are possible by the encouragement of clean, light industry to fill presently vacant buildings through a newly formed industrial development commission and by having a municipal official responsible for inquiries made by prospective purchasers who are tenants of industrial space, in order to provide general guidance and information concerning the rules and regulations effective in the Town of Danvers, and to give general information concerning the various agencies with whom a prospective purchaser or tenant must meet in order to obtain the necessary permits for his particular use.

Danvers

There are very few job opportunities for young people in Shelburne so they are moving out and being replaced by young families with school age children who are attracted by a favorable tax structure compared to Greenfield and Amherst and by the pleasant, rural atmosphere of Shelburne. There is a general problem of a shortage of jobs and low wages for the jobs that are available. The impact of this situation is that the town's expenditures are increasing, but the town's income is not.

Shelburne

In a State where until recently, the unemployment rate consistently exceeded the national average, City, State and suburbs must work more closely toward achieving growth of and access to employment opportunities for all workers in the region.

Boston

Economic Development

Industrialization, rapid or heavy, would, in the long run, destroy the very essence of the community. The reason people choose to live in the town of Granby include: rural, quiet, attractive, open areas.

Granby

Lunenburg cannot look to industry to broaden its tax bases.

Lunenburg

Brockton has several features which make it (or if developed, could make it) attractive to new industry. Two hundred acres of industrially-zoned land are available for development, much of it land where factories once stood or still stand boarded up or used as warehousing. Vacant space in sound old shoe factories is getting rare. Most of what remains are eyesores which should be torn down. Since private developers don't want to take the initiative, it is up to the City to buy dilapidated factory buildings, demolish them, and sell the cleared land for new development; this is a program which would require state and federal economic and urban renewal assistance.

Brockton

An increase in the tax base without a vast increase in service costs is seen as attainable by industrial growth. Warren is now rural in character, yet provides many industrial positions; therefore, industry is not feared as it might be in some small towns.

Warren

Currently, the Leominster Industrial Development Commission is preparing to engage a nationally known and proven economic consultant firm for the express purpose of conducting a feasibility study and establishment of a proper priority basis for industrial development needs in this community. Development problems will be identified and implementation strategies outlined.

Leominster

The recent growth is a result of the highway system as well as the availability of rail and airport, and availability of municipal facilities. The residential growth is not occurring because of the industrial growth. The residential growth is occurring for the same reason as the industrial expansion. Even if the town did not have the industrial expansion it would still be experiencing the residential expansion. The residential growth has put a larger demand on expansion of municipal services than the industrial expansion. The industrial growth has provided the town with the tax base resources to supply the needed utility services to service the residential growth. The town has also made the long-range investment in its utility system, conservation, and recreation programs. Money for these expanded systems came from the expanded tax base provided by the industrial development.

Mansfield

Industry won't be attracted to town because there is no labor force in Wendell.

Wendell

Since 1960, efforts of the Industrial Park Commission have succeeded in establishing a 42-acre development bordering I-95. Although less than successful in attracting new business to the town, it has enabled businesses needing space to expand, or more modern facilities to remain in town. North Attleborough has been more successful in holding on to its old firms than the Commonwealth as a whole.

North Attleborough

We cannot depend entirely on agriculture and recreation for future growth. An attempt should be made to establish some type of light industry in town. This could be done without affecting our rural setting if tight controls were maintained.

Hancock

Industrial development is the key in order to increase the tax base and improve job opportunities.

Fitchburg

We anticipate gradual controlled industrial and commercial growth. We anticipate an increase in tourism in the town and throughout the area. Without increased commercial and industrial growth, the unemployment rate will increase. We would like to have a significant industrial development composed of a variety of small industries and of commercial business.

Amesbury

During the past 15 years, several new industries have been added within the city of Gardner, with a mix of light to heavy industry.

Gardner

The new industrial growth in Hudson has more than offset the loss of the older shoe, machine tool, and agricultural industries which used to be the major employers in the area. A re-training period for some residents was required to fill the new technical and clerical positions available. Minimal costs with substantial benefits were realized and less reliance on major employers resulted from a larger number of smaller firms. Most of the industrial growth has occurred within two small industrial parks.

Hudson

In 1963 and 1964, the Route 128 Industrial Park was constructed. It includes the Route 128 passenger station for Amtrak. There has been increased use of the Norwood airport and there has been expansion of the electronics industry in this area.

Westwood

What we need now is . . . more industry. . . . However, before opening the door to any industry which may desire to locate here, we must evaluate the gains we might have versus expenses which may also occur. The gains would be a help to our tax base and also more jobs hopefully for local residents. However, the losses we may incur would be a strain on our school system, Police and Fire Departments.

Dudley

One citizen at the hearing expressed the opinion that growth of the town should be planned, although it would seem that what he had in mind was that it should be controlled. In any event, it might be said that this person was expressing a concern of many citizens that Shrewsbury has grown too fast in recent years and that it would be desirable for future growth to proceed at a slower pace.

Shrewsbury

The growth and development of Fall River in the past 10 to 15 years has changed us into an industrial city rather than the mill town we were. The more mature industries and institutions that have developed have provided more and better job opportunities and improved the aesthetics and environmental character of the City.

Fall River

Our industrial growth has not created any significant local employment. Some of our natural and environmental resources have been damaged by our industrial growth. Our local and active conservationist groups are working diligently to protect that which remains and are also purchasing amounts of land to be conserved.

Saugus

We are a community based on larger, more expensive homes, while other towns get industry. We need some industry; in order to get it we must furnish water, sewerage, and some form of tax incentive.

Norfolk

The Commonwealth should be committed to enhancing and promoting the competitive position of Boston as compared to other major U.S. cities as a place to do business. Conflicting policies and competition for economic activity between the City and surrounding communities should be discouraged. Necessary economic support activity, such as seaport expansion, airports, oil refineries, power plants, etc., should be located where they can best serve the region and where the resulting negative effect of these activities be shared more equitably. All of these issues require a commitment of both planning and financial support by the Commonwealth and surrounding cities and towns.

Boston

The attraction of additional industries could depend on local concessions, state incentives, the availability of energy sources at appropriate prices, waste disposal services; in general, industrial attraction would be most easily facilitated by state and local cooperation.

Chicopee

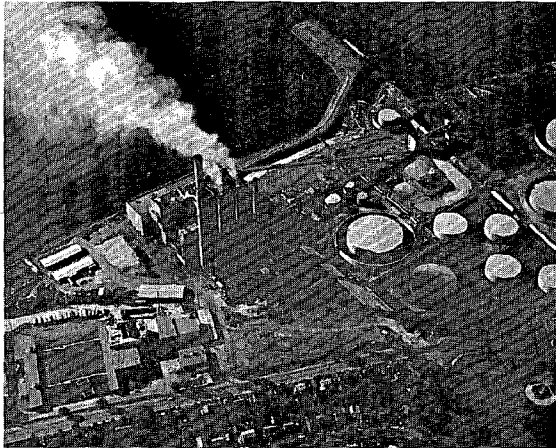
Industry brings increased traffic problems, more jobs for metropolitan areas. Detrimental effect on neighborhoods. Degradation of natural areas. Feel cost of services to industry outweigh benefits.

Braintree

One of the major things that will decide future growth is the state's role in industrial development.

Russell

The Economic Climate



The Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act (MEPA), requiring environmental impact statements from utilities, eventually adds to the costs of utility users. Public hearings are not well attended, generally, but at least some attention is being paid to what the utility companies are doing to the land. The general attitude of the state EPA is one of criticism; alternative solutions are not provided. Environmental requirements can make the cost of doing business in the state prohibitive; this is discouraging growth of industry or new industry.

Hopkinton

Of additional importance, however, are state and regional decisions which will impact Boylston's course in the next 20 years. The future development of interstate highways, e.g., I-190, will make the entire Central Massachusetts region a logistic center for the distribution of products in New England. This, in turn, would attract transportation and warehousing industries to the area.

Boylston

The opinion expressed herein paints a rather uncertain picture, but it is based for the most part upon events in the "external" world — upon forces over which we as Westford citizens have little or no control. While it is possible that the unfavorable business climate in Massachusetts may become occasionally mitigated by legislative action or executive fiat, we believe it is unlikely that Massachusetts will be able to significantly improve its poor standing relative to that of neighboring New Hampshire. We therefore expect no industrial growth in Westford.

Westford

The state must do something about the current tax structure to attract new industries and to encourage existing industries to expand within the Commonwealth.

Southbridge

The State should develop better business climate for jobs and tax base, develop population and resource conservation policies, and help towns implement existing laws.

North Brookfield

State laws have a definite impact on our town. Business and industry cannot get tax incentives, so we are losing out in business areas.

Oxford

One need not be a Rhodes scholar nor a mental giant to see that Massachusetts *definitely* has its growth problems; all you really have to do is read the newspapers and see that businesses are fleeing the Commonwealth daily.

Lowell

However, the Committee also notes their concern with the current State economic conditions and the present "no-growth" policy by the State Administration and the long-range impact that these two critical areas will have on Mansfield being able to expand its economic base and develop in accordance with a planned program. State interventions in many areas have severely hampered the growth of the State economy and have had a definite impact on the local economy, particularly on the industrial expansion. Mansfield will continue to grow in a residential nature; however, it needs the industrial and commercial expansion to balance development and help to finance the amenities which all growing communities demand. The Committee recommends that the State adopt a positive policy towards an economic expansion which will be beneficial to all communities.

Mansfield

There has been an abundance of talk and scarcity of action devoted to economic problems faced by our City and Region. There is little faith in the State's ability to aid our Region and considerable suspicion that State Policy favors the specific needs of Boston and communities within Route 128.

New Bedford

The L.G.P.C. opinion is that there must be an expansion of Provincetown's economic base, that such expansion should be in the direction of year-round employment rather than the highly seasonal situation that currently exists.

Provincetown

"Taxachusetts" image creates a negative economic environment.

Dennis

We must be aware that many of our economic problems are beyond our immediate control. State and federal programs and policies are partly to blame for the current economic situation. Most often mentioned in this regard are high taxes and great difficulty in obtaining permits forcing business to leave the state. We should demand that the state and federal government coordinate their programs to allow and encourage economic development.

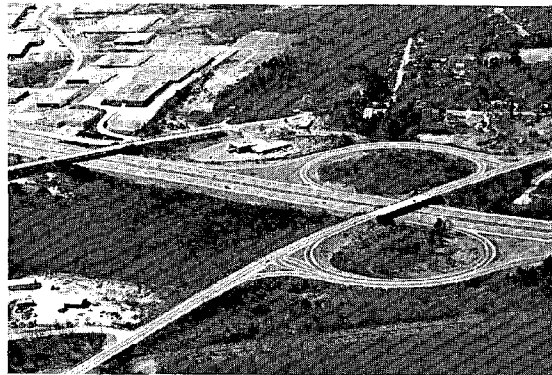
Plymouth

By a skillful balancing of conflicting land uses, we will work toward finding ways to resolve the problems of providing a greater tax base, retaining and improving environmental quality and providing adequate services. We need to find ways to strengthen the process, and to broaden its base so that decisions made will really reflect community desires, and so that intelligent reviews of proposed projects can be conducted without creating expensive and time-consuming delays for their proponents.

Lenox

Beyond this, the State should primarily be concerned with providing a good economic climate to prevent further deterioration of business and jobs. Growth should be directed at the redevelopment of older urban areas where services and an employment base are available.

Sherborn



Unfortunately, the political climate in the state of Massachusetts, which places a heavy burden on the private sector to support an extensive array of public services, combined with the natural economic disadvantages of the region, has created a very difficult environment for private industry in Massachusetts. The increasing tax burden and declining economic base are mutually destructive and lead to continued urban and regional decay while people move to growing, more responsible sections of the country for employment. They leave behind fewer privately employed citizens to pay the bill for higher government spending creating today's unbearable tax burdens. In all, the regional development pattern will be directly affected by the State's determination of fiscal and political, as well as moral, responsibilities to itself and the working people it serves.

Acton

Economic changes in this region will not materially affect taxes; but changes in the economics of the Boston Metropolitan area will.

Foxborough

Economic distress is a foreseeable problem which could seriously blight the residential property values and lower the existing tax base within the town. Such distress could result from closing G.E. or the Route 128 complex if the State loses defense contracts and there is an overall abatement in national defense spending. Such economic distress would clearly affect many of the primarily residential communities in the greater Boston Metropolitan Area, and would demand both a statewide and regional problem-solving endeavor, closely coordinated and integrated with local initiatives.

Marblehead

Mainly, future growth in a free economy is the result of confidence in the future of the region. Unfortunately, New England is suffering from an identity crisis, and business feels that the state is "anti-business" in its actions and laws. We have a strong conservation and environmental action group in the Commonwealth. On the positive side for future business investment is a large market area with a high standard of living, educational, research, and hospital facilities second to none, and a large financial community in the form of banks and insurance companies, plus a large skilled labor force.

Burlington

A community which collectively decides through its policies and actions to maintain the status quo will eventually feel the impact of negative growth. Some signs of this possible decision already appear within our community.

Taunton

Taxes

Reevaluation will inevitably produce the sale and development of some of the large parcels of 10 acres or more owned by individuals. (Most of these 60 parcels are completely undeveloped or occupied by 1 or 2 houses.) The development of same will bring pressure on all Town services especially the school system. There will be added pressure to sell on the owners of homes bought many years ago whose taxes will rise abruptly with the change in assessment. Many of these people are elderly. Their children have finished school and in many cases have moved out of the house. New owners will increase the number of children in the school system.

Milton

The state and federal governments have helped Carlisle finance its schools, conservation land acquisitions, road improvements, and some fire, police, and public works equipment. However, although the impact of this assistance is beneficial, it should be noted that this aid is simply town money (raised through state or federal taxes) being returned to the town, and is not a windfall that residents are somehow not paying for. Since state and federal taxes are inevitable for such programs, Carlisle's continued participation in the programs is desired so that the town gets a "fair share" of its own money back.

Carlisle

The committee feels that the changes so far have been absorbed without severe impact, but that we are close to a critical point in effects on fiscal resources — from the standpoint of education and other services (roads) needed because of growth. In addition, a character which depends on open space and visual quality is highly vulnerable. Pressure on the tax base, which is severe, has been caused, up to now, not by growth but by other social programs.

Whately

We recommend a return to the town of a fixed statutory percentage of graduated income tax, based on taxpayer's residence. We also recommend state collection of property taxes on industries, with redistribution to towns in proportion to the impact/burdens involved, for schools, services, etc.

Harvard

If the tax system were changed and perhaps substituted with a graduated income tax, Rowley would be able to attract more industry.

Rowley

The property tax system has inequities and restricts communities with a limited tax base. Because of this, it may be beneficial from time to time, over a specific project, for costs and benefits to be shared, perhaps through greater state financial support.... A revision of state and local tax structures is long overdue. The property tax does not adequately support local services where tax base is limited to residential units, especially in a community experiencing expanded residential development.

Westhampton

Property ownership is not a proper measure of capacity to pay in today's world. Pelham cannot change the system, but it feels strongly that changes should be made.... The level and allocation of the real estate tax burden have an important bearing on the extent and shape of future growth in any community.

Pelham

Yes, reliance on the property tax has influenced growth and development here. Such a proposed change (away from reliance on the property tax) in the tax system may provide a better chance for young people to get started in the community and would also lessen the chances for further losses of agricultural lands. This shift away from such a reliance could definitely significantly alter growth patterns.

East Longmeadow

The threat of an increase in property valuation as a result of a contemplated property improvement is often cited as a cause for not making the improvement at all. The imposition of higher property taxes is one of the main causes for the substantial flight from New Bedford to some less expensive suburbs. Property taxation can thus be cited as an indirect cause of sprawl and wasteful expenditures for sewers, water, drainage, roads, and sidewalks. Reliance on a tax which does not respond favorably to increases in wealth places cities and towns in a fiscal bind — rising costs cannot be met by a sluggish tax; expensive items such as quality educational facilities cannot be financed without exceptional increases in the tax rate. Furthermore, the property tax is the most unfair tax in terms of the ability to pay. A more responsive, more equitable tax would provide cities and towns with greater revenues for such costly items as education, fire, police, capital investments, etc. By allowing cities to improve their services, it would be a valuable means of increasing the City's attractiveness as a place to live and work.

New Bedford

A significant amount of revenue needs to be generated from some source other than land use. Possible taxes on second and third cars, pleasure horses, motor boats, skimobiles, soft drinks, etc., could help ease the property tax burden.

Leverett

The criteria for the distribution of state aid among the various municipalities ought to be looked at; they probably need to be put on a more rational basis so as to put the most money where there is the most need. Some of us have heard horror stories of wealthy suburbs receiving school construction funds on exactly the same basis as the worst slums in the state, and we can hardly believe it. If, however, the Dukakis Administration carries out its promises to see that funds for such purposes as the purchase of open space are increasingly channeled to urban areas, the state should bear in mind that while we're not exactly hurting as Boston is, Maynard still has many urban characteristics and in many respects has a greater need for assistance than truly suburban towns do.

Maynard

The state and federal governments must meet the needs of communities such as Dracut and provide funds for the impact of growth, or the real estate tax will not be able to afford to cover services to attract business and industry.

Dracut

State fiscal policy and tax reform: Tax reform is essential for future growth of the state. This should take the form of some kind of equitable, graduated income tax free of loopholes, with provision for the return of some portion of this revenue to the municipalities either through a state revenue sharing system or some other modality.

West Springfield

Boston's problem lies in the fact that the Federal and State governments have reserved for their own use the income and sales taxes which reflect and respond to the growth in the City economy, leaving the City with only the property tax, which does not similarly respond. . . . In FY '76, the City of Boston generated 22% of total state revenues, yet received in state aid only 5.4% of total state revenue. In FY '77 this share dropped to 4.2%. If the City were to keep all the money it generates for the State in tax revenues, it would barely have to collect property taxes at all. . . . The State government's insensitivity to fiscal imbalance negatively affecting cities and towns, especially Boston, has aggravated tax burdens on City property owners and residents.

Boston

There is no inclination to approve issues which would raise taxes by the Town Meeting; thus the influx of wealthy people, costly buildings, largely increased public facilities, and municipal services is not foreseen.

Spencer

Growth in non-productive citizenry, such as older people paying lower taxes, welfare recipients, has negatively effected tax base:

Southbridge

Throughout our discussions, the burden of the property tax recurred as an immediate problem. The Committee agreed that the property tax is most undesirable in its present form — that is, its tendency to weigh more heavily on less affluent persons. The Committee further reflected the diversity of our community on the question of whether the total level of State services is too high. We do, however, continue to fear changes in the tax system which we see as providing an opportunity to increase overall State spending.

Newton

Dependence on the property tax is the key factor in local land use and economic development decisions. If the present system were changed, the private sector would make economic decisions to benefit Worcester and would help the City to be competitive with the suburbs which have lower tax rates. The State should be more aggressive in achieving an equitable enforcement of assessments through the Commonwealth.

Worcester

The costs associated with increased population have exceeded the tax revenues obtained as a result of growth.

Leominster

People want more industry to broaden the tax base. Jobs are not a major consideration in the desire for more industry. The concern is taxes! Taxes!

Stoughton

We have been subjected to increasing tax rates as have most other communities across the Commonwealth. The largest portion of the budget has been schools, with the greatest impact being the salaries of teachers and administrators.

Wilmington

The local property tax greatly affects growth and development. Under the present system, capital-intense industries are burdened more; this has contributed to blight in many older sections of the city.

Fitchburg

The greater pressures on municipal services have caused the property tax rate to climb at a rate that has reached the point of intolerance to some of our residents, particularly those senior citizens who own large tracts of land. In order to pay their taxes, they are selling this land, often times to developers, thus continuing the cycle of new housing and further demands on municipal developers.

Lakeville

Industrial and business growth has not helped the tax rate.

Randolph



Taxes: With the national, state and local economies suffering, the idea of increased taxes is unacceptable to all residents. This, above all issues, seems to receive the most attention. The present feeling is that growth does two things: 1) new growth increases the town's need to raise money; 2) new growth does not pay the full load of its needs. Whether it is because of poor planning by the Town, or lack of "exclusive" control of growth and its location, a municipality usually spends more tax money to provide the new growth demands than what this new growth gives back to the town in revenue. Should the town pay or should the new growth pay?

Easton

Chapter 5

Some Particular Concerns

It is important to note that the Office of State Planning has not attempted to structure the excerpts along any preconceived notions of what the major topics would be. Rather, our strategy has been to let things fall where they may and to select the excerpts based on the concerns most often raised by communities.

The broad issue of housing is a topic of concern included in this chapter. Residential development patterns, housing supply and demand, increasing housing costs and the housing market are specific topics. Included here as well is what the cities and towns have said about the issue of providing adequate housing for our citizens who need it — both elderly and low-income families.

Transportation is another overriding concern of many communities. Many growth policy statements noted that transportation investments and improvements have had mixed impacts on growth and development opportunities within their communities. Others noted the need for improved mass transit, railroad development, and airport development as priorities for transportation policy.

Another general local concern is the impact of commercial development, particularly the growth of shopping centers and "strip" developments. Finally, the need for the preservation of agricultural land in the state was identified as a concern by Local Growth Policy Committees, from not only rural towns but also from more densely-populated communities.

Housing

We envision a time phased policy to develop more low and moderate income housing in Needham. Five to ten years is not too long a period for the town to move with determination toward such goals as we propose. Consistent with keeping as much decision making as possible at the local level, the town should act voluntarily to attract low and moderate income housing. Through its municipal agencies, particularly its Housing Authority, the town should give wholehearted support to the building of low and moderate income units by others and should encourage aggressive use of all available state and federal programs that provide resources to accomplish these purposes. The town should encourage its realtor associations to seek affirmatively to attract minority renters and purchasers in the town.

Needham

This committee recommends the policy of providing low income family housing by using the scattered site concept rather than constructing new housing complexes solely for low income families. This policy will motivate landlords to improve properties presently available to low income occupants by insuring them of an adequate income from their investment, and decrease the number of substandard and deteriorating houses within the town.

Chelmsford

The industrial growth of the past was positive but the housing growth was too quick; it was not well-controlled. With the rapid growth in population there has been an increased demand for services and utilities. Open space acquisition has helped the present green space, but not quickly enough and with not enough significant funds to do a good job. Our community has provided more low and moderate housing and housing for the elderly than any other community in Massachusetts. It has been an outstanding community in this respect.

Peabody

Much of the apartment building in the 1970's might have been controlled but for the laxity of some town officials and the excessive zeal and ill-considered site selections and spending habits of the State and Federal Governments.

Milford

Housing is currently needed at all income levels. There are many older homes and buildings which would lend themselves to rehabilitation as multi-family dwellings. Local builders believe the building code should be rewritten with requirements determined by town size and population density.

Warren

Housing programs for low or moderate income people should be affiliated with monies to meet the additional school and facility needs that such additional persons create without the benefit of any real compensating tax revenue. The State should look more seriously at the scattered site housing concept. We fear the incompatible project type development might be forced on us by State planners looking for short term solutions.

Norton

As noted above, the most striking characteristic of recent residential development has been the increase of multi-family dwellings. One impact of this development is that since Quincy has been for many years a well developed City, new development and especially multi-family projects often must site on marginal lands or use lands from the small number of vacant parcels which remain.

Quincy

The town should allow for a variety of housing types. Apartments such as townhouses should be allowed in Methuen at a very low density and only by special permit where land use patterns dictate.

Methuen

Available opportunities: There was much debate about the meaning of the concern relating to housing. Too much or too little of a given housing type can be a "concern" depending on whether a need is felt.

Whately



There is a growing, aging population — problems of inflation and its effects for fixed and retirement incomes are cause for concern. The lack of adequate numbers of dwelling units suitable for older small families is a major problem, with no solutions in sight. High taxes and mortgage interest rates tend to make home ownership beyond the reach of younger families. This, with the trend of fewer children, point toward a further decrease in school population. The decrease in family size probably will offset any growth due to a possible increase in apartment units.

Belmont

Whenever the bottom of the economic cycle was reached, the state has overreacted by increasing subsidized housing. Both compounding existing economic problems.

Lowell

The number of low and moderate income families in Sudbury may not be as low as "statistics" would indicate. For example, the many couples living with in-laws, both young and old, in Town are not counted as part of the "quota" required by Chapter 774 simply because they are not accepting assistance from the Commonwealth. In other words, their individual efforts at self-determination "are not valid." We reject this kind of thinking. Federal and/or State housing programs should be designed to stimulate individual initiative, not collective dependence. At any rate, we are confident that Sudbury's growth will accommodate more diverse economic groups. This will be abetted by the trend toward alternative lifestyles (in the constructive sense of the term.)

Sudbury

We recognize the need and have largely provided for low and moderate income housing. Weymouth has made a substantial effort in this area; we expect the surrounding communities to do likewise. We do not support more "project" type construction either for low income or elderly. The building of ghettos for any group will not offer opportunities for utilizing to the fullest the potential of the individual or provide for the inter-relationships necessary to insure the goal of a peaceful society and a harmonious community. The committee feels that the abilities and contributions of our youth and elderly are not being used to their fullest.

Weymouth

At present 81.4% of the housing units are owner-occupied, a slight drop from 84.4% in 1963. We feel that the population should be predominantly owners rather than renters, of mixed ages and with some mix of incomes, including those who work within Wellesley. The young and the elderly are having trouble affording to live here — a function of finances rather than of age. Low-income families would need subsidy with the cost of homes, and more help with transportation, jobs, and social services. We now have 176 subsidized units of housing, with 56 more in the near future. In addition, we subsidized 125 units in the MacArthur Road area by making gifts of land just after World War II. From time to time there are proposals to build subsidized units. If there is such pressure, we would like to be able to give rent or other subsidies for existing homes in scattered sites.

Wellesley

A 240 unit low and moderate income housing project is proposed for North Andover under Chapter 774. We are generally in favor of subsidized low and moderate income housing because it will provide much needed housing for our residents. We fear that this housing development will attract people from some of the more affluent surrounding towns.

North Andover

There is a question as to how to accept a fair share of diversified housing (expected growth of South Shore) in all areas (housing types, income, etc.).

Norwell



Property taxes, real estate values, and home maintenance costs have increased substantially. As a result, housing in certain areas within the City has deteriorated. Families of low and moderate income are less able to purchase homes and rent apartments within the City because of the inflated values caused by demand and general economic conditions. According to the annual census questionnaire, Newton residents perceive the disappearance of privately owned open space as a serious problem.

Newton

There is a strong fear that the State or Federal government low-cost housing will be imposed on the town, with its resulting tax base ramifications.

Lancaster

It should be pointed out that Waltham is a very complete city, providing residential, wholesale, retail, research and production activities. Its job opportunities cover a wide range of skills and incomes, and its housing supply does the same. It has accepted its responsibility to provide subsidized housing for its less fortunate, with about 5% of units falling into that category. Its housing supply can serve a variety of housing demands: large and small singles; new and old; two family and three family units capable of owner occupancy; small four to ten family apartment buildings; along with housing complexes of over 500 families.

Waltham

One suburban town acting alone cannot by itself bring about the future we advocate. One town, however, can take the lead in urging the state through the Growth Policy process of which this hearing is a part, to adopt fair and equitable housing and land use guidelines which will lead to increased opportunities in all the suburbs throughout the region. When this occurs, the pressures on any one will be minimal. Within these guidelines, each municipality will be able to maintain and develop its own unique character.

Needham

Housing problems within the City frequently have their origins in housing conditions and markets in surrounding communities. The mix of housing opportunities for various income groups is an issue both among neighborhoods within the City and among communities within the metropolitan area. It is this larger inter-jurisdictional question of mixing and balance that requires longer range perspective and broad consensus among higher levels of government because access to many public and private opportunities in our society is linked to the location of one's housing . . . While Boston contains less than 25% of the total population of the SMSA, we house over 40% of the area's poor and near-poor (i.e., households with annual incomes less than \$5,000) and over 75% of the area's non-white residents. Opening up housing choices further requires elimination of policies which artificially restrict those choices for many groups and individuals, such as overly restrictive zoning codes. Unreasonably high zoning standards push the price of housing far beyond the reach of moderate and even middle income families in some areas. . . . In sum, we feel that racial and economic integration in the region cannot be accomplished until moderately priced or subsidized housing is located so as to give low and moderate income households a greater choice from which to choose. The objective is not to force families to live where they don't want to, but rather to facilitate mobility and freedom of choice, which means eliminating obstacles imposed by local government policies to opening up communities with a wide range of densities, housing types and prices.

Boston

The net deterioration of housing stock will reinforce undesirable out-migration trends. Rents will continue to rise due to increased demand by young singles and young childless couples. The uncertainty about the quality and cost of the school system will continue to discourage the in-migration and maintenance of middle income and/or owner occupant families. The continued failure of suburbs to respond to the needs of low and moderate income populations and their resistance to open housing and metropolitan educational programs will maintain the pressure on already overburdened Cambridge taxpayers struggling to preserve a reasonable level and variety of social and educational services.

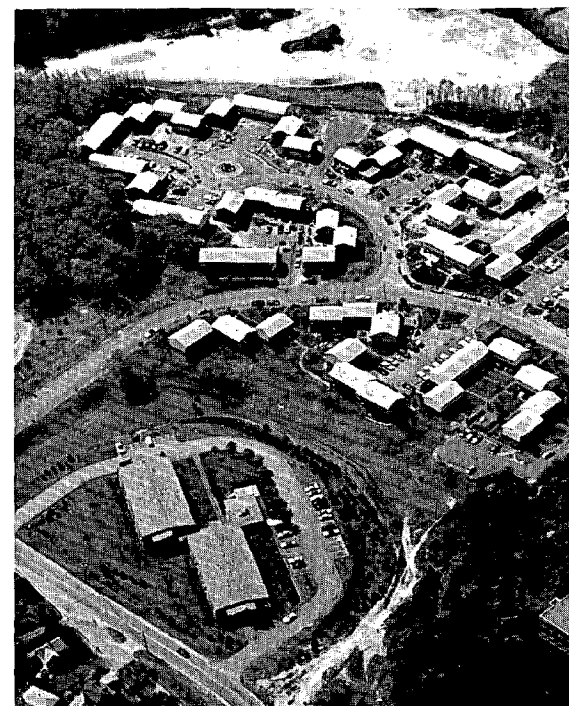
Cambridge

It is one thing to provide for the disregard for Town regulatory by-laws in order to encourage housing for the needy, and yet there ought to be some assurance that such housing will not refute all common sense regulations nor create expensive maintenance problems when such construction occurs on marginal, environmentally fragile or otherwise unsuitable locations.

Concord

In the early 1960s many new homes being built were retirement homes and the population was skewed in that direction. In the last three to five years homes have been bought and built by young families . . . who live here year round, even when the wage earner works 150 miles away.

Alford



One aspect of multi-family development which will probably be looked at in the near future is that of low-cost housing for the elderly. There is certainly a need for such housing as the ever-present tax situation more and more forces elderly persons on fixed incomes to give up their life-long residences and move into more affordable housing. At present, such housing is not available within the town and it certainly would be more appropriate to construct such housing for our elderly population.

Boylston

Commercial Development

To compound the situation, shopping centers appeared after the construction of Westgate Mall in different areas of the city and continued to spread out into strip development because of few zoning controls. These poorly planned commercial areas, which lack landscaping or any softening affects, brought blight to once residential neighborhoods and open space. An over-abundance of gas stations and fast food chains were built. Because of over-building and hard economic times, several now stand vacant. A handful are already being torn down.

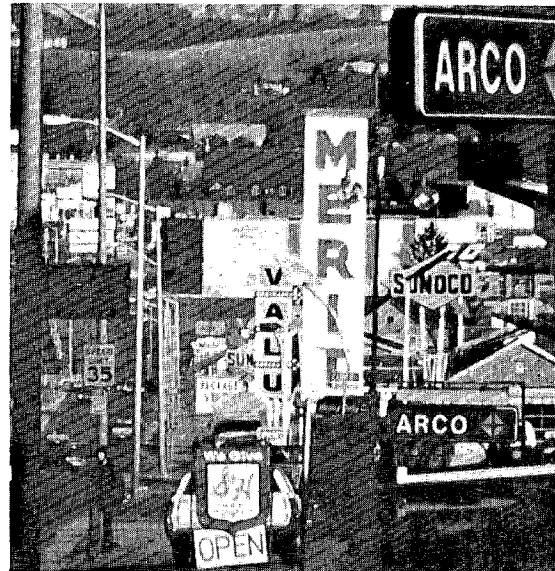
Brockton

The impact of commercial development has not, in many respects, enhanced the character of the town. The effect of strip zoning of business along the town's major travel corridors has produced an unattractive visual quality to these streets and resulted in increased traffic congestion and safety hazards from numerous curb cuts. The job opportunities created have been limited in number and skill required. Commercial development has not significantly affected the natural resources of the town and it has proven to be a fiscal asset to the town, requiring few municipal services.

East Longmeadow

There has been no basic impact of commercial growth or change on the environment, natural resources, or the character of the town. Existing businesses have continued the New England character of our town in the areas most frequented by strangers.

Dalton



Encourage light industry to locate in Sandwich and to allow additional commercial development to serve the permanent community and visitors. The existing reliance on tourism as the economic base of the town should not be discouraged but community actions should be to enlarge this with other job and income activities. However, tourism should not be neglected, and its growth should be encouraged.

Sandwich

The impact of commercial growth on available opportunities has been stable; on natural and environmental resources, it has been detrimental; the character and identity of the community changed from rural to semi-urban; costs and benefits have been insignificant.

Greenfield

Large-scale shopping centers and other commercial growth has been major in scope occurring on Routes 128, 1, 114. Industrial growth has occurred but of less importance in numbers and acreages. Commercial and industrial development has tended to urbanize Danvers adversely affecting some residential areas and increasing traffic problems such as accidents, noise, air pollution, and crime. Downtown: The shift of businesses to shopping centers has somewhat depressed the downtown area, resulting in less permanent establishments. However, banks and professional uses have created a stabilizing effect.

Danvers

With the construction and promotion of large shopping centers in outside areas, our local merchants have felt the impact of such shopping areas. The town has not shown a clear intent to provide a location for a larger shopping area due to such concerns as traffic and retaining town appearance. One further example is the recent vote to increase local parking locations.

Needham

The town has one large employer who was swallowed by a larger corporation which has resulted in a much smaller work force. (1000-3000). (This eventually will have a very large impact on the tax structure.) Most properties, municipal and personal have improved, industrial properties have deteriorated. (It is hoped that an active development commission could effectively bring growth into commercial, industrial and residential areas.)

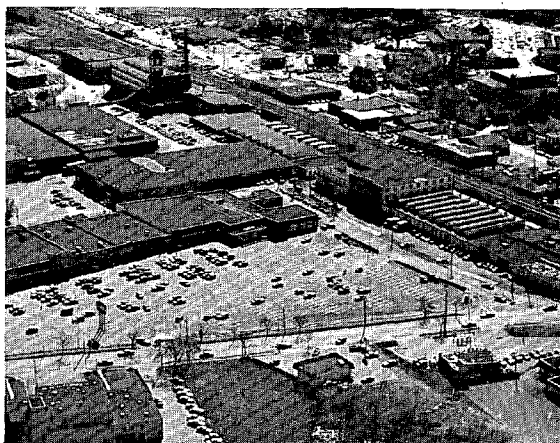
Hopedale

The shopping area is important to the town and to its image and feeling. Our policy is to preserve it. We want to keep the shopping areas attractive and usable and would recommend more shade trees, more landscaping (especially around parking lots) and more accommodation to people who want to sit or to park their bicycles. We would discourage development of peripheral shopping areas which would detract from the central business district. And, we would discourage any further mall-type shopping plazas and urge improvement of the visual aspects of the existing ones.

Wellesley

Commercial growth in the town has had a mixed influence, but clearly more positive than negative. In addition to providing merchandise and services within the town, the new businesses have created jobs, and the increased costs to the town from their operation have at least been offset by fiscal benefits to the town. On the negative side, there has been damage caused to natural resources, and the construction of large shopping "plazas" has been a significant factor in altering Milford's "small town" character and giving the town an appearance indistinguishable from hundreds of thousands of similar communities throughout the country.

Milford



There was no real "downtown shopping center." Growth was accelerated by expressway interchange. This brought a shopping mall — primarily an auto oriented shopping area. The mall perhaps helped contain the commercial growth in one area instead of extensive strip spread.

Hanover

Shopping centers are abundant. In general, residents regard the availability of shopping centers as a plus, though not all of the centers have been well located or successful.

Acton

Downtown: Commercial growth has occurred mainly in shopping centers on the city's periphery. This growth has led to a significant decline in the central business district.

Holyoke

There is definite lack of commercial identity within the area and the business community is not cooperating together for the future of the downtown area. Shopping centers in other communities have helped to detract from the Mansfield commercial center. . . . It was felt that as the downtown presently exists it is a liability in that it does not meet the present needs of the community. However, it was noted that there is both assets and liabilities, particularly in its potential to be improved, provided that the community is willing to cooperate with this expansion.

Mansfield

Regional shopping centers in contiguous towns have directly and negatively affected the City Central Business District. State and Federal roads enable some firms to easily reach larger tracts of available construction — ready suburban lots large enough for expansion.

Worcester

Being in transition from a farming community to a suburban, purely residential community, we still cling to a rural and spacious development pattern. Residents prefer to avoid any commercial development even at the necessity of going elsewhere for all goods and services.

Richmond

Transportation



The excellent transportation network within the Town of Framingham has already been alluded to. On a regional level this network is a mixed blessing. On the one hand, it has undoubtedly contributed to making Framingham the hub of the South Middlesex area and a town of major importance. On the other hand, heavy volumes of commuter traffic, headed for Interchange 13 and then onto Route 128 and Boston, use the town as a conduit and contribute greatly to the already severe congestion caused by local traffic.

Framingham

Since this park-and-ride facility (i.e., proposed on Rt. 2 and 495) would be a regional facility, it would be very inequitable to require the town in which it would be located to assume fifty percent of any operating deficit, as it would have to do under present legislation. It is both appropriate and necessary that the State assume one hundred percent of any deficit incurred by a service that would be utilized by residents from a dozen or more towns and cities.

Groton

The prospective terminus of the MBTA line at Route 128 is an issue with positive and negative aspects. The benefits of having ready access to the Metropolitan Area are enormous. At the same time, it is necessary to examine the potential negative aspects. With completion of the terminus, the pressure on the town for building sites for residential and industrial development will increase tremendously. If the town is to avoid making the same kinds of mistakes that occurred in the 1950's boom (i.e., the Great Road strip development, etc.), careful planning must be done in advance in order to minimize the negative potential of the impact.

Bedford

Route 128 has had a substantial impact on the town in that it has become a tourist attraction and it has as a result been leaning in the direction of a bedroom community of Metropolitan Boston, both of which could be argued as being either good or bad. The state widening of a number of their roads through the town, we feel, has been extremely detrimental. From a scenic point of view, many trees have been lost and the town is no longer the community that it was 25 or 30 years ago. All that seems to have been accomplished is that motorists are able to travel along our town at higher speeds. We have paid a very high price.

Essex

The interstate has also provided better access to bigger and more diversified shopping areas. As a result, town residents are shopping less frequently in downtown commercial center.

Conway

The single most influential force in Dartmouth's recent growth, development, and change was the construction of Interstate Route 195. Improvement of Route 140 to Interstate Standards has also been a major influence. . . . Other State highway investments were later required as a result of this highway-stimulated growth.

Dartmouth

The development of Route 128 in particular has drawn new business and industry into the region. Many of Carlisle's new residents are employees who have been hired by these firms and who find Carlisle an easy commute. The development of eastern Massachusetts' entire multi-lane, limited access road system has reduced the automobile travel time between locations in the region. This has permitted people to live further from their jobs while maintaining or even reducing their commute time. Many people who are seeking a different life-style than that available in the inner suburbs have found it possible to live in a town like Carlisle due to the improvement in travel time. Those highways which have most significantly affected Carlisle in this manner are: I-93 and Routes 2, 3, and 128.

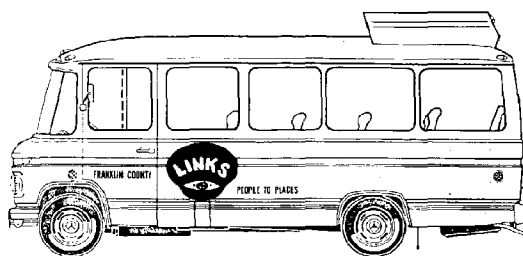
Carlisle

However, lack of a similar highway system (Rt. 2) in a North-South orientation is expected to continue to inhibit economic growth and development by restrictions on the flow of traffic (industrial) to primary markets in the South.

Gardner

Improved transportation facilities — mass passenger, as well as freight — are needed. The Penn Central Railroad line running through Warren has at least not been scheduled for abandonment, but continuing action at state and federal levels is needed if it is to benefit Warren or any of the small towns along its path. This would be preferable to large scale highway development.

Warren



Upgrading of the Framingham Railroad Line and better bus service can be promoted by our MBTA Advisory Board representative. Wellesley is being urged to provide commuter bus service within the Town, to Riverside transit line and bus, and to our railroad stations. We see the need for better and greatly improved rail service. Better use of public transportation can help to relieve our own traffic problems as well as make it easier and more pleasant for us to visit Boston and Framingham. We support the idea of intra-town transportation, reducing the great dependence which most citizens have on the car, or indeed, on several cars per family,

Wellesley

The neglect by the Federal and State government of the railroad has been short-sighted. The destruction of the rail link between the mainland of Massachusetts and Woods Hole, the major port of the ferry service to Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, has turned portions of Woods Hole and Falmouth Village into parking lots for people using the ferry service.

Falmouth

In terms of transportation, Boston is fortunate in having an extensive transit system already in place to support downtown and the residential neighborhoods. Boston's transit system was a definite asset to the City from the early 20th century until World War II, contributing to population growth in the neighborhoods and economic growth downtown. On the other hand, the factors of rising affluence, land use policy and single family housing programs in the late 40's and 50's, combined with the national highway boom, had a largely negative impact on the City. While highways improved mobility for auto owners and greatly increased auto access to the downtown, they also resulted in further dispersal of the middle and upper income city population to the suburbs.... The major issue in relating transportation to Boston's growth policy is to determine how well State and regional policy and investment programs serve the needs of the City of Boston. In other words, in which way can business access and residential mobility be provided in the most energy-saving, convenient, cost-effective, and environmentally-sound manner, while protecting the integrity of the City's residential neighborhoods and open space.

Boston

The committee was sharply divided on mass transportation. Many believed that the town would be paying a mountainous price for a mole-hill of service.

Peru

Because of Brockton's unique geographical position in the State, it has the potential of becoming the major trucking center of South-eastern Massachusetts. This is presently hampered by an antiquated road system. Several state-numbered highways, which are also the major arterial streets of the city (and narrow ones at that), are funneled through Brockton's congested Downtown. Furthermore, several sharp turns and jogs at intersections slow travel on these routes even more. Competition between local and through traffic, combined with parking in commercial and industrial areas, has created a traffic nightmare along these routes in all parts of the city.

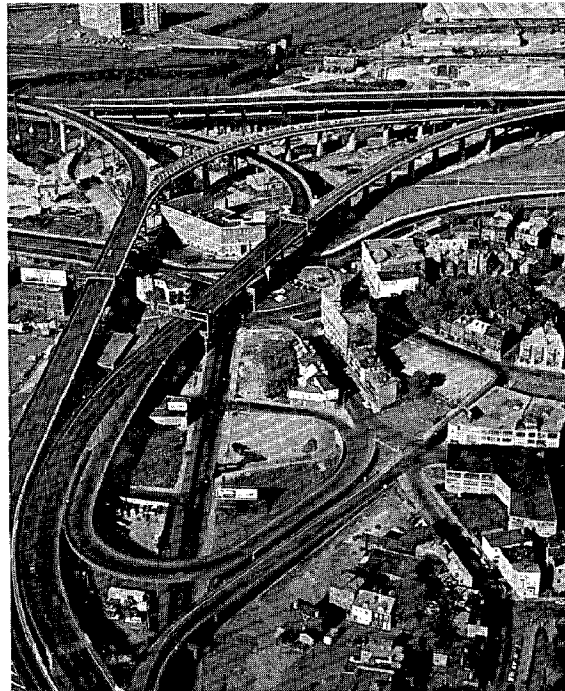
Brockton

The regional transit system has had a beneficial impact on local mobility and has made access to the downtown easier. Highway investments have had a positive impact in making the City accessible to a larger market area in the Northeast. In conjunction with this, inter and intra-city travel convenience has improved, as have travel and safety in neighborhoods which experienced thru traffic.

New Bedford

To a limited degree, apartment construction has changed the character of the town, but housing is not the basic factor in this respect — rather it is a response to the factor, namely the University.

Amherst



The improvements in Route 2 and the building of Route 495 have made travel to and from our town much easier. This ease of movement has attracted people who wanted to live in suburbs although they have to work in urban areas. Available roads have also helped to attract the Sheraton/Boxborough Motel.

Boxborough

State and federal transportation projects, specifically I-195 have increased the value of commercial and industrial land.

Seekonk

The highway network for the North Attleborough area is excellent. State and federal monies invested in this category have had a significant positive impact on both residential and industrial growth.

North Attleborough

Increased housing development and abandonment of public transportation has led to more auto traffic on Tyngsborough roads. Also the tendency of well-paid workers in Massachusetts industries and offices to live in New Hampshire has had a big impact on traffic through town.

Tyngsborough

A North-South highway would drastically increase the growth rate in all areas and adversely effect the very qualities which the residents of this area most desire to preserve. It would be very difficult for the community to control this factor and impossible to undo the damage done to the environment.

Cheshire

The state's investment in highways has created great problems in inner city neighborhoods. In addition, urban sprawl has resulted. The recent investment in mass transit is a positive trend.

Springfield

Building local roads with state aid (Chapter 90) requires making them look like super-highways which do not fit the character of a rural town. Otherwise state transportation expenditures have had little effect on local growth, development, or traveling convenience, since Route 202 was built years ago.

New Salem

Route 91 has had the greatest impact of any change because of the greater accessibility to jobs and opportunities within the region. A lesser impact has been in making Whately accessible for residence.

Whately

In reference to the regional highway network and nearby highway interchanges: Although in theory these two factors should encourage growth, we feel that due to certain socioeconomic factors, the availability of a nearby shopping center, and nearby job opportunities, they have discouraged growth in Lowell.

Lowell

Access and egress has been, or will be improved with projects such as Routes 52, I-190, I-290, and the Mass. Turnpike; however, these projects have also encouraged growth outside City limits at the expense of the City's growth.

Worcester

Recommended improvements in transportation: There was a feeling that better mass transportation, particularly restoration of commuter rail service to the Boston area, would be of considerable advantage to help to improve the quality of life by providing more convenient travel means to jobs, recreation, and cultural activities.

Wareham

Transportation systems which encourage private modes of movement and travel are a mixed blessing. While perhaps enhancing the possibility of economic development, the contribution of the large numbers of private vehicles to pollution of all kinds may not be a wise trade off.

Mattapoisett

The Mass. Pike has had a negative impact in that it cut the town, damaged the view wherever it crossed our streets and generated noise pollution and some salting of streams. It provided some low-skill, low-paying jobs.

Charlton

Auburn's most recent history has been characterized by two distinct and unique periods of growth. The first of these saw the town's population increase from 6,000 to 15,347 between 1940 and 1965. This period of rapid population growth has ended at least temporarily. . . . The second period of growth has occurred in last decade with Auburn's location at the crossroads of several major highways, including the Massachusetts Turnpike, I-290, Route 12 and 20, and the still to be completed Route 52, spurring commercial growth and industrial growth.

Auburn

The City's densely-populated environment can be attributed to a low tax rate. During the past eight years, Everett has experienced and benefited from an extremely low tax rate, which resulted in a strong movement of people to our community. New highways, traffic by-passes, and other thoroughfares in and out and around Everett have relieved it of its former congestion. These highways provide rapid transportation in and out of the City to various parts of the State, which makes Everett a top candidate for providing efficient warehouse and distribution centers.

Everett

The most significant investment of state and federal funds have been in the area of mass transportation. At this time, it is extremely difficult to discern the long-range impact of this construction. However, the immediate impact has fostered mostly automobile-related problems: parking, heavy traffic, etc. Also, this service has generated a development of apartment projects and an increase in land value, particularly around the three local substations.

Quincy

Agriculture

There has been a steady decrease and an almost abolition of agriculture within the city. People have subdivided their farms when one's parents have passed away.

Chicopee

Yes! To encourage the economic feasibility of farming and to preserve agricultural land for needs of future generations is a state concern. Massachusetts should consider adopting New Hampshire's tax plan for farming and other land uses designed to preserve open space and agricultural land. The so-called "Connecticut Plan" should also be considered as it combines the best use of the private and public sector. Under this plan the state buys the "development rights" of the land other than the agricultural use which can be sold or inherited. Essentially the state bonds the difference in the value of land as agricultural land and its "highest and best use." The owner can then sell the development rights of his land for this difference in value.

Marblehead

Agricultural land lends "character" and peacefulness to a region. Allowing the farmland to become suburbia would deprive present and future generations of a priceless resource. It also provides valuable "aquifer" and "recharge" land for preserving water supplies.

New Bedford

Newly constructed Route 49 was built through farmland, without provision being made to cross the highway. This effectively reduced the land available for farming.

East Brookfield

The loss of farmland is an issue of great state-wide concern. The State should consider whatever means are necessary to prevent the loss of prime agricultural land to incompatible development. Such means include the purchase or transfer of development rights, reform of property tax laws, a tax on property transfers, and state subsidization of local acquisition of development rights.

East Longmeadow

Agriculture is the most important occupation, employing the largest number of people and helping to maintain open space. Essentially, the plan provides for the county to purchase the development rights from farmers who voluntarily enter the program; when he sells his development rights to the county, the farmer's land is committed to agriculture in perpetuity, thereby preserving it.

Alford

Locally there has been an increasing conflict between growth and development on the one hand, and available agricultural land on the other. Agricultural land taxes have dramatically increased, thereby increasing the "selling" pressure.

Williamstown

The continuing decrease in the number of dairy farms has not necessarily been accompanied by losses in farm land as the remaining farms utilize most of the farm acreage that has always been available. This could change overnight if the sale price of land outstrips the ability of agricultural uses to pay for it.

Hardwick

Any significant loss of agricultural land would destroy the character and identity of New Braintree which is currently an agricultural community. The fiscal costs to the Town, to the State, and to the State's consumers would be great due to the loss of in-state agricultural land and consequent increase in costs of food. . . . Agricultural zoning or the State's purchase of development rights are significant factors as is the State's attitude toward taxation of agricultural land.

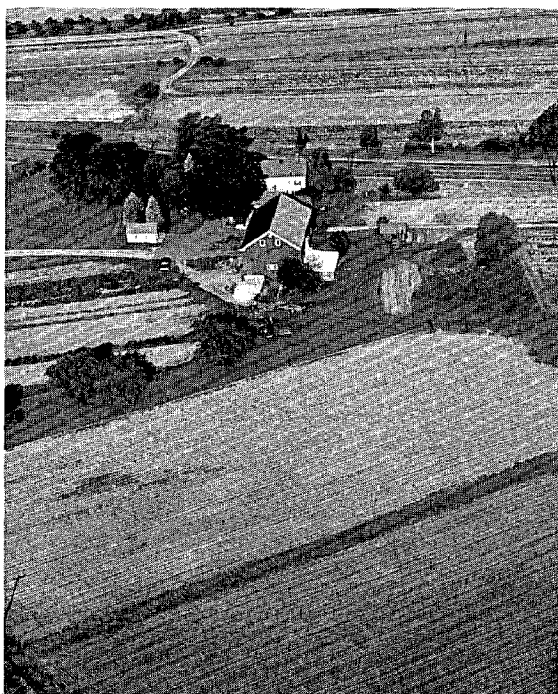
New Braintree

The preservation of agricultural land is a very serious problem, and there should be incentives to maintaining agricultural land and encouraging agricultural use of existing State land. The State should explore relieving tax burdens and development pressures.

Sherborn

Another major problem is the retention of open land and agricultural uses. Far and away the most popular reason for people locating in Sudbury, according to a Planning Board questionnaire, is given as "open land" or "rural atmosphere." Some of us will argue about how "rural" we are. Sudbury established a Conservation Commission about fifteen years ago and has acquired wetlands, woodlands and some farm land. This has been done with the assistance of matching funds from the Commonwealth. These are no longer available; this will limit the ability of the Town to acquire additional open land. Agriculture, in the traditional family farm sense, has almost disappeared. Farmers have sold their land, their only resource in some cases, for housing and industrial lots. There are a few family farms left and there is an active greenhouse/agriculture business in Town. There are some nursery stock farms in Town and some rented agriculture land is farmed by out-of-town interests.

Sudbury



Yes — this is a major concern — subsidized in tax breaks, discourage development of farmland for residential, business, or industrial development.

Braintree

We believe Millis should be among the first in the state to implement The Massachusetts Food and Agriculture Plan.

Millis

Westport was a rural, agricultural community of many large and small farms. Many of the small ones have been forced out by economic conditions that demand a large operation in order to succeed. Much of this land is now being utilized on a rental basis by the operators of the large dairy farms. It is important that the town encourage and give incentives to the few farmers still in business to continue and keep this developable land in production.

Westport

Farm land is under extreme pressure from developers. Immediate action from all levels of government is necessary to retain what little is left. Tax relief for farmed lands must be enhanced. Development rights must be taxed rather than ownership of land. State land-use plans and control legislation requiring environmental impact analysis and dealing with limiting development rights separate from land ownership is needed.

Hingham

Agriculture is still an important but diminishing enterprise in West Brookfield. The loss of farmland can be attributed to the high price offered for land for residential development, taxation, distant markets, poor rail service, large capital investment needs, and the general sense among the young that farming is a difficult undertaking with little opportunity to remain financially solvent. All people value a healthy agricultural system but the concern for its future state of health is widespread.

West Brookfield

The decline of agriculture has been severe and concern is locally expressed about preserving what agriculture is left. No local solutions have been found.

Agawam

Fitchburg would support a system whereby the state purchases the development rights of prime agriculture and open space lands.

Fitchburg

The decline in farming has continued to the point where Westminster, once a farming community, has only four full-time farms left.

Westminster

The fact that 85% of the State's food supply is imported from other states is a cause for concern. Economic development must be balanced by agricultural development. Possible action might be to reward property owners to develop their land potential, but discourage policy which encourages minimum use of land as a tax dodge.

Worcester

Anything to encourage agriculture would be beneficial, provided that research and development (in particular), soil conservation, and pesticide control programs accompany it.

Berkley

Charlton's original growth base was primarily agricultural, but this has changed gradually to primarily rural-suburban with essentially one large industry and several smaller businesses.

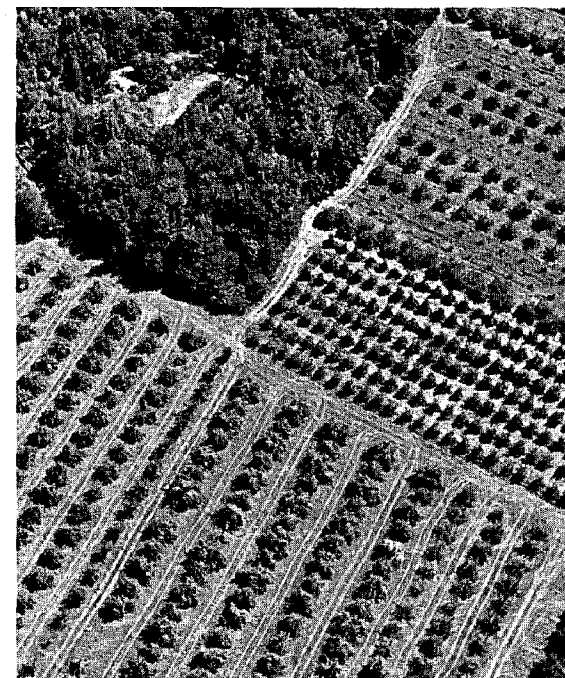
Charlton

In Princeton where only a small portion of the land is suited for agriculture, the allocation of suitable land to this use can provide economic gain as well as aesthetic benefit without hindering residential development to any significant degree. Efforts should be made to retain and expand farmlands wherever it is practicable to do so.

Princeton

There is a difference of opinion among Sunderland residents whether to encourage development up near the mountains or in the valley on the good farmland. Development has been arriving mostly in the farmland where it is cheapest to build but more people want to save the farmland and put the houses on the hills.

Sunderland



Hatfield is a small community of 9,300 acres of rich valley farmland with agriculture one of the principal occupations. Prime agricultural land is a definite asset.

Hatfield

Chapter 6

Regionalism

Many of the issues related to growth spill over local boundaries. Environmental resources — such as lakes, rivers, beaches, watersheds, floodplains — don't recognize municipal boundaries. Similarly, major development projects often have impacts that go beyond a single community. Clearly, what happens within a region affects communities, and what is happening in communities likewise will affect that region.

In Massachusetts, there is local government, state government, and something in-between: "regions." Regional activities have been going on for some time. Many focus on a specific function — such as mass transit, water supply, or solid waste. Others, such as county government and regional planning agencies, offer more general regional services.

These regional issues and activities, and potential future ones, are the focus of this Chapter. It should be noted that the Commonwealth's 13 regional agencies have prepared Regional Growth Policy Reports as part of this process. Those reports contain a more detailed analysis of regional issues. This Chapter contains some local perspectives on regionalism.

Communities and Their Neighbors

If the region experiences a return to development and industrial/commercial/residential growth, then this community will definitely feel the pressure for more rapid development to a suburban town with increased housing density. This, in turn, would lead to probable growth in commercial areas and a demand for more town services. The growth of industry and job opportunities might change the profile of the "typical" Topsfield home-buyer.

Topsfield

We consider that Danvers had — or shares — several "areas of critical planning concerns." Among these are the Ipswich River which is presently a source of water supply for several communities and a recreational resource; our Danvers River is a major recreational facility shared with Salem, Beverly, and Peabody as well as a potential edible shellfish area; and the Putnamville Reservoir, Wenham Swamp, and Folly Hill Reservoirs of Salem and Beverly. Danvers does include river banks, estuaries, and salt water marshes that are all important to the continued propagation of salt water fish species. We consider that our local Conservation Commission and others are doing an adequate job of protecting these resources and would favor only such action as would give technical advice, guidance, and support to our local efforts.

Danvers

Due to a variety of factors, including the difficulty of obtaining water as well as the inconvenience of local roads, Dover has not maintained the pace of development experienced by some other communities within the region. Based on a variety of factors, Dover's future growth and development will probably follow on a proportionate basis with the further development of other communities in the region. Increasing pressures of expansion from outlying communities in the region could force substantial changes within Dover with respect to highway construction and potential public forms of transportation passing through Dover itself. In the past, Dover has participated in regional activities with other communities in order to solve our region-wide problems. In general, the experience has been that active participation initiated by and controlled by the communities is the most desirable approach to such regional projects. Even with such an approach, experience gained from the regionalized junior and senior high schools highlights the forfeiture of control, particularly over costs which are incurred by regionalized activities.

Dover

Differences in zoning districts along both sides of town boundaries have led to some difficult alternatives and it has been difficult to find ways of providing municipal services that satisfy both towns. Water does, as it always has, run downhill.

Lenox

Because of the closeness of towns, any decision made by one of the communities does and will continue to have an impact on the others. For example, when North Brookfield banned trailers, there was an increase of trailers in adjoining towns.

North Brookfield

Waltham's non-residential activities provide salaries and wages for thousands of residents of communities near and far. With the need to rely on the car, Waltham's residential streets are heavily impacted by wage earners passing through. In spite of this Waltham has always cooperated in its regional responsibilities, whether on a broad scale as with the MDC, MBTA, and MAPC or on a narrow scale with Weston as regards sewer connections or Newton as regards solid waste disposal.

Waltham

U.Mass has been and is a major economic stimulus to the area; it has also had many sociological effects. The idea of shared costs has not been widely discussed. There seems at present to be something of an "isolationist" spirit afoot in the town, but in the long run Amherst would probably participate so long as adequate checks were provided.

Amherst

Plymouth's rapid growth and development has had a substantial impact on our community. Carver's tax rate was much lower here and has attracted much of Plymouth's overflow population.

Carver



In general, rejection of certain types of industries and commercial developments by this Town has caused the applicants to move next door! Employees of these companies often came to live in Sharon causing a type of negative growth since the non-residential tax revenues do not come to this town, but the people and their families do.

Sharon

The extent to which Dartmouth's future growth, development, and change is related to development within the larger region depends upon the degree of influence exerted by various government levels outside of the town. Dartmouth is more vulnerable than most towns to "spillover effects" of development because of its large open areas, good community services, highway access, and location. Dartmouth's assets are highly visible because so many out-of-town residents are drawn to the town by the recreational and educational facilities.

Dartmouth

The development and change within the region (within Route 495 circumferential highway) also will affect Newton. Policies relating to zoning, housing, and commercial and industrial development could have an effect. If outlying communities restrict housing development for low and middle income families, increased societal and political pressure could influence Newton to accept more of such housing. Conversely, if land in outlying communities were made available at a lower cost for commercial and industrial development instead of housing or green belts, Newton might find it more difficult to revitalize its existing industrial and commercial areas. These two influences acting in concert could prevent Newton from achieving its goal of a better mix of residential and economic activity and a larger number of available job opportunities.

Newton

Over-development of multiple dwellings in Framingham has caused problems for Natick with MDC sewerage facilities. However, the problem of sewerage systems and sewage treatment transcends individual community or "regional" solutions as it is also a matter of statewide concern and should be dealt with on that basis.

Natick

We envision and argue for a future Needham that both preserves the present assets and opens these assets to a limited proportion of populations who cannot presently afford to live in this town. We feel strongly that the future we propose is not only right in the context of our Judeo-Christian heritage, but is also in the self-interest of the town as well. Needham and the metropolitan area as a whole will be weakened and ultimately undone if the city of Boston is maintained as an enclave for the poor and minorities. We, therefore, urge this Growth Policy Committee to view the best interests of Needham as integrally bound up with the needs and requirements of the metropolitan area. The overall goal should be a strong and unique Needham contributing as a limited but necessary unit to a vigorous, healthy metropolitan area.

Needham

Chicopee has been very dependent for neighboring cities for cultural activities. Certain problems in the City of Chicopee have been caused by poor environmental control on developments in neighboring communities. On the whole however, the city growth policy committee felt that cities and towns share key problems and opportunities, and the solution of problems for one area will help other communities solve their problems.

Chicopee

Although there is a strong feeling about municipal "home rule" in the area, we realize that there are times when individual communities cannot provide adequate service because of problems keeping an economy of scale.

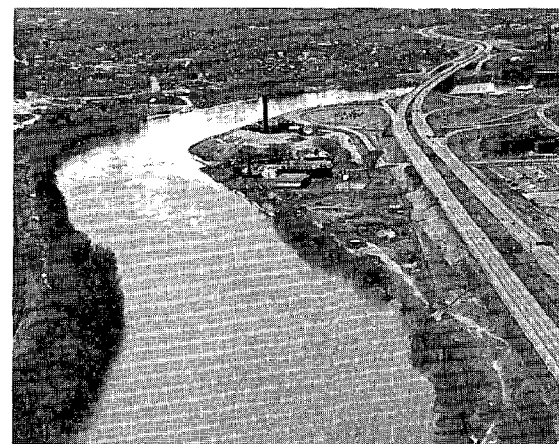
Russell

The Growth Policy Committee agreed that regional development affects us only in a general way. We depend on regional well-being, its economic good health, though we are probably less affected than other area communities. Lexington depends almost entirely on other communities for jobs, higher education, utilities, transportation. The only specific effect on Lexington due to regional development appears to be the increased traffic generated by neighboring communities.

Lexington

Due to the siting of an MDC facility in Quincy, surrounding communities are dependent upon the City for wastewater treatment. In that the operation of this facility has had an effect upon the quality of water in Quincy Bay, the growth of these communities, which has resulted in the increased use of this facility, has heightened the significance of this relationship.

Quincy



Because of the great burden to Revere from outside sources, over 80% of our traffic comes from outside the city. Revere Beach can attract up to 80,000 people on a hot day. The dog (Wonderland) track and the horse (Suffolk Downs) track are additional traffic generators. Traffic problems can only be resolved on a regional basis with State and Federal assistance. More funds should find their way to the city coffers from both the dog and horse tracks.

Revere

The problem of disposal of solid waste is suitable for a regional solution. . . . The surrounding area may look toward Whately more for outdoor recreation opportunities. . . . Other communities own substantial watershed lands in Whately. Their plans are not known to us.

Whately

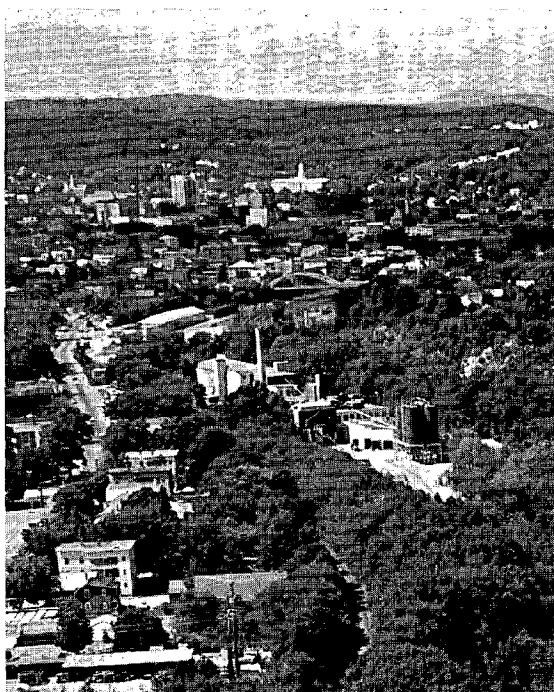
Regional Identity

What is immediately needed is a strengthening of the cooperative efforts of the six Island towns. For the most part the necessary institutions, officials, and programs are already in existence, at least in outline. What must come first is a more widespread public awareness of the issues and readiness to do something about them. This is particularly important in order to inspire public officials to explore and resolve those problems which are either common to all towns or can only be resolved in cooperation.

West Tisbury

The twenty cities and towns of Southern Essex County represent a deceiving economic picture to those who drive by the Myopia Hunt Club of Hamilton at 3:30 each Sunday during the summer months. In general, except for the immediate vicinity of Hamilton, the region is represented by the large decaying urban city of Lynn at one end of the region, and the economically depressed, fishing dependent city of Gloucester at the opposite end. Such cities as Salem, Peabody, Lynn, Gloucester and Beverly (in the same region of Hamilton, Wenham, Manchester) contain many minority and ethnic populations with evolutionary mobility and blending capabilities. There is little regionalization existent, nor do state and county coordinating efforts produce cost-effective results in the regional planning, management, and evaluation process.

Hamilton



Multiple definitions (for region) are necessary. Clearly, however, the concept of "region" loses meaning when it becomes as large and diverse as the Metropolitan Area Planning Council area.

Wayland

Sherborn is not comfortable in the larger metropolitan Boston Region and would prefer a more well-defined region.

Sherborn

Wellesley is within a number of regions. Its Regional Planning District consists of 101 cities and towns of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, but is also within many other regions such as the regions served by the Metropolitan District Commission, the Mass. Bay Transportation Authority, and is within the Charles River watershed. But Wellesley has less in common with most of the cities and towns within the above mentioned regions than with its immediate surrounding neighbors: Newton, Needham, Dover, Natick, and Weston.

Wellesley

The geographic location of Halifax is the center (or heart) of Plymouth County which makes it the center for almost all planned ventures. We are without heavy industry; without water to support such operations; our roads are not sufficient to support heavy trucking; therefore, we are destined for a type of growth which includes residential growth and the retention of some family farms. It is in this way that Halifax can best service not only its own citizenry, but can be an asset to the urban areas of Plymouth and Brockton which are within reasonable distance.

Halifax

The town is probably equally divided: that residents believe that the town offers everything they require for recreational and cultural activities, and that residents believe the town offers the barest minimum of such activities. The latter group goes elsewhere or goes without.

Natick

The town of North Attleborough has many valuable assets in terms of natural and physical resources, such as an abundant supply of excellent drinking water. This community is in an enviable position to assist the other communities which constitute along with North Attleborough the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD). The Town should be able to review the needs of member SRPEDD communities and consider the various opportunities for assisting this region. In the opinion of the Growth Policy Committee, voluntary participation is the ideal form of mutual cooperation among SRPEDD communities.

North Attleborough

Bolton does not do much at this point to influence the region. Bolton is presently in the MAPC, which seems pointless, since as the town to the extreme west, we have little in common with the suburban towns to the East.

Bolton

Sudbury does not look for larger government. We recommend that the Commonwealth do what it can to encourage diversity and uniqueness in its cities and towns. This is not done with mish-mash master concepts and plans. When in doubt . . . leave us alone. County governments *everywhere* seem to function better than in Middlesex County. If county government is to work here, we need a new "Westsex" or "Southsex" County, containing communities which "commune" about something. Area planning agencies, while idealistically important, are not doing much for us or anyone else we see. The state planning functions should all be streamlined and the regional planning functions performed by the new streamlined counties. This would put the planning functions "in harness" with functional operating levels for government services and get them out of their separate and tenuous office "away from it all."

Sudbury

Wilmington is a part of several regions depending on its particular services.

Wilmington

Somerville is a core city of the Boston metropolitan area. It is a bedroom community with 24,000 people working in Somerville and Cambridge. It is a blue collar community with strong neighborhood identification. The citizens are well organized and concerned with improving the quality of life and the environment. Somerville wants to maintain its identity, yet participate fully in the wide spectrum of regional activities.

Somerville

The city has in the past participated in official regional endeavors such as the MDC and the MBTA, and in the areas of water supply and waste disposal. The residents of the city at the present time would strongly support a spreading of responsibility throughout the region in two major areas: transportation and waste water treatment, in which they feel Quincy bears a disproportionate share. The city is willing to bear a major share of the responsibility of being an employment, shopping, and cultural center for the region.

Quincy

The people of Chelmsford look at the aspect of regions and bring to mind Middlesex County with its bureaucratic nightmare and conclude that arbitrary regions will not work. This is not paranoia, it is reality.

Chelmsford

The Committee urges more efficient structure and functioning of the entire county system. One major problem is that the area covered is too dispersed. Furthermore, the county seat in Plymouth is too far away. Brockton is the population center of the county and should play a greater role in county institutions. One example of unnecessary expense incurred by the county system is the transport of prisoners to the Plymouth House of Correction. The question was also raised as to why counties exist at all in Massachusetts when they are abolished in other New England states.

Brockton

Hingham continues to be included within the metropolitan area of Boston and MAPC. Although the problems facing Hingham are the classical problems facing the metropolitan area . . . open space and land-use management . . . and this has left Hingham a suburban, even rural flavor. For that reason, the majority of residents feel closer akin to other South Shore suburban towns other than metropolitan cities. Hingham is within Plymouth County, which supports the premise that Hingham should be excluded from the metropolitan area. . . . This lends to a determination that a gathering of 12 to 18 towns in a regional council may be an optimum size for managing growth . . . and to maintain the quality of life.

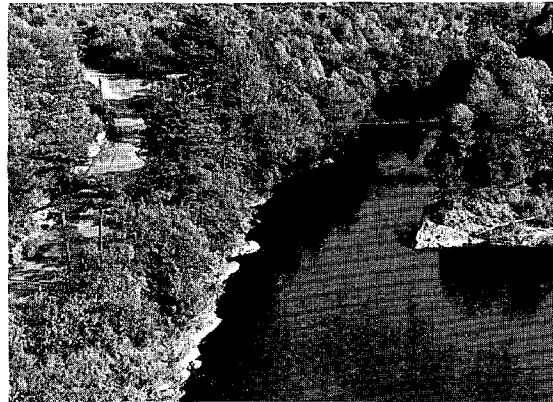
Hingham

The greatest concern of "problem" at the moment is that the decisions made by the federal government and by the state legislature will interfere with or be detrimental to South Hadley's goals and wishes. As regional and state approaches are taken to problems in the future, it will be important to preserve the integrity of the individual towns making up each region and of the state.

South Hadley

We are swept along and tied in with regions to the North (New Hampshire) and Lowell and Fitchburg. If the present tax structure continues in New Hampshire, Northern Massachusetts will continue to offer no incentive to industry. We are tied both negatively and positively depending upon which region is referred to.

Pepperell



Increasing shifts of authority and power from municipal to regional and county governments would significantly affect the patterns of future development in Dartmouth. With its wealth of open space, shoreline, and highway access, the town is being increasingly pressured to accept the problems spilling out of the state's urban areas.

Dartmouth

Above all, as our colleagues in Acton rightly recognize, Maynard is in many ways different from its mostly larger, wealthier, less industrialized and less crowded neighbors. Therefore we must emphasize that any "regional" policy based solely on geography and ignoring these differences might well prove to be unfortunate.

Maynard

Present regional planning associations are of little use to towns that have no federally reimbursed projects. They are also too arbitrarily defined. Towns should be encouraged to band together for planning in an ad hoc way as mutual problems become apparent. Just as state aid to regional schools allows towns to cooperate in any pattern that effectively solves their educational problem, so aid in planning solutions to other problems like sewerage, solid waste, recreation, etc. should encourage flexible planning units designed to solve each problem in its own best framework of participants, rather than the single frame imposed by the arbitrary boundary of a regional planning association.

Petersham

The economic region of the area differs greatly from the physical geographic area. The committee wishes to state that any regional approach to solving problems must take cognizance of that fact, if it does not, the particular issue is doomed to failure. If an economic problem is to be solved on a regional basis, it must be done within the economic region. If a solid waste problem is to be solved, it must be done within a solid waste region, drainage problems, then watershed region, etc.

Chelmsford

Present arbitrary political boundaries of county government should be organized into compact regional areas including towns with common interests to direct the planning of the area as a whole.

Duxbury

Resolving Common Problems

Regional Disposition: Most problems (water, sewerage, public transportation, etc.) affect all of the communities in the region. We have participated in some inter-community programs. Regional issues would be considered *only if Hanson is given an equal say* in such discussions.

Hanson

Issues such as water supply, sewerage treatment, solid waste disposal, transportation improvements, are issues which should be shared by our surrounding neighbors. Our community would support regional endeavors under the conditions that the regional project is efficiently and effectively managed while respecting the rights and interests of the individual member towns. Currently we are participating in South Essex Sewerage, the MBTA, and we are considering participation in South Essex Solid Waste Disposal District. In addition we feel that such issues as economic development, air quality, and public transportation should be addressed regionally. However, in the area of housing, a division of opinion exists: on one side are those that feel we should be concerned about our own citizens first, while others feel that as a part of a larger metropolitan area we have a responsibility with and for others.

Marblehead

There are issues which our community faces which are shared by some of our surrounding neighbors, for example, sewerage treatment, solid waste disposal, water supply, coastal zone management, oil exploration and fuel recovery, the 200-mile fishing limit, state tax policies, continuing population influx, agriculture, recreation. We have not defined "regional" issues that the community would like to see addressed regionally, with responsibility shared by the various communities of the region. We approve of the State, SRPEDD, and Federal Government providing technical data and assistance in various issues. However, the Town and the County should have the power to make the laws. Local people should do the planning with the support of the State Legislature. Regional action on a county basis among communities with the approval of those communities and under their individual local controls is recommended for some responsibilities, costs, and benefits.

Westport

Many issues could be resolved quickly and efficiently with more coordination between the State and the town in respect to the needs and desires of the town. As most issues in some manner have a regional impact, serious consideration should be given to a better method to promote regional planning and to expedite plan implementation.

Foxborough

More regional or local control; less state control. Strengthen regional or county government. The county has not been too aggressive in solving problems on a regional basis. The county commissioners have good suggestions for solutions and programs but they are often weakened or abandoned because of lack of state money. There are many problems which could be better handled on a regional basis — waste disposal, road maintenance, transportation, education, public safety. County government should be strengthened and also made more representative — perhaps there could be a representative for each town rather than three commissioners representing 26 towns.

Shelburne

We need enabling legislation to allow for the association and cooperation of affected (or afflicted) towns, to join, on a per-problem basis, in constructive attack on issues of mutual concern. This system should be allowed to proceed through the most efficient use of the multiple resources available within the communities represented, and it should be so constituted that a weighted representation will allow the fairest allocation of costs and responsibilities among communities of variant wealth, population, etc.

Dedham

We oppose blanket regionalization but would favor it on specific inter-community issues.

Pembroke

Yarmouth would not support multi-community regulations under any circumstances.

Yarmouth

Georgetown has participated with caution in regional activities because of fear we have little to gain and such participation may be costly and may mean a loss of autonomy. . . . We are concerned about activities which would effect watershed areas, flood plains, beach areas, and the Merrimack River.

Georgetown

Too much emphasis is creeping into regional bodies tending toward implementation rather than planning function for which they were designed. It has not been demonstrated that this trend is good or bad. It is, however, another area of responsibility being absorbed by appointed bodies instead of those elected to do so. If any combination should occur it should be on the basis of the body being elected.

Fairhaven

There are areas such as water supply and solid waste disposal where Lynnfield could and should benefit from regional solutions. Unfortunately, none of the present regional programs are viable options in their present stage of development to meet Lynnfield's requirements now.

Lynnfield

It is obvious that there exists a need for some centralization of local government structures, however, Norton is certainly not alone in being cautious to regional solutions that ultimately diminish local autonomy although some problem areas are best resolved through regionalization. We wish to point out that regional programs have the potential to be abusive and insensitive to the needs of small members of the regional community.

Norton

Conway doesn't approve of solving local problems on a regional level. For example, there has been a proposal to locate a regional incinerator in Pittsfield which would require towns to transport their waste a long distance and at a high expense. The town is also upset about a suggestion to regionalize elementary schools.

Conway

One regional issue that interests Leyden residents is the proposed Franklin County Land Use Bill. Although it has been tabled for this year, we support the proposed bill and if passed it may help to maintain our woodland and agricultural areas.

Leyden

We do not think Norwood should support any regionalization unless voluntary, cooperative, and equitable.

Norwood

The committee was unanimous in opposing any regionalization of any town services, administration, and control. However, the committee did support regionalization only as complimentary act of town services, administration and control. Many on the committee wish to see more of the state services, administration and control administered on a more regional basis rather than out of Boston.

Palmer

Since many communities in the Montachusett Region are experiencing similar problems, regional actions would be extremely beneficial.

Fitchburg

This committee subscribes to cooperation, shared information and technical assistance among neighboring communities, but opposes abandonment of local controls over areas which can be handled at a local level.

Whitman

There should not be any decision made by any neighboring communities which have a direct affect on Winthrop without full public hearing, an opportunity for Winthrop to study the feasibility of any intended project, and the ability to rely on a regulatory agency such as through the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act, whenever a decision is to be made.

Winthrop

The city's future will depend to a great extent upon the regional delivery of services by special authorities, commissions, etc. These services are water, sewer, solid waste, and the like.

Worcester

Regionalization to meet these needs would most certainly be considered especially in such areas as water supply, sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, and mass transportation. However, at present, the town would view such arrangements with initial skepticism and would be concerned about retaining control of its local problems and the solutions to them; and the town would seek assurances that it could extricate itself from regional pacts should it be demonstrated that the benefits derived from such a regional approach to a particular issue exceeded any benefits derived. The town realizes, however, that regional solutions to many of the problems facing us today are justified and should be encouraged and promoted.

Longmeadow

The areas of central planning concern most significant to the community are watershed protection and the cleaning of our rivers and lakes. We would support multi-community regulation with the condition that our citizens would have the right to accept or reject decisions.

Lanesborough



Sterling would consider regional actions to help control the impacts of growth on a limited basis, only after careful consideration of the benefits to be derived and possible alternatives. The community would likely aid in the improvement of regional economic opportunities. Since Sterling's future depends upon the future of the greater region, which in turn reflects the general economy of the state, this committee is concerned with the present distressing economic condition of the Commonwealth. The town generally prefers to solve its own problems and multi-community regulation would not be supported, unless the measures guaranteed town autonomy.

Sterling

When it comes to participation with neighboring towns, it is clear that many of the problems faced today, and this will become even more so in the future, can best be reached by common efforts, and it is felt that this is a necessary development for the immediate future.

Sheffield

If the growth proves gradual, the town can meet needs as they arise. But it should take advantage of any chance to obtain public facilities on a regional basis.

Tyngsborough

Regional solutions to problems may be realistic in situations that Auburn cannot handle by itself. Auburn would then be interested in a regional approach provided that a certain amount of local control is maintained.

Auburn

We know that our suburban and rural neighbors have growth concerns also. We would welcome the opportunity to work with them on those issues in particular where a combined effort and/or cooperation would be to our advantages.

Worcester

We absolutely would not consider regional action because regionalization tends to benefit stronger municipalities to the disadvantage of the smaller. We would rather see a change in bureaucracy to administrative management at the "grassroots" level.

Middlefield

Except in some expensive instances (waste disposal) the town would probably prefer to "go it alone" rather than to give up more Home Rule to a regional government, if it is at all like our present county government.

West Boylston

If new political entities are required, they should be composed of members both elected and appointed regionwide and locally. In no way should any existing regional planning agency be allowed to implement development plans or engage in resource management.

New Bedford

A regional body governing Leverett or overseeing its policies should be resisted absolutely. It would be one more clump of bureaucratic crabgrass planted in our midst. It could do more to destroy Leverett than any problem now facing it.

Leverett

Regional action should be pursued only as a last resort when the desired future was imperiled and regional action was our only recourse.

New Salem

In the above areas of study, Wakefield is a strong viable community. We feel our residents have not received the full benefits of regional services due to overlapping of regions, duplication of services, and poor regional structures established, without community input or uniformity. We strongly urge changes in this area if the growth of these services on a composite basis will promote positive growth in our community.

Wakefield

Two areas of concern to Sherborn and other towns are the Charles River and the agricultural land at the Medfield State Hospital. Sherborn would support multi-community regulation of these areas.

Sherborn

The committee felt that this community would support no regional issues. There are some endeavors that possibly the town would be interested in with other communities but it would take a good selling job and an in-depth study before it would be considered by the town.

Holliston

There are issues which Hudson could approach on a regional basis — such as, solid waste disposal, sewerage treatment, river pollution, regional planning, public transportation, mosquito control, vocational education, public safety, health care — indicating that we are presently doing so to some extent.

Hudson

Little regional legislation if any has had an impact on Southbridge. Air pollution, public transportation, waste disposal, and improved access roads are all areas where the town would support regional legislation if the participating costs were not prohibitive.

Southbridge

We would support reasonable multi-community regulation to preserve and protect wetlands, Richmond Pond, shared waterbed areas, forests, mountain tops, and valleys. . . . Assurance against water pollution seems to be a good place to push for multi-community action.

Richmond

The regional planning agencies have insufficient power to resolve local planning and growth issues. There has been a trend on the part of regional agencies to concentrate on well funded federal programs with many public hearings, which are usually not well attended. Instead the effort should be to assist established local planning groups especially when interpretation of various state regulations is required. Too often, local planning groups need to hire a consultant when a regional group could provide the necessary professional assistance.

Marblehead

The conditions under which the City would support regional endeavors in the future would simply be that all such endeavors be voluntary and that the City withdraw its support from the programs at any time it wished.

Holyoke

There is ample (in the minds of many, too much) regional involvement which has reduced local autonomy. A citizen expressed the community's feelings well when he stated that the only time we should regionalize was "at gunpoint."

East Bridgewater

Manchester has participated on a limited basis in regional plans: a vocational high school, proposed solid-waste disposal, a shared health inspector. The Town's general approach toward regional solutions can be expected to continue, based on economics, but there is an apprehension as to the effectiveness of the state and federal bureaucracies.

Manchester

This community would not consider regional actions unless a specific issue was of tremendous importance and positively could not be achieved by the Town on its own. Fear of large government makes most people shudder and this is a prime deterrent to regional action.

Scituate

The committee believes that Walpole would consider supporting regional endeavors if it did not take away any local powers and it did not cost more. Realistically, the status quo exists and there does not appear to be a movement in that direction. The geographical limitations of the county has failed our area as a workable region. The question persists as to what our region is, and certain issues may create a regional response whereas others may not.

Walpole

There is a lack of inter-community cooperation and communication which has a negative impact on Shelburne. Each town has its own set of problems with its own list of priorities. They are all finding it difficult to make ends meet but they have not been very successful in solving problems cooperatively.

Shelburne

There should be further regional cooperation in economic development; recreation and conservation areas also.

Blackstone

Water, sewerage, and solid waste disposal are certainly areas in which regional action would be desirable. Likewise, transportation, schools (i.e., vocational, Chapter 766, etc.) are already working toward this.

Duxbury

Only if not detrimental to our self determination.

Ashby



A proposal towards achieving a desired future is the continuation of the growth committee's work, but not as we are doing now; reacting to a very redundant and ill-conceived questionnaire. A community needs a growth planning committee to plan and recommend various alternatives and to be aware of planning in other areas of the State. The group would be advisory only, and in no way regulatory.

Easton

Regional endeavors must allow each community to exercise some degree of control, and to insure accountability over problems that are broad and expensive.

Lynnfield

Chapter 7

State Government

Two of the principal objectives of the growth policy process have been: to evaluate how well things are going, and to promote communication between local and state government. As a result, local comments on state government are central to any recommendations coming out of this process.

The first section deals with communities' evaluation of existing state laws, programs, and policies and their impact on growth and development. The second section includes a number of local recommendations for changes in state government.

The majority of the excerpts in this Chapter are critical of state government. We will not attempt to respond to those criticisms here. (See the forthcoming draft Statewide Growth Policy Report.) Most are clearly well-founded. We have only attempted here as one community proposed, "to accept them in the spirit in which they were offered."

An Evaluation of Past Performance

The lack of coordination among state agencies and between those agencies and the city is best illustrated by a current project in Cambridge — the Red Line subway extension to the Alewife Brook area. A number of state agencies are involved in this project: MDC, MBTA, DPW, and MAPC. The lack of understanding of each agency's area of jurisdiction and each agency's commitment to public improvements leaves the city of Cambridge in a position of having to coordinate and seek in writing the commitment of each of proposed future development. If the Alewife Brook development area coordination were unique, one would dismiss the need for state coordination of its own agencies, but it is not unique. Any major new development in this state will require such cooperation. If the state fails in an area where all parties have similar goals, then a state growth policy has little hope of being implemented.

Cambridge

Our criticisms of state government are not markedly different from other communities: the setting of standards without any assistance in complying for the affected communities; the slowness and uncertainty of state funds due cities and towns and due individuals dealing with state government; the heavy reliance on the property tax as a means of financing government services; the apparent inability of state government to process its required paperwork with any moderate degree of speed; and a lack of leadership which will improve our business climate and our unemployment rate.

Lenox

On the whole, Ipswich is suspicious of state laws, programs, and policies which have an impact on Ipswich, principally because of a feeling that most of these are formulated for the benefit of the many communities in its region and others whose problems have little relationship to those of Ipswich and which in the long run will tend to metropolitanize Ipswich. Already, many of the Commonwealth's mandated educational programs have increased taxes locally. Such encroachments on local self-determination as "Anti-Snob Zoning" are seen as being directly against the desire of the town to retain its single family homes character. Probably the most widely accepted and popular state laws are those which protect Ipswich's greatest natural resource — its wetlands — and, therefore, limit further growth.

Ipswich

Part of the problem is the State Legislature and state agencies. Boston is not accountable. . . . Initial promises are frequently broken. . . . Technical assistance . . . late.

Agawam

Overly specific state regulations, as in the health area often impose a significant and largely unnecessary burden on volunteer, part-time basis in small towns such as ours. What makes sense in certain cities doesn't always make sense for the rest of the state.

Maynard

Many state regulations and programs have increased taxation to a nearly intolerable level for most of the people of Hubbardston.

Hubbardston

The state has been unable to integrate the goals and objectives of its various departments so that they are complimentary rather than at odds. In particular, it would appear that tax laws, economic development, environmental protection, and consumer protection are not mutually supportive. Unless some hard, comprehensive decisions are made in these areas to insure contribution to a common end, neither the environment nor the economy will be the winner. Both will end up losing perhaps more than they otherwise would have with no policy at all. A second area of non-integration of policies has to do with roads, mass transit, housing, and employment/economic development, which again often seem to be at odds. Any non-coordination at the state level will likely eventually impact Carlisle by putting perhaps avoidable pressure on our roads, housing, schools, and open spaces.

Carlisle

Sunderland feels snowed under by state regulations. The building inspector feels very restricted by the building code. The wetlands law is not really applicable to Sunderland but the regulations must be complied with. The regulations against farm runoff are going to make it very difficult to continue farming.

Sunderland

Wetlands Protection Act has benefited the town in providing the Conservation Commission with methods of protecting fragile or sensitive areas. Statewide standardization serves a larger purpose.

Lancaster

The existing state laws dealing with welfare encourage people to come into Amesbury from New Hampshire for handouts.

Amesbury

In this area, we feel obligated to state that there is some disagreement between the members of the Growth Policy Committee and some of the other members of the community. There is a general feeling by many of the citizens of North Andover that the state does nothing right and that all state programs and policies are bad. When asked about specific programs and issues, we were unable to determine just what it is that these citizens see as being so bad. A few people expressed a desire to move to New Hampshire but we see that as a case of the grass being greener in the other fellow's yard. The members of the Committee think that there are many areas of state responsibility that need improvement, but that in general the laws, programs, and policies of this state lead to a better quality of life than is available in most other states.

North Andover

When state laws are passed, there is little help, a great deal of paper work, and very expensive. There is too much bureaucratic structure to facilitate state aid programs.

Dighton

The state tends to be provincial; it has the reputation for setting a single policy to cover a variety of situations.

Springfield

The State Sanitary Code has been especially beneficial in controlling septic tank design where town sewerage is not available. While the Anti-Snob Zoning Law has not been very effective, the Wetlands Protection Act has. Strengthening of the Anti-Snob Zoning Law and the Wetlands Protection Act is strongly suggested. The town of Hudson has revalued at the state-required 100 percent, yet other towns have not. Because of this, there is considerable question as to whether state funds received by the town are proper and equitable. Changing the fiscal year appears to have worked satisfactorily. However, the town was not allowed to finance school salary increases over a period of time as a direct result of the change in the fiscal year. This resulted in a healthy interest payment. State requirements of the town's educational budget has had a considerable effect on the town's taxes.

Hudson

All existing state laws, programs, and policies have a very significant impact on this community, the region and throughout the Commonwealth — for the worse. The state makes its laws, programs and policies work poorly, i.e.: (a) its tax structure is suicidal; (b) its unemployment programs are mis-managed; (c) its overburdensome welfare programs are badly administered; (d) it lacks fiscal responsibility; and (e) its Civil Service is sinful.

Westfield

State wetlands laws are affecting development in Melrose and have effectively stopped one subdivision. Wetlands legislation is seen as a means of avoiding future problems and costs to the city by preventing unsuitable development. All state aid and assessment formulas need prompt review and revision. State-local fiscal relationships suffer from a rat's nest of cherry sheet formulas and from inequities in the establishment of equalized valuations. The state housing for the elderly program has worked well and the concept of the program is good. In practice, the product, the actual housing, has been less well conceived. State-aided recreation facilities such as the MDC pool are welcome in the city but the MDC tends to abandon the facility to vandals through most of the year. Stronger local control over MDC facilities might be beneficial.

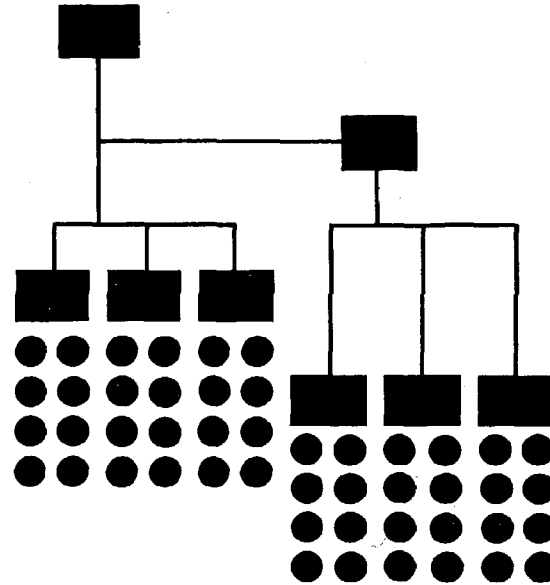
Melrose

The Commonwealth can help in the resolution of these issues by increasing the local autonomy allowed in zoning regulations; encouraging the rural, agricultural base of the town by farm tax assistance, estate tax assistance, and the development of a 4-level tax plan for the use of land (commercial, residential, agricultural, and conservation); and providing financial assistance for the purchase of open space and recreational areas by the Town.

West Tisbury

We have fears that state action may interfere with the orderly growth the planning board has provided for.

Brewster



The present system of hearings and permits is overly cumbersome. Protection achieved is appreciated but decision processes should be streamlined so as to not unrealistically hamper desirable activity.

Cohasset

State laws, programs, and policies have both good and bad effects. If state laws or policies do not fully consider local effects, then poor results occur. Based on the cost of living and high taxes imposed in Massachusetts and movement of industry out of state, it could be said that the state is poorly administered and lacks solid planning.

Attleborough

Existing state laws, programs, and policies have a significant impact on the growth and development of this community, the region, and the Commonwealth. Some state regulations could lead to community improvement, such as the Hatch Act if properly financed to provide for follow-up. Others have not helped the community, and such requirements as the MBTA assessment have neither helped nor encouraged positive feelings towards "out of town" regulation. Laws not enforced due to lack of funding and manpower are seen as worthless. The development and expansion of highways without adequate provision for communities to participate which are impacted has resulted in poor attitudes toward the state. It is difficult for town boards to expend the time and effort necessary for matching funds. State regulatory programs can affect the growth and development of a community. Environmental impact statements are at times not adequately comprehensive. They can neglect areas which impact community negatively, such as the widening of major highway too close to a school. Many times a state regulation or program will result in increased costs which are then reflected in the local taxes. Some are necessary, but they do affect community development.

Topshfield

Chapter 70 school reimbursement program has had a positive impact on Methuen. The school busing reimbursement program has had a negative effect on Methuen. The busing program helps to create urban sprawl.

Methuen

Towns such as Acton are increasingly unable to control their economic affairs because of state interference in areas such as collective bargaining and compulsory arbitration and state mandated programs. Even in those situations where a program may have a desirable objective, the imposition by the state may have a serious negative impact on the finances of communities like ours. By this we do not mean to suggest that the state and federal governments do not have legitimate areas of concern and activity, nor do we mean to impugn either the motives of or the abilities of their professional staffs.

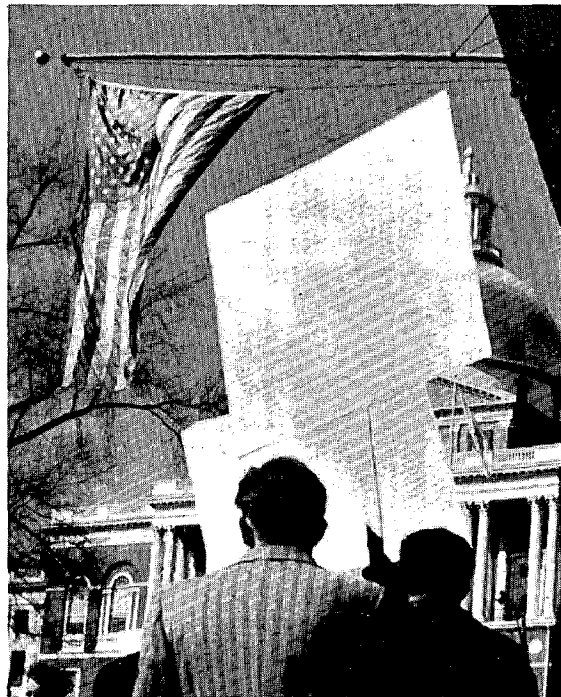
Acton

MEPA is a constant threat to the City's economic development because of the prohibitive cost involved by the City — while the pollution controls are set by the State. The State offered no assistance in assuring that plans would meet requirements. (This is an example of the State and Federal bureaucracy and technology in the failure of the City's new incinerator to meet MEPA standards.)

Fall River

The State Building Code was imposed hastily and without sufficient education. Many persons feel that it is inflexible and does not take into account the antiquity of buildings in part of the Town (e.g., height of porch railings, size of doors). We feel that its inflexibility discourages rehabilitation of older buildings. Because of its complexity, our building inspector's department had to be increased in size.

Marblehead



Reduce the term of the legislature to no more than 120 days, reinforce home rule, less interference in local rule by state; allow communities to keep 50% of the state income tax before expenses then remit remainder of money to state, give the total lottery returns, before expenses to cities and towns, expenses to be taken out of state's share of income tax. Reduce the state to the servant of the communities not as their boss.

Douglas

The State has helped to finance our schools, our conservation land purchases, and housing for the elderly facility. It has also set up regulations for construction of schools for which, if not in conformity, funding is denied. Many of these regulations called for unnecessary and wasteful design requirements which have caused continual high maintenance costs.

Concord

Many of the State's regulatory programs do offer a sound basis for ensuring a high standard of living and preservation of the environment by placing the initial decision making process at the local level. The soundness of these programs has been undermined by provisions for appeals to state agencies, appeals which frequently result in decisions contrary to local desires. An example is the decision by the Department of Natural Resources to overrule the Saugus Conservation Commission's refusal to grant an "Order of Conditions" for the filling of additional acreage in the salt marshes for the disposal of solid wastes. Such a decision completely frustrates the concepts of home rule. Not only have viable salt marshes been filled without a full awareness of the long-term effects but also the search for alternate disposal sites has been deferred for several months or even years.

Saugus

State guidelines sometimes are not always beneficial to the town. Many state laws are made for the Boston area and not applicable to the Western area of the state.

Webster

Recommended Changes

The State should play less politics and display more intelligence by not enacting additional useless legislation. Cutting of cost of State Government, welfare, unemployment compensation and reduction of taxes a must. Establish and support one agency such as the Office of State Planning to act as "Big Brother" for small towns.

Southbridge

The Office of State Planning should not be allowed to become a bureaucratic maze.

Rockland

The state and federal governments should allow the towns to decide their own future, while providing help on a *consulting* basis not a dictatorial one. Further, we believe the state should provide services *as requested* so long as the decisions are legally sound.

Plympton

It should become standard procedure for state agencies to communicate with appropriate local officials and boards immediately upon learning of any plans, either private or governmental, which would affect the town. Our experience in the past has shown that this has not been the practice.

Warren

State and federal governments should back off in the area of land use and zoning. They should operate on strictly enabling legislation. Land acquisition should be encouraged for the Town, as well as for agricultural uses.

Sudbury

The state's recent interest in growth policy and land use planning must be directed from the state level toward the urban renewal task as most urgent. Both commercial/industrial facilities and residential resources must be redeveloped in order to retain economic activity and the residential population in the urban environment. Redevelopment assistance must be made available to the small land owner and indigenous civic organizations interested in improving the neighborhoods and upgrading the quality of life for the residents. By upgrading services and living conditions in the urban centers, growth pressures will be reduced on the suburban areas on the fringe of the urban centers as well as the farmlands lying beyond.

Hingham

We recommend that the state shift the support of schools from the property tax to an income tax, return home rule to communities in lieu of state edicts and state mandates which are not state funded, change tax structures to encourage industry to stay in Massachusetts, evaluate transfer of development rights to aid agricultural industry and to preserve open space, and become more energy self sufficient.

Lanesboro

Recommended state action: Improve state administration for greater efficiency and to reduce the cost of state government. Structure of government as it relates to town-county-state should be reviewed in order to determine if it meets today's needs. The legislature has got to stop initiating programs which require local taxation and which we cannot afford.

Granby

The negative aspects seem to indicate that growth of industry and tourism cannot be facilitated without an adequate transportation system, lower taxes, and better medical facilities. However, these changes cannot be instituted without the extensive funds necessary to promote them. Such extensive funding certainly is not feasible on the completely local level. We deem State support in this area essential.

Adams

State should pressure the federal government to give communities more latitude on the use of community development funds and to consider communities past attempts and achievements.

Amesbury

Growth-related issues having statewide significance: water and air pollution; too many cars on the roads due to lack of public transportation, which also means more road building. We need more parks, state and local, with open space as well as forests. Rehabilitation of cities into pleasant economic living spaces so not everyone will be desperate to move out into rural or suburban areas. Loss of open spaces.

Leverett

Having the cooperation of state and federal governments, thoroughly consider the specific needs of individual towns, and realize that one building code or one specific law cannot be equally beneficial to all towns.

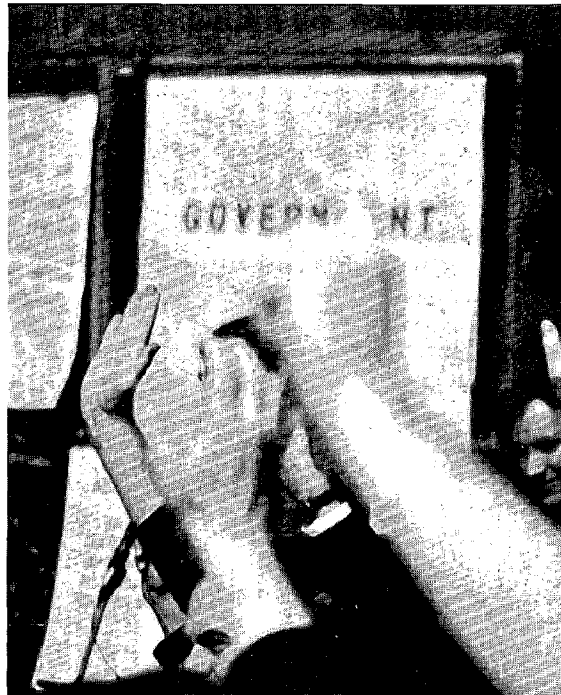
Bolton

Problem seems to be there are too many laws now; should have fewer and simpler laws. Need for a coordinating state agency for state approvals, to "clean up the red tape." If state is not capable of finding means of meeting its own responsibilities, local governments should be able to do it the way they feel it should be done; should be less state control over local affairs. State is not "town-oriented."

Holliston

Help from the State: (1) Expansion and improvements in facilities on State land to create more and varied recreation. (2) Allocation of more money for the town to use at its discretion, to improve the town itself in whatever areas it feels necessary to make the town more attractive to the potential newcomers. (3) State legislation should be adopted that would recognize the problems of small towns, and would adjust all laws so that these towns get their fair share of both costs and benefits, and are not subjected to the unrealistic requirements of much city-oriented legislation.

Sandisfield



Leave us alone. Allow homeowners to do their own plumbing, wiring, building, and sanitary systems so long as they pass inspection. Approve the clivus-multitum type of waterless composting toilet. Make streams on state property available for small hydro-electric generators. Allow large acreage zoning to preserve rural character and agricultural land, but not for snob purposes. Make Chapter 90 funds available for building narrow local roads that look beautiful. Eliminate inheritance taxes on agricultural land. All these state laws hinder our community.

New Salem

The following State regulatory programs were the subject of discussion at Local Growth Policy Committee meetings and public hearings: (1) the State Building Code; (2) the State Plumbing Code; (3) the open burning law; (4) regulations governing the small businessman ("small" defined as one employer with perhaps, 1 to 3 employees); (5) the statute governing eligibility of town residents for service on official Town Boards. It is not the impact of these programs on growth and development per se which concerns Plainfield residents; it is the intrusion of these programs into individual decision making, personal initiative, self reliance and independence, and local control. And the insensitivity of (5), for example, to the problems of governance in small rural communities. Through these regulatory programs, the state needlessly intervenes and says "You must..." in areas which should be left to the individual or to the local community to decide. It is this *kind* of government activity which concerns us, and it is the inevitable subsequent *growth* of government activity which concerns us, as well. That is, each regulatory program brings about an increase in administrative and enforcement personnel, i.e., the government bureaucracy, which we are then taxed to support. We citizens of the Commonwealth get it both ways: our value system is eroded, and we have to pay for the erosion.

Plainfield

Legislators must be made aware of the impact of their actions. New state and/or federal programs must be carefully reviewed for their absolute necessity and cost effectiveness. Existing programs must receive the same critical appraisal.

Groveland

In planning, there is a need for local communities to commit themselves to long-range planning including methods to achieve the long-range goals. The state might help through an offering of funds to defer costs of technical assistance (such as planning consultants) in a voluntary program for local community planning.

Holland

The state should amend the enabling acts for zoning, subdivision control, and wetlands, to eliminate conflict and provide for greater cooperation among town boards. . . . Have the Department of Public Health and the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering encourage sewage disposal options other than large-scale treatment plants and individual in-ground septic systems. . . . Are state laws on low-income housing encouraging the creation of instant slums? . . . Education programs for town officials of state laws and programs; provide for an exchange of information among towns. . . . Amend state laws to require a developer to contribute land or money toward municipal services, such as schools, parks, fire stations.

Hopkinton

Adaptations of state policies relating to land use, economic development and housing must be made to accommodate local conditions. It must be recognized by the legislative and executive agencies that a tract of land without public water or sewerage, removed from mass transit facilities and in rural settings must be considered under different guidelines than a similar-sized tract in an urban or suburban setting that has the benefit of public water and sewerage. The recognition that local opinions and values as well as local control are keys to our governmental system must be enhanced among the executive agencies.

Lakeville

Institute legislative action on the Legislature's own sponsored studies.

Palmer

With tax revenues stretched beyond the limits of fiscal responsibility to do what is essential, the state and federal government should do such planning as is necessary in their respective spheres and leave local communities to work out their own planning without overlays or bureaucracy and the tax burden to support it.

Orleans

Specifically, the State has made recommendations and suggestions but has failed to follow up with manpower, money, or active participation in several areas in the past.

Marlborough

The principal constraint is the availability of funds to promote development on a local and regional basis. Specific state programs developed to aid individual communities in obtaining local goals should be increased, as should general aid programs.

Haverhill

The Office of State Planning should spend less time preparing new reports and asking communities to tell it what its problems are. Instead, the OSP should work in partnership with communities to formulate and carry out plans for solving problems of local and State concern. Most communities know what they want and have been telling the State what they want for years.

Framingham

We were shocked to realize the extent of State involvement in every area of local affairs. We urge elimination of reliance on the big government concept as the solution to all major problems.

Canton

My Minority Report on the Local Growth Policy would be simply that your laws are only as good as that body that facilitates the enforcement of those laws — the Courts. As long as the courts act as slowly and without conscience then the laws will continue to be mostly useless pieces of paper. We would be better off without any laws, then the persons involved would not suffer the prolonged heartache of a distant court that doesn't give a damn. Don't pass a law in one section of government when the enforcing part of government is going to do a poor job of enforcing it.

Townsend

We recommend that the State should begin to consider preservation of local character, as determined by local residents, sufficient grounds for limiting growth. Having chosen a particular community in which to live on the basis of its present character, members of that community should have the right to block growth that is believed to be detrimental to that character.

Nantucket

State and federal agencies should review their programs for overlap and eliminate needless ones, especially those that impose unrealistic restrictions at the local level. Give the community the option of implementing controls.

Attleborough

State funding for road maintenance has been aimed at paving, widening and keeping up paved roads. In many areas of our town the dirt roads provide very adequately for our use and add to the character of the town. We do not wish to pave them but would rather maintain them properly. The state needs to consider this an equal priority with the paving projects in their funding program.

Shutesbury

More permissive and less mandatory legislation.

Worthington

The fragmented permit system which developers have to go through should be coordinated and simplified. This does not mean the creation of a single authority but development of a procedure that coordinated the decisions of the various boards involved. The aim is to have a one-stop permit system.

Pittsfield

The State should abolish county government forthwith. The functions performed now by county government — administration of courts, hospitals, vocational schools, and road construction — can be handled more effectively and more efficiently by state or local government.

Framingham

We need a state legislature that is more sensitive to rural problems and that can provide fewer regulations and more available money.

Shutesbury

At our public hearing the opinion was expressed that there should be improved coordination with the town as to use of state-owned land within the town, and as to any state programs carried on within the town. It is important that the state seek local input prior to formulating plans or programs for land use, road construction, traffic flow, signs, and other common interests.

Shrewsbury

State laws, programs, and policies have significant impact on growth within the town, but they generally have questionable benefits and are expensive to implement. This committee feels that most state regulatory programs are ill-defined and inadequately assess their own possible impacts. Some of the state programs may be better administered at the local level. . . . Two state-wide problems which the state may possibly alleviate are the rapid decline of agricultural lands and the heavy reliance upon the local property tax in growth-related decisions and actions.

Sterling

Grafton would like to see a better communication system between our town and the State itself. State plans have somewhat hampered the town's production by stressing ideas and conformities which Grafton has a difficult time with. Our local agencies can do a much better job without State planners exploring an area unfamiliar with them. A clear-cut outline of State policies should be evident and applied to towns that they will help, not hinder. The state is driving industry out of Massachusetts; power rates are too high, tax rates are too high, and waste programs cannot be met for industry to survive.

Grafton

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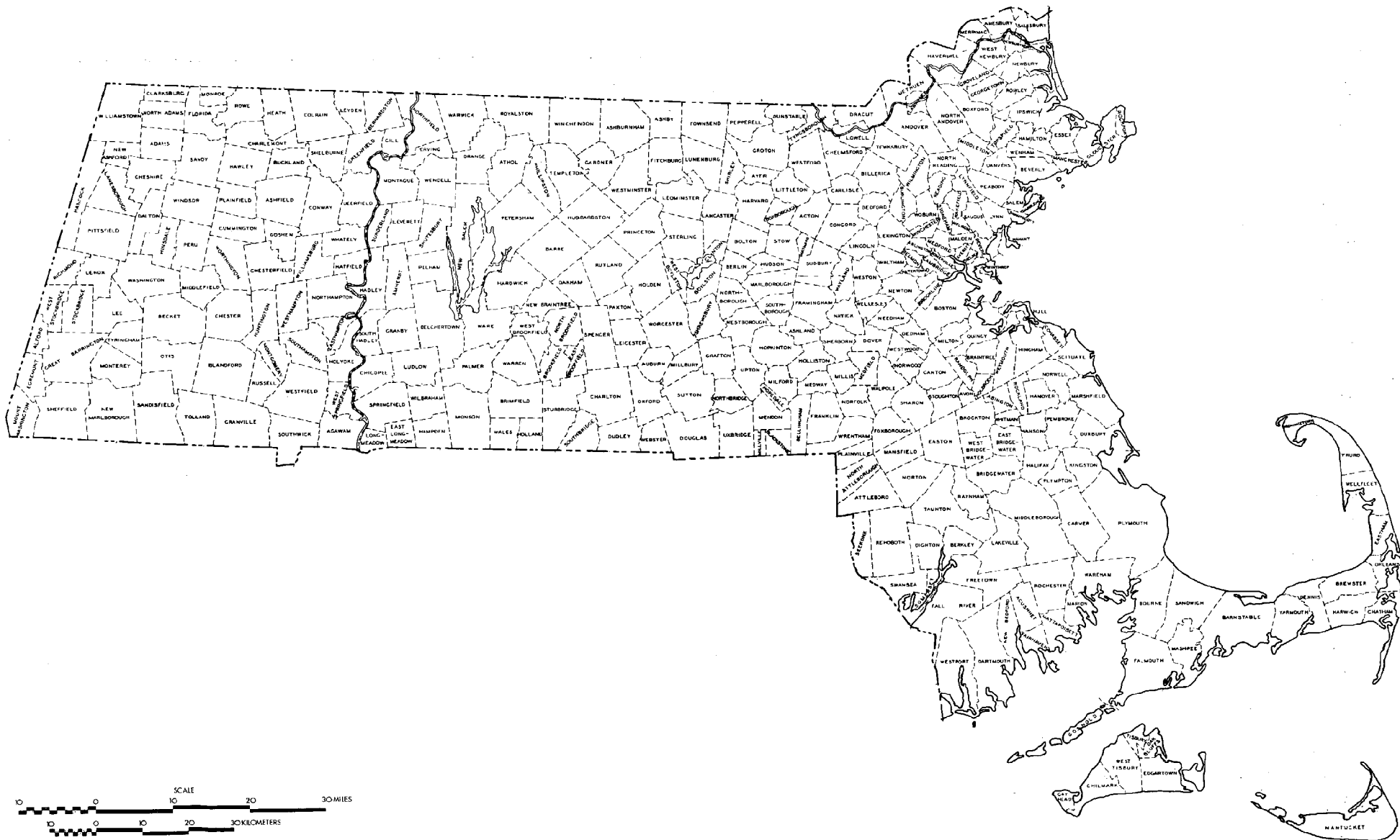
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Errata: Page 29, third column should appear under "Commercial Development" on page 45. Page 49, first column, Amherst excerpt should appear under "Community Character" on page 22. Page 32, second column, Revere excerpt, line 2, first word should read "hierarchical." Page 36, third column, Mansfield excerpt, line 9, sixth word should read "severely." Page 50, second column, Mattapoisett excerpt, line 1, first word should read "transportation." Page 65, second column, Cambridge excerpt, line 13, fourth word should read "to."

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