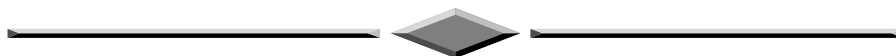

WILTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MASTER PLAN



Effective as of April 6, 2022

**Prepared by the
WILTON PLANNING BOARD**

With the Assistance of the





WILTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

MASTER PLAN

Effective as of April 6, 2022.

**Individual chapters adopted
Jan 2015, Oct 2015, Nov 2016, Oct 2018, Dec 2018, Apr 2022.**

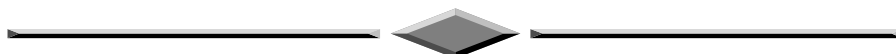
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and the



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(Adopted January 21, 2015)

CHAPTER II: NATURAL RESOURCES **II-1**
(Adopted November 2, 2016)

CHAPTER III: POPULATION AND HOUSING **III-1**
(Adopted October 3, 2018)

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(Adopted November 2, 2016)

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CHAPTER I: VISION

INTRODUCTION

Wilton's current Master Plan was most recently updated in 1999. The Town of Wilton has changed markedly since 1999, as have the regional and national landscapes. In recognition that the Wilton Master Plan should be responsive to current conditions, the Planning Board began the task of updating the Master Plan Vision Chapter in 2012.



A Master Plan Vision survey was distributed in the latter part of 2012 to find out why residents moved to and live in Wilton, what makes Wilton attractive now and what would make it better, and what the Community's overall vision for Wilton is in the next 10 years. The Planning Board also held a Community Vision Workshop in 2013 to understand the trends and forces that are affecting the community, and to understand concerns and recommendations for Wilton's housing, land use, transportation, community facilities, natural resources and recreation, and cultural and historic resources.

WHAT MAKES WILTON ATTRACTIVE NOW?

When residents were asked why they live in Wilton, a majority of respondents to the 2012-2013 community outreach stated that they value the small town feel and rural and historic character that Wilton provides while being within a reasonable distance to more populated destinations and services. Other common responses included the art and cultural community, private education, and Wilton's charming downtown. Additionally, factors that were reported as contributions to Wilton's quality of life included natural landscapes, safety, and knowing neighbors. A majority of respondents said that they plan to stay in Wilton beyond retirement.

WHAT ARE AREAS OF CONCERN NOW AND IN THE FUTURE?

In order to present recommendations, it is important to understand the Community's concerns with respect to Wilton's past, present, and future. A primary concern that was noted among residents are the high town and school taxes, preserving educational quality and future school facility needs, and the high cost of education. There are also concerns about the lack of commercial development, need for a thriving downtown, and a strong overall business base to support local employment opportunities. Residents expressed that opportunities for young people are minimal, keeping the workforce in Wilton is difficult, and mobility and opportunities for seniors is limited. Wilton residents are also concerned about the loss of rural character, which contributes to the quality of life that is valued so highly.

VISION STATEMENTS

The vision for Wilton builds upon the past work of the Wilton Master Plan Committee, which first met in 1987, and the goals and objectives of the 1999 Master Plan. The vision statements below refine the goals from the 1999 Master Plan and incorporate new visions that resulted from public outreach in 2012-2013. The overall vision for Wilton is:

- To remain a small-town that protects its rural environment, historic charm, and natural resources, while promoting opportunity for a variety of residential development and local business opportunities that are compatible and respond to the current needs of the community and support the local economy.
- To be a Town that supports a climate in which the downtown is thriving, to be a place where visitors seek as a destination, and to enhance the Town as a Gateway to the Monadnock Region, while preserving the character that is strictly unique to Wilton.
- To be a vibrant and collaborative Community that provides support and opportunities for its young, old, and ages in between to affordably live, work, visit, play, and stay for a lifetime.
- To be a Town that is a gold standard for the region by celebrating its image as a creative community where residents enjoy art, culture, and high quality education.
- To be a Town that is environmentally progressive with its policies involving energy, natural resources, building standards, and land use patterns that are critical to Wilton's long term sustainability.
- To be a Town that benefits from safe and adequate public services and facilities, and ensures that the Town's growth will occur at a rate not to out-pace the ability to provide these services and facilities at reasonable costs.
- To be a Town that has a transportation system that provides a variety of transportation options to allow all people to get to where they need, without impacting the Town's scenic and rural character and natural resources.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

The following Master Plan Chapters contain the guiding principles and recommendations to achieve the overall vision for the Town of Wilton.

CHAPTER II: NATURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Natural resources contribute to Wilton's community character, quality of life, and recreation opportunities. They also play a role in determining the type and location of development. Natural resources in Wilton include forests, conservation land, wildlife, reservoirs, and streams, as well as natural systems that cannot be seen as easily. These natural systems provide valuable services to the Town free of charge, including flood storage, clean air, water purification, productive soils, wildlife habitat, waste recycling, and temperature moderation. Loss of these services impacts human health, safety, the economy, and quality of life.

This chapter divides Wilton's natural resources into two broad categories—water and land-based resources and services. Within each category there is a discussion of the specific resources present in Wilton, resulting land use implications, and recommendations for further consideration.

Vision

The Town of Wilton will preserve the visual character of the community by protecting its natural, historic, scenic, and agricultural resources. The Town will also promote the conservation, protection and sound management of the Town's natural resources including its agricultural lands, water resources, wildlife, forests, streams and rivers, wetlands and waterbodies, scenic vistas, clean air, open spaces, and recreational areas. Furthermore, Wilton will encourage a range of uses and activities that are consistent with protecting its natural resources and features.

The supply of safe, high-quality water to the community shall be preserved through the protection and sound management of water resources such as groundwater aquifers, wells, reservoirs, and surface watersheds. The Town will regularly monitor its ability to supply water and provide backup supply of water, especially during times of drought or contamination. The use of agricultural or prime farmlands for farming, husbandry, orchards, silviculture, horticulture, agrotourism or other agricultural uses will be encouraged by the Town through the protection and preservation of high-quality lands and their soils. Natural features including open space, waterfalls, wetlands, waterbodies, steep slopes, and the presence of wildlife are important elements of our environment that should not be disturbed. The Town will encourage a range of recreation opportunities for all ages and user groups during all seasons through support and preservation of recreational areas and facilities. Such recreational opportunities may be encouraged through more formal means such as open space development standards.

Natural Resources and the Town of Wilton

Support for Natural Resource Protection in Wilton

In 2012, the Town of Wilton sent out a community survey. Respondents were asked to identify the five features most important in making Wilton a desirable place to live. 71.9% (100 of 139 responses)

answered “rural character.” In addition, 88.9% of the respondents (113 of 127 responses) rated rural character as an economic strength for Wilton. From this input it can be deduced that Wilton’s rural character has a high value to its residents and its natural resources play an important role in contributing to the Town’s rural character.

At the same time, respondents were not concerned about the potential for losing the Town’s natural resources. When asked what the biggest concerns currently in Wilton are, only 18.7% (26 of 139 responses) identified loss of conservation land/natural resources and 20.1% (28 out of 139 responses) stated loss of rural character. Respondents were also asked to identify their biggest concerns in the next ten years. Again, only 21.8% (29 of 133 responses) selected loss of conservation land/natural resources and 33.1% (44 out of 133 responses) stated loss of rural character.

There was strong support for limiting the impact of development on natural resources. 87.3% of respondents (117 of 135 responses) of the Community Survey stated that the town should require maintenance of surrounding natural resources for new development. In addition, 74.8% (101 of 135 responses) said the Town should require maintenance of adequate buffers and setbacks from wetlands.

Role of the Town of Wilton

The Town of Wilton can play an important role in promoting and preserving the natural resources that are so critical to its quality of life and community character. Thoughtful planning can ensure that natural services remain intact and functional for the wellbeing of all citizens and that public access is maintained to natural resources used for recreation. Wilton has adopted a number of ordinances designed to protect its natural resources.

- [Wilton Land Use Laws & Regulations, Zoning Ordinance 10.0, Floodplain Conservation District](#)—the regulations in this district apply to all lands designated as special flood hazard areas by FEMA.
- [Wilton Land Use Laws & Regulations, Zoning Ordinance 11.0, Wetlands Conservation District](#)—the regulations in this District are intended to guide the use of land with extended periods of high water tables, in the interest of public health, convenience, safety, and welfare.
- [Wilton Land Use Laws & Regulations, Zoning Ordinance 12.0, Aquifer Protection District](#)—the purpose of this district is to protect, preserve, and maintain existing and future municipal water supply sources of the Town by regulating the uses of land over known aquifers and their recharge areas, so as to protect such supplies from contamination caused by adverse or incompatible land use practices or developments.
- [Wilton Land Use Laws & Regulations, Zoning Ordinance 14.0, Watershed District](#)—the purpose of this district is to preserve water quality and to protect the health and welfare of the residents of the Town by minimizing sources of pollution through regulation and restriction of population density and activity, and by keeping organic and inorganic wastes to a minimum.

Water-Based Resources

Watersheds

A watershed is an area of land that drains downslope through a network of drainage pathways to the lowest point. These pathways can be underground or on the surface and they typically become progressively larger as the water moves downstream. Watersheds vary in size and every stream, tributary, and river has an associated watershed. Small watersheds join to become larger watersheds. Wilton lies within the Souhegan River watershed, which is part of the larger Merrimack River watershed.

There is a significant interconnectivity in watersheds between tributaries and the Souhegan River, surface water, ground water, and wetlands. In addition, because water flows downstream, an action that impacts water quality, quantity, or rate of movement in one location can affect locations downstream as well. For this reason, all neighborhoods and communities within a watershed must work together to make sound land use decisions.

Major Surface Water Bodies

Souhegan River and its Tributaries

The Souhegan River is a 33.8 mile long tributary of the Merrimack River. 7.4 miles of the Souhegan River flows through Wilton. The river is used for water supplies, hydropower, and recreation. In 2000, the Souhegan River was protected as a Class B River by the NH Rivers Management and Protection Act. With a Class B designation the Souhegan is considered acceptable for fishing, swimming, and other recreational purposes, and for use as a water supply after adequate treatment has been applied.

The Souhegan River Watershed contains numerous tributary streams of varying sizes. There are approximately 271 miles of rivers and stream in the watershed and 103 miles of intermittent streams. Tributaries within the Town of Wilton include:

- Temple Brook—originates in southeast Temple and flows approximately 4.2 miles northeast to west Wilton, where it converges with Blood Brook.
- Blood Brook—flows approximately 7 miles southeast from Sharon through Temple to west Wilton where it converges with Temple Brook to form Gambrel (Gambol) Brook, which flows into the Souhegan River.
- Mill Brook—originates in Temple and flows 7.4 miles through Wilton to its convergence with Stony Brook; it is the only Class A water in the watershed (meaning it is considered to be of highest quality and considered optimal for use as water supply after adequate treatment and that no sewage discharge is allowed).
- Stony Brook—approximately 9.6 miles long, rises in the hills of Lyndeborough, flows west into Greenfield, then swings back southeast through Lyndeborough into downtown Wilton where it converges with the Souhegan River.
- Tucker Brook—originates in a wetland in southeast Wilton and flows approximately 4.5 miles northeast to its convergence with the Souhegan River in Milford.

Ponds and Reservoirs

Wilton's ponds and reservoirs are an important resource for wildlife habitat, water supply, flood control, and outdoor recreation. Table 1 on the following page is a partial inventory of ponds and reservoirs in Wilton greater than 2 acres. In addition, there are approximately 50 unnamed ponds under 2 acres in size.

Table 1. Ponds and Reservoirs Inventory

Name of Waterbody	Size
Heald Pond	Area: 65 acres * Elevation: 827 feet
New Wilton Reservoir	Area: 22 acres* Elevation: 618 feet
NH Flood Control Site (Site 15)	Area: 69 acres Elevation: 835 feet
Batchelder Pond	Area: 6 acres Elevation: 819 feet
NH WRB Flood Control Pond (Temple-Wilton)	Area: 45 acres Elevation: 740 feet
Beaver Dam Brook Flood Control Pond (Site 33)	Area: 5 acres Elevation: 680 feet
Rhododendron Swamp	Area: 30 acres Elevation: 575 feet
Frog Pond	Area: 4 acres* Elevation: 465 feet

**Calculation based on data courtesy of GRANIT. Elevations based on contour map.*

Watershed District

The Town of Wilton's major watersheds are protected by Section 14.0 – Watershed District in the Zoning Ordinance. The stated purpose of the Watershed District is “to preserve the quality of the water and to protect the health and welfare of the residents of the Town of Wilton by minimizing sources of pollution through regulation and restriction of population density and activity, and by keeping organic and inorganic wastes to a minimum.

District boundaries are those land and water areas which by seepage or flow introduce water into both the old and new reservoirs in the Town, inclusive of the Mill Brook and Stockwell Brook watersheds above the reservoirs as delineated on the official zoning map for the Town.

The District's regulations include lot area, frontage, setback requirements, erosion and sediment control requirements, and those uses which are prohibited such as use of hazardous and toxic materials and liquids, pasturing limitations, grading restrictions, and uses other than residential or agricultural.

Wetlands

Importance and Function of Wetlands

Wetlands are areas that have water at or near the surface, saturated soils for at least part of the year, and plants that are tolerant of wet conditions. Swamps are the most common type of wetland in New Hampshire and are simply forested wetlands. New Hampshire is approximately 6-10% wetlands and has the distinction of being one of only three states to have retained over 80% of its wetlands since 1780.(NH DES).

Wetlands provide a number of critical services to communities. One of the most important is their protection of water quality and drinking water. Wetlands remove excess nitrogen and retain sediments that contain contaminants such as heavy metals and excess nutrients, thus assisting in providing protection of water quality and drinking water and preventing these contaminants from entering waterways and downstream pollution. Wetlands also play an important role in flood prevention and maintenance of water flow. During periods of flooding, wetlands decelerate runoff from upland areas and release it slowly, decreasing peak flood flows and mitigating flood damage. In dry periods, wetlands feed streams through groundwater discharge, which maintains in-stream flow and is important for water supply and wildlife habitat.

Wetlands provide vital wildlife habitat for species of all types, including almost two-thirds of the habitat of the state's most threatened wildlife. Wetland habitats that support wildlife range from isolated vernal pools on which amphibian species rely for breeding to swamp lands that moose utilize for their food source.

Finally, wetlands support recreation and both the local and statewide economy which is heavily based on natural resources and tourism. Quality of life in Wilton is dependent on clean water, wildlife, and outdoor recreation, to which wetlands greatly contribute.

Based on the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) there are approximately 525 acres of wetland soils located in Wilton. This represents about 3.19% of the total 16,447.3 acres covered by the Town. The majority of these wetland areas are located adjacent to rivers, streams and ponds. There are however, a few isolated wetlands scattered throughout the Town. Wetlands are shown on Map 1.0.

Wilton's Wetlands Conservation District Ordinance

The regulations imposed by the Wetlands Conservation District guide the use of wetlands in Wilton for the purpose of preventing detrimental actions or effects. The ordinance is structured around four key purposes:

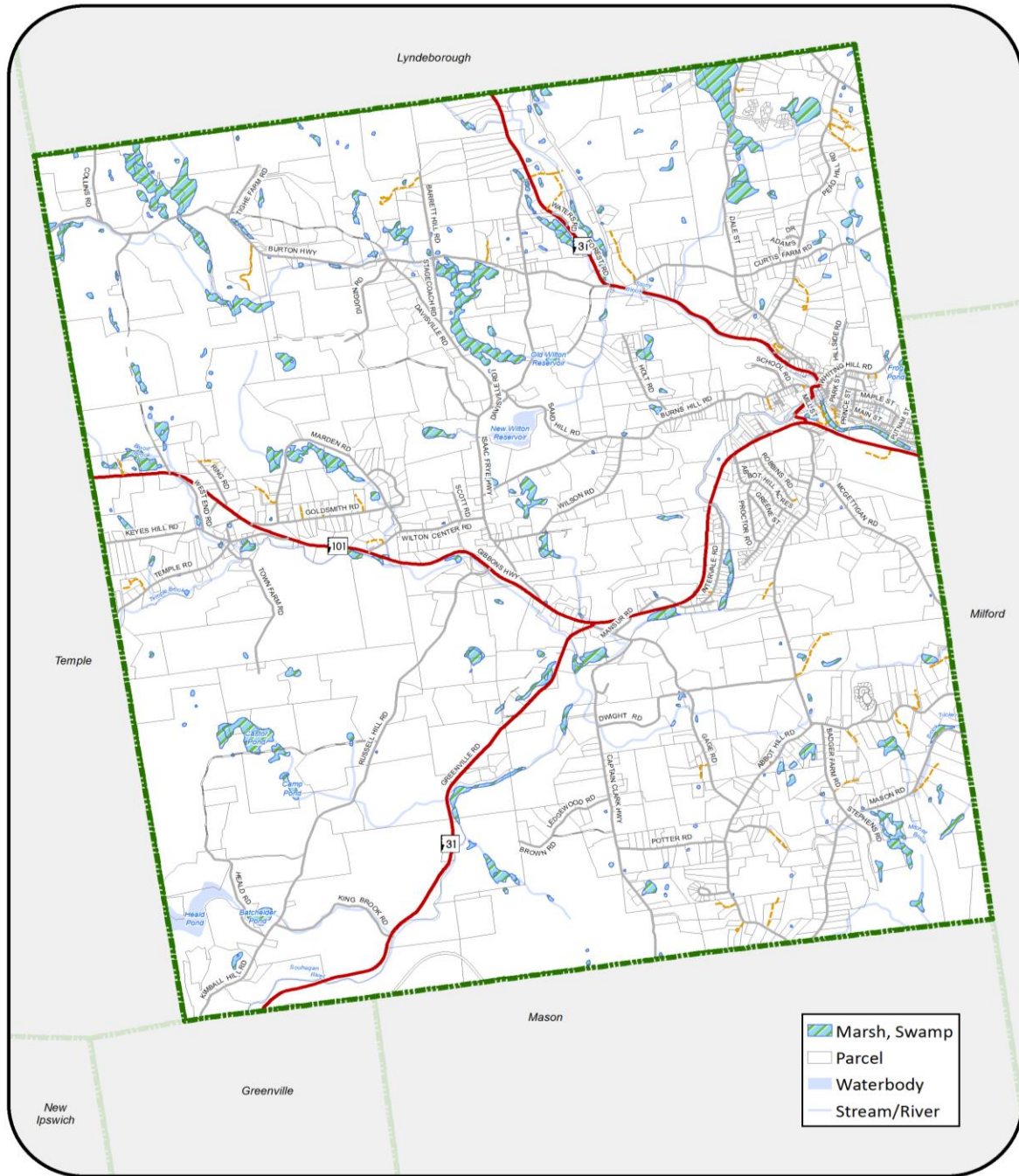
- Prevent the development of structures and land uses on naturally occurring wetlands which would contribute to pollution of surface and groundwater by sewage.
- Prevent the destruction of natural wetlands which provide flood protection.

- Prevent unnecessary or excessive expenses to the Town to provide and maintain essential services and utilities which arise because of inharmonious use of wetlands.
- Encourage those uses that can be appropriately and safely located in wetland areas.

The ordinance regulates items such as boundaries, permitted uses by right and by special exception, and setbacks. For more information see the Wetlands Conservation District, Section 11, of the Wilton Land Use Laws: Zoning Ordinance.

Surface waters, wetlands and soil types determine the location of septic systems and the suitability of land to support individual systems. The Town has limited resources to adequately determine soil types from information provided on septic plans and limited enforcement capability to address potential health-related issues as they arise. The Town should conduct further study on methods, such as more stringent setback requirements, which can assist in proper location of septic systems.

MAP 1—Rivers, Streams, Ponds and Wetlands



Data Source(s): 2006

Wetlands – New Hampshire National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), courtesy NH Granit
 Waterbodies, Rivers, and Streams – New Hampshire Hydrology Dataset (NHHD), courtesy NH Granit
 Parcels, Roads – NRPC GIS Database -

Flood Storage Lands/Floodplains

Importance of Flood Storage Lands

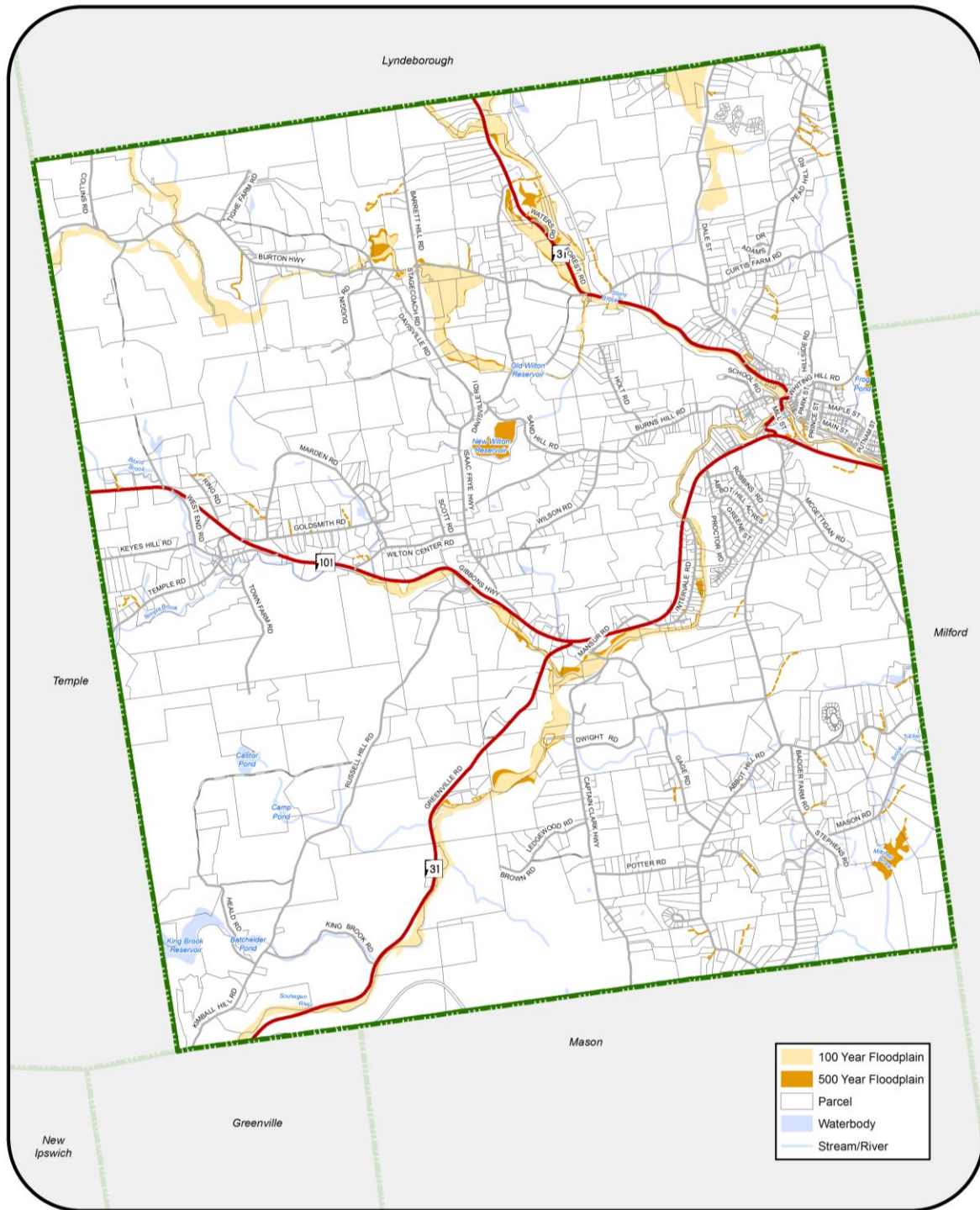
New Hampshire has more than 16,000 miles of rivers and streams. Communities have historically developed along these waterways, placing infrastructure and property in flood hazard prone areas or land subject to the risk of flooding. Riverine flooding is the most common disaster event occurrence in New Hampshire. In recent years, some areas of the State have experienced multiple disastrous flood events at recurrence intervals of less than 10 years. Locally, severe flooding occurred in April 2007 and October 2008 resulting in thousands of dollars of property damage.

Wetlands provide natural flood storage to a community. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency one acre of wetland can typically store one million gallons of water. In addition, trees and other wetlands vegetation slow the speed of flood water, which when combined with flood storage can lower flood heights and decrease destruction.

Floodplain Conservation District

Wilton's Floodplain Conservation District is centered on a 100-year flood elevation zone as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. A 100-year flood elevation is the "base flood" level having a one percent (1%) chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. For example, all new construction in a flood zone, as determined by the Wilton Building Inspector, must have improvements resistant to flood damage such as watertight walls and utilities (electrical, heating, plumbing, ventilation, and air conditioning) that are designed to prevent water from entering. New construction must also elevate the bottom floor (including the basement) of all structures to or above the 100-year flood level. For more information see the Floodplain Conservation District, Section 10, of the Wilton Land Use Laws: Zoning Ordinance.

MAP 2—Floodplains in Wilton



Data Source(s) - 2013

Floodplains – FEMA Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM), courtesy NH GRANIT

Water Supply Lands

Aquifers

Aquifers are areas of the subsurface that are water bearing. Although there are aquifers underlying almost all of New Hampshire, an aquifer's ability to provide a source of groundwater for water supply is greatly influenced by the ability of the subsurface rock and soil types to transmit the flow of water. As groundwater moves through the overburden and rock fractures in the aquifer area it gravity flows downhill and to areas of lower pressure. In general groundwater discharges to surface waters, although surface waters and wetlands can also recharge aquifers.

The following types of aquifers exist within the boundaries of the Town:

Stratified Drift Aquifers

Stratified drift aquifers are composed of sand and gravel deposited by the melting of glacial ice. These deposits may be quite extensive, layered or "stratified" and coarse in texture. This coarse texture allows for the storage of large volumes of water and the high porosity allows groundwater to flow through quite readily. Because of their potential to yield large volumes of water, stratified drift aquifers are considered prime sources of water for municipalities or other large volume users.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) recently conducted a survey of stratified drift aquifers in the NRPC region. The location and extent of the stratified drift aquifers in Wilton is shown in detail on the maps produced as part of the USGS Aquifer Delineation Study. The general locations of aquifers in Wilton, with associated transmissivity rates, are shown on Map 3. The map delineates the aquifer based on transmissivity and material composition. Transmissivity is the capacity of the aquifer to transmit water measured in feet squared per day. Aquifers are classified in four basic types based on material composition. Material composition is directly related to the storage capacity and transmissivity of the aquifer, for example coarse grained stratified drift is more porous than fine grained stratified drift and therefore it has a greater capacity to store and transmit water. The following excerpt is the USGS aquifer study description of Wilton's stratified drift aquifers:

"Permeable stratified drift covers 5.2 square miles or about 20 percent of Wilton. These stratified drift deposits are found in continuous bands along Stony Brook, Blood Brook, a Stony Brook tributary, and the Souhegan River."
(http://pubs.usgs.gov/wri/wrir_95-4100/pdf/wrir_95-4100.pdf)

The USGS aquifer study further identified the most important stratified drift aquifer available for additional water supply development in Wilton is along the Souhegan River near New Hampshire State Routes 101 and 31. This aquifer extends from the Massachusetts border northward toward Wilton Center and westward up the valley on Blood Brook. Seismic-refraction and test-well data indicate the presence of about 80 feet of saturated sand and gravel in this area. Well W-6 in this aquifer has a yield of 500 gallons/minute. Transmissivity in the most thickly saturated part of this aquifer is greater than 8,000 square feet per day.

The aquifer along Stony Brook south of the Wilton-Lyndeborough town line is of limited area extent but contains at least 40 feet of saturated sand and gravel. Potential exists for induced recharge from Stony Brook to supplement the yield of this aquifer. Although the transmissivity of this aquifer is less than 8,000 square feet per day, the aquifer may, upon testing, have the capacity to sustain one large-yielding well.

All other stratified drift aquifers in Wilton, including those in valleys of upper Blood Brook, Stony Brook tributary and lower Souhegan River contain stratified drift with transmissivity generally less than 2,000 square feet per day. This stratified drift is best suited for supplying water to individual households or other small users.

Till Aquifers

Till aquifers, like stratified drift aquifers, are also composed of glacial material. Material porosity and thickness are the main differences between till and stratified drift aquifers. Till aquifers contain an unsorted mixture of clay, silt and gravel that were ground up from solid rock by the glacier. This mixture of different sized particles limits the available pore space for water storage. Therefore, it is difficult for these deposits to store and transmit water. Wells drilled in till usually yield only small volumes of groundwater adequate for private residential use.

The only protection mechanism provided for wells in till deposits is the minimum setback requirements from property boundaries and septic leach fields. To protect these individual water supplies the Town should consider adopting more stringent setback requirements to prevent contamination.

Bedrock Aquifers

Bedrock aquifers are composed of fractured rock or ledge with groundwater stored in the fractures. These aquifers are very complex because bedrock fractures decrease with depth, "pinch out" over short distances and do not carry much water. Locating water supply wells in bedrock aquifers is often a hit or miss proposition because it is difficult and costly to determine the location of fractures. Bedrock aquifers exist in Wilton and are used for individual wells. Again, the only source of protection for bedrock aquifers is minimum requirements from property lines and septic leach fields. Recharge areas for bedrock aquifers are difficult to pinpoint which complicates any effort of protection.

Importance of Aquifers to Wilton's Water Supply – Aquifer Protection District

Aquifers are primarily recharged by precipitation and are highly susceptible to pollution from the surface due to the ease and speed with which water-borne pollutants are transmitted through the soil. Insecticides, septic tank effluent, leaking underground storage tanks, landfill leachate or improperly stored hazardous wastes are potential sources of aquifer pollution. In addition, development which involves extensive amounts of impervious material cover (e.g. asphalt or cement) can reduce the productivity of aquifer areas. Extensive sand and gravel excavations can also have a negative impact on aquifers and removal of too much material increases the likelihood of contamination. Decreasing the amount of material overlaying the aquifer increases the potential for the contaminant to infiltrate into the aquifer at an increased rate and at an increased concentration. Therefore, the Town should adopt

sand and gravel excavation regulations to protect the integrity of the aquifer and preserve the quality of the groundwater.

It is imperative that the Town protect its stratified drift aquifers to ensure the continued availability of the quantity and quality of its groundwater resource. The existing Aquifer Protection District provides a fairly strong level of protection for the Town's aquifers and groundwater supplies.

The Aquifer Protection District sets forth the land uses and activities allowed and prohibited in the areas identified as stratified drift aquifers by the USGS Aquifer Delineation Study. The District boundaries (Wellhead Protection Area) are delineated on mapping done by Emery and Garrett Groundwater, Inc. and the Nashua Regional Planning Commission and shown on the "WHPA Delineation – Abbott and Everett Production Wells Wilton, NH". The District is generally located south of NH Route 101 and straddles the area between Russel Hill Road, NH Route 31 and Davidson Road. For more information see the Aquifer Protection District, Section 12, of the Wilton Land Use Laws: Zoning Ordinance.

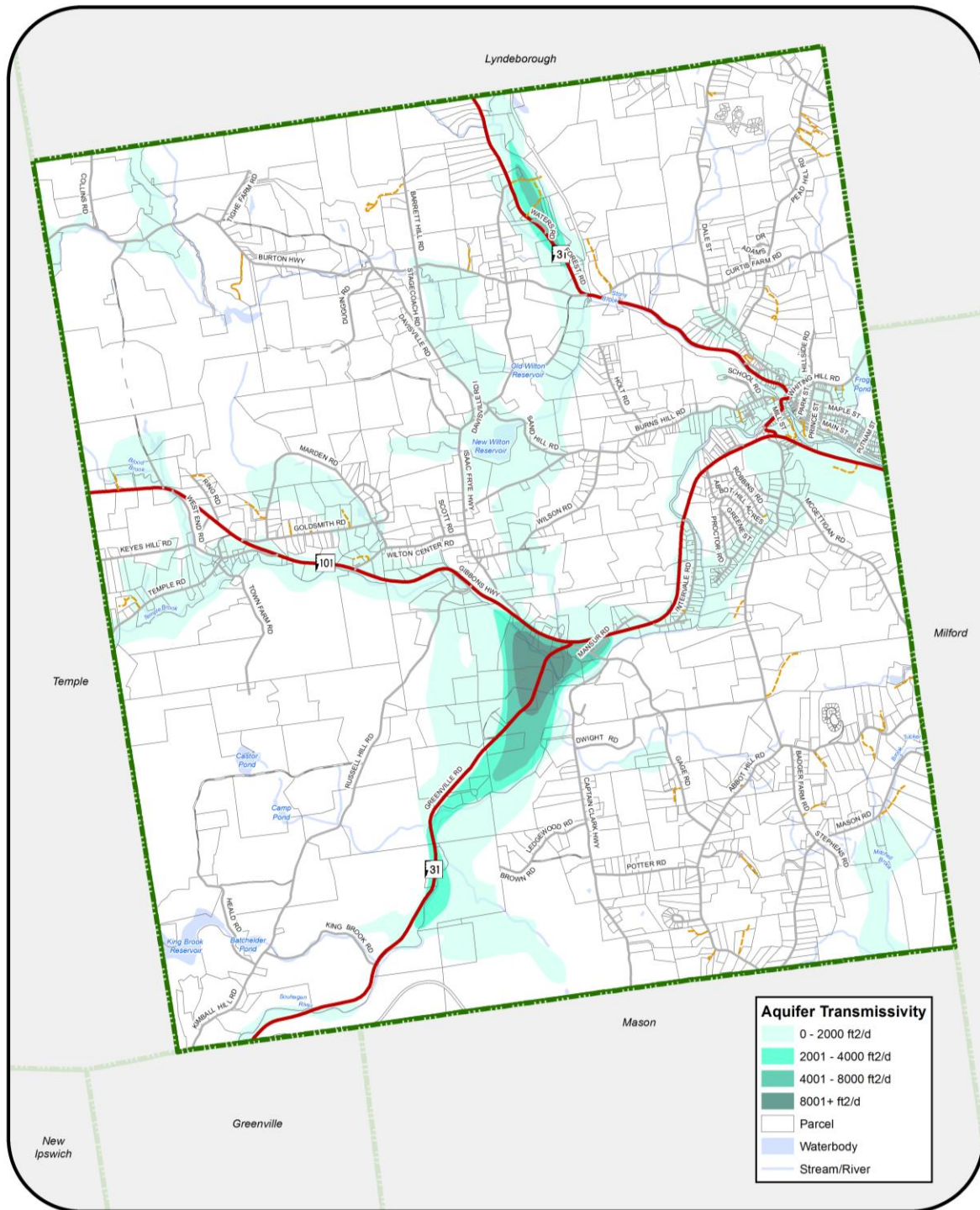
New Hampshire Dept. of Environmental Services Favorable Gravel Well Analysis

In the 1990s, the USGS and NH DES mapped stratified drift aquifers in New Hampshire. The maps showed large areas underlain by these aquifers, however, only a small fraction of these areas is likely to produce high yielding community wells. In response, NH DES developed a technique called Favorable Gravel Well Analysis (FGWA) to analyze these maps and account for constraints to siting a community well. This analysis provides a tool to make better use of stratified drift aquifer maps, helps planners understand the relative scarcity or abundance of potential high-yield well locations, and highlights the need to protect future drinking water resources.

The two constraints considered in the analysis of siting community wells are water quantity and quality. Wells must yield enough water to meet community needs and must be located far enough away from known or potential contaminants to preserve water quality. The FGWA assists in estimating potential well yield (quantity) by eliminating from consideration any stratified-drift aquifer area where the transmissivity is below a certain threshold. The desired yield determines the outcome of the analysis.

According to the 2009 Town of Wilton Natural Resources Inventory prepared by the Society for the Protection of NH Forests for the Wilton Conservation Commission, Wilton's most important water resources are the Wilton Water Works water supply wells located along the Souhegan River. These are high-yield wells in the sand and gravel aquifer along the River and near NH Route 31. Although substantial areas are protected, further land protection is strongly recommended with continued communication between all stakeholders, including the Wilton Water Commission.

MAP 3—Aquifers in Wilton



Data Source(s): - 2000

Aquifer Transmissivity – US Geological Survey (USGS), distributed by NH GRANIT

Identification of Land-Based Resources and Services

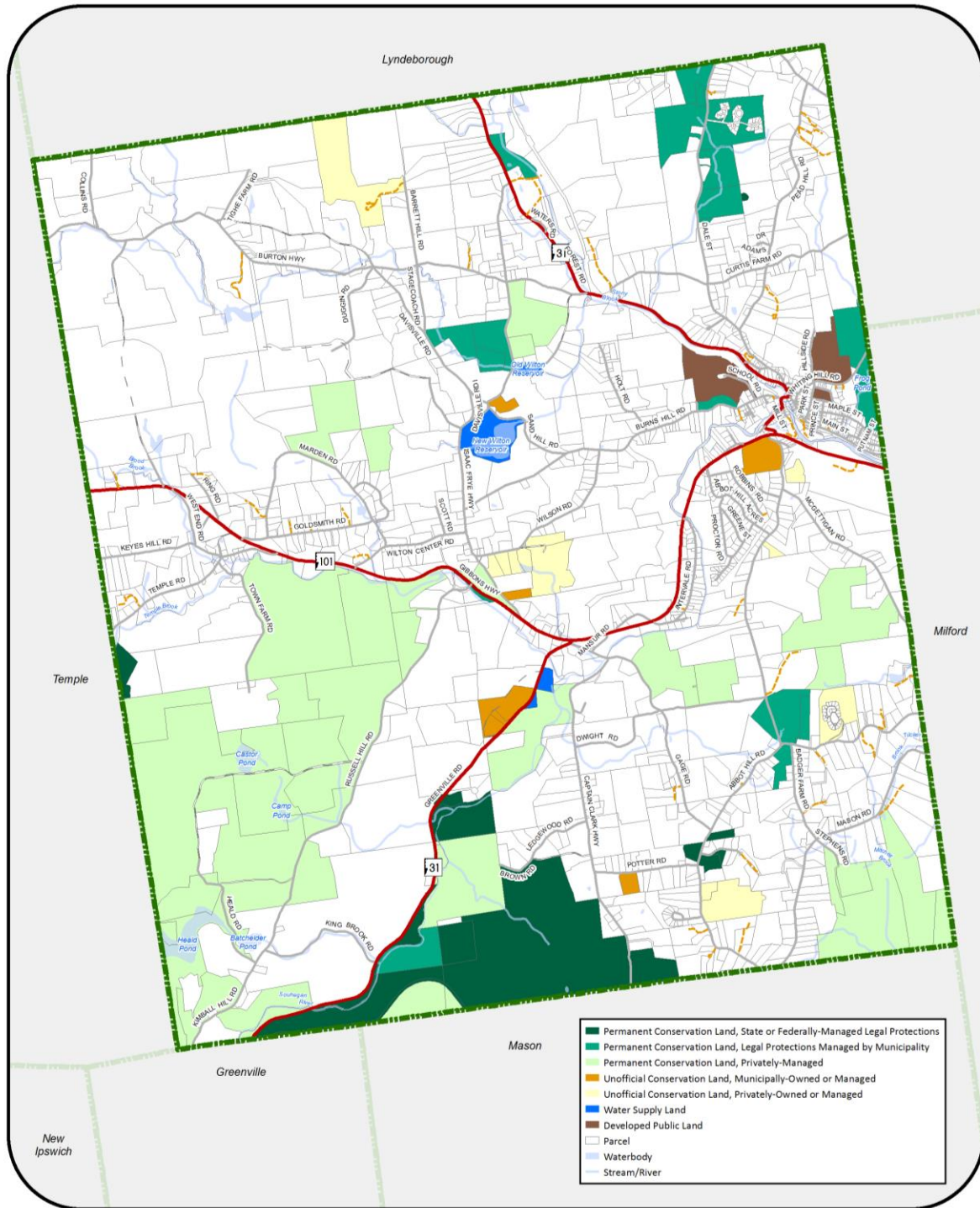
Conserved Land

Conserved, or conservation, lands are areas that are, through various mechanisms and for various purposes, kept from residential and commercial development. Existing conservation lands fall into two basic categories based on level of protection and the primary protection agency. Over the past year NRPC has been working to create a seamless layer that reflects GRANIT's conservation land data and NRPC data collected over the years. GRANIT's template was used as a foundation for the project. Level of Protection and Primary Protection Agency were the chosen categories for maps based on their importance to the towns in the region. Level of Protection is broken into 5 categories: Permanent Conservation Land, Unofficial Conservation Land, Unprotected Water Supply Lands, Developed Land and Unknown. Primary Protection Agency consists of Federal, State, Municipal/County, Private, and Other Public/Quasi-Public Entity. An in depth definition of these and other attributes can be found on NH GRANIT's website. Wilton's existing natural, scenic, historical and agricultural conservation areas and town owned lands are depicted on Map 4.

Summary of Community Opinion on Conservation Land

The 2012 Wilton Community Survey asked citizens whether or not the current amount of conservation land within the town of Wilton aligned with their vision of the future of the town. 35.2% (45 of 128 responses) thought that the current amount of conservation land seems about right. However the same number of people (35.2% or 45 of 128 responses) also thought that the current amount of conserved land was not substantial enough and that there should be more conservation land. 5.5% (7 of 128 responses) believed that there should be less conservation land and the remaining 24.2% (31 of 128 responses) did not have an opinion on this topic. The survey also questioned what actions Wilton should take with regard to nature/hiking trails. In response, 24.2% (30 of 127 responses) thought the Town should acquire more nature/hiking trails and 47.6% (59 of 127 responses) thought the Town should improve its existing nature/hiking trails.

MAP 4—Conserved Lands in Wilton



Data Source(s): - 2015

Conserved Lands – NRPC GIS database, based on NH GRANIT data template

Agriculture

Agricultural land is one of the most important forms of open space in Wilton. In addition to the production of crops and livestock, farms provide scenic vistas and help create rural character. Farming was a major economic activity in Wilton during the 1800's and early 1900's; however, as the population migrated to the cities and more fertile lands in the Midwest, many farms were abandoned with the fields and pastures growing into the forests that exist today. Because of this migration and the agricultural limitations of the climate, New Hampshire relies heavily on other states to produce the majority of its food.

According to the 2009 Natural Resources Inventory, excellent agricultural soils are found evenly and widely distributed across the entire Town of Wilton. These soils tend to cluster on the broad ridge tops as do the most productive forest soils. There are very few large, active farms left in Wilton today. Therefore, it is important for the Town to preserve its good agricultural land for both economic and natural resource reasons. As the importance of local agriculture continues to grow it is important to promote the existence of the local farming community. One such step that the Town could take is to review ordinances to determine if it effectively identifies and promotes the location and nature of the agricultural businesses and agritourism.

Agricultural lands are basically defined in two ways. First, by soil type (identified areas may or may not be actively used for farming) and second, by active agricultural uses, which may or may not be located on agricultural soils. The following sections discuss the existing agricultural resources of the Town based on soils and active agricultural use.

Importance of Soils in Determining Agricultural Land Use

Soil types are one of the most critical determinants of a parcel's capability to support agriculture or other development. This is particularly true in Wilton, where they serve as the sole medium for sewage purification through individual septic systems. Soil data presented in this section comes from three studies by the US Dept. of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service—"Soil Potentials for Development," "Town of Wilton Soils and their Interpretations for Various Land Uses," and "Soils Survey of Hillsborough County, New Hampshire-Western Part."

Based on soil type, the soils for Hillsborough County have been classified into three categories of farmland: prime and unique farmland, locally significant farmland and farmlands of state significance. Wilton has 903 acres of prime farmland, 8,506 acres of locally significant farmland and 703 acres of state significant farmland. Combined, these three categories constitute 61.3% of the total land area of the Town. Prime, locally and state important farmlands are depicted on Map 5.

- *Prime farming soils:* interpreting from technical soils data, prime agricultural soils have sufficient available water capacity to produce the commonly grown cultivated crops adapted to New Hampshire. They have high nutrient availability, generally low slope and low landscape position, infrequent flooding, and contain less than 10% rock fragments in the top six inches. Prime agricultural soils are best suited for cornfields and other row crops.

- Soils of local importance: farmland that is not prime or of statewide importance, but has local significance for the production of food, feed, fiber and forage. In Hillsborough County, this includes all land that is in active farm use, but does not qualify as prime or of statewide importance. Pasture land and hay meadows may be common indicators of locally significant soils.
- Soils of statewide importance: land that is not prime but is considered farmland of statewide importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage or oilseed crops. Hay meadows not normally in row cropping could indicate soils of statewide importance.

General Soil Types Found In Wilton and Suitability for Agriculture

As delineated on the General Soil Map, Hillsborough County, New Hampshire -Western Part (US Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service) the soils in Wilton can be classified into four primary classifications: Colton-Adams-Naumburg; Marlow-Peru; Monadnock-Lyme and Monadnock-Lyman-Tunbridge. A brief description of each follows along with each soil classification's general suitability for agricultural land use; however each classification is more specifically defined in referenced the Soil Survey):

Colton-Adams-Naumburg

The Colton-Adams-Naumburg series of soils consists of very deep, nearly level to very steep, excessively to poorly drained sandy soils located on outwash plains and terraces. Most areas with these soils are wooded and droughtiness is a limitation for crops, hay and pasture.

Marlow-Peru

Marlow-Peru soils are very deep, nearly level to steep, well drained and moderately drained, compact loamy soils and located on uplands and on smooth, oval-shaped hills called drumlins. Most areas containing these soils are forested, however agricultural uses include hay, pasture, and orchards.

Monadnock-Lyme

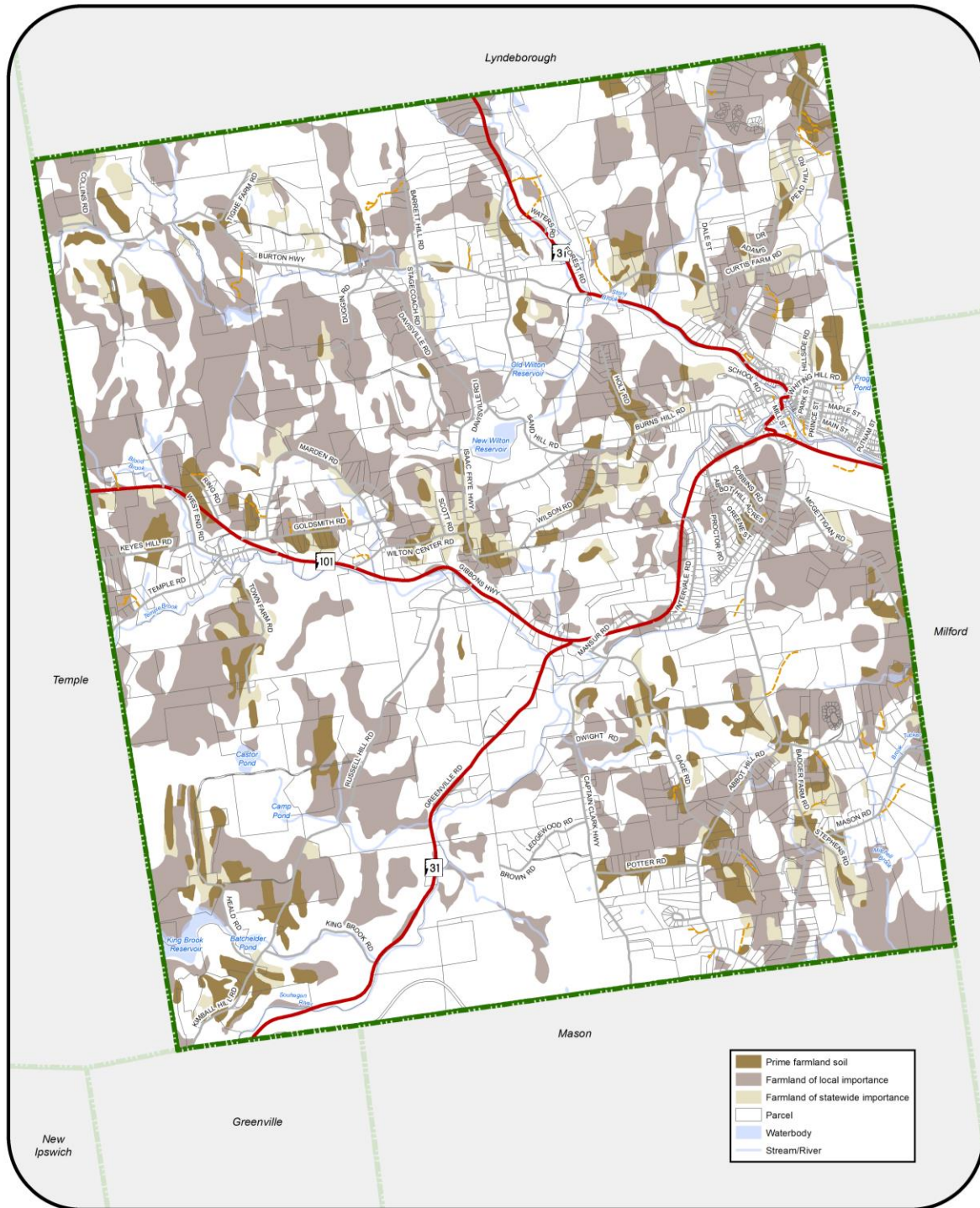
Monadnock –Lyme soils are very deep, nearly level to steep, well drained and poorly drained, loamy soils on uplands. The agricultural uses for these soils include hay, pasture, orchards and crop cultivation.

Monadnock-Lyman-Tunbridge

These soils are generally located in mountainous areas and are very deep to shallow, gently sloping to steep, well drained and somewhat excessively drained, loamy soils located on uplands. The soil is generally suited for hay and pasture, although a few areas are cultivated for crops and orchards.

Certain classifications of Marlow (76B), Peru (78B), and Monadnock (142B) are classified as Prime soils by the Soil Survey with generalized locations indicated on Map 5.

MAP 5 — Prime Soils for Farming



Data Source(s): 2009

Prime Farmland – USDA/NRCS Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database, courtesy NH Granit

Wildlife

Maintenance of quality habitats is important to the survival of all species. Change is inevitable; however, some species are less able to adapt to changes in habitat than others. The fields, forests, streams and wetlands in Wilton provide habitats for a diversity of wildlife and plant species. The 2009 Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) study evaluated habitat resources and conditions to develop a ranking to identify the highest condition habitat relative to all instances of a given habitat type in the state. The tiers of habitat quality listed below, and shown on Map 6 were based on an intensive statewide analysis:

- **Tier 1** rating was given to areas that contain the *highest condition habitat in the state*.
- **Tier 2** areas contain *the highest condition rank in the biological region* (defined by eco-region for terrestrial habitats, and watershed for wetland and aquatic habitats).
- **Tier 3** includes *supporting landscapes* such as watersheds containing top-ranked stream networks and lakes, large forest blocks, or specific animal, plant and natural community occurrences of special note.


Existing land use conditions in the Town provides habitat for common game and non-game species of birds, amphibians, fish, reptiles, and mammals, such as deer, turkeys, raccoons, pheasant partridge, fox, ducks, Canada geese, eagles and other species native to New Hampshire. In addition, a great blue heron rookery has been located in the Town. The diversity found in types of habitat, ponds, wetlands fields, and forests, means diversity in types of animal species found in the Town. It is important to maintain a balance between fields, naturally succeeding areas, forests and wetlands to ensure the quality and quantity of wildlife habitat. Therefore, the Town should protect different types of habitats to ensure the proliferation of species diversity.

Species Found in Wilton Listed as Threatened or Endangered by NH Natural Heritage Inventory

The NH Natural Heritage Bureau, department of the New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands, has the mission to find, track, and facilitate the protection of New Hampshire's rare plants and exemplary natural communities. The Natural Heritage Bureau provides information to facilitate informed land use decision-making to help protect the State's natural heritage while meeting land use needs. As of January 2011, the NH Natural Heritage database contained information on more than 6,000 species or natural community occurrences throughout the state.

Table 2 below is derived from the NH Natural Heritage Bureau’s January 2011 publication “Rare Plants, Rare Animals, and Exemplary Natural Communities in New Hampshire Towns” for Wilton:

Table 2. Rare Plants and Animals

NH Natural Heritage Bureau 

Town Flag	Species or Community Name	Listed?		# reported last 20 yrs	
		Federal	State	Town	State
<u>Wilton</u>					
Plants					
	Giant Rhododendron (<i>Rhododendron maximum</i>)	--	T	Historical	13
Vertebrates - Reptiles					
**	Wood Turtle (<i>Glyptemys insculpta</i>)	--	SC	3	193
Vertebrates - Fish					
**	American Eel (<i>Anguilla rostrata</i>)	--	SC	1	177
Invertebrates - Dragonflies & Damselflies					
**	Southern Pygmy Clubtail (<i>Lanthus vernalis</i>)	--	--	1	11
**	Spatterdock Darner (<i>Rhionaeschna mutata</i>)	--	--	1	21

T= Threatened SC = Special Concern **= Very high importance

The Town also provides habitat for the usual game and non-game species of birds, amphibians, fish, reptiles, and mammals, such as deer, turkeys, raccoons, pheasant partridge, fox, ducks, Canada geese, eagles and other species native to New Hampshire. In addition, a great blue heron rookery has been located in the Town. The diversity found in types of habitat, ponds, wetlands fields, and forests, means diversity in types of animal species found in the Town. It is important to maintain a balance between fields, naturally succeeding areas, forests and wetlands to ensure the quality and quantity of wildlife habitat. Therefore, the Town should protect different types of habitats to ensure the proliferation of species diversity.

Endangered Species

The NH Fish and Game Department is the agency responsible for endangered animal species. NH Natural Heritage Inventory, a part of the Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) is responsible for endangered plant species. The Audubon Society records the locations of endangered bird species in the State. There are no known endangered species in Wilton. This does not mean that these particular species are not present in the Town, just that none have been documented. More information about specific endangered species and their habitats can be found at each of these agencies’ websites and in the Wildlife Action Plan. The Conservation Commission should consider contacting these agencies every few years to keep apprised of changes to endangered species in the Town and the State.

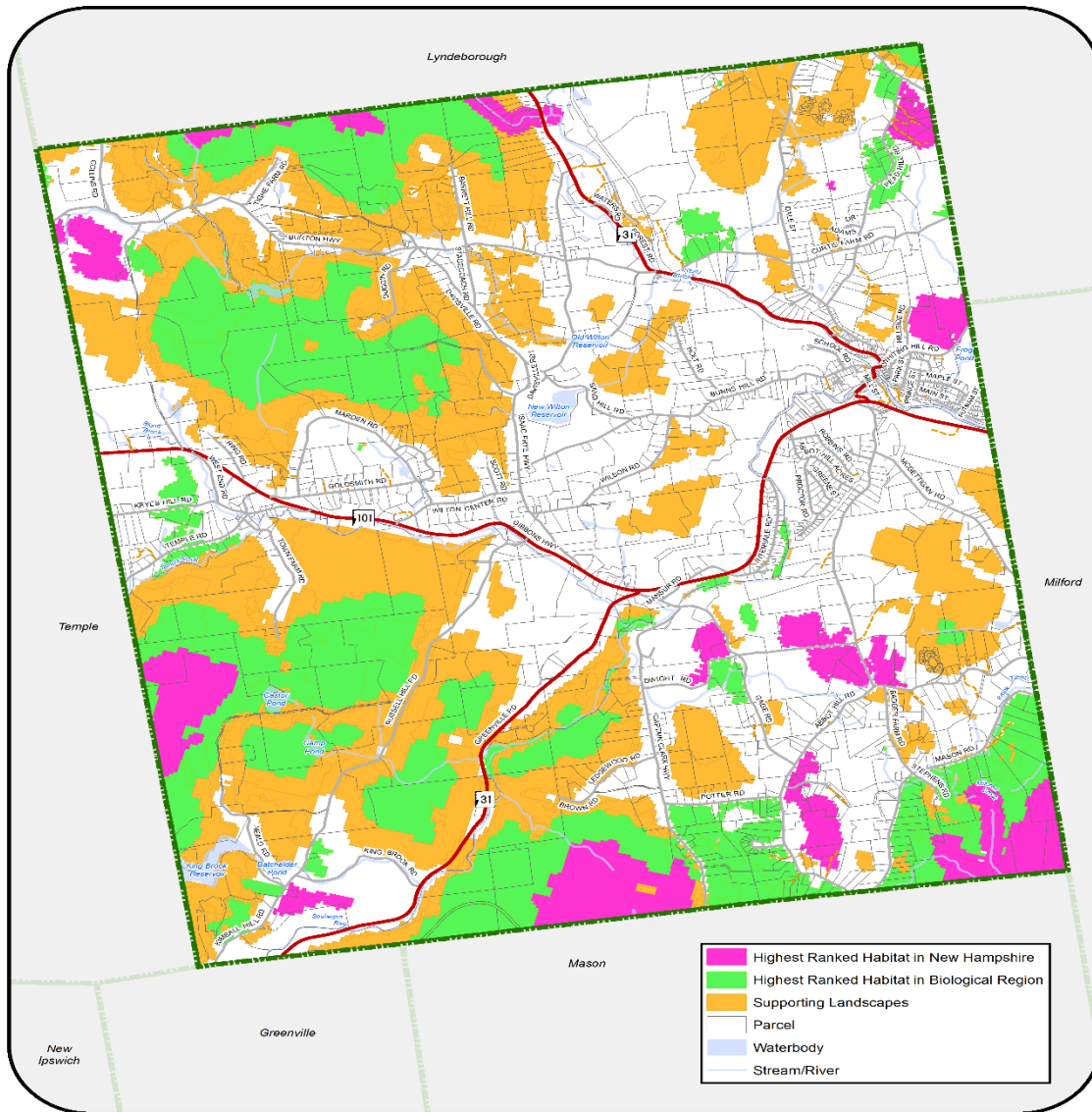
Strategies for Managing Land for Wildlife

Since many species require a large territory to find food and adequate breeding grounds, wildlife habitat protection should occur at the largest scale possible. Small, isolated segments of habitat may not contain enough resources to sustain a species, resulting in its decline. Maintaining contiguous habitat blocks as development occurs will protect wildlife and create a network of viable habitats. A model Habitat Management Ordinance is available in the Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques Handbook, A Handbook for Sustainable Development, NH Department of Environmental Services, October 2008. The model addresses the importance of preserving wildlife habitat by identifying several key principles:

- Maintaining the ability of ecological systems to provide ecosystem functions necessary to maintain wildlife habitat and the multiple benefits to wildlife and humans provided by such habitat,
- Maintaining unfragmented habitat blocks,
- Connecting habitat patches to create wildlife corridors and facilitate wildlife movement between areas,
- Protecting wildlife from the negative impacts of development, including not only negative impacts to the habitat itself, but also to animal behavior and life cycle activities,
- Requiring site-specific habitat assessment when appropriate to protect wildlife from potentially negative impacts of development.

As the Town continues to grow it is recommended that these wildlife protection principles be considered as development occurs and the Planning Board and Conservation Commission consider implementing the tools for effective wildlife protection.

MAP 6—Wildlife Habitat



Data Source(s): - 2015

Natural Wildlife Habitat Areas – NH Fish and Game NH Wildlife Action Plan 2015, courtesy NH GRANIT

Visual Resources – Slope and Scenic Vistas

Slope Categories and Associated Land Use Implications

Slope measures the pitch or steepness of land between two points. It is expressed as a percentage, which is calculated by dividing the change in elevation between two points by the distance between the two points. Steep slopes are defined as having 15 feet or greater of vertical rise over 100 feet of horizontal run, or a 15% slope. Maps and descriptions of slopes should not be used as a definitive guide to where development should and should not occur. Rather, specific site characteristics should be investigated to identify potential problems and to decide whether they can be overcome. Slope data must be used in conjunction with soil and water resources data to determine a specific site's natural capability to support a proposed use. Map 7 shows the existing topography of Wilton with contour lines at 20' intervals. For reference, the closer together the topographic lines, the steeper the slope.

Slopes are generally classified based on their ability to support development and are broken down into 4 categories. Slopes of 0-8% are considered developable with few constraints. Slopes of 8-15% can be developed but costly of special design considerations may be necessary due to the steepness of the area. Areas with slopes 15-25% and greater than 25% present significant constraints for development and potential hazards for the environment. Therefore, these areas should not be developed. Aside from development considerations, the contrasts in slope provide the waterfalls and cliffs, gently rolling fields, low, winding river beds, ponds, wetlands and bubbling brooks that people find visually appealing.

Visual Resources in Wilton

Elevation and slope are two major components comprising the visual resources of a community. Elevations provide both the high points for viewing the scenic vistas and the subjects of the views from lowland areas or smaller hills. Slope provides the subtle and dramatic changes in the land surface that make the views interesting. Together they are the two major components of topography.

Wilton's topography is typified by sloping and gently rolling hills, cut by low-lying areas running east-west and north-south along the Souhegan River and its tributary streams. Elevations in Wilton range from a low of approximately 320 feet above Mean Sea Level (MSL) in the Town center bordering Milford to just over 1140 feet in the southwestern part of Town approaching Fisk Hill in Temple. The majority of the higher elevations, those greater than 900 feet are located in the western section of the Town. High elevations in the eastern section of Wilton range between 700-800 feet with a few areas in the 900 foot range located primarily in the Abbot Hill area. Map 7 shows the contour lines in Wilton.

The high elevations in Wilton provide opportunities for viewing the scenic beauty of the Town and the surrounding countryside and these areas should be accessible to the public for passive recreational use. Development on the Town's hilltops would significantly alter the Town's rural character; and clear-cut logging operations on hillsides can turn beautiful scenes into marred landscapes overnight. Therefore, the scenic vistas need to be maintained through the use of good forest and agricultural management practices.

The Conservation Commission conducted an inventory of the scenic vistas and views within the Town. These areas are depicted on Map 8.

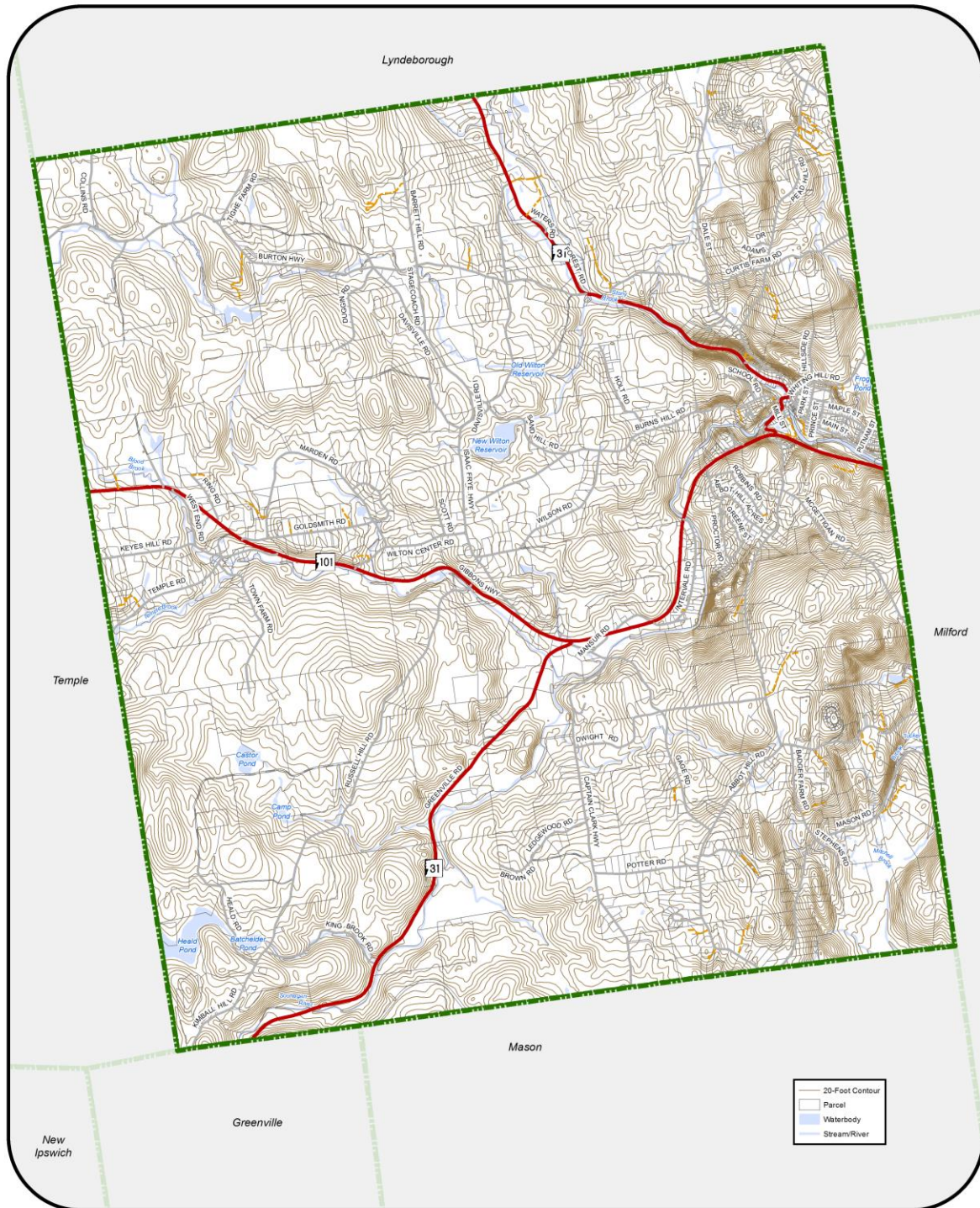
Scenic Roads

The Town of Wilton contains many miles of scenic roads bounded by rivers and streams, wetlands, agricultural areas, woods and the characteristic rock wall. These scenic roadways in many instances represent the essence of Wilton's rural character. State statute, RSA 231:157, grants towns the authority to designate local scenic roads. Once a road has been designated a scenic road, any repair, maintenance, reconstruction or paving work shall not involve or include the cutting or removal of medium and large-sized trees (with a circumference of 15 inches or more at a point four feet from the ground), or the tearing down or destruction of stone walls, except with prior written consent of the Planning Board or any other official Town body designated at Town meeting to implement the law, and after a public hearing. The law is flexible, however in that it allows the highway superintendent to cut trees, shrubs, vegetation and remove obstructions within three feet of the traveled way without consent.

Scenic road designation protects the scenic qualities of the road. At present, there are seven (7) designated scenic roads totaling seven (7) miles in Wilton, Kimball Hill Road, Heald Road, King Brook Road, Wilson Road, Sand Hill Road, Russell Hill Road and Dwight Road. The existing scenic roads in Wilton are depicted on Map 8.

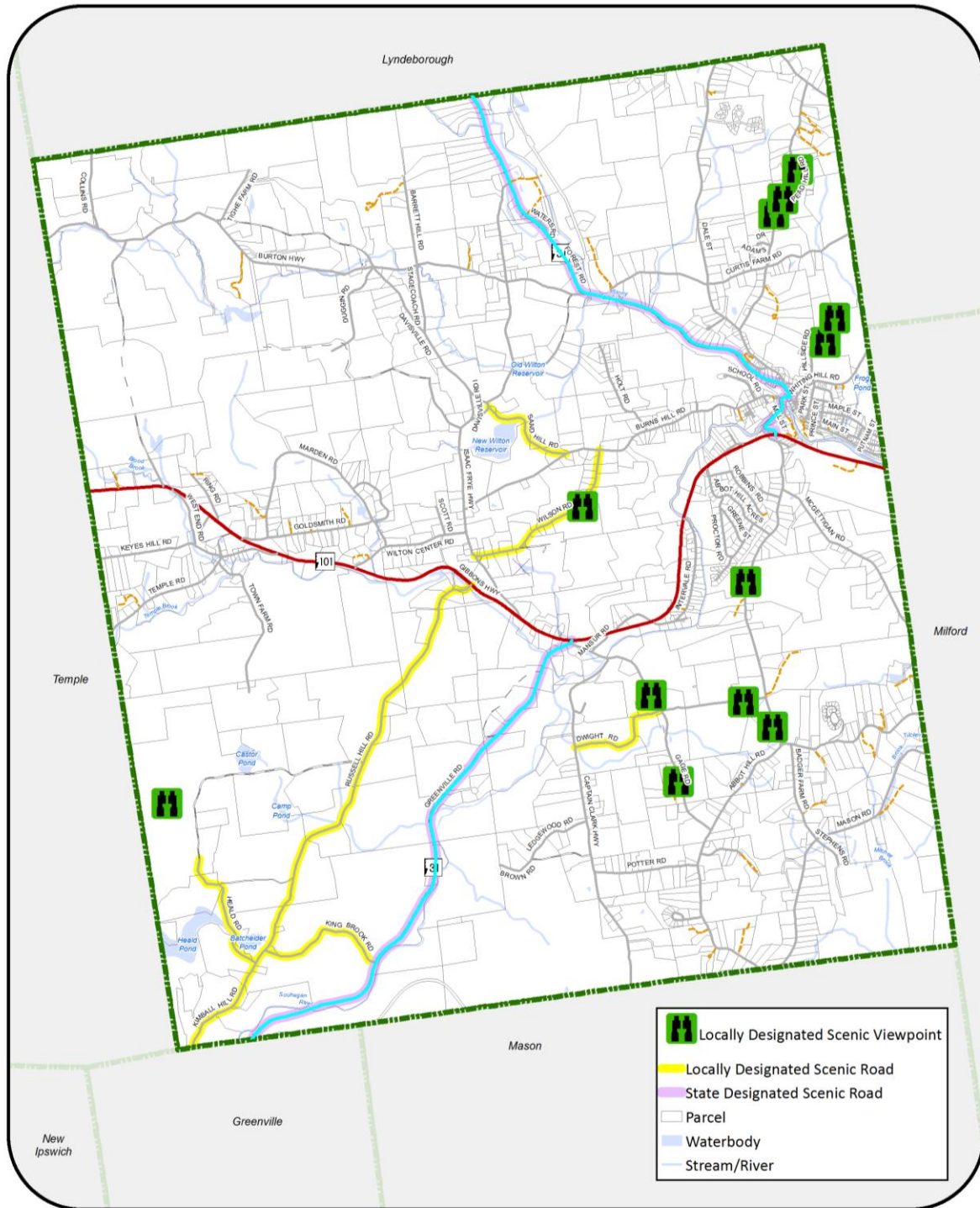
There are many roads or stretches of road in Wilton with scenic qualities and character deserving of protection. The Conservation Commission should inventory the Town's roads and organize the residents to petition for scenic road designation at Town meeting.

MAP 7—Slope



Data Source(s) - 2013
Contours - US Geological Survey (USGS), distributed by NH GRANIT

Map 8 – Locally Designated Scenic Roads and Vistas

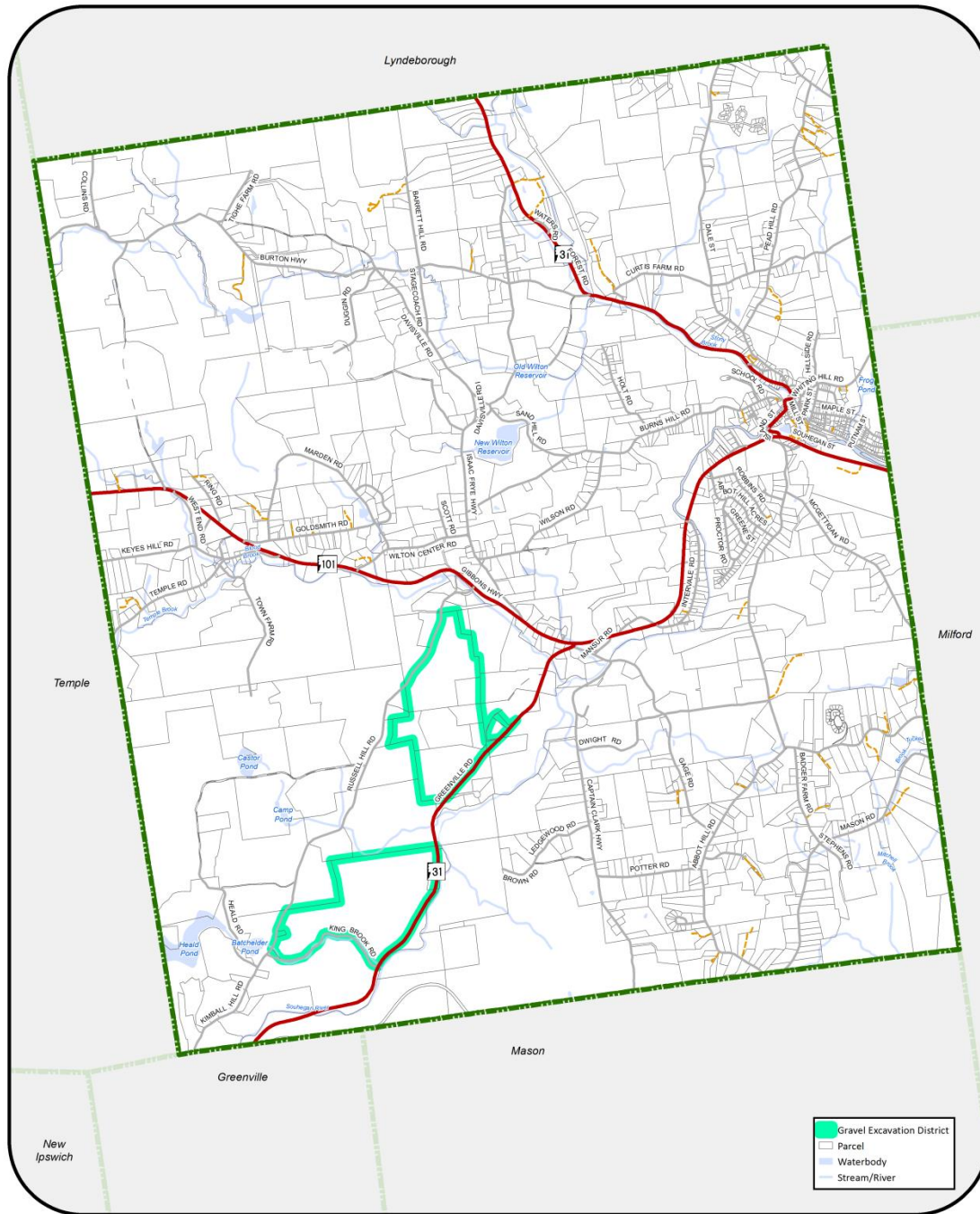


Data Source(s): - 2009
Locally-Designated Scenic Roads – NRPC GIS Database
Scenic Viewpoints – Town of Wilton Natural Resources Inventory (NRI).

Excavation Materials

Wilton has a significant supply of excavation material resources and several excavation operations. Commercial sand and gravel operations can alter the land's ability to filter and recharge groundwater and if these operations are not carefully carried out there is potential degradation of water quality and groundwater contamination due to diminished filtering capacity of the soil if excessive material is removed. The Town has taken steps, most recently in 2014 and 2015, to update and enhance its site plan review regulations for mining and excavation operations that are consistent with New Hampshire RSA Chapter 155-E, as well best practices for stormwater and erosion control.

Map 9 – Gravel Excavation Overlay District



Data Source(s): - 2015
Zoning – NRPC GIS Database and Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance

Priorities for Natural Resource Management

Natural resource management is critical to Wilton's community character, quality of life, and recreation opportunities. All natural systems are interconnected and both existing and future land uses must consider impacts that affect their health and sustainability. The 2015 Wilton Conservation Plan identifies four significant assets of the community which have been determined by the Town to be essential elements in for planning:

- Conserve Prime Agricultural and Habitat Resources
- Create Corridors for Wildlife Habitat Protection
- Preserve Scenic and Unique Natural Resources for Outdoor Exploration
- Preserve the Quality of Surface Waters and Groundwater for the Future.

In conjunction with the recommended actions included in the Conservation Plan to protect and enhance these assets, further recommendations for managing the natural resources of the Town include:

1. To protect surface waters, wetlands, and individual water supplies the Town should consider adopting more stringent setback requirements, or developing technical expertise to assist in the proper location of septic systems and prevent contamination.
2. Although substantial areas are protected, further land protection is strongly recommended with continued communication between all stakeholders, including the Wilton Water Commission.
3. The Town should review its current sign ordinance to determine if it effectively identifies and promotes the location and nature of agricultural businesses and agritourism.
4. The Town should protect wildlife habitat to ensure the proliferation of species diversity by implementing appropriate tools for wildlife protection.
5. The Conservation Commission should monitor the most current lists of endangered species in the Town.
6. The Conservation Commission should inventory the Town's roads and organize the residents to petition for scenic road designation at Town meeting as needed.
7. The Town should continually assess the effectiveness of its subdivision, site plan, and zoning regulations in managing its surface water, wetlands, and floodplain protection measures; stormwater management; agricultural resources; wildlife habitats; scenic resources; and excavation materials.
8. The Town should explore the viability of potential uses of the new reservoir.

CHAPTER III: POPULATION AND HOUSING

Introduction

Population and housing trends and characteristics in the Town of Wilton are examined in this chapter, including historical and future growth. As a significant percentage of the Town's land area, housing's cost, availability, and location are critical components in the range of elements that together define the character of the community. Predominantly single family homes, Wilton's historic housing stock and rural character are two assets that attract people.

Of Wilton's five primary zoning districts, three allow various types of housing. The largest zone is the general residence and agricultural zone. This zone allows single family dwellings on a minimum of two contiguous dry acres, duplex family dwellings on a minimum of four contiguous dry acres, and multi-family dwellings containing three dwelling units on a minimum of six contiguous dry acres. The residential district is located near Wilton's downtown and is primarily served by municipal water and sewer. This district allows the same type of housing in the residence and agricultural district, but requires a minimum lot size of one-half acre per dwelling unit when served by both public water and sewer and one acre per dwelling unit for lots not served by both public water and sewer. The commercial district allows single family and multi-family dwellings.

Wilton's population and housing trends are very similar to trends at the county and state level. Following the 2008 financial crisis, housing development in Wilton has slowed. Population growth has declined, but household and per capita incomes have increased. Public school enrollment has decreased as the age distribution of the Town is growing older. Recently, there are some signs that development is increasing again, and population projections show that Wilton will see moderate growth over the next few decades. This chapter outlines Wilton's plan to meet the housing needs of its current population and plan for future housing trends.

Data Sources, Limitations and Units of Analysis

The information in this chapter is based primarily on the 2010 US Census, American Community Survey data, and the 2014 Nashua Region Housing Needs Assessment as included in the NRPC Regional Plan in conjunction with other local and state studies, estimates and reports. Wherever possible more recent data from other sources have been utilized; however, alternative up-to-date data or estimates are often only available for larger geographical units, such as the county, statistical areas or the state. Note that given the small sample size, some of the data sources, including the American Community Survey, are used with caution for analysis and recommendations.

Vision

Wilton prides itself on its small-town and rural character, however, it also recognizes the need to provide a variety of housing opportunities that fulfills the needs of its fluctuating population and demographics. As such, the Town envisions a housing environment that encourages the renovation of

existing stock and welcomes new development that is consistent with the community's character. This desired environment is critical for guiding future development and the associated actions needed to fulfill this vision.

These actions primarily support the Town's vision through regulatory means. Some of these short- and intermediate-term actions include the utilization of land use regulations that preserve the character of existing housing stock and maintain a balance of diverse housing types at varied densities. Moreover, these actions should encourage that new development is near existing population centers to minimize sprawl and preserve the natural environment. The locations and opportunities for low-income and age-restricted housing developments should be further developed and provided as guidance for future development. With respect to home occupations, existing residential areas shall remain residential in nature. Noticeable expansion of home occupations is inconsistent with the residential use and shall be discouraged. These various measures should support adequate, affordable, and diverse housing supply that meets its needs and preserves community character.

Population

Historical Trends

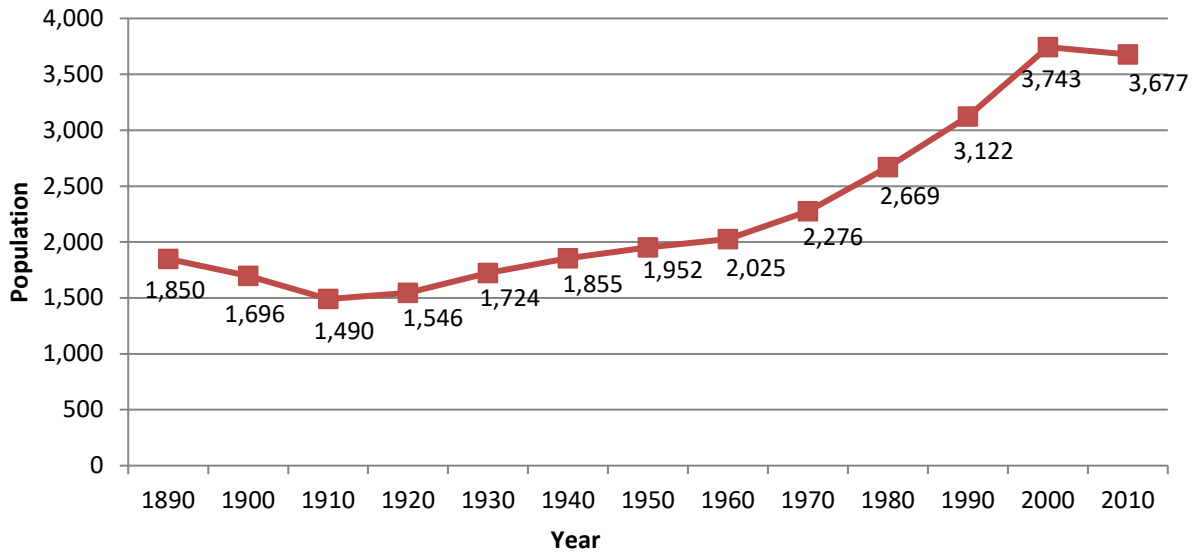
Wilton population trends are illustrated in Table 1 and Figure 1. During the first part of the 20th century, population decreased in conjunction with economic decline in the textile industry. Then, for 40 years it increased at a slow but steady rate, usually less than one percent per year, through the 1950s. From 1960 through 2000, population growth nearly doubled to about 1.6 percent per year. Since 2000, Wilton's population has begun declining at a low rate of 0.2%. The most recent US Census population estimates place the 2016 town population at 3,677.

Table 1: Population Change, 1890-2010

Year	Population	% Change	Numerical Change	Avg. Annual % Change
1890	1,850	-5.9	-103	-
1900	1,696	-8.3	-154	-0.8
1910	1,490	-12.1	-206	-1.2
1920	1,546	3.8	56	0.4
1930	1,724	11.5	178	1.2
1940	1,855	7.6	131	0.8
1950	1,952	5.2	97	0.5
1960	2,025	3.7	73	0.4
1970	2,276	12.4	251	1.2
1980	2,669	17.3	393	1.7
1990	3,122	17.0	453	1.6
2000	3,743	19.9	621	1.8
2010	3,677	-1.8	-66	-0.2

Source: U.S. Census (1890-2010)

Figure 1: Wilton Residential Population, 1890-2010



Source: US Census 1890-2010

From 1910 to 2000, Wilton’s population has steadily increased. The most significant period of growth occurred in the period 1990 to 2000. During this ten-year period population grew by nearly 20%, with 621 persons added to the 1990 population of 3,122. A factor influencing increased rates of growth in Wilton from the 1960s to 1980s was that the baby boom generation born during the high fertility period in the 40s and 50s was having children. The increased growth in the 1990s can be explained by the economic resurgence in the latter part of the decade. However, between the period of 2000 and 2010, Wilton’s population has seen a slight decrease of 65 people. The 2012-2016 American Community Survey estimates a 2016 population of 3,677 showing that the town population has steadied, but has yet to reach 2000 population levels.

Continuing trends established in the 1950s and 60s the Nashua region continued to experience rapid population growth during the 1980s. This stemmed from two broad trends, the growth of the greater Nashua economy and in-migration from the Boston area following improvements in the state and federal highway system. The population of the NRPC region in 2010 was 205,765 persons and the 2010 State population was 1,316,256 persons. The Wilton 2010 population of 3,677 represents approximately 0.3 percent of State population. The NRPC region represents approximately 16 percent of New Hampshire population and Hillsborough County, with a population of 400,721, represents approximately 30 percent of State population. Table 2 shows recent population changes for Wilton, the Region, Hillsborough County and the State.

Table 2: Population Change, 1960-2010

	Wilton Population	% Change from Prior Decade	NRPC Region Population	% Change from Prior Decade	Hillsborough County Population	% Change from Prior Decade	NH Population	%Change from Prior Decade
1960	2,025	-	63,216	-	178,161	-	606,900	-
1970	2,276	12.4%	100,862	57.9%	223,941	25.7%	737,579	21.5%
1980	2,669	17.3%	138,089	36.9%	276,608	23.5%	920,475	24.8%
1990	3,122	17.0%	171,478	24.2%	335,838	21.4%	1,109,252	20.5%
2000	3,743	19.9%	195,788	14.2%	380,841	13.4%	1,235,786	11.4%
2010	3,677	-1.8%	205,765	5.1%	400,721	5.2%	1,316,470	6.5%

Source: US Decennial Censuses 1960 – 2010, NH Office of Strategic Initiatives

Since 1990, regional growth moderated, due in part to the recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s and again due to the Great Recession that began in 2007. The economic resurgence of the later 1990s was accompanied by higher population growth rates. During this period, Wilton had a higher growth rate compared to the NRPC region, county, and state. This growth was driven by new in-migration to the Nashua region and natural increases in the existing population. Since the Great Recession, the State is starting to recover and see slow to moderate growth in the south. Population estimates for Hillsborough County show just under a 1% increase in total population from 2010-2015; essentially holding constant for many communities in Southern New Hampshire.

Table 3 presents population shares for the NRPC region municipalities from 1950 to 2010. Wilton's share of the regional population decreased from 3.7 percent in 1950 to 1.8 percent in 2010. Municipalities like Merrimack, Pelham and Litchfield have increased their share of the regional population. This shows that historic central cities and town centers were demonstrating steady or declining populations at the same time that suburban areas near the central cities and interstate highways were growing. This is consistent with suburbanization trends nationwide.

Table 3: Local and Regional Population Shares (NRPC Region), Percent, 1950-2010

Municipality	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Amherst	2.8%	3.2%	4.6%	6.0%	5.3%	5.5%	5.4%
Brookline	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%	2.1%	2.4%
Hollis	2.3%	2.7%	2.6%	3.4%	3.3%	3.6%	3.7%
Hudson	7.9%	9.2%	10.6%	10.2%	11.4%	11.6%	11.9%
Litchfield	0.8%	1.1%	1.4%	3.0%	3.2%	3.7%	4.0%
Lyndeborough	1.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%
Mason	-	-	-	-	-	0.6%	0.7%
Merrimack	3.6%	4.7%	8.5%	11.2%	12.9%	12.8%	12.4%
Milford	7.9%	7.6%	6.6%	6.3%	6.9%	6.9%	7.3%
Mont Vernon	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.2%
Nashua	65.5%	61.2%	55.3%	49.2%	46.5%	44.0%	42.0%
Pelham	2.5%	4.1%	5.4%	5.9%	5.5%	5.5%	6.3%
Wilton	3.7%	3.2%	2.3%	1.9%	1.8%	1.9%	1.8%

Note: Mason was previously a member of SWRPC

Source: Profile of the Nashua Region, NRPC 1994, 2000 and 2010 US Census

The NRPC region represents approximately 16 percent of New Hampshire population, which is consistent with the higher population densities demonstrated in the rest of the Southern New Hampshire. The 2000 census population figure for the NRPC Region was 195,788 persons while total New Hampshire population was 1,235,786 persons. For comparison, Hillsborough County population in 2000 was 380,841, or approximately 31 percent of State population, which shows that the other 19 Hillsborough County municipalities have a lower population density than the region.

Population Density

Population densities (residential population per square mile of land) for Wilton and its surrounding communities are presented in Table 4. The population density of Wilton more closely resembles the rest of the State rather than the NRPC region and Hillsborough County. Wilton's 2010 population density was 143 persons/square mile, a one percent decrease from the 2000 population density of 145. Wilton's population density has remained constant from 2000 and 2010, thereby maintaining its rural community ambiance. Its density is comparable to nearby commercial centers, such as Peterborough, and rural residential communities such as New Ipswich and Mont Vernon. The area with the highest population density in Wilton is the downtown, adjacent to the Milford border.

Table 4: Population Density -- 2000 and 2010

Municipality	2000		2010	
	Population	Density (per sq. mi)	Population	Density (per sq. mi)
Amherst	10,769	312	11,201	332
Brookline	4,181	208	4,991	252
Greenfield	1,657	62	1,749	66
Greenville	2,224	322	2,105	305
Lyndeborough	1,585	52	1,683	56
Mason	1,147	48	1,382	58
Milford	13,535	535	15,115	597
Mont Vernon	2,034	121	2,409	144
New Ipswich	4,289	130	5,099	154
Peterborough	5,883	154	6,284	165
Sharon	360	23	352	22
Temple	1,297	58	1,366	61
Wilton	3,743	145	3,677	143
NRPC Region	195,788	610	205,765	608
Hillsborough County	380,841	435	13,943	507
State of NH	1,235,786	137	1,316,256	147

Sources: 2000 and 2010 US Census

Age Distribution

Examining the age profile of community population provides insight into future changes in local population and the future needs of the Town. Wilton's age distributions for 2010 are depicted in Table 5 and Figure 2 along with the NRPC region, Hillsborough County and the State. It shows population distribution among 18 age cohorts. The percentage of people aged 0-19, about 25 percent, is on par with the Nashua region, the County or State, about 27, 26 and 25 percent respectively. However, Wilton has a much higher percentage of adolescents aged 10-14 than the region, county, or state.

Table 5: Age Distribution, Wilton, 2010

Age	Wilton	% Total	NRPC Region	% Total	Hillsborough County	% Total	State	% Total
0-4	195	5.3	11,898	5.8	23,824	5.9	69,806	5.3
5-9	234	6.4	13,578	6.6	25,588	6.4	77,756	5.9
10-14	280	7.6	14,535	7.1	27,145	6.8	84,620	6.4
15-19	226	6.1	14,402	7.0	27,716	6.9	93,620	7.1
20-24	172	4.7	11,208	5.4	24,253	6.1	84,546	6.4
25-29	197	5.4	11,291	5.5	24,657	6.2	73,121	5.6
30-34	172	4.7	11,846	5.8	24,441	6.1	71,351	5.4
35-39	238	6.5	13,972	6.8	26,881	6.7	82,152	6.2
40-44	290	7.9	16,488	8.0	30,698	7.7	97,026	7.4
45-49	358	9.7	19,183	9.3	35,267	8.8	113,564	8.6
50-54	337	9.2	17,728	8.6	33,209	8.3	112,397	8.5
55-59	307	8.3	13,936	6.8	27,074	6.8	96,289	7.3
60-64	235	6.4	11,805	5.7	22,441	5.6	81,954	6.2
65-69	152	4.1	8,116	3.9	15,045	3.8	57,176	4.3
70-74	93	2.5	5,549	2.7	10,515	2.6	39,586	3.0
75-79	99	2.7	4,160	2.0	8,325	2.1	31,774	2.4
80-84	44	1.2	3,221	1.6	6,794	1.7	24,971	1.9
85+	48	1.3	2,849	1.4	6,848	1.7	24,761	1.9
Total	3,677	100.0	205,765	100.0	400,721	100.0	1,316,256	100.0

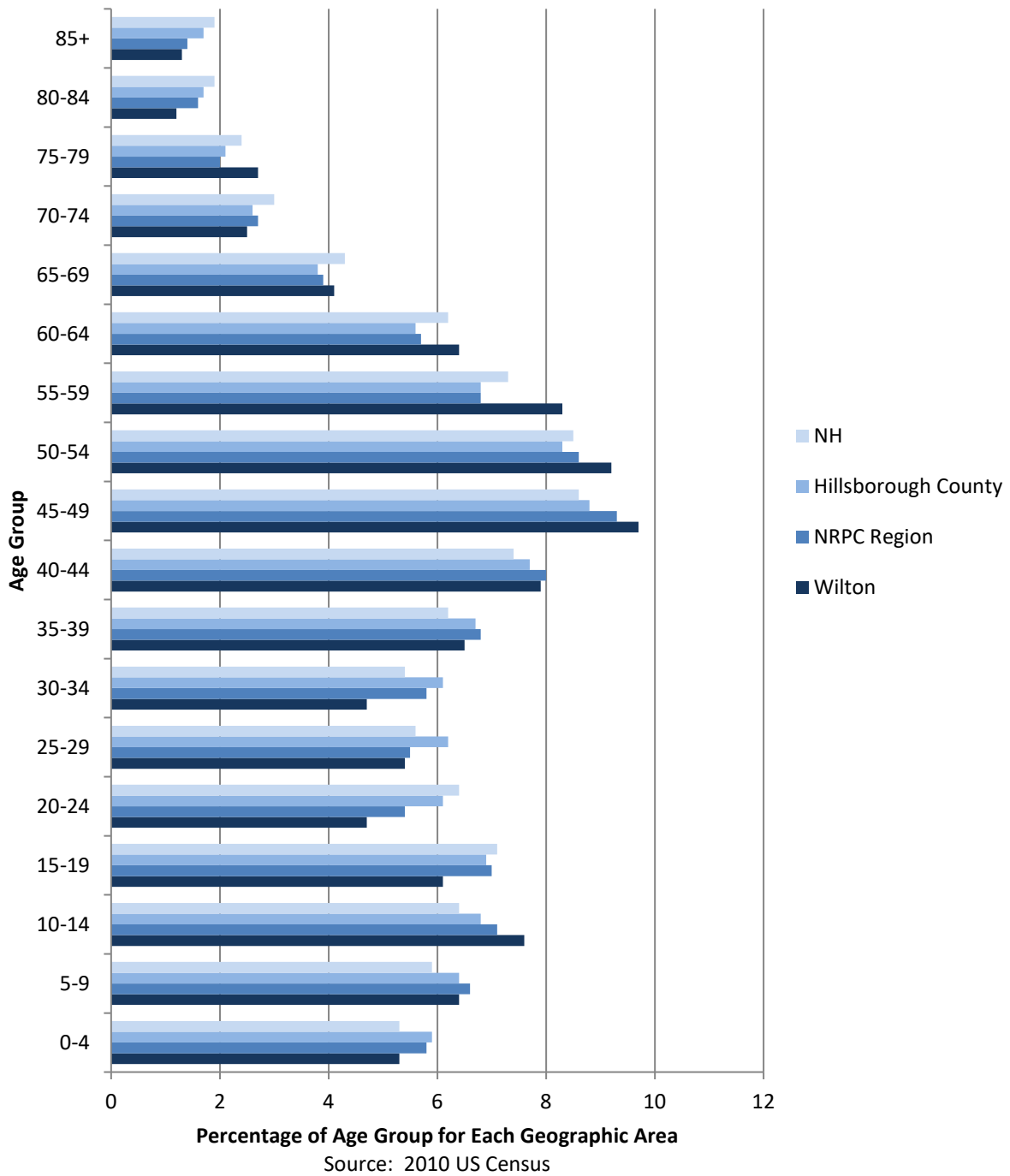
Source: 2010 US Census

Wilton's population over 55 is about 26 percent compared to about 24 percent for the NRPC region and County, and about 27 percent for the State. However, Wilton has much greater variation within the 55-59 age group from the region, county and state. This suggests that Wilton has a greater concentration of middle-aged people. Further evidence of this is seen in the increase of the 2000 median age of 37.4 to 42.1 in 2010.

Further evidence of an aging population in Wilton is a decline in public school enrollment. Between 2005 and 2016, the number of students at Florence Rideout Elementary School went from 321 to 222, representing a 31 percent decline. At the Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative Middle School-High School, enrollment decreased from 389 students in 2005 to 316 in 2015 (a 19 percent decline). This trend also suggests a nationwide trend of shrinking household sizes.

The smaller percentages of people in the 20 to mid-30 year old cohorts is a trend seen throughout the region, county and state, in addition to Wilton. This issue may be due to out migration possibly fueled by a renewed interest in urbanization or lack of affordable housing.

Figure 2: Age Cohort Distribution, 2010 – Wilton, NRPC Region, Hillsborough County and New Hampshire



Natural Increase and Migration

Table 6 shows the number of natural increase (the number of deaths subtracted from births) and population change for each decade. Migration is calculated as the difference between the population change and the natural increase. Between 1970 and 2000, approximately two-thirds of the population change in Wilton was due to in-migration of people into Town, with the other third due to births. However, migration of new residents into the community came to represent a smaller share of the total population increases per decade. After 2000, this trend shifted, with out-migration outpacing natural population increases. Part of this pattern is due to the trend of decreasing household size and suggests that younger people are not moving to Wilton to replace those moving out or dying. Since the majority of Wilton's housing stock is single family residences, obstacles to homeownership may be a factor for the lack of in-migration of people in the 20 to mid-30s age bracket to Wilton. Nationwide trends of high levels of student debt, and increased costs of living could be deterrents to young people coming to Wilton.

Table 6: Wilton Natural Increase/Migration

Decade	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase	Population Change	Migration	% Migration
1970-79	393	375	18	87	69	79%
1980-89	318	177	141	453	312	69%
1990-99	488	248	240	621	381	61%
2000-09	452	250	202	-66	-268	406%

Sources: NH Vital Statistics, US Census, NH Office of Strategic Initiatives

Household Size

Table 7 is a breakdown of the number of households and average household size for Wilton and the communities that surround it. A household is composed of one or more people who occupy a housing unit; not all households contain families. A family consists of a householder and one or more other people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. Under the U.S. Census Bureau definition, family households consist of two or more individuals who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption, although they also may include other unrelated people. In 2010, the average household size in Wilton was 2.59, down slightly from the 2000 average household size of 2.65. This is consistent with the national trend towards smaller household sizes that is also reflective in all of these communities, as well as the NRPC region, Hillsborough County and the state.

Table 7: Households, 2000 and 2010

Community	Total # of Households 2000	Total # of Households 2010	% Change	Average # of Persons per Total Household		Average # of Persons per Family Household	
				2000	2010	2000	2010
Amherst	3,590	4,063	13.18	3.00	2.76	3.26	3.06
Brookline	1,343	1,631	21.44	3.11	3.06	3.36	3.31
Greenfield	563	701	24.51	2.69	2.61	3.12	3.02
Greenville	879	954	8.53	2.53	2.44	3.16	3.02
Lyndeborough	560	643	14.82	2.83	2.62	3.20	2.89
Mason	433	529	22.17	2.65	2.61	3.02	2.96
Milford	5,201	5,929	14.0	2.58	2.53	3.11	3.04
Mont Vernon	693	838	20.92	2.90	2.87	3.17	3.18
New Ipswich	1,350	1,995	47.78	3.16	2.90	3.55	3.33
Peterborough	2,346	3,364	43.39	2.37	2.24	2.94	2.85
Sharon	138	160	15.94	2.61	2.44	2.88	2.77
Temple	440	607	37.95	2.91	2.61	3.24	2.95
Wilton	1,140	1,418	24.39	2.65	2.59	3.06	3.02
NRPC Region	72,410	78,494	8.29	2.68	2.60	3.14	3.07
Hillsborough County	149,961	166,053	10.73	2.58	2.53	3.10	3.05
State	474,606	518,973	9.35	2.53	2.46	3.03	2.96

Sources: 2000 and 2010 US Census

Income

The standard of living in New Hampshire is high. Wilton embodies the Nashua region and the Southern Tier overall with some of the highest levels of income and well-being in the State of New Hampshire. Table 8 shows the most recent detailed data available for median family, median household, and per capita income for individual municipalities, surrounding communities, and the State. The median household income in Wilton is \$1,300 higher than Hillsborough county median and \$6,000 higher than the median for the State. The range of median household income for Wilton's surrounding communities extends from a low of \$52,602 in Greenville to a high of \$115,898 in Amherst.

Table 8: Median and Per Capita Income, 2000 and 2010

Community	Household Income			Family Income			Per-Capita Income		
	2000*	2010	% Change	2000*	2010	% Change	2000*	2010	% Change
Amherst	\$113,517	\$115,898	2%	\$124,350	\$123,354	-1%	\$45,124	\$47,881	6%
Brookline	\$97,885	\$109,006	11%	\$101,872	\$116,833	15%	\$37,175	\$36,147	-3%
Greenfield	\$62,018	\$62,273	0%	\$71,438	\$72,917	2%	\$25,267	29,390	16%
Greenville	\$50,222	\$52,602	5%	\$61,913	\$63,850	3%	\$22,734	24,457	8%
Lyndeborough	\$75,804	\$76,250	1%	\$89,183	\$85,833	-4%	\$34,505	\$31,043	-10%
Mason	\$76,750	\$87,656	14%	\$78,623	\$92,143	17%	\$36,199	\$36,054	0%
Milford	\$66,476	\$63,203	-5%	\$78,336	\$80,714	3%	\$31,020	\$30,463	-2%
Mont Vernon	\$90,488	\$93,841	4%	\$98,894	\$93,841	-5%	\$39,080	\$36,811	-6%
New Ipswich	\$68,503	\$84,332	23%	\$73,489	\$91,776	25%	\$25,667	\$35,210	37%
Peterborough	\$60,174	\$60,529	1%	\$69,056	\$90,321	31%	\$33,216	\$41,947	26%
Sharon	\$84,138	\$87,500	4%	\$95,663	\$92,500	-3%	\$37,437	\$42,544	14%
Temple	\$71,755	\$72,143	1%	\$81,657	\$93,676	15%	\$27,809	\$32,180	16%
Wilton	\$68,931	\$72,250	5%	\$77,865	\$89,559	15%	\$33,805	\$37,755	12%
NRPC Region	\$87,266	\$79,244	-9%	\$92,314	\$92,966	1%	\$34,155	\$35,342	3%
Hillsborough County	\$67,798	\$70,906	5%	\$79,201	\$85,401	8%	\$32,001	\$34,767	9%
State	\$62,823	\$65,986	5%	\$73,120	\$80,812	11%	\$30,282	\$31,422	4%

*All dollar amounts are adjusted for inflation and presented in 2010 value
Sources: 2000 and 2010 US Census

There appears to be many moderate to high income households in Wilton. The data confirms that there are higher incomes in the NRPC region than the overall State. Wilton has one of the highest per capita incomes compared to its surrounding towns. This may indicate that Wilton has a higher share of two-income-earner households where each individual is earning a moderate salary. But most significantly, the Town's higher per capita income is a result of the town's relatively smaller household sizes; simply put the household or family income is divided across fewer individuals. Indeed, the 2016 median family income (\$86,313) in Wilton is higher than the median household income (\$71,083). Family households tend to have more people, and more of those members are in their prime earning years; as contrasted with members who have lower incomes because they are very young or elderly. Areas with a wide disparity between the two measures have an excess of nonfamily households.

As depicted in Table 8, the median household income in 2010 of \$72,250 represents a 5% percent increase over the 2000 figure of \$68,931 once these figured are adjusted, or indexed, for inflation. On a percentage rate basis the increase in income during 2000-2010 in Wilton is significantly better than

within the NRPC region that saw a 9% loss in income and slightly lower than the 5 percent rise demonstrated statewide.

Table 9 shows a breakdown of household income in 2010 by category. Wilton had a greater percentage of its population in the \$10,000 to \$14,999, \$35,000 to \$49,999, \$75,000 to \$99,999 and \$100,000 to \$149,999 income ranges than the NRPC region. The largest income category in Wilton in 2010 was households earning \$100,000 to \$149,999 at 25% of the town's population. Compared with its surrounding communities, Wilton has a slightly higher percent of its households in low-income categories. One factor that may influence this statistic is that there are increases in number of residents in the highest age categories. The elderly are one group that demonstrates low household incomes due to the fixed incomes associated with retirement and diminished rates of workforce participation.

Table 9: Percent of Households in each Income Category, 2010

Community	<\$10,000	\$10,000- \$14,999	\$15,000- \$24,999	\$25,000- \$34,999	\$35,000- \$49,999	\$50,000- \$74,999	\$75,000- \$99,999	\$100,000- \$149,999	\$150,000- \$199,999	>\$200,000
Amherst	2.2	0.3	2.5	5.2	8.0	12.4	11.8	24.0	18.6	14.8
Brookline	0.5	1.3	2.6	6.0	6.1	12.6	15.2	25.3	16.4	14.0
Greenfield	4.3	3.8	7.8	6.9	10.7	24.1	15.5	19.6	3.6	3.6
Greenville	8.2	3.0	15.3	7.7	14.8	22.9	14.0	8.1	3.1	2.9
Lyndeborough	2.8	1.7	6.0	6.0	12.4	20.3	17.3	19.3	8.8	5.5
Mason	6.5	4.6	3.2	6.1	4.2	22.4	10.9	21.6	11.1	9.3
Milford	2.9	2.2	11.8	7.1	17.0	15.5	15.1	16.4	7.5	4.5
Mont Vernon	2.1	0.5	2.1	5.1	6.7	15.8	24.3	21.6	9.5	12.2
New Ipswich	1.1	1.8	5.7	2.8	7.4	22.8	19.2	22.1	10.2	6.9
Peterborough	5.0	1.5	12.9	9.9	15.2	15.5	11.8	12.8	5.5	9.9
Sharon	0.0	0.0	6.3	5.6	9.7	22.9	13.9	21.5	11.8	8.3
Temple	1.8	0.8	4.9	8.6	17.4	16.8	10.7	24.0	10.0	5.1
Wilton	0.4	6.5	6.8	4.8	17.2	15.2	15.6	25.0	3.9	4.6
NRPC Region	3.7	2.6	7.3	6.8	11.0	16.1	14.7	21.1	9.2	7.5
Hillsborough County	4.2	3.3	8.0	8.0	11.2	17.9	14.4	18.8	7.7	6.7
State	4.3	4.0	8.3	8.7	12.4	18.4	14.4	17.1	6.8	5.7

Source: 2010 US Census

Poverty

Poverty is not unique to Wilton and limits available housing choices to only the most affordable homes. In the NRPC region, just over six percent of individuals live below the poverty level and 3.6% of families fall below the poverty level. The highest regional levels occur in both the most and least populous communities, Mason (13.8 percent of individuals) and Nashua (11 percent). Wilton is slightly below the region with 5.4% of individuals and 2.4% of families below the poverty level in 2016. Low poverty rates are attributable to a combination of high education levels and high median incomes.

Table 10 presents 2016 US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) dollar income figures in the Nashua HMFA (HUD Metropolitan Fair Market Rent Area) classified as having *very low* or *low* family incomes according to the number of persons per household. *Very low* income figures represent 50 percent of median area incomes (MAI) in the region. *Low* family incomes are 80 percent of the median area incomes (MAI) in the Nashua HMFA. In recent years, the New Hampshire income gap has been widening, with people in the lowest income brackets typically earning disproportionately less than the upper brackets.

Table 10: Very Low & Low Median Income Thresholds by Family Size, Nashua HMFA, 2016

Nashua HMFA	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
Very Low Income (50% MAI)	\$31,950	\$36,500	\$41,050	\$45,600	\$49,250	\$52,900	\$56,550	\$60,200
Low Income (80% MAI)	\$46,000	\$52,600	\$59,150	\$65,700	\$71,000	\$76,250	\$81,500	\$86,750

Sources: NHHFA, May 2016, http://www.nhhfa.org/assets/pdf/hudincome_current.pdf

Educational Attainment

The characteristics of educational attainment of Wilton residents are similar to those for the region and the State as illustrated in Table 11. Since the 1990 Census, Wilton's population has become more educated, with a 10% decrease of those with no high school diploma. In 2016, the proportion of residents in Wilton with a high school diploma is greater than the NRPC Region and the State. One third of Wilton's population also has at least a Bachelor's degree.

Table 11: Highest Level of Educational Attainment of Population over Age 25, 2012-2016

Education Level	Wilton		NRPC Region		State of NH	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<9 th Grade	26	1.0	3,850	2.7	22,057	2.4
9 th – 12 th Grade (No Diploma)	123	4.5	6,391	4.4	47,217	5.1
High School graduate	868	31.8	37,451	25.9	264,372	28.4
Some College (No Degree)	568	20.8	26,774	18.5	176,695	19.0
Associate's Degree	250	9.2	13,761	9.5	91,327	9.8
Bachelor's Degree	558	20.5	36,258	25.0	206,061	22.1
Graduate or Professional Degree	335	12.3	20,258	14.0	124,615	13.4

Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey

Housing

Housing Supply and Types

A history of new residential unit building development in Wilton is presented in Table 12. The trend for local residential development has followed population growth with the highest level of new construction peaking in the 1980s.

Table 13 shows the annual number of building permits issued from 2010 to 2016 and the estimated number of housing units in 2016. Negative numbers suggest either a demolition was permitted or the number of dwelling units in a structure decreased. Town Reports from 1999 to 2006 show that approximately 20 residential building permits were issued annually. The low number of residential permits issued in Wilton since 2010 could be due to the Great Recession, which has severely impacted building trends within the region. 2016, however, showed an upswing in building construction that may continue into the future.

Single family detached homes, with 1,075 occupied units, is the most common housing type. There are also 22 occupied mobile home units and 457 occupied multi-family units. Due to zoning amendments, which passed at the 2017 Town Meeting, accessory dwelling units are now permitted in Wilton. However, Wilton housing stock is likely to remain primarily single family. Note that these data cannot distinguish between multi-family rental units and multi-family condominiums or row houses.

Table 12: Decadal Housing Growth, 1970-Present

Year	Total Housing Units	Change	% Change Units
1970	775	-	-
1980	919	144	19.1
1990	1,251	332	36.1
2000	1,451	200	16.0
2010	1,530	79	5.4

Source: US Census 1970-2010

Table 13: Annual Residential Building Permits Issued in Wilton 2010-2016

Housing Type	Residential Permits, Net Change of Units							Total Estimated Housing Units in 2016	Percentage of Estimated Housing Units in 2016
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016		
Single Family	4	2	2	6	7	4	7	1,075	69.2%
Multi-Family	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	457	29.4%
Manufactured Housing	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	1.4%
Demolished	4	3	4	2	2	2	1		
Total Housing	+1	-1	-2	+4	+8	+2	+6	1,554	100%

Source: Wilton Town Clerk September 2018, NH OSI Current Estimates and Trends in New Hampshire's Housing Supply 2010-2016 Update

Housing Tenure

Housing tenure refers to whether a housing unit is owned or rented by the occupants. Table 14 presents housing tenure for Wilton, the NRPC region, Hillsborough County, and the State. Of 1,418 occupied housing units in Wilton, 1,086, or 76.6 percent, are owner occupied, and 23.4 percent are renter occupied. The Nashua region has a higher percentage of owner occupied than the State. On a regional basis, Wilton has a higher proportion of rental units. However, the rental housing market is very tight in the Region and throughout Southern New Hampshire. There is practically no available rental housing supply in some communities and the supply is very tight in many other parts of greater Nashua. The vacant units presented in Table 14 should be viewed with caution as there was a higher margin of error for those figures.

Table 14: Housing Tenure, 2000 and 2010

Community	Total Units		Occupied		Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied		Vacant		Seasonal/ Recreation/ Occasional Use*	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Wilton	1,451	1,530	1,410	1,418	1,052	1,086	358	332	41	112	19	29
NRPC Region	74,341	82,568	72,680	78,494	50,991	56,996	21,689	21,498	1,661	4,074	549	609
Hillsborough County	149,961	166,053	144,455	155,466	93,748	103,951	50,707	51,515	5,506	10,587	2,283	2,286
State	547,024	614,754	474,606	518,973	330,700	368,316	143,906	150,657	72,418	95,781	56,413	63,910

*Included in Vacant Housing Units.

Source: 2010 US Census

Age of Housing

As Table 15 illustrates, approximately half of the housing stock in Wilton was built between 1970 and 2009. Approximately 18.8 percent of the units (some 319 dwellings) were constructed during the 1980s alone. There is also a sizeable proportion of dwelling units constructed before 1940. The 650 units that were constructed pre-World War II appear to be grouped primarily along the historic town centers, including Wilton Center, West Wilton, the former Davisville area and present-day downtown Wilton. These homes are a significant cultural resource for the community as they are architecturally significant and represent the heritage of the community (see Historic and Cultural Resources Chapter).

Although a prior effort to designate a historic district failed, the Wilton Heritage Commission has conducted efforts to inventory these structures and define and document their characteristics. Such information could be used to investigate the potential to nominate the additional sites for National Historic Register designation. Such an initiative would require collaboration with property owners. Collaboration with community groups could also be useful to investigate other tools and tactics to preserve these structures and their surrounding sites for the benefit of future generations. Historic preservation easements, conservation easements, the use of Federal historic rehabilitation tax credit, and fund raising are examples of common historic preservation techniques.

Table 15: Age of Housing Stock

Year Built	#	% Total
Pre 1940	650	38.3%
1940-1949	30	1.8%
1950-1959	58	3.4%
1960-1969	59	3.5%
1970-1979	207	12.2%
1980-1989	319	18.8%
1990-1999	173	10.2%
2000-2009	198	11.7%
2010 or later	*	*

Source: ACS 2012-2016

*Note that the age of housing stock for 2010 or later is inconsistent with the residential building permit figures. Construction since 2010 represents a very small proportion of the housing stock in Wilton.

Owner-Occupied Housing Costs

Table 16 indicates that the average sale price of homes has increased since 2000, both in Wilton and its surrounding communities. Nearby communities that had low sample sizes for every year were excluded from this table. Within the NRPC region, from 2000 to 2010, the average sales price of a home increased 49.4% from \$160,000 to \$239,000. The bulk of that increase took place in the period from 2000 to 2005, when the average sales price increased 65.7% from \$160,000 to \$280,000. In Wilton, the average sales price of a home increased 93.4% from 2000 to 2005, with a 25.1% decrease from 2005 to 2015 (these figures are not adjusted for inflation). The average sales price of a home in Wilton was \$198,500 in 2015, slightly lower than the average for the NRPC region but on par with nearby communities such as Peterborough and New Ipswich.

Table 16: Median Purchase Price of All Homes

Community	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	% Change	% Change	% Change
						2000-2005	2000-2010	2010-2015
Amherst	\$185,000	\$245,000	\$383,488	\$310,000	\$311,000	56.5	26.5	0.3
Brookline	N/A	\$207,000	\$375,000	N/A	\$303,100	81.2	-	-
Milford	\$126,000	\$144,000	\$249,000	\$201,000	\$220,500	72.9	39.6	9.7
New Ipswich	N/A	\$128,876	\$250,000	N/A	\$196,000	94.0	-	-
Peterborough	N/A	\$130,000	\$248,000	\$210,000	\$193,300	90.8	61.5	-8.0
Wilton	N/A	\$137,000	\$265,000	N/A	\$198,500	93.4	-	-
NRPC Region	\$130,095	\$160,000	\$280,000	\$239,000	\$243,500	75	49.4	1.9
State of NH	\$119,905	\$143,000	\$250,000	\$215,000	\$221,000	74.8	50.3	2.8

Note: Calculations based on a sample size of less than 50 are highly volatile and not considered valid (N/A). Does not include manufactured housing.

Source: 1990-2015 - NH Dept. of Revenue, PA-34 Dataset, Compiled by Real Data Corp. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing

Table 17 shows the median sales price by housing type (existing homes, new homes, and condominiums) for Wilton and its surrounding communities in 2015. The sample size for new homes and condominiums in Wilton was too low to produce significant results. Nearby communities that had low sample sizes for 2015 were excluded from this table.

Table 17: Median Purchase Price by Home Type, 2015

Community	Existing Homes	New Homes	Condominiums
Amherst	\$307,700	N/A	N/A
Brookline	\$303,066	N/A	N/A
Milford	\$220,000	N/A	N/A
New Ipswich	\$190,433	N/A	N/A
Peterborough	\$192,900	N/A	N/A
Wilton	\$198,500	N/A	N/A
NRPC Region	\$239,933	\$372,333	\$169,333
Hillsborough County	\$224,000	\$353,900	\$161,000
State	\$219,933	\$337,200	\$172,500

Calculations based on a sample size of less than 50 are highly volatile and not considered valid (N/A). Does not include manufactured housing.

Source: 1990-2015 - NH Dept. of Revenue, PA-34 Dataset, Compiled by Real Data Corp. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing

Renter-Occupied Housing Costs and Assisted Housing

Approximately 26% of all housing units in the NRPC region are renter occupied, which is the same proportion as the State. In Wilton, approximately 23.4% of all occupied housing units are renter occupied (Table 14, above). All indicators reveal a critical demand for rental units in Wilton. In Table 18, since 2005, rental vacancy rates in the town have fluctuated, ranging from 0% to 8.2%. Caution should be used for the years that show 0% vacancy rates in Wilton as the survey methods used may underestimate the real rate of vacancy. However, these figures still suggest a very low vacancy rate in Wilton, nearby communities, and the NRPC region.

The demand for rental housing has also contributed to increased rents (Table 19). Since the mid-2000s median gross rental costs for all rental units have been creeping upward both Wilton and its surrounding communities that have a rental market. From 2000 to 2015 median gross rental costs increased 46% in the NRPC region and 53% statewide, indicating that the region is experiencing disproportionate housing costs likely due to a constrained housing supply and employment growth in southern New Hampshire and northeast Massachusetts. An increase in tax rates over time could also contribute to this increase.

Table 18: Rental Vacancy Rates, 2005-2015

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Amherst	4.7%	0.0%	2.6%	N/A	66.3%	3.0%	0.0%	1.4%	N/A	N/A	0.0%
Greenville	N/A	12.5%	12.9%	15.4%	25.5%	12.8%	4.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Milford	1.9%	3.0%	5.2%	3.9%	6.4%	3.9%	2.2%	1.7%	1.2%	2.4%	1.5%
Peterborough	0.6%	2.5%	2.0%	0.5%	4.4%	9.7%	4.1%	1.8%	1.3%	1.8%	0.6%
Wilton	0.0%	8.2%	8.2%	0.0%	3.3%	N/A	N/A	0.0%	N/A	4.3%	0.0%
NRPC Region	2.2%	3.0%	3.5%	3.9%	4.8%	2.7%	2.4%	1.9%	1.7%	1.6%	2.3%
Hillsborough County	3.3%	4.0%	4.3%	4.7%	5.6%	4.5%	2.8%	2.4%	2.9%	2.5%	2.6%
State	3.1%	3.7%	4.2%	4.0%	5.3%	5.0%	3.9%	3.2%	3.4%	2.7%	2.8%

Note: Calculations based on a sample size of less than 20 are highly volatile and not considered valid (N/A).

*Caution should be used in interpreting these numbers since the survey methods used may underestimate the real rate of vacancy.

Source: 1990-2015 - NH Dept. of Revenue, PA-34 Dataset, Compiled by Real Data Corp. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing

Table 19: Median Gross Rental Costs for All Rental Units, 2005-2015

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Amherst	\$849	\$827	\$842	N/A	\$939	\$718	\$830	\$971	N/A	N/A	\$1,308
Greenville	N/A	\$830	\$832	\$800	\$794	\$865	\$898	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Milford	\$947	\$1,010	\$994	\$1,085	\$1,020	\$1,056	\$1,067	\$1,031	\$1,060	\$1,210	\$1,119
Peterborough	\$793	\$832	\$794	\$907	\$926	\$933	\$974	\$955	\$975	\$1,023	\$921
Wilton	\$1,023	\$918	\$948	\$1,157	\$1,109	N/A	N/A	\$1,141	N/A	\$1,137	\$1,144
NRPC Region	\$1,024	\$1,048	\$1,071	\$1,082	\$1,089	\$1,090	\$1,096	\$1,120	\$1,139	\$1,137	\$1,214
Hillsborough County	\$994	\$1,008	\$998	\$1,024	\$1,019	\$1,026	\$1,040	\$1,067	\$1,054	\$1,073	\$1,148
State	\$901	\$928	\$946	\$969	\$969	\$980	\$984	\$1,005	\$1,018	\$1,037	\$1,069

Note: Calculations based on a sample size of less than 20 are highly volatile and not considered valid (N/A).

*Caution should be used in interpreting these numbers since the survey methods used may underestimate the real rate of vacancy.

Source: 1990-2015 - NH Dept. of Revenue, PA-34 Dataset, Compiled by Real Data Corp. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing

Table 20 shows a count of assisted and accessible units for Wilton and its surrounding communities. The majority of all assisted housing in the region is located in the city of Nashua (not shown on the table). A significant portion of assisted housing for the region is also located in the center of Milford, with Peterborough and Greenville also having significant supplies. Overall, most assisted housing is restricted to elderly or senior populations, which is a concern in terms of impeding residents' access to fair housing based on familial status. Wilton has a total of 31 elderly assisted housing units (located at Edgewater Estates on Howard Street), no assisted family units, and no accessible units.

Table 20: Count of Assisted (and Handicap Accessible) Housing Units

Community	Total	Elderly	Family	Elderly/ Family	Transitional Housing	Special Needs
Amherst	49 (4)	21 (2)	28 (2)	0	0	0
Brookline	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greenfield	24(2)	24(2)	0	0	0	0
Greenville	70(4)	70	0	0	0	0
Lyndeborough	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mason	0	0	0	0	0	0
Milford	182 (9)	132 (9)	50	0	0	0
Mont Vernon	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Ipswich	0	0	0	0	0	0
Peterborough	80	51(2)	29(2)	0	0	0
Sharon	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temple	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wilton	31	31	0	0	0	0
NRPC Region	2,661 (278)	1,450 (219)	538 (29)	132 (8)	60 (20)	114 (5)

Source: NH Housing, Directory of Assisted Housing, 2016

The following represent definitions of the terms used in Table 20:

- **Elderly Housing:** a household whose head or spouse or sole member is elderly, or a person with disabilities (HUD definition).
- **Family:** A unit with dependents or children
- **Elderly/Family:** a family whose head or spouse or sole member is a person who is at least 62 years of age.
- **Transitional Housing:** a project that is designed to provide housing and appropriate supportive services to homeless persons to facilitate movement to independent living within 24 months, or a longer period approved by HUD.
- **Special Needs:** includes the frail and non-frail elderly, persons with physical, mental, or behavioral disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, persons with alcohol or drug addictions.

The use of the words “assisted housing” or “assisted units” in Table 19 does not mean that all the housing units are intended for tenants requiring assistance in the activities of daily living (cooking, cleaning, shopping, etc.). Rather, “assisted” means that the housing facilities listed here have been or are being provided subsidies for the purpose of creating affordable units for low and very low-income households.

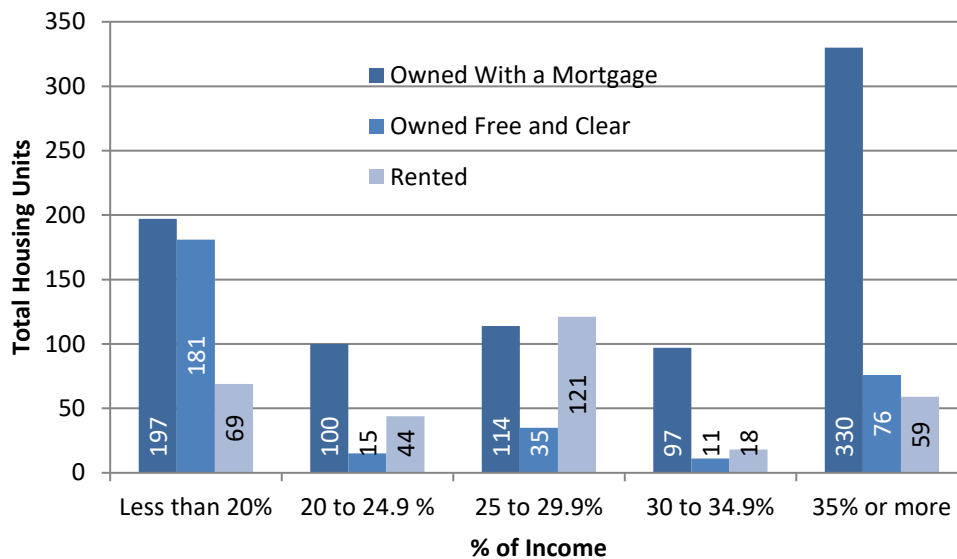
Because there are many characteristics that can make a unit “accessible,” a precise definition was not used in collecting this data by New Hampshire Housing. A list of typical characteristics of accessible units was used as a guideline. The characteristics included, but were not limited to the following: roll in showers; grab bars in the bathroom and shower areas; wiring to accommodate strobe lights for the hearing impaired; flush interior/exterior thresholds; hallways wide enough to accommodate wheelchair

turns; 5 feet turning space in bathrooms and kitchens, lever door knobs; accessible low level cabinets; accessible appliances; low level light switches; rounded counter top edges, etc. During data collection, respondents to the census used their own judgment to determine whether a unit was accessible. Therefore, not all the “accessible units” contain the features listed.

Housing Affordability

Figure 3 portrays the cost of housing in Wilton relative to household income based on units that are owned with a mortgage, owned free and clear, or rented. For example, approximately 200 households own their home, have a mortgage, and pay less than 20% of their household income toward monthly mortgage and associated costs, such as taxes and insurance. Approximately forty percent of all households spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs. Housing expenditures that exceed 30 percent of household income have historically been viewed as an indicator of a housing affordability problem, which is now the standard set forth in the 1981 amendment to the Housing and Urban Development Act.¹ The NRPC region overall has one of the most assorted housing supplies in the state. With new forms of housing beginning to gain popularity, such as multi-family housing versus the traditional single-family homes, Wilton could increase its options for current and potential residents.

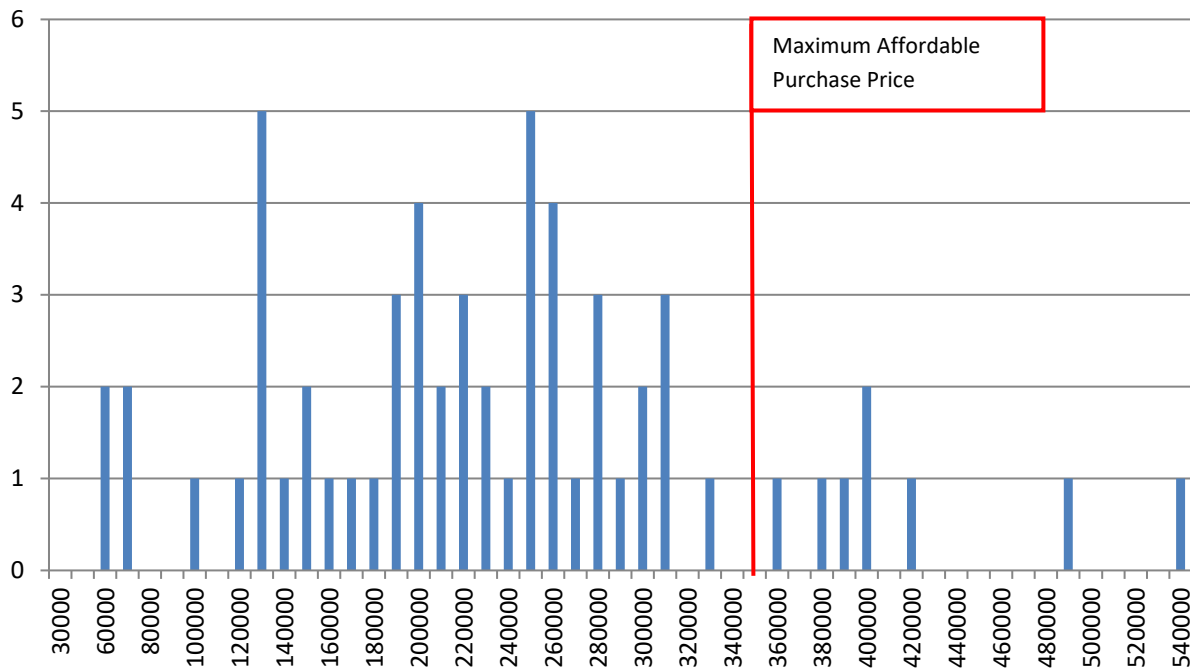
Figure 3: Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, 2016



Source: ACS 2012-2016

¹ <https://www.census.gov/housing/census/publications/who-can-afford.pdf>

Figure 4: Primary Home Purchase Price Frequency, Town of Wilton, 2016



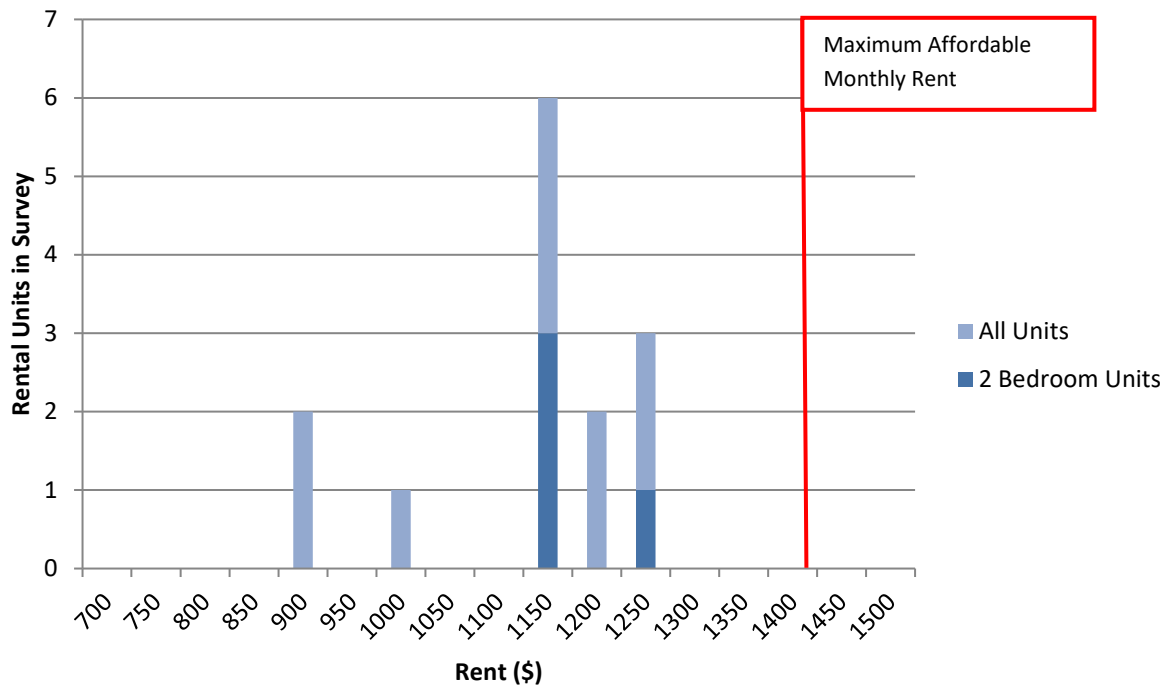
Source: 1990-2016 - NH Dept. of Revenue, PA-34 Dataset, Compiled by Real Data Corp. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing. 2016 - The Warren Group. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing.

***Note: Figure 4 does not correlate exactly with Figure 3 due to the use of a different data set and different sample sizes.**

The maximum affordable purchase price of homes in Wilton is estimated to be \$352,500 for a family of four that makes 100% of the median area income (red line as shown in Figure 4)². The maximum affordable purchase price represents the point at which households are spending 30% of their income on housing with 5% down payment, 30-year mortgage at 3.65%, 0.5 points, private mortgage insurance, and estimated taxes and hazard insurance. This is the threshold for the State’s definition of Workforce Housing. It is generally considered a healthy market when residents are putting 30% of their income toward housing. When the majority of residents are paying more than 30% of their income on housing it is reflective of an unaffordable housing market. In Wilton the majority of housing falls below the maximum affordable housing price, which translates to having many affordable housing options. However, since 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) data shows that nearly forty percent of residents are paying 30% or more on their mortgage, the data in Figures 4 and 5 may be indicators of low housing prices following the recession, rather than a large supply of affordable housing.

² NH Housing, 2018 Workforce Housing Purchase and Rent Limits, http://www.nhhfa.org/assets/pdf/WrkfrchsgPurchaseAndRentLimits_2018.pdf

Figure 5: Primary Home Rental Price Frequency, Town of Wilton, 2016



Source: 1990-2016 - NH Dept. of Revenue, PA-34 Dataset, Compiled by Real Data Corp. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing. 2017 - The Warren Group. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing.

*Note: Figure 5 does not correlate exactly with Figure 3 due to the use of a different data set and different sample sizes.

The maximum affordable monthly rent of units in Wilton is estimated to be \$1,440 for a family of three making 60% of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) median area income (red line shown in Figure 5)³. The maximum affordable monthly rent is similar to the maximum affordable purchase price, where is the point at which households are spending 30% or more of their income on housing. Again, this threshold also meets the State’s definition of Workforce Housing. Although there were not many rental units sampled in Wilton, the majority of them are considered affordable where households do not pay more than 30% of their income on rent. The 2012-2016 ACS data supports this finding, as it showed that monthly gross rents were \$958 and only nineteen percent of households pay 30% or more on gross rent.

In 2001, the Town adopted an impact fee ordinance to order to help meet the needs occasioned by the development for the construction or improvement of capital facilities owned or operated by the Town of Wilton. Impact fees were not assessed until the Fee Schedule was amended in 2014. The fees from these developments go toward public schools, the fire department, and town roads. The current schedule incentivizes the development of elderly housing, which can qualify for a waiver from the school fee and single family housing developments, which pay a lower impact fee than duplexes. Since impact

³ NH Housing, 2018 Workforce Housing Purchase and Rent Limits, http://www.nhhfa.org/assets/pdf/WrkfrchHsngPurchaseAndRentLimits_2018.pdf

fees will contribute to overall development, they may be a barrier to building more affordable housing in Wilton to attract younger families. Switching to an assessment per square foot for residential uses may help to encourage building smaller, more affordable homes.

Population Projections

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission's population projections for the region are presented in Table 21 and depicted for Wilton in Figure 7. The forecasting methodology is based on building permit trends and a community's historical share of its respective county's growth according to the 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010 Censuses. Rates of change are applied to the most recent population estimate as a growth factor, from which the projection is derived. By this method, changes that have taken place in the 1980, 1990, and 2000 populations guide the projections beyond the year 2010. The NH Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI) projections were used for communities outside the NRPC region that neighbor Wilton (*).

Table 21: Population Projections

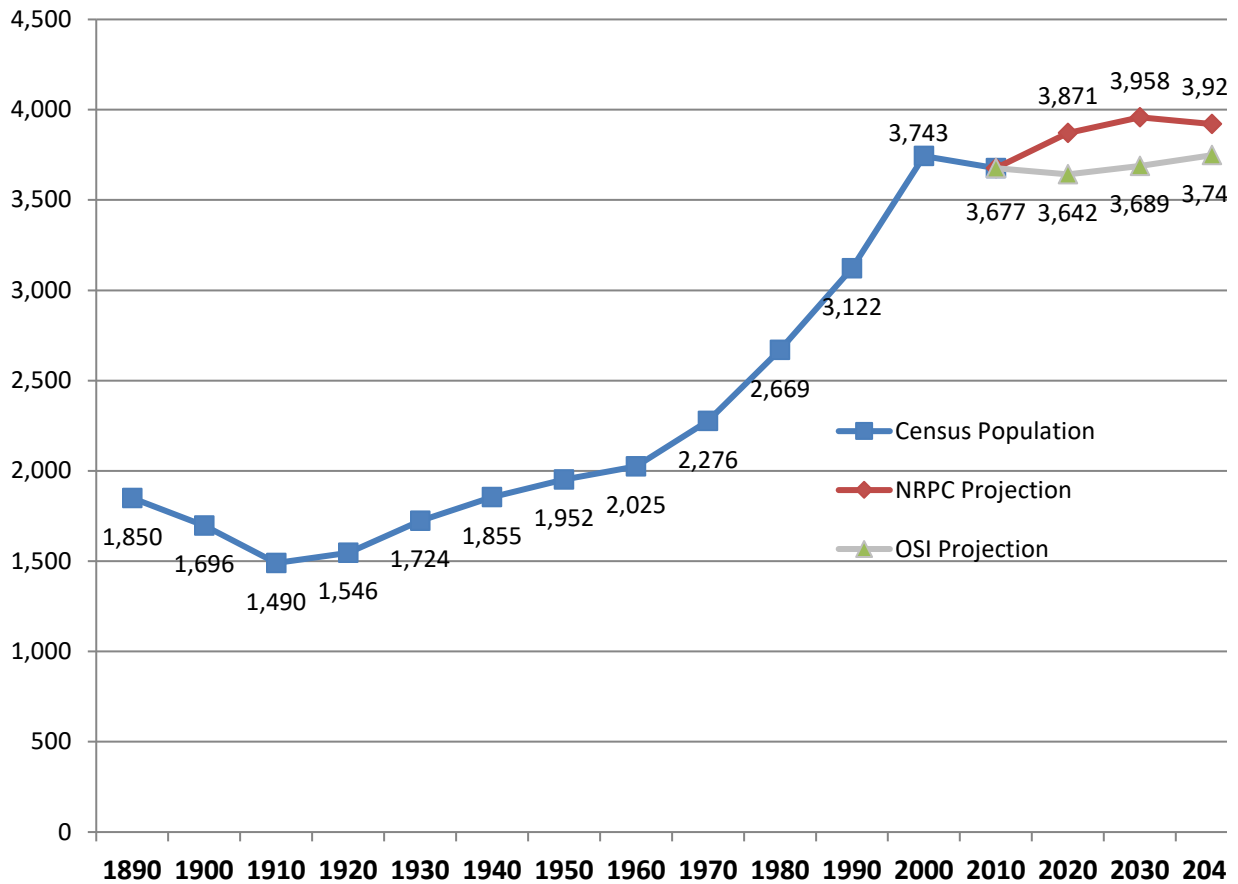
Community	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Change (2010-2040)	% Annual (2010-2040)
Amherst	10,769	11,201	11,452	11,550	11,563	11,579	11,521	2.9%	0.10%
Brookline	4,181	4,991	5,470	5,681	5,857	5,984	6,060	21.4%	0.71%
Greenfield*	1,657	1,749	1,868	1,928	1,965	1,989	1,997	12.4%	0.41%
Greenville*	2,224	2,105	2,009	1,954	1,992	2,016	2,024	-3.8%	-0.12%
Lyndeborough	1,585	1,683	1,798	1,826	1,837	1,819	1,790	6.3%	0.21%
Mason	1,147	1,382	1,524	1,565	1,587	1,577	1,548	12.0%	0.40%
Milford	13,535	15,115	16,203	16,629	17,146	17,756	17,738	17.4%	0.58%
Mont Vernon	2,034	2,409	2,635	2,731	2,814	2,873	2,901	20.4%	0.68%
New Ipswich*	4,289	5,099	5,383	5,635	5,744	5,182	5,836	14.5%	0.48%
Peterborough*	5,883	6,284	6,604	6,795	6,926	7,008	7,037	12.0%	0.40%
Sharon*	360	352	348	345	352	356	358	-0.56%	-0.01%
Temple*	1,297	1,366	1,399	1,424	1,451	1,469	1,475	8.0%	0.27%
Wilton	3,743	3,677	3,871	3,928	3,958	3,954	3,921	6.6%	0.21%
Hillsborough County	380,841	402,776	409,478	416,445	424,492	429,538	431,284	7.1%	0.2%
NRPC Region	195,788	205,765	213,507	-	220,381	-	223,249	8.5%	0.27%
State of NH	1,235,786	1,316,256	1,349,908	1,374,702	1,402,878	1,422,530	1,432,730	8.8%	0.3%

Source: Nashua Regional Planning Commission, 2014; OSI Population Estimates.

Wilton's population is expected to continue to grow approximately 0.21 percent annually over the next 25 years. If projections hold true, this may mean the addition of 244 persons by 2040; however, the actual rate of growth in any community is unpredictable and due to forces beyond most local control. Keeping this in mind, it can be reasonably expected that Wilton will likely grow at a faster rate than

some of its neighbors in the Monadnock Region (except for Peterborough and New Ipswich), but will grow at a slower rate than its neighbors in the Nashua region.

Figure 6: Population Projections for Wilton



Source: U.S. Census, NRPC, OSI

Figure 6 compares the NRPC population projection with OSI’s model. OSI’s forecasting methodology is based on a community’s historical and shifting share of its respective county’s growth to estimate the community’s expected growth, according to population changes from the 1970 through 2010. Users of these projections are cautioned about placing strong confidence in very small projected changes of population. Small changes, up or down, essentially mean that a community is expected to be “stable” for the involved time period.

Alternative Housing Arrangements and Opportunities

The main housing type in Wilton is owner-occupied single family units. A review of the existing housing stock and new development in Wilton since 1990 shows that while there is some variety in the housing available, very little new development has occurred except for single family dwellings. Other types of housing may represent alternative forms of shelter for people of low incomes or for people who have

unique housing needs such as the elderly, young adults, small families, single parent households, and recent immigrants.

Duplexes, condominiums, multifamily apartments, in-law apartments, assisted living facilities, motels, extended stay facilities, and nursing homes are examples of non-traditional housing demonstrated in communities to provide inexpensive alternatives to the stand-alone single-family home. A diversity of housing opportunities may also provide the required flexibility for people who newly locate in the community or temporarily reside there in case of a change in job or living situation.

The strategic provision of housing opportunities can be an asset for the community. For example, as demographic patterns shift to smaller households and an older population, assisted living facilities or elderly communities provide for the unique needs of the elderly. Housing for older persons, as defined in NH RSA 354-A:15, can provide affordable living situations for people with fixed incomes, accessibility to people with disabilities, and social contact for a group that can experience isolation. The Wilton Zoning Ordinance established an Elderly Housing District, which allows by special exception twenty-four (24) units/gross tract acre for one (1) bedroom units or twelve (12) dwelling units/gross tract acre for two (2) bedroom units when served by Town water and sewer. This provision encourages elderly housing to be near downtown Wilton, so the elderly are near amenities.

New Hampshire's Workforce Housing Statute, enacted in 2008, requires each community to provide a reasonable and realistic opportunity to develop affordable housing codifying the NH Supreme Courts 1991 Britton v. Town of Chester ruling. Under RSA 674:58-61 local land use regulations and ordinances cannot discriminate against housing for families or certain income ranges, the collective impact of the regulatory framework must allow workforce housing to be economically feasible, workforce housing must be allowed in a majority of residentially zoned areas, and multi-family must be allowed within the community. Under the statute workforce housing is defined as homes that are affordable for purchase by a family of four earning up to the median income or for rent at a price affordable for a family of 3 earning up to 60 percent of the median area income. Affordable is considered when a family pays no more than 30 percent of the household's income to housing costs.⁴

In terms of public services provision, many housing for older persons arrangements can be structured to help minimize the cost of providing health care and social services. It may also provide elderly people with the chance to continue residing in close proximity to friends and family. In Wilton, a high cost of living and housing price inflation coupled with limited housing opportunities may force elderly people to move out of the community in order to locate affordable housing. The state's response has been the enactment on an Accessory Dwelling Unit Statute in 2016 (RSA 674:72), which requires every municipality with a zoning ordinance to allow accessory dwelling units as a matter of right or by either conditional use permit pursuant to RSA 674:21 or by special exception, in all zoning districts that permit single-family dwellings. Permitting in-law apartments and accessory apartments promotes affordability,

⁴ NH Housing, *Meeting the Workforce Housing Challenge*, <http://www.nhhfa.org/workforce-housing>

development of a varied housing mix, as well as intergenerational living situations. It can also provide housing for young people returning to the area for employment.

Recognizing the need to provide additional housing options for aging or young adult family members, in 2017 the town adopted provisions to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units in the General Residence & Agricultural District, the Residential District, and the Commercial district. The provisions allow a single family homeowner the ability to create a separate, but connected apartment.

An advantage of enabling these various types of housing is that adding more housing options to the existing housing stock can increase vacancy rates. Adequate vacancy rates, in turn, promote a stable and affordable marketplace. More so now than in the past, there is evidence that more Americans are shelter poor -- they pay more than 30 percent of their family income to pay for housing. Allowing and promoting mixed-use housing, such as in commercial zones, is unlikely to cause congestion, would increase the available supply and may actually help the market viability of these locations. For the same reasons, it is worthwhile to examine how to enable more development of affordable housing.

At the March 2018 Town Meeting, Wilton amended their definition of "family" in the Town Zoning Ordinance from "One or more persons related by blood, marriage, legal adoption or those placed in the home for adoption, and foster children, or a group of not more than five persons (excluding no more than two servants) not related by blood or marriage, living together as a single non-profit housekeeping unit" to "A group of individuals, whether or not related, living together in a dwelling unit in a structured relationship constituting an organized housekeeping unit." The intent of this zoning ordinance change was to update town regulations with more modern concepts of family and household units and was inspired by the "Scarborough 11" lawsuit in Connecticut.

Tiny homes are a newer and trending housing option that is gaining popularity. Configurations range from a single small home on a single lot, to a second unit on an existing residential lot, or small villages established similar to a manufactured housing park. Tiny homes offer a more financially feasible housing solution for young adults straddled with student loan debt and consume fewer resources, providing environmental benefits. Generally, tiny homes are between 100 and 400 square feet and made from any building materials. As a new structure type, building codes have yet to consider tiny homes. The current NH adopted Building Code does not permit them. Most commonly there are two ways to establish a tiny home within the current regulatory and permitting system. The first is to register them as an RV or mobile/manufactured home built on a chassis or with wheels. Wilton currently does not allow tiny homes, as the Code for Building and Sanitation (Ordinance Section E) prohibits buildings under 500 square feet, and the zoning ordinance prohibits detached accessory dwelling units, which is an alternative way of regulating tiny homes.⁵

⁵ Nashua RPC, *Tiny House Fact Sheet*, http://www.nashuarpc.org/files/2614/4595/9730/FS36_TinyHouses.pdf

Conclusion

Residential development is a major influence on land use and has a significant impact on municipal finance and the local economy. Housing development is cyclical and influenced by the regional and national economies. Through zoning the Town can affect the potential for housing development. Planning Board recommendations on residential zoning represent an attempt to provide housing opportunities, manage the local public sector financial impacts of new residential development, and maintain community character and a sense of place. While Wilton currently has a surplus in buildable since family lots in its rural sections of town, emphasis should be placed on creating opportunities for alternative housing arrangements to further develop a community with places and options for people of all ages.

Recommendations

- Maintain the rural/agricultural character of the town as well as the residential community.
- Encourage housing development within the Residential Zone to help conserve land in other areas of Wilton.
- Revise the Downtown Commercial District to address multi-family housing needs and whether to allow the prohibition of residential uses on the ground floor.
- Encourage more higher density and infill development where appropriate within the downtown Wilton area without disrupting Town character or placing too great a burden on municipal services.
- Consider amending the zoning requirements in the residential neighborhood surrounding downtown to make existing structures more conforming with zoning.
- Continue to inventory town-owned land and tax title property to identify potential parcels for use as affordable housing sites.
- Consider allowing detached accessory dwelling units as a permitted use or by special exception in the Residence-Agricultural Zone. Such regulations should include provision that would require the developments to either share the same septic system with or be a certain distance from the primary dwelling unit.
- Revise building regulations to conform with any regulatory changes at the state level, including relaxing the minimum building size to allow tiny houses.

CHAPTER IV: TOWN FACILITIES AND SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

The type and adequacy of facilities and services a town provides often affects just how well a town functions. Added levels of service required by residential, commercial, and industrial growth places greater demands on existing facilities and services. More children enter local schools, greater volumes of waste need to be disposed of, and more calls are made for fire, police, and ambulance protection services. Roads require maintenance and upgrading, as do existing public water and sewer facilities. Therefore, as a town grows, its facilities and services must adapt and not be outpaced by growth.

This section of Wilton's Master Plan looks at existing town facilities and services the Town provides for its residents. Also addressed are anticipated needs to meet existing deficiencies and provide for future levels of growth. The Town adopted an Impact Fee Ordinance in 2001 and the Planning Board adopted the Impact Fee Schedule in 2004 and amended it in 2014. These fees are designed to offset the fluctuating impact of development upon the School System, Fire Department and road maintenance. If a town grows differently than predicted, its Master Plan must be adjusted to meet those different needs.

It is important for towns to plan in advance for the public facilities and services it will need to service future growth. In New Hampshire the required plans for guiding growth are the Master Plan and the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). A Master Plan is intended to cover a ten to fifteen-year planning horizon. Some of the recommendations resulting from the Master Plan process are implemented over a five-year period in the Capital Improvements Plan.

This Section does not provide the financial analysis as found in the CIP, but helps to define the goals and priorities on which the CIP is based. The Town should consider developing a more formalized CIP process in the future that accurately reflects the Town's fluctuating circumstances.

WILTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Similar to many small town rural fire departments, Wilton's Fire Department is made up of a small force of local residents. They operate the firefighting equipment and answer all of the calls for assistance. The Wilton Fire Department is considered a volunteer organization. The firefighters only receive a small reimbursement once a year, dependent upon what rank they hold. At the present time, there are 24 volunteer firefighters. A full roster for the department would have a total of 33 members.

Fire Department Calls

Over the past decade the call volume has remained steady at around 130 to 160 calls each year. This does not include the inspections or permits which are done weekly. The Fire Department responds to various types of calls such as brush, car, chimney, electrical and structure fires. The Department also assists on ambulance calls, motor vehicle accidents, illegal burning, propane releases and false alarms

just to name a few. Wilton provides mutual aid assistance to Lyndeborough, Milford, Mont Vernon, Temple, Mason, Greenville, Greenfield and Peterborough Fire Departments.

Fire Department Response Time

Even with the current call volume there is a struggle, especially during the day time calls, to be able to provide the man power needed to fight the fires. This is due to the fact that the firefighters are working out of town or their employers are not willing or able to support this activity at the current time.

Providing one full time employee would make response time during the day much quicker. This person can be on scene to investigate and request assistance as needed and allow firefighters that need to leave work only when it is absolutely necessary. Keeping to a minimum of full or part time employees while still using the volunteer system in place for years will help keep costs at an affordable level.

Fire Department Vehicles

At the present time we have the following vehicles in service:

- 3 Engines (1964), (1987), (2007)
- 1 Tanker Truck (1994)
- 1 Rescue Vehicle (2015)
- 1 Ladder Truck (1980)
- 1 Forestry Truck (1984)

Fire trucks are very expensive; therefore the Department has set up a rotation schedule of roughly 25 years. The Department has been using the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to set aside money each year to help level out the costs to the taxes, allowing it to keep updating the fleet without costly financing. The next scheduled replacement will be for the 1964 Engine. This truck was been skipped over in the past years because there was no physical room to house it. Now that the new station has been built, there is room for its replacement.

As far as to adding to the fleet in the coming years, 2 items are foreseen. The first is to purchase a pickup/utility truck. The second is an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) which would allow firefighters to get around in the woods. With an extensive trail system in town the ATV would be used for brush fires as well as an emergency rescues from the woods.

Water supply

In the village district there are pressurized hydrants. On the outskirts of Town water holes, dry hydrants and/or cisterns must be utilized. As developments are being proposed at the Planning Board or the Building Permit level the Department looks carefully at each project to determine how the water will be made available in case of a fire. It is up to the developer, along with consultation and guidance from the fire chief, to provide a suitable location that will ultimately help not only that immediate project but the surrounding area. This has been made a top priority in recent years due to the current laws in place and

water accessibility or lack of in the outreaching areas. In the village area an expansion of the water system should become a priority for the Town and the Wilton Water Works in the coming years.

Recommendations for the future

1. Enforce the building code to prevent fires, save lives, and protect the towns property
2. Work with the Budget Committee and the Planning Board to better facilitate the Capital Improvements Program.
3. Gradually increase the operating budget to increase training and more maintenance.
4. Periodically review to see if the time and need has come for a small, full daytime, fire force.
5. Maintain and improve the water systems in place and add new as needed for buildings.
6. Continue the Inspection Program.
7. Increase Public Education and awareness through demonstrations and lectures in the school systems and media exposure.
8. Purchase a pickup truck and ATV.

WILTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Wilton Police Department consists of seven full-time officers, four part-time officers, two part-time administrative assistants, and a full-time attorney prosecutor. The seventh officer and prosecutor positions were added in 2011 in response to significant increases in calls for service and court cases along with an increased need for specialized legal knowledge that is required to prosecute district court cases. The prosecutor is also contracted to provide prosecution services to a neighboring town. The Department provides 24 hour/7day coverage and currently handles over 11,000 calls for service annually. The Chief feels that the Department is adequately staffed for current conditions.

Facilities and Equipment:

The Police Department moved into a newly constructed building in 2003. The building is 3309 square feet and is centrally located to town. The building has a modern office and booking facilities as well as an emergency stand by generator allowing it to be fully functional during any emergency. The building is equipped with up-to-date computer, phone, and radio systems. A secure impound lot and storage container are also located behind the building.

The Department presently has four cruisers (one four wheel drive SUV and three sedans) which are replaced on a rotational basis. The cruisers are appropriately equipped with standard police related equipment and laptop computers.

Recommendations:

1. The current police facility is adequate but may need to be reconfigured or expanded to accommodate future growth.
2. Staffing and vehicle levels are also adequate but may need to increase to accommodate future growth.

TOWN OF WILTON AMBULANCE

The Town of Wilton Ambulance provides pre-hospital emergency medical care to the Towns of Wilton, Lyndeborough, and Temple 24 hours a day. The Wilton Lyndeborough Volunteer Ambulance and Rescue Association started in March 1974 to handle pre-hospital emergency care in the towns of Wilton and Lyndeborough. In 1997, the Town of Temple joined the association forming the Wilton Lyndeborough Temple Emergency Medical Service Association. In January 2007, the Town of Wilton assumed responsibility for the operation of the ambulance service. The Association remained in place due to owning the building that houses the ambulance service and as a benevolent association. In 2010 the name of the service was changed to the Town of Wilton Ambulance.

The ambulance operation is mainly funded through two funding streams; billing for service and taxation. If possible, the service also looks for grant funds to help offset the amount needed to be raised via taxation. The Town of Wilton Ambulance directly bills private insurance companies, Medicare, and Medicaid for services. If a patient does not have insurance, or is unable to pay for their service, they are able to contact the billing service and work out a payment plan or ask for a hardship request. The ambulance association can receive donations, and these are used for equipment purchases, building improvements, and other items/reasons.

The Town of Wilton Ambulance presently has the following staff: Chief of Department, 10 Paramedics, 3 Advanced EMT's (AEMT)/EMT-Intermediates (EMT-I), 13 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) and 2 Driver/Non-Medical Providers. The Chief of Department is a full time salaried position that covers daytime responses during the week. The Chief of Department is the only full time employee. During the weekdays, there is also a paid EMT or EMT-I/AEMT with the Chief of Department. On nights and weekends, there is a Paramedic and an EMT or AEMT/EMT-I on call. The Driver/Non-Medical position is a volunteer position that was created in 2011 to bring on non-EMS providers. Once a Driver/Non-Medical member is cleared to drive, they may attend an EMT class. Once they complete the EMT class, the member must give the Town of Wilton Ambulance one year of service in return. This has proven very productive and has produced several long term EMT's for the service.

The service has two advanced life support ambulances, a 2007 Ford E450 Medtec Ambulance and a 2014 Ford F450 PL Custom Ambulance. Both ambulances are housed in the Wilton Forest Road facility. The primary ambulance is staffed with a scheduled crew. The second ambulance is staffed by off duty personnel that may be available when a call comes in. The service continues to request Capital Reserve

Fund allocations from its member towns to pay for ambulance replacement and major equipment purchases.

The call volume for the Town of Wilton Ambulance in 2014 was 454 calls for service, which is up 5.3% from the year before. Call volumes have continued to rise even higher in 2015 with a total of 473 calls which was up another 4% from 2014. Presently there are no medical facilities, nursing homes, and only one senior housing facility in the service area. If an additional one of these facilities is ever built in the coverage area, there will be a dramatic increase in call volume increasing overall expenses. As the area develops, and traffic increases in the Route 101 and Route 31 corridors, call volumes will also continue to rise. The Town of Wilton may have to look at expansion of per-diem hours and/or hiring additional full time providers to assist with covering the ambulances. In the near future, the station may need to expand as room is needed for staffing, etc. An additional garage bay may be needed in the distant future to house a Paramedic Intercept Vehicle. There should not be a need for a third ambulance for the foreseeable future (at least 25-30 years, if not more).

Radio communications are also a concern. The Town of Wilton Police, Fire, and Ambulance are dispatched via the Milford Area Communications Center (MACC Base). The towns of Lyndeborough and Temple Fire Departments are dispatched via Southwest New Hampshire Fire Mutual Aid Dispatch (SWNH Dispatch) in Keene, and the Lyndeborough and Temple Police Departments are dispatched via Hillsborough County Sherriff's Office. This can get confusing when calls are dispatched. Presently the ambulance has to speak with two dispatch centers (MACC Base and SWNH Dispatch) whenever responding to a call in Lyndeborough or Temple.

The other issue with radio communications is limited availability due to the terrain and lack of radio coverage in the member towns. Presently MACC Base has antenna sites for the ambulance on Pead Hill in Wilton and the Milford Town Hall. When a call is received, members should be calling in via radio to discuss their status. Due to the marginal coverage, they need to call in via cell phone. These limitations are also inhibiting radio communications while traveling to the station or on scene when responders are in personal vehicles. This could be a serious provider issue if there is a violent situation and the responding provider cannot be reached. Each ambulance has been equipped with an on board repeater that boosts the power of the portable twenty times to come out at the strength of the ambulance radio.

Recommendations:

1. Periodically evaluate the need to hire additional full time and per diem staff. As Wilton, Lyndeborough, and Temple continue to grow, the Department's on-call manpower will face an increasing demand for its services. It is presently at its tipping point.
2. Continue to add to the Capital Reserve Fund for the anticipated replacement of the existing ambulances. Work with the CIP Committee in the annual updating of this document.
3. Continue to add to the Capital Reserve Fund for the anticipated replacement of the existing major equipment (cardiac monitors, etc). Work with the CIP Committee in the annual update of this document.

4. Consider the fiscal impact of proposed developments that increase the demand for pre-hospital emergency care, for example, housing developments, medical facilities, nursing homes, etc.
5. Maintain and improve the force of EMS providers. These people greatly improve the Town of Wilton Ambulance's capability at a minimal expense, and because of personal involvement provide superior care and support. The Town of Wilton Ambulance should continue to recruit providers, train providers and reward them with public recognition, adequate equipment and appropriate compensation.

TOWN HALL

Along with a 2500 square foot movie theater, Wilton houses its Town Office facilities in the Town Hall Building located at 42 Main Street. Built in 1885, Wilton's Town Hall provides 4970 square feet of office space for Town government services, including tax collecting, vehicle registration, dog licensing, building permits, maintaining vital statistics and other Town related services. Of this total amount, 1600 square feet is being used for office space, 100 square feet for storage (Town vault and storage closet, 1512 square feet for a meeting room (old courtroom), and two handicapped accessible bathrooms in the Town Offices and two bathrooms for the Wilton Town Hall Theatre.

Staff

To oversee the day to day operations of all Town Departments and services for residents, Wilton employs one full time Town Administrator. To run the Town Office, Wilton employs one full time Town Clerk/Tax Collector and one part-time Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector. The Selectmen's Office employs one full-time Administrative Assistant and one full-time Selectmen's Assistant. Also employed at the Town Hall are a part-time Building Inspector, a part-time Welfare Director, and a contracted Assessor. Also making use of the office space are the clerks for the Planning and Zoning Boards and the Water and Sewer Commissions.

Recommendations:

1. Continue on-going improvements by insulating the entire Town Hall.
2. Develop a plan to renovate the north side of Town Hall.
3. To improve and/or replace the heating system.
4. Develop a long-term plan to update or replace the current roof.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Wilton Public Works is responsible for the Highway Department, Recycling Center, Cemetery maintenance, Parks and Recreation, as well as maintaining Town infrastructure (drainage, water and sewer). The Public Works Department employs nine full time employees, four work at the recycling Center, four work for the Highway Department, and one Director. The Department also employs two to four seasonal employees for the maintenance of the cemeteries and parks. The work force is adequate at the present time.

HIGHWAY

The Highway Department building was built in 1956 and is constructed with five bays: three are used for truck and equipment storage; one is rented by the Wilton Water Works; and all are unheated. The last and main bay is heated with a wood stove and supplemented with propane to prevent pipes from freezing when not occupied. This bay is used for a multitude of uses including equipment repairs, restroom facilities, the Director's office, and a break room. Storage space for equipment and vehicles is at a minimum, and it is recommended to construct a new facility or add additional storage and office space in the near future.

Recommendations:

1. Evaluate the need for additional storage and office space at the Highway Department building, in the near future.
2. All highway six wheel dump trucks should be replaced every fifteen to twenty years and are listed on the Town's Capital Improvement Plan for rotation.
3. All heavy equipment should be replaced as needed dependent upon usage and repair costs and are also listed on the Town's Capital Improvement Plan for rotation.
4. The backhoe should be replaced with a comparable excavator and trailer (2016).

RECYCLING CENTER (SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL)

Wilton's solid waste is disposed of at the Regional Recycling Center, which serves the five town area of Greenville, Lyndeborough, Mason, Temple, and Wilton. The Transfer station was ordered to remove the incinerator, so all non-recycled materials or "burnables" are now transported to another landfill facility. The majority of the solid waste which is brought into the facility is considered recyclables. Items such as glass, textiles, paper, food and yard wastes, metals, and plastic are trucked off site by Waste Management for reimbursement. At present time we have one forty-two yard compactor for burnables and two open top containers. Both open top containers should be replaced with hydraulic

compactors. The main building is showing its age and needs refurbishing by replacing the windows and doors and insulating the office etc.

Though it may not be a profit making operation, the Recycling Center does save the participating towns money in that the recycling operation generates income (approximately \$100,000 or 19% of the Center's operating budget). In addition, what is recycled does not have to be trucked to a landfill that is becoming more expensive every year. The Center's main costs result from a small staff, and facility and equipment maintenance. Recently the annual operating costs have ranged from \$500,000 to \$525,000 per year. The costs are paid proportionately between each of the participating Towns. Each community pays its portion based upon their percentage of the population for the five towns involved. The 2014 proportion figures (population and percent) are presented in the table below:

TABLE IV-11: MEMBER TOWN POPULATION AND COST ALLOCATION FIGURES

Town	Population	Percent Of Total
Greenville	2105	20.61
Lyndeborough	1683	16.48
Mason	1382	13.53
Temple	1366	13.38
Wilton	3677	36.00
Total	10,213	100.00

Source: Wilton Recycling Center FY 16 Proposed Budget

The Recycling Center has added many improvements since it began and now includes storage bins, loading docks and sheds, 2 skid steers, back hoe, 2 balers and 1 50-yard compactor.

Recommendations

1. Continue to educate the public as to the benefits of recycling: it generates income, saves on landfill space and costs, saves on trucking costs, recycles still useful material resources, etc.
2. Continue to financially support the Wilton Recycling Center by funding the existing operations, maintaining or adding equipment, expanding services provided, adding staff, etc.
3. Start or continue a recycling program in each of the five area town's school systems.
4. Replace the two open top containers with hydraulic compactors.

CEMETERIES

There are a total of four cemeteries located within the Town of Wilton. Based on past figures, the annual maintenance cost for these cemeteries has been between \$28,000 and \$30,000.

TABLE IV-3: WILTON CEMETERIES STATISTICS

Name of Cemetery	Size (Acres)	Plots remaining
Laurel Hill	10	450
South Yard	3	300
Vale End	6	496
Mt. Calvary (Catholic Church)	10	600

TABLE IV-4: ANNUAL NUMBER OF BURIALS, 1994–2015

1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
39	23	36	28	38	33	30	22	22	33	39
2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
38	26	19	20	28	20	25	21	21	20	35

Recommendation

1. Periodically evaluate the availability of existing cemetery space and purchase additional land to provide space for future needs.
2. Replace the Cemetery Department storage facility at the Laurel Hill Cemetery.

PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES INCLUDING CONSERVATION LANDS

By providing recreation facilities and conservation lands, a town gives its residents the opportunity to enjoy themselves and the natural resources within the community. Wilton is very fortunate to have recreational facilities and areas of forest, open space, and water resources within its boundaries in which to take advantage. Wilton's recreation facilities have not changed significantly since the original master plan was prepared (four additional tennis courts were added at the High School along with a soccer field, a baseball diamond, and a quarter mile track). Wilton's existing recreation facilities are listed below. Some of the areas listed are also considered conservation lands due to the natural

resources they contain. These have been listed here as well as in the Natural Resources Section because of the dual-purpose recreation conservation uses they support.

Goss Park	An 18 acre complex located off of NEW HAMPSHIRE Route 31 in the northern section of Town. Owned and operated jointly with the Town of Lyndeborough, the park and Youth Center provide facilities for swimming, tennis, volleyball, boating, crafts, picnicking as well a playground. The Wilton-Lyndeborough Youth Center is operated through Town appropriations, in addition to individual and corporate donations.
Monument Park	Located on the Souhegan River near the center of Town, the monuments in the park honor local men who have fought in wars.
Carnival Hill	A 36 acre area that includes athletic fields, basketball courts, a picnic area and has historically been the location of winter recreational activities such as sledding.
Whiting Park	This small park is adjacent to the Florence Rideout Elementary School playground and is also used by the school.
Main Street Park-Lot 48	Located in the middle of Main Street, this parcel functions as a small gathering space for community events and residents.
Elementary School	The schoolyard has playground equipment, and the school has a gym.
Wilton-Lyndeborough High School	Various field sports (baseball, track, field hockey, and soccer), and hardcourt sports (tennis (4) and basketball), are played on the school's facilities. The school also has a gym.
Russell-Abbott State Forest	Hiking, picnicking, and hunting, among other daytime activities are allowed in the 656 acre State Forest. However, campfires and barbecues are prohibited. The State Forest is located in the southern section of Town to the east of NEW HAMPSHIRE Route 31. Part of the State Forest is in the Town of Mason.
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forest Lands	A 300+ acre tract of land located partially within the Towns of Wilton and Temple. The tract includes a pond, wetland areas, forests, and other natural resources that provide fishing, canoeing, and hiking recreation opportunities for the public.
Burns Hill Town Forest	A small, less than 10 acre Town-owned forest, located near the WLC School, which can be used for short hikes during the day. Fires of any kind are prohibited in the forest.
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests Heald Tract	A 1,500+ acre tract of land located partially within the Towns of Wilton and Temple. The tract Lands include a pond, wetland areas, forests, and other natural resources which provide fishing, and hiking opportunities for the public.

Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests Wilton Forest	A small 46 acre tract of land situated off NH Route 31 South on both sides of the Souhegan River near the Town well.
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests VonFelsing Forest	A 118 acre forest situated off NH Route 31 South on the easterly side of the Souhegan River.
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests Everett Forest	A 40 Acre Forest situated off NH Route 31 South adjacent to the Wilton Forest.
Frog Pond	Includes a .6 mile walking loop that allows for activities such as picnicking, hiking, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. Dogs on leashes are also allowed to stroll the loop.
High Mowing/Frye Conservation Land	151 acres near High Mowing School that includes a large field, views, wooded areas, agriculture, trails for passive recreation, cross country skiing and snowmobiling.
Nature Conservancy Sheldrick Forest	A 227 acre tract that includes about 4 miles of trails which allow you to observe the natural beauty of the forest. This tract also connects to Heald which offers about another 6 miles of hiking trails.

Recommendations

1. The Town could develop additional amenities such as hard courts, playgrounds, picnic area, basketball courts, and outdoor ice arenas.
2. Develop other types of recreational facilities as the Town's population grows and disperses, or as public demand warrants.
3. Incorporate into the Town's Subdivision Regulations for the provision of recreation land, pocket parks and facilities within future major developments.
4. Evaluate the current Zoning Ordinance and consider a zoning amendment to allow for additional commercial recreational uses, such as a driving range.

WILTON WATER WORKS

Wilton Water Works was established in 1905 by the New Hampshire Legislature. The Wilton Water Works are currently using two wells that supply the 600,000-gallon storage tank on Abbot Hill. In 1995 the State mandated water quality standards required the absence of bacteria or the presence of chlorine in the extremes of the water lines. A change in the billing process to a metered system was completed in 2000. This system encourages water conservation. There are approximately 863 billable water meters in the Town of Wilton.

The Town's current surface water supply system can now provide an average daily total of approximately 900,000 gallons of potable water. The average daily demand on the system has been estimated at 250,000 gallons. Presently, the water system's metering devices are insufficient to provide an accurate estimate of use. A reserve capacity of roughly 650,000 gallons now exists and is available to be utilized. Current users of the Town's water supply system include approximately 900 residential households, 25 non-residential users and 2 town schools. With the water supply capacity now available, the Town's water supply system has the capability to permit an expansion of service to any location where adequate water pressure can be maintained.

In 2012, the Wilton Water Works hired a full time Water Superintendent. In 2013, the water system infrastructure was improved from Madison Street east to the Pine Valley Mill building. This was completed to accommodate improvements at the Mill including fifty additional residential units. In 2014, the Wilton Water Works also receive two grants. One grant was used to purchase a generator at the pump station, which can be used to power the pump stations during power outages. The second grant was for GIS mapping of the water works infrastructure. The Wilton Water Works may consider water rate increases to plan for significant infrastructure improvements in the future, as needed.

Recommendations:

1. Determine appropriate areas for expansion of the water supply system. The water supply distribution system should be extended to provide service to potential problem areas (failing septic systems, higher density development needing fire protection, etc.), or areas where future development should be directed.
2. Developers should pay all costs of upgrading and extending the water system associated with their developments. Coordinate expansion efforts with private developers to make efficient use of areas now being considered for development.
3. Adequately protect existing surface and groundwater sources for the Town's water supply system, and plan where future water supply needs will come from. Continue to monitor high and low water levels of the aquifer.
4. Locate a second storage tank on high ground, at either Whiting Hill Road or Dale Street. This will improve fire flows and water quality in these two areas.

5. Replace the undersized and unlined 6 and 8 inch water mains, in excess of 95 years old, to improve quality and fire protection.
6. Replace the 6 inch main that crosses the river from the Recycling Center to Intervale Road by the Sewer Pumping Station. It is unlined pipe in excess of 90 years old and has very little coverage or protection in the river bed.
7. Establish a capital improvements fund to upgrade water system components as necessary.
8. Continue to replace four water hydrants and 25 water meters on an annual basis.

WILTON SEWER DEPARTMENT

The Town of Wilton signed an updated inter-municipal cooperative agreement with the Town of Milford in March of 2015 to purchase a specified amount of the sewage treatment capacity of the Milford Waste Water Treatment Facility. This new agreement is in effect for twenty years or until the Town of Wilton reaches the reserved capacity. Managed by the Wilton Sewer Commissioners, the Town's sewer system is presently supporting 540 billable units, a combination of residential, commercial, industrial and municipal users.

According to the agreement, Wilton has 320,000 GPD of total fixed capacity at the Milford Wastewater Treatment Facility. The Town's total current average daily demand is about 135,000 GPD, and the average daily demand of Wilton users is about 120,000 GPD or about 40% of their allotted capacity, the difference between the two figures being groundwater infiltration into the piping system.

A pump station, where sewerage is pumped to gravity lines feeding into the Milford Wastewater Treatment Facility, is housed in a 152 square foot building located on Mill Street. About 40 square feet of space is used for storage and the remainder houses the pumping equipment. The station was originally constructed in 1982 and equipment installed for a cost of slightly more than \$200,000. There is about 400 square feet of parking available at the site. The Wilton Sewer Commissioners have stated that the present facility is adequate for existing and future needs.

A second pump station, located near the intersection of New Hampshire Route 101 and Intervale Road, is housed in a 143 square foot building. About the same distribution of building space is used in this building as in the Mill Street Pump Station mentioned above. There is also about 200 square feet of parking available at this site. The Wilton Sewer Commissioners have stated that this facility is adequate for existing needs. The only foreseeable need for expansion of this facility would be to accommodate an intensive industrial or office park facility further west along New Hampshire Route 101.

Equipment used to pump and meter sewage flow passing from the pump stations to the Milford Waste Treatment Facility include the following:

- Two 10 HP, 140 GPM Vertical Centrifugal Sewage Pumps

- Two 5 HP, 325 GPM Vertical Centrifugal Sewage Pumps
- Two 30 KW Emergency Generators
- One 1,000,000 GPD Digital Flow Meter with Transmitter and Remote Recorder
- Two High Level, Low Level Power Failure Alarm System with Remote Alarm at Base 500.

The equipment listed above was purchased new when the sewer system was constructed and a new digital flow meter was installed in 2014. The equipment is in good working order and no additional equipment is anticipated.

The Sewer Department is managed by the Sewer Commission, which is comprised of three elected commissioners serving three year terms. The Department of Public Works provides labor and equipment as needed to maintain daily needs, and outside contractors are also utilized as needed. The Sewer Commissioners have stated that this service arrangement meets current needs however it is likely that a full time staff person may be needed in the future.

The Sewer Department recently purchased Waterpoint Software and a GPS capable tablet to map the entire sewer system. In 2013 the Maple Street sewer main was replaced in an effort to upgrade that section of town. Continued upgrades will be made to the Maple Street project in 2016. It has been determined that the Maple Street improvement project should be extended to the east, due to excessive infiltration of groundwater.

Recommendations:

1. Periodically evaluate the sewer collection system and level of service provided to the Town. Determine appropriate areas for expansion of the system providing service to potential problem areas or areas where future development should be directed.
2. Developers should pay for upgrading or extending the sewer system associated with their developments. Coordinate expansion efforts with private developers to make efficient use of areas now being considered for development.
3. Continue with the existing agreement with the Town of Milford to use the Milford Waste Water Treatment Facility, and monitor Wilton's share of the facilities capacity. Cooperate with Milford to provide the existing level of sewer service and expand as necessary.
4. Work towards the possibility of billing based on meters.
5. Define the process for approval and installations of new sewer hook-ups and sewer expansions.
6. Extend the Maple Street sewer main further east of the 2013 improvements.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The municipal school system is in many ways the most vital and important element of community life. Residents of the community as a whole are entrusted with the responsibility of providing public education for all children. The major thrust of public education is to provide the basic knowledge and learning skills that will foster life-long individual development and productivity.

As such, the municipal school system represents a significant commitment of resources to provide facilities, staff, and materials that will enhance the educational experience for the community's youth. In Wilton, as is most likely the case in all municipalities, schools demand the most substantial expenditures of any government service.

Florence Rideout Elementary School (FRES)

The Florence Rideout Elementary School provides education for students in grades 1–5 and the developmentally handicapped that reside in Wilton and Lyndeborough. The elementary school building is also used for non-school functions such as meetings, etc. The school facility is located on a 1.6-acre parcel of land situated between Livermore, Tremont, and Park Streets. The site accommodates a single building and parking for at least 52 cars. Adjacent to this site is the 2.6-acre Whiting Park and Playground, which is used by the School for a recreation area.

The original school building was constructed in 1895, with additional space constructed in 1930 and most recently completed a renovate/build project in 2015. The building is a total of 51,000 square feet in size. The school facility includes space for classrooms, a gymnasium and stage, administrative and health offices, a cafeteria, and storage. The capacity of the school is rated at 375 pupils, with 222 enrolled as of September 2015. Past enrollment figures are presented below. The School Board feels that the space available is adequate for present enrollment. Enrollment projections are calculated by the School Board. However, it is difficult to project public school enrollments for Wilton, based solely on population projections. There is a private school located in Wilton that does attract new families who want their children to attend it.

Current staffing of the Elementary School totals 43 employees and includes 24 professional employees (14 classroom teachers, 2.5 special education teachers, 1 gym health instructor, 1 music teacher, 1 art teacher, 1 principal, 1 nurse, 1 guidance counselor and .5 reading specialist), and support staff (2 administrative assistants, 1 librarian, 2 Title I tutors, 9.5 instructional assistants, 2.5 custodians and 2 cafeteria workers). The School Board also feels that the current level of staffing is adequate for present and near future needs.

Recommendations:

1. Add bleachers to the school gym.

TABLE IV-5: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

Year	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
2004-2005	0	41	40	59	50	34	43	54	321
2005-2006	0	40	42	44	53	52	33	42	306
2006-2007	0	36	44	40	44	53	52	34	303
2007-2008	0	27	37	45	41	43	55	53	301
2008-2009	0	35	31	38	48	42	39	53	286
2009-2010	0	40	35	32	33	42	44	42	268
2010-2011	7	29	42	32	29	34	38	44	255
2011-2012	10	28	37	37	30	29	35	35	241
2012-2013	12	42	36	35	37	32	27	0	221
* 6th grade moved out of Elementary Schools and went to Middle School									
2013-2014	14	28	45	31	31	31	29	0	209
2014-2015	15	33	30	38	30	36	32	0	214
**2015-2016	0	0	46	47	51	33	45	0	222
**Pre-K and K moved to Lyndeborough Central School & Lyndeborough Elementary Students grades 1 thru 5 were moved to FRES									

Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative Middle School-High School (WLC)

The WLC School provides education for grades six through twelve. The WLC School facility is located on a 54.6-acre parcel of land located west of the downtown area off Burns Hill Road. A single story 55,000 square foot brick building was built in 1970 to house all administrative, class, and other rooms. An additional two-story building to house a middle school and a new high school science wing totaling 34,000 square foot brick building was built in 1999. In 2011 it was voted and agreed upon that grade 6 be relocated to the Middle School along with grades 7 and 8.

The site also includes enough parking for over 100 cars, and a ten-acre athletic area with fields for baseball, softball, soccer, track, and four tennis courts. The capacity of the present facility as of 2015 is 372.

A history of the School’s enrollment is presented below.

TABLE IV-6: HISTORICAL MIDDLE SCHOOL-HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS*

2005	389	2011	338
2006	397	2012	320*
2007	386	2013	360
2008	374	2014	334
2009	360	2015	316
2010	359		

*Grade 6 relocated from elementary schools to middle school fall of 2012

Source: SAU63*

Current staffing of the Middle School-High School 2.0 Administrative persons, 2.6 Administrative Assistants, 2.0 School Counselors, 6.9 Support Staff, 33.0 Teachers and 9.3 Paraprofessionals.

THE WILTON PUBLIC AND GREGG FREE LIBRARY

The Wilton Public and Gregg Free Library, constructed in 1908 and given to the Town by David Gregg, occupies a 0.8 acre lot located on Forest Street. The Library is listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings. The Library has had handicapped access to the main floor of the building since 1988 via a building project funded by Federal, State, and local funds. A lift has made all floors of the library accessible. Additional parking at the rear of the building (on Gregg Street) was also added at this time.

The building is a 4875 square foot building with 308 square feet used for storage, 240 square feet for restrooms, and the remaining space for reference materials, historical library collection, and the circulating collections.

Library Collection

The Library collection numbers 21,927. These materials include fiction and non-fiction books for adult and juvenile collections as well as the following:

- 52 print periodicals (44 adult, 8 juvenile)
- Access to 40 Nook periodicals online
- 1,473 videos (1,239 adult, 234 juvenile)
- 702 audio (506 adult, 196 juvenile)
- 6 newspapers
- Inter-library loan privileges which allow lending from any reciprocating library in New Hampshire including universities and colleges. The Library is pleased to take part in these services which extend the range and scope of the collections.

The electronic collection includes:

- Access to 7,470 downloadable audio book titles online
- Access to 12,601 downloadable ebook titles online
- Access to online reference databases

Automation

The Library uses an online integrated library system which allows patrons to manage their accounts online. The Library has provided internet access to its patrons since 1997. Computer skills and internet training sessions are conducted on an ad hoc basis as well as by appointment by staff members. The library provides 11 public computers, an iPad, Nook and Kindle for public use. Wi-fi is available in the building and 24/7 on the grounds and in the parking lot.

The library is a member of the New Hampshire Downloadable Books consortium which provides access to downloadable books and magazines. In addition, Ebsco Explora, Britannica School Edition, Britannica Image Quest, MedlinePlus and The Wall Street Journal are available through the library website, which also hosts calendars of events and information about library services.

**TABLE IV-7: WILTON PUBLIC - GREGG FREE LIBRARY
USAGE STATISTICS, 2015**

2015	Juvenile/Teen	Adult	Downloadable	Total
Circulation	10549	14449	2570	27568
Computer use				1430 user sessions
Database usage				1847

Library Facility

The renovation of the Library's first and second floors was completed in 2014. In 2015 a complete foundation drainage system, new sewer lines and new water lines and valves were installed. In 2016, landscaping of the grounds disrupted by the drainage system project will be done. Research into adaptation of the one pipe steam heat system to heat the lower level more efficiently is in progress. Slate roof replacement is planned for 2025.

Library Staffing

- Director
- Youth Services Librarian
- Adult Services Manager/Technical Services
- Library Assistant: Circulation and Outreach
- Library Assistant: Information Technology
- Library Assistant: Youth Services
- Library Assistant: Substitutes (2)
- Pages (3)

Volunteers

It should be recognized here that the Friends of the Wilton Library and other volunteers donate many hours of service to the Library. Volunteers provide support to the staff by raising funds for library programs, donating funds for a museum pass reimbursement program and volunteer hours to assist in special projects.

Recommendations:

- Landscaping to mitigate disruption by drainage, sewer and water projects, planned for 2016.

- Modify the existing heating system.
- Work toward an energy efficient library building.
- Conduct annual roof maintenance with replace the roof in 2025
- Renovation of Children’s Library to modify shelving, seating, flooring and paint planned for 2016.

TABLE IV-12: SUMMARY OF CHAPTER RECOMMENDATIONS

Fire Department	
1.	Enforce the building code to prevent fires, save lives, and protect the Town's property.
2.	Work with the Budget Committee and the Planning Board to better facilitate the Capital Improvements Program.
3.	Gradually increase the operating budget to increase training and more maintenance.
4.	Periodically review to see if the time and need has come for a small, full daytime fire force.
5.	Maintain and improve the water systems in place and add new ones as needed for buildings.
6.	Continue the Inspection Program.
7.	Increase Public Education and awareness thru demonstrations and lectures in the school systems and media exposure.
8.	Purchase a Pickup Truck and an ATV.
Police Department	
1.	Consider expansion or reconfiguration of the Police Facility.
2.	Evaluate future staffing and vehicle needs.
Wilton Ambulance	
1.	Evaluate the need for additional staff.
2.	Continue adding to the Capital Reserve Fund for ambulance and major equipment replacement; Coordinate with the CIP Committee.
3.	Consider the fiscal impacts of proposed developments.
4.	Maintain and enhance EMS Providers.
5.	Identify a location for a new long term home for the Wilton Ambulance facility.
Town Hall	
1.	Insulate the entire Town Hall.
2.	Improve the handicap access to Town Hall.
3.	Develop a plan to renovate the North side of Town Hall.
4.	Improve and/or replace the heating system.
5.	Develop a long term plan to repair/replace roof.
6.	Hire a Town Administrator.

Department of Public Works/Highway	
1.	Evaluate the need for additional storage and office space at the Highway Department building.
2.	All highway six wheel dump trucks should be replaced every fifteen to twenty years.
3.	All heavy equipment should be replaced as needed dependent upon usage and repair costs.
4.	The backhoe should be replaced with a comparable excavator and trailer.
Recycling Center (Solid Waste)	
1.	Continue to educate the public on the benefits of recycling.
2.	Continue to financially support the Wilton Recycling Center.
3.	Develop a plan for the future of the Recycling Center due to a potential loss of participating towns.
4.	Start or continue a recycling program in each of the five member Town's school systems.
5.	Replace the 2 open top containers with hydraulic compactors.
Cemeteries	
1.	Evaluate the availability of existing cemetery space and purchase additional land to
2.	Replace the Cemetery Department storage facility at the Laurel Hill Cemetery.
Parks & Recreation Facilities Including Conservation Lands	
1.	Develop facilities such as hard courts, playgrounds, picnic areas, basketball courts, and outdoor ice arenas.
2.	Develop additional recreational facilities as public demand warrants.
3.	Incorporate into the Town's Subdivision Regulations the provision of recreation land, pocket parks and facilities within future major developments.
4.	Evaluate the current Zoning Ordinance and consider a zoning amendment to allow for additional commercial recreational uses, such as a driving range.
Wilton Water Works	
1.	Identify areas for expansion of the water supply system.
2.	Work with developers to expand the systems as opportunities arise.
3.	Protect existing surface and groundwater sources for the water supply system. Plan for future water supply. Monitor aquifer levels.
4.	Add a second storage tank on high ground.
5.	Replacement of undersized and unlined water mains.
6.	Replace the 6 inch water main which crosses river from the Recycling Center to Intervale Road.
7.	Establish a Capital Improvements Fund to upgrade the water system.
8.	Continue to replace 4 water hydrants and 25 water meters annually.

Sewer Department	
1.	Periodically evaluate the system and identify areas for service expansion.
2.	Coordinate service expansion as development occurs, and ensure developers contribute to the cost.
3.	Continue the agreement with the Town of Milford to utilize its Waste Water Treatment Facility and monitor Wilton's usage.
4.	Explore the feasibility of billing based on meters.
5.	Define the process for approval and installations of new sewer hook-ups and sewer expansions.
6.	Extend the Maple Street sewer main further east of the 2013 improvements.
Public Schools	
1.	Add bleachers to the Florence Rideout Elementary school gym.
Library	
1.	Install landscaping to mitigate disruptions from drainage, sewer and water projects planned for 2016.
2.	Improve the existing heating system.
3.	Replace the library roof planned for 2025.
4.	Renovate the Children's Library planned for 2016.
5.	Work towards an energy efficient building.
General Recommendations	
1.	Develop a new comprehensive Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that can easily be updated on an annual basis.
2.	As part of the CIP, gradually expand facilities to keep pace with growth.
3.	Consider the impact of specific development proposals on Wilton's community facilities and services.
4.	Whenever feasible, community services should be provided on a regional basis to minimize costs and/or ensure a higher level of service.
5.	Participate in regional planning efforts, since growth in neighboring communities has a significant impact on Wilton's community facilities and services.

CHAPTER V: TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

The evolution of the transportation system, within a town and throughout a region, has a reciprocating impact upon the prevailing patterns of land development and the spatial layout of the town. Traffic is one of the more visible impacts of land development and economic activity. Traffic due to all types of land development (residential, commercial, industrial), and the economic activities that go along with the different types of land uses, not only affects a town's local road network, but also impacts the highway system and inter-regional travel. As a part of the overall planning process, the Town should assess how its own growth patterns will affect travel demands and to what extent the existing local and regional system can accommodate those demands.

The intent of this chapter is to provide information to assist in this assessment, including an inventory of the existing highway network in the Town, including highway classification, traffic volumes, roadway conditions, crash statistics and travel patterns. Issues related to transportation and mobility are discussed, including highway policy, travel demand, and non-motorized and alternative modes of transportation. Recommendations to improve the highway network, and mobility in general, are also provided.

Vision

The Town's vision for its transportation network is one that provides a range of safe options for residents and visitors, supports the growth of the community, can be maintained and improved efficiently, and has limited the impact on the Town's rural character and natural resources.

This vision can be realized by:

- Enhancing Wilton's coordination and administration of its transportation system;
- Maintaining the Town's transportation inventory and assessing changes and opportunity when considering maintenance, improvements and/or expansions;
- Supporting and encouraging a variety of transit options and infrastructure for other than single-occupancy vehicular travel; and
- Proactively planning and developing for transportation improvements and regulations which contribute to a safer, more effective and reliable system.

In addition, throughout the following section are further recommendations to achieve the Town's transportation vision and objectives.

Transportation and the Town of Wilton

An important aspect to support transportation preservation and improvement is understanding the views and opinions of the community it serves. Accordingly, the implementation of public meetings,

workshops, charrettes, outreach programs and educational events help inform the public and solicit feedback. There are several different transportation topics that the Town of Wilton may consider worthy of reaching out to the public. Some of these topics include traffic volumes, safety concerns, roadway maintenance and design standards, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, trail amenities and many more. Representative decision makers can then use this community feedback to better address the preservation and improvement of transportation within the Town.

Support for Transportation Improvements in Wilton

In 2012, the Town of Wilton sent out a community survey. Respondents were asked to identify the five features most important in making Wilton a desirable place to live. 71.9% (100 of 139 responses) answered “rural character.” Few expressed concerns about traffic along Wilton’s major roads. In fact, 56.5% of the respondents (70 of 124 responses) rated roads as an economic strength for Wilton.

When asked what the biggest concerns currently are in Wilton and for the next ten years, 21.6% (30 of 139 responses) selected lack of local/regional transportation options and 21.6% (30 out of 139 responses) stated road improvements. Car speed was also characterized as a concern. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of maintaining and/or introducing various transportation options in Wilton and there was strong support for maintaining and expanding the existing transportation network, especially for bike and pedestrian amenities. 77.1% of respondents (101 out of 131 responses) rated sidewalks as very or somewhat important. 78.5 % (102 out of 127 responses) rated pedestrian trails as very or somewhat important. 76.3% (100 out of 131 responses) rated bike paths as very or somewhat important. Also, transportation for seniors was found to be a priority with 75.6% (99 out of 131 responses) rating it as very or somewhat important.

Plan NH Charrette

In July 2017, Wilton hosted a Plan NH charrette, which brought together diverse professionals to brainstorm recommendations to encourage downtown revitalization. Among its recommendations, connectivity was a major theme. For example, the charrette team encouraged promoting pedestrian safety downtown, filling in gaps within the sidewalk network and re-examining road circulation patterns.

The charrette team identified access to the river as a major tool for Wilton’s economic development, as it could provide a safe pathway connecting the town’s attractions from restaurants to shopping, create access to more recreation, and be an aesthetic draw. The charrette team proposed an extension of the Riverwalk, including a pedestrian bridge across the river to connect the Police Station walkway with Wilton House of Pizza and extending the pathway by the Proctor Parking lot along the street front of Main Street buildings and back through Main St Park and out to the Riverview Mill.

Existing Transportation Network

Roadway Classifications

The State-aid roadway classification system was developed by the state of New Hampshire, as defined by RSA 229:5, to determine responsibility for construction, reconstruction and maintenance as well as eligibility for use of state aid funds. The following is a description of the state-aid system:

- Class I, Primary State Highway System, consist of all existing or proposed highways on the primary state highway system, excluding portions of such highways within the compact sections of towns and cities - provided that those portions highways within the compact sections of those cities are Class I highways.
- Class II, Secondary State-Highway System, consist of all existing or proposed highways on the secondary state highway system, excluding portions of such highways within the compact sections of towns and cities. All sections improved to the satisfaction of the Commissioner are maintained and reconstructed by the State. All unimproved sections, where no state and local funds have been expended, must be maintained by the Town or city in which they are located until improved to the satisfaction of the Highway Commissioner. All bridges improved to state standards with state-aid bridge funds are maintained by the State. All other bridges shall be maintained by the city or town until such improvement is made.
- Class III, Recreational Roads, consist of all such roads leading to, and within state reservations designated by the Legislature. The [NHDOT](#) assumes full control of reconstruction and maintenance of such roads.
- Class IV Compact Highways, consist of all highways within the compact sections of cities and towns listed in RSA 229:5, V. The compact section of any such city or town is the territory within such city or town where the frontage on any highway, in the opinion of the Highway Commissioner, is mainly occupied by dwellings or buildings in which people live or business is conducted throughout the year. No highway reclassification from Class I or II to Class IV shall take effect until all rehabilitation needed to return the highway surface to reputable condition has been completed by the State.
- Class V, Rural Highways, consist of all other traveled highways, which the town or city has the duty to maintain regularly.
- Class VI, Un-maintained Highways, consist of all other existing public ways, including highways subject to gates and bars, and highways not maintained in suitable condition for travel for five years or more.

The State-aid classification road mileage in Wilton is summarized in Table 1. There are Class I, II, V and VI type roads in the Town. There are no roads in Wilton classified by the state as Class III (Recreational Roads) or Class IV (Compact Section). Approximately 41.573 miles of Class V roads are paved, and 11.461 miles of Class V roads are unpaved.

Table 1. State Aid Classification Road Mileage

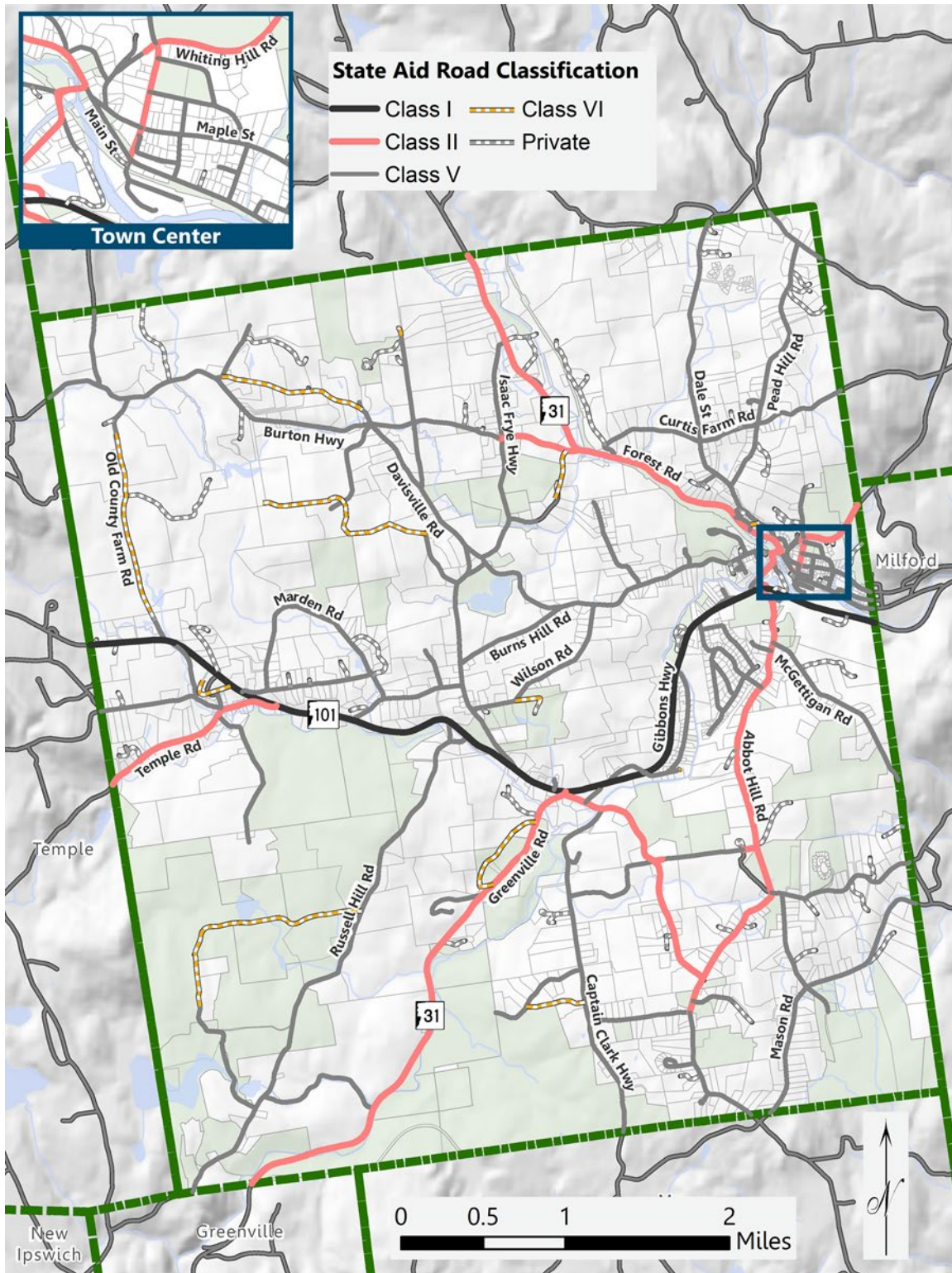
State Class	Road Mileage	Percent of Total
Class 0 Private Road	14.093	15.04%
Class I Primary State Highway	5.878	6.27%
Class II Secondary State Highway	13.542	14.45%
Class III Recreation Roads	0	0.0%
Class IV Compact Section	0	0.0%
Class V Rural Roads Local	53.245	56.81%
Class VI Un-maintained	6.970*	7.44%
Total	93.728	100%

Source: NH DOT Quarterly Snapshot, January 2019; Class VI Data from NRPC

*The Town of Wilton has identified 6.156 miles of Class VI Un-maintained roadways in addition to the 0.814 miles identified by NH DOT.

There is a total of 93.728 miles of roads in Wilton; 53.245 miles are Town maintained, 19.42 miles are maintained by the State, 6.970 miles are un-maintained, and 14.093 miles are private roads (Table 1). In Wilton, 5.878 miles of NH Route 101 (Gibbons Highway) bisects the Town; this road is classified as a Primary State Highway in NH. There are 8.497 miles of NH Route 31 in Wilton. This road is classified as a Secondary State Highway, comprises Burns Hill Rd, Forest Rd, Gibbons Highway/ NH Route 101, Greenville Rd, Island St, and Mill St.

Map 1. State Aid Road Classification in Wilton



Source: NHDOT, FHWA; Class VI data from NRPC

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation ([NHDOT](#)) has defined a second tier for classification of roads in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration ([FHWA](#)). This scheme classifies roads and highways into different categories according to their functions as well as their source of funding. The Functional Classification scheme was developed to define eligibility for funds under federal programs. The major source of funding for maintenance of minor collector roads and local roads comes from the Town and New Hampshire State block grant for roads. The following describes the Functional Classification system characteristics of a road and highway network:

<u>Functional System</u>	<u>General Characteristics</u>
Principal Arterial	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provides corridor movement suitable for substantial statewide or interstate travels and provides continuity for all rural arterials, which intercept the urban area. 2. Serves the major traffic movements within urbanized areas such as between central business districts and outlying residential areas, between major intercity communities, or between major suburban centers. 3. Serves a major portion of the trips entering and leaving the urban area, as well as the majority of the through traffic desiring to bypass the central city.
Minor arterial	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Serves trips of moderate length at a somewhat lower level of travel mobility than principal arterials. 2. Provides access to geographic areas smaller than those served by the higher system. 3. Provides intracommunity continuity but does not penetrate identifiable neighborhoods.
Collector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collects traffic from local roads and channels it into the arterial system. 2. Provides land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas.
Local	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprises all facilities not on higher systems. 2. Provides access to land and higher systems. 3. Through traffic usage discouraged.

Table 2 provides a summary of the mileage for roads in the Town of Wilton based on the [NH DOT/FHWA](#) assigned Functional Classifications and Class VI roadways identified by the Town. Map 2 displays the functionally classed road network.

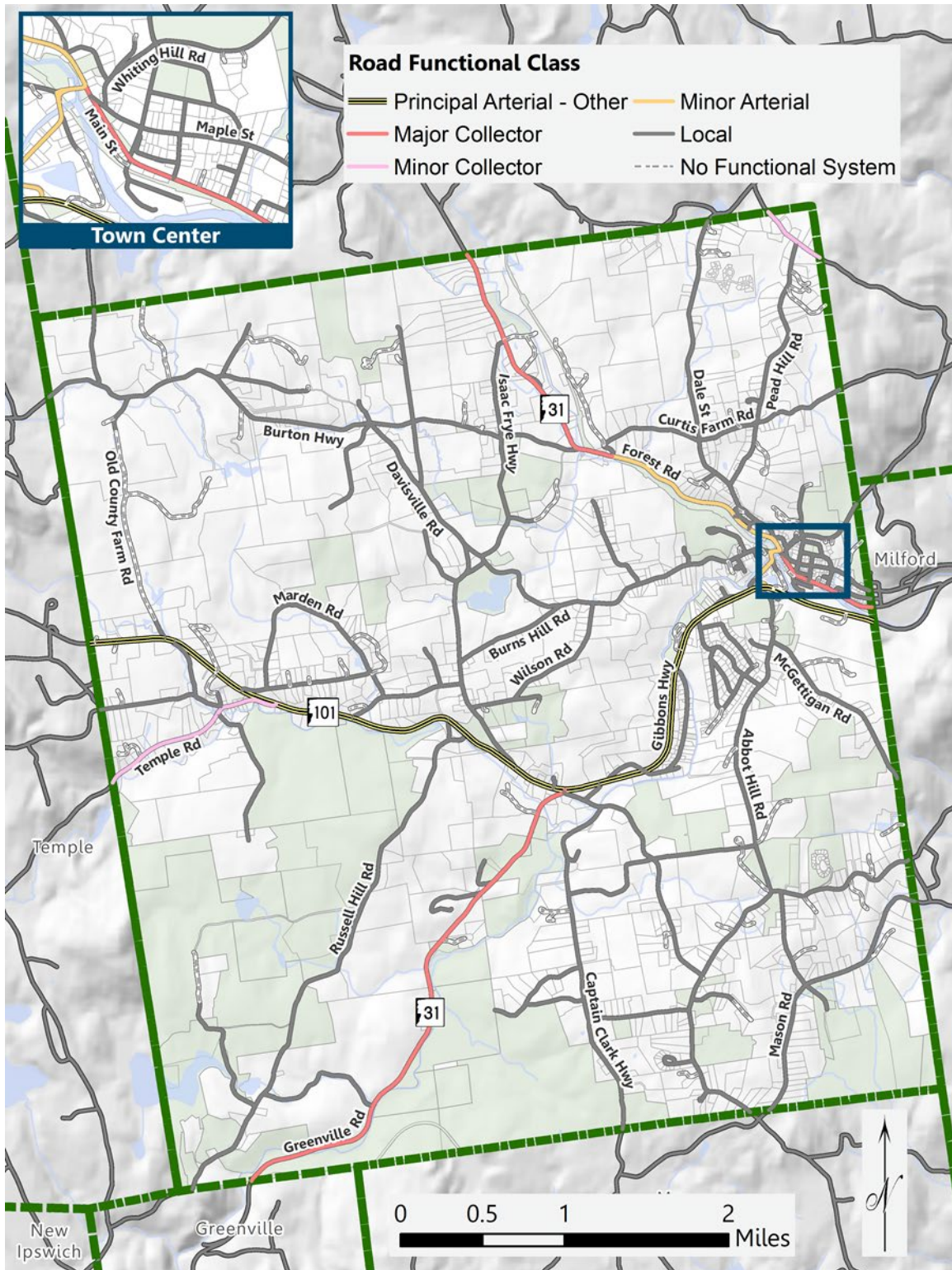
Table 2. Functional Classification of Wilton Roads

State Functional Classification	State Aid Road Classification							Totals
	Class 0 Mileage	Class I Mileage	Class II Mileage	Class III Mileage	Class IV Mileage	Class V Mileage	Class VI Mileage	
No Functional Classification	14.093					0.167	6.970*	21.23
Principal Arterial – Other		5.878						5.878
Minor Arterial			1.618					1.618
Major Collector			4.927			0.692		5.619
Minor Collector			1.179			0.425		1.604
Local Roads			5.818			51.961		57.779
Total	14.093	5.878	13.542			53.245	6.970*	93.728

Source: NH DOT Quarterly Snapshot, January 2019; Class VI Data from NRPC

*The Town of Wilton has identified 6.156 miles of Class VI Un-maintained roadways in addition to the 0.814 miles identified by NH DOT.

Map 2. Functional Classification of Roadways in Wilton



Source: NH DOT Quarterly Snapshot, January 2019

Scenic Roads are special town designations of Class IV, V, and VI roads. The designation requires the municipality to obtain written permission of the planning board prior to any repair, maintenance, reconstruction or paving work on the road if such work requires damage or removal of trees, or the removal or destruction of stone walls. Likewise, any utility or other person who wishes to install or maintain poles, conduits, cables, wires, pipes or similar structures must obtain prior written consent of the planning board if the work involves tree cutting or removal of stone walls. Scenic road designation does not affect a municipality's eligibility to receive construction, maintenance or reconstruction aid.

Table 3. Scenic Roads in Wilton

Date	Name
2009	Dwight Road
1975	Heald Road
1975	Kimball Hill Road
1975	King Brook Road
1975	Russell Hill Road
1975	Sand Hill Road
1978	Wilson Road

Inventorizing the existing local vehicular roadways is an important step in understanding the Town's transportation network. Though this process, the Town can begin to assess the connectivity, layout, character and amenities the network presents. Such information collected can be useful for understanding the functionality and flow of transportation within the town and region, as well as what assets are important for preservation or development.

Traffic Volumes

Historic traffic volume data for the Town of Wilton is compiled from several sources. [NHDOT](#) collects traffic counts in accordance with federal guidelines under the Federal Highway Performance Monitoring Program. The guidelines describe federal procedures for sampling highway and road volumes. These procedures provide [FHWA](#) with highway volumes for design standards and meet the Environmental Protection Agency's ([EPA](#)) requirements for estimating vehicular highway travel. In addition to the NHDOT's annual traffic counting program, the Nashua Regional Planning Commission ([NRPC](#)) maintains an ongoing traffic count program for validating the region's traffic model. [NRPC](#) also provides traffic counts for member communities upon request.

The most heavily traveled road in Wilton is NH 101, which runs east-west from Milford to Temple. The other road with the greatest traffic volumes is NH 31, which serves as a north-south route and partially overlaps with NH 101 and connects Lyndeborough to Greenville Table 4 and Map 3 show the traffic volumes for the Town of Wilton.

Per the Highway Performance Monitoring System Field Manual, traffic counts on local roads can be based on a six-year counting cycle. Traffic volume data that was collected before 2013 is included in Map 3 for reference and to highlight areas where the Town may wish to update its traffic counting data.

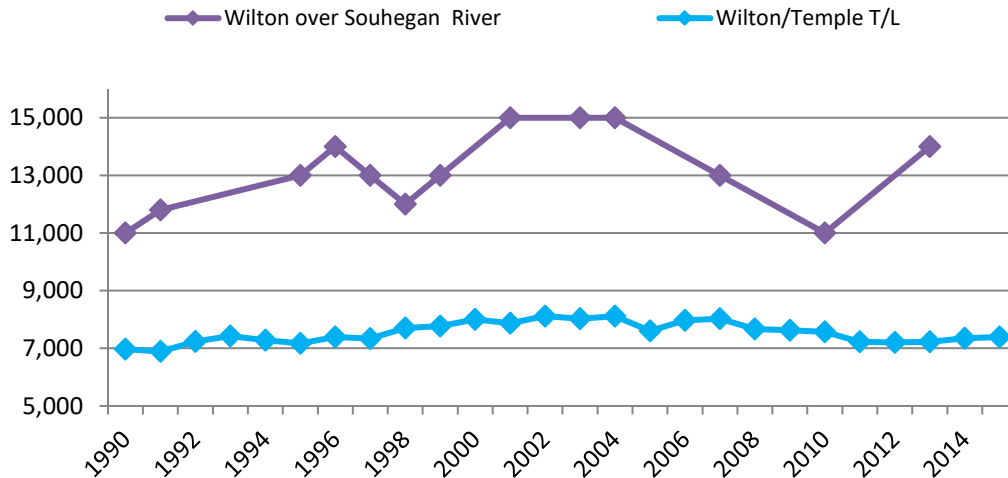
Table 4. Average Annual Daily Traffic

Count Year	ADT (Vehicles Per Day)	Location
1993	10,174	Gibbons Hwy west of Greenville Rd
1997	153	Abbot Hill Rd and Mason townline
1998	1,221	Abbot Hill Rd south of NH 101
1998	8,464	Main St east of Park St
1998	9,215	Gibbons Hwy west of NH 31
2006	1,044	Abbot Hill Rd south of Morse Dr
2006	67	Orchard View Dr west of Abbot Hill Rd
2006	5,171	Greenville Rd and Greenville townline
2007	1,607	Temple Rd and Temple townline
2009	8,226	Gibbons Hwy and Temple townline
2010	49	Town Farm Rd over Temple Brook
2010	552	Whiting Hill Rd east of Park St
2010	77	Russell Hill Rd south of NH 101
2016	4,888	Forest Rd east of Burton Hwy
2016	332	Burton Hwy west of Duggin Rd
2016	856	Isaac Frye Hwy over Souhegan River
2016	2,784	Island St over Souhegan River
2016	475	Isaac Frye Hwy S. of Putnam Hill Rd
2016	10,594	Gibbons Hwy west of Wilton Center Rd
2016	3,535	Greenville Rd S. of NH 101
2016	45	Frye Mill Rd north of Burton Hwy
2016	3,565	Forest Rd over Stony Brook
2016	266	Keyes Hill Rd over Blood Brook
2016	15,528	Gibbons Hwy over Souhegan River
2017	837	School Rd
2017	826	Burns Hill Rd west of School Rd
2017	216	Greg St. and Library
2017	1,873	Burns Hill Rd east of School Rd

Source: NRPC

Figure 1 shows the change in traffic volumes on NH Route 101 since 1990. Overall, there have been steady increases in the volume on NH Route 101. These increases can be accounted for by the increase in population and its role as a major commuting route for the Nashua Region. Traffic volumes on NH Route 101 are higher on the eastern side of Wilton.

Figure 1. NH 101 Annual Average Daily Traffic Volumes



Level of Service

Using the observed traffic count data, it is possible to estimate highway capacity, or the maximum amount of traffic that can be accommodated by a given facility. The analysis can provide tools for the improvement of existing facilities and for the planning and designs of future facilities.

“Level of Service” (LOS) is a term which denotes the type of operating conditions which occur along a roadway or at a particular intersection over a given period of time, generally a one-hour peak period. It is a qualitative measure of the effect of several operational factors, including roadway geometrics, travel delay, freedom to maneuver and safety. LOS categories for roadway segments and descriptions are explained below.

LOS “A” represents free flow. Individual users are virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream.

LOS “B” is in the range of stable flow, but the presence of other users in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable. Freedom to select desired speeds is still relatively unaffected.

LOS “C” is in the range of stable flow but marks the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream. Occasional backups occur behind turning vehicles.

LOS “D” represents high-density, but stable, flow. Speed and freedom to maneuver are restricted, and the driver experiences a below-average level of comfort and convenience. Small increases in traffic flow will generally cause operational problems at this level.

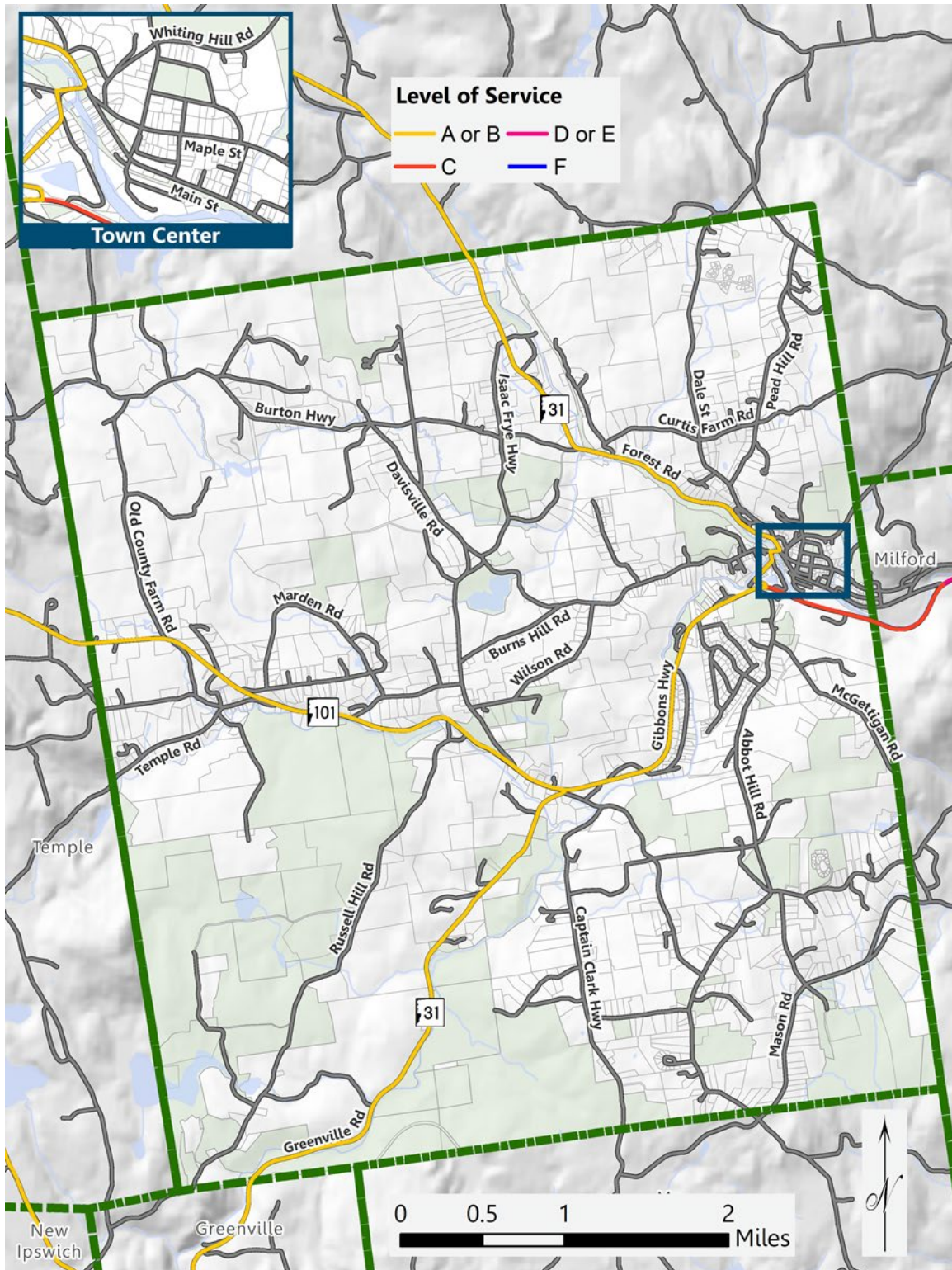
LOS "E" represents operating conditions at or near the capacity level. All speeds are reduced to a low but relatively uniform level. Freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely difficult and is generally accomplished by forcing other vehicles to give way. Congestion levels and delay are very high.

LOS "F" is representative of forced or breakdown flow. This condition exists wherever the amount of traffic approaching a point exceeds the amount that can traverse the point, resulting in lengthy queues.

Map 4 shows the [LOS](#) in Wilton along NH Route 101 and NH Route 31. The [LOS](#) on most roads in Wilton is at either an A or B level, indicating that users of the road are generally unaffected by congestion and other vehicles. However, the segment of NH Route 101 between NH Route 31 and the Milford Town Line is at a "C" rating, which indicates occasional backups occurring behind turning vehicles.

By understanding the traffic volumes and whether they have changed within Wilton, the Town can begin to identify problematic locations, which may occur in the town center because of slower speeds, narrower roads and the presence of pedestrians or in the outskirts of Town where sightlines are obstructed, signage is scarce or pavement conditions are compromised. The Town must identify these areas in connection with decisions related to monitoring, maintenance, improvement and expansion of the Town's transportation network.

Map 4. Level of Service in Wilton



Source: NRPC, 2011

Accidents

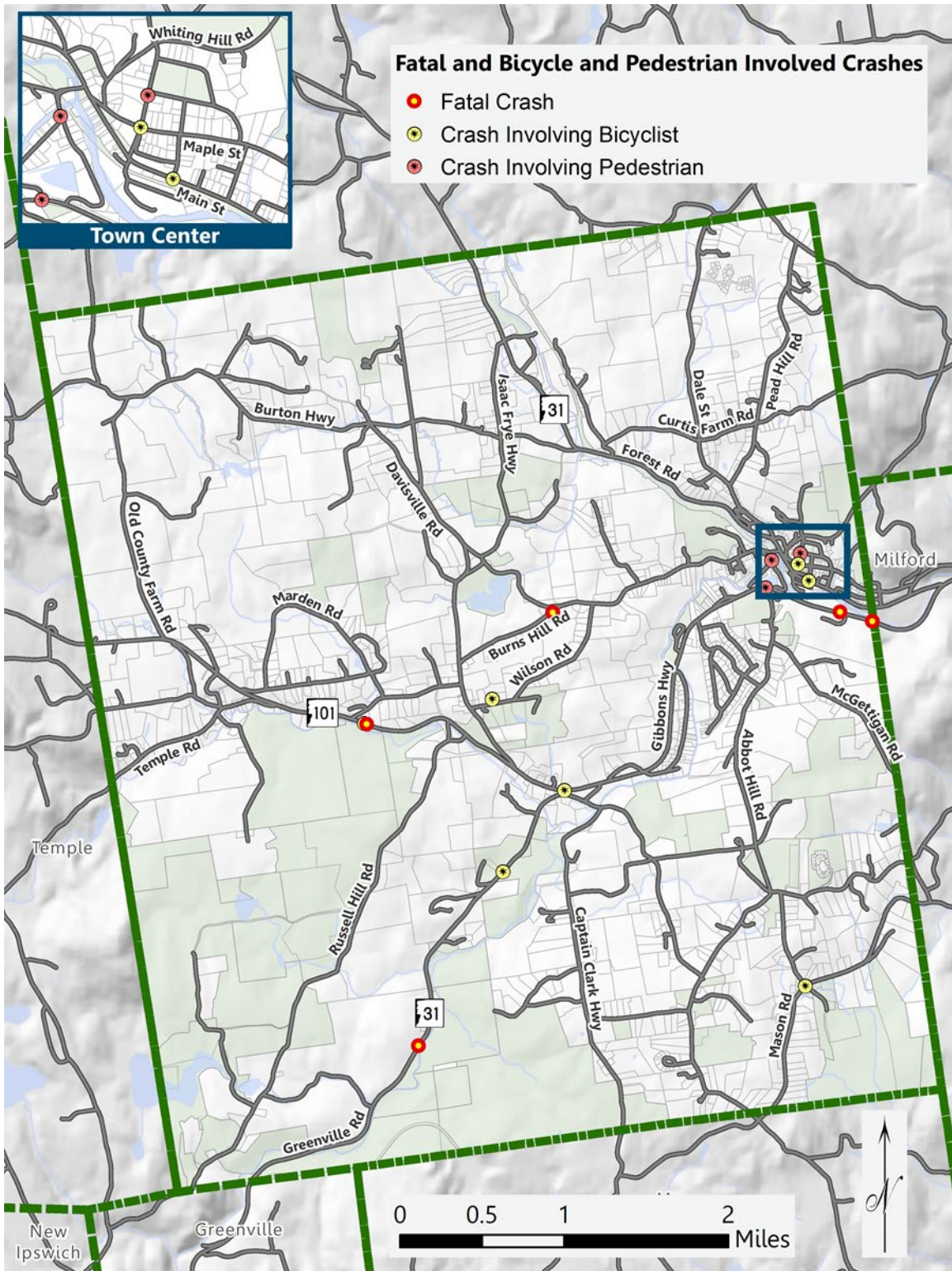
All locatable automobile accidents (2002-2017) in the state of New Hampshire are compiled by the NH Division of Motor Vehicles based on local police reports. This database reveals that approximately 1,365 occurred in Wilton; five crashes involved a fatality and 11 involved a pedestrian or bicyclist (Map 5). Map 6 shows nonfatal crashes in Wilton from 2014 to 2017 coded by their level of severity. The primary cause of a crash was hitting a fixed object, followed by colliding with another vehicle.

On April 1, 2017, one cyclist traveling in southbound lane of Forest Rd (NH 31) was killed after being struck by a car heading north on Route 31, which was turning left onto Burton Highway. Reasons for the crash could be due to elevation change and poor sightlines. In 2019, the Town began to address and alter the intersection of Route 31 and Burton Highway to reduce such hazards conditions.

Assessment and improvements to safety measures should be at the top of the list of items to be addressed by the Town. Accidents have been documented throughout the Town, from the densely packed Town center to its rural back roads with limited traffic. They involve automobiles, cyclists and pedestrians.

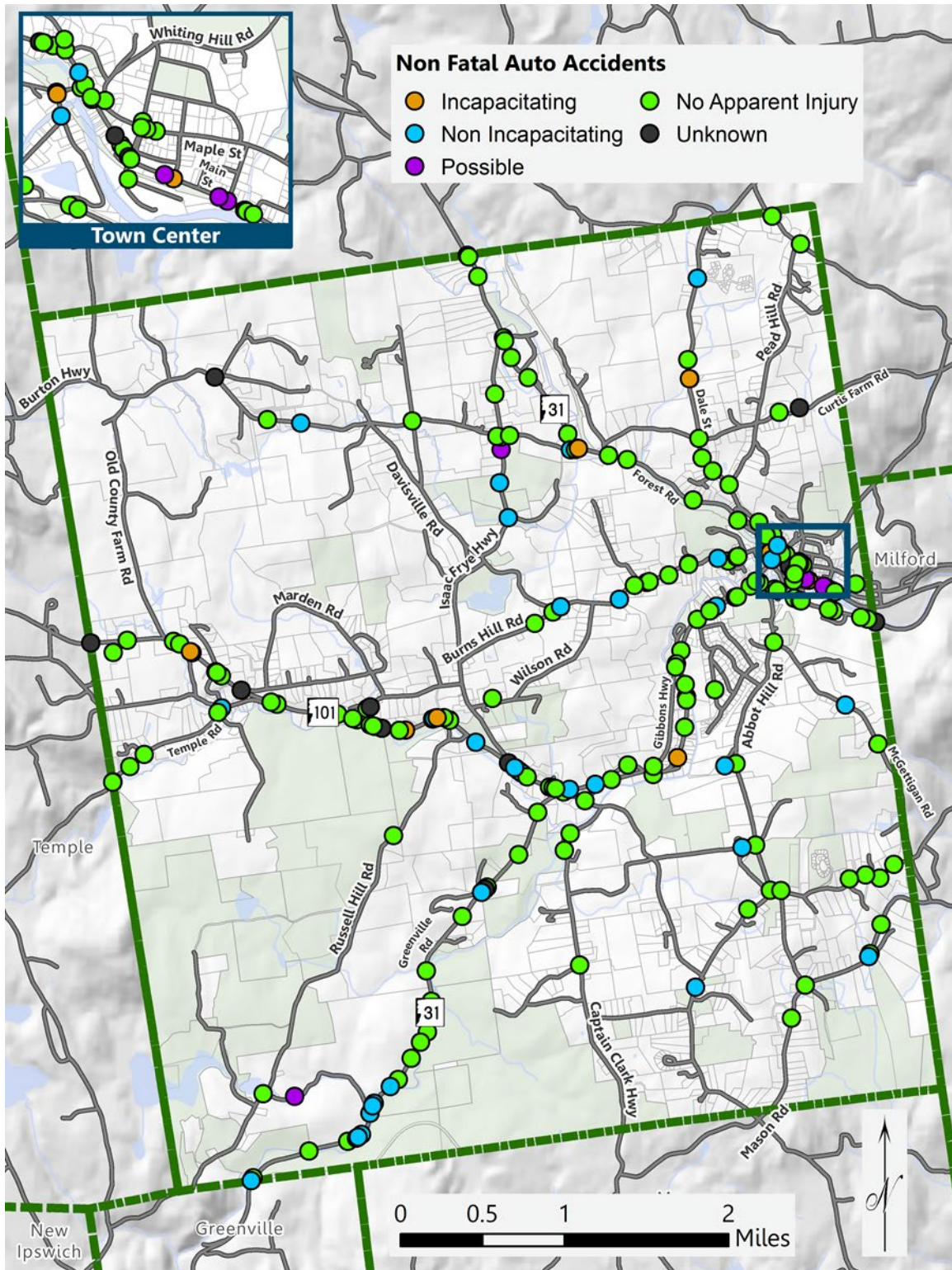
Once problematic areas are identified, it is important for the Town should consider improvements to help prevent such accidents. Strategies may include improved sightlines, reduced slopes, the installation of new or updated signage or signals, more frequent painting of roadway markings and/or educational events for community.

Map 5. Fatal and Bike/Pedestrian Crashes in Wilton from 2002 to 2017



Source: NH DOT, 2018

Map 6. Nonfatal Crashes in Wilton from 2014 to 2017



Source: NH DOT, 2018

Pavement Conditions

[NHDOT](#) collects information about paving conditions using an advanced road condition survey vehicle. Some routes, like Interstates and those on the National Highway System, are surveyed every year. Other routes are surveyed every other year, with numbered routes collected during odd-numbered calendar years and unnumbered collected during even-numbered calendar years.

The condition of the road is determined by its roughness. The International Roughness Index ([IRI](#)) measures the vertical movement, or bumpiness, that occurs along a route. It is an important value because it measures what the driver feels. As the road ages and distresses increase, the bumpiness and [IRI](#) increases.

Since roads are surveyed during the Spring/Summer/Fall months, coinciding with the construction seasons, the data may not reflect all the paving that occurred during each collection year. Thus, the reported condition may not accurately reflect current conditions. As of 2017, 45% of Wilton's surveyed roads were considered to have poor pavements. These typically included Isaac Frye Highway, Gage Rd., Abbot Hill Rd., and Whiting Hill Rd.

Bridge Conditions

Per RSA 234:2, the [NHDOT](#) inspects municipally owned bridges on local roads, as well as State-owned bridges. However, to qualify for inspection, the bridges must have a clear span of at least 10 feet, measured along the highway's center line, spanning a water course or other opening or obstruction. Inspection and maintenance of culverts and other structures on local roads that do not meet this 10-foot span definition are the responsibility of the town. The [NHDOT](#) regularly inspects bridges belonging to municipalities on class IV and V roads (in accordance with RSA 234:21-:25) and publishes the results of the inspections yearly in the State's bridge list. The State requires towns to keep records. The inspections are a prerequisite for bridge-aid funds. There are 23 bridges in Wilton that are regularly inspected by the [NHDOT](#). As shown in Table 5, the State of New Hampshire owns nine of these bridges and the Town owns the other 14. The [NHDOT](#) lists five bridges in Wilton on the 2017 "Municipal Red List," including Old County Farm Rd over Blood Brook, Temple Road over Blood Brook, King Brook Road over King Brook, Frye Mill Road over Mill Brook, and Stage Coach Road over Mill Brook. Bridges on the State's Municipal Red List are bridges requiring interim inspections due to known deficiencies, poor conditions, weight restrictions or type of construction. Table 5 shows the status of all Wilton bridges.

In the 2019 -2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan ([MTP](#)), two bridge replacement projects are listed through the State Aid Bridge Program. One is the replacement of the bridge on Old County Farm Road over Blood Brook (Bridge ID 060/118), which is scheduled for 2025. The other is the replacement of the bridge on Stage Coach Road over Mill Brook (Bridge ID 086/142), scheduled for 2021.

Although the [NHDOT](#) inspects all locally owned bridges as well as state bridges, it only recommends a load restriction posting on locally owned bridges. The municipality bears the responsibility for installing signs for the posting of load restrictions, in accordance with [NHDOT](#) recommendations.

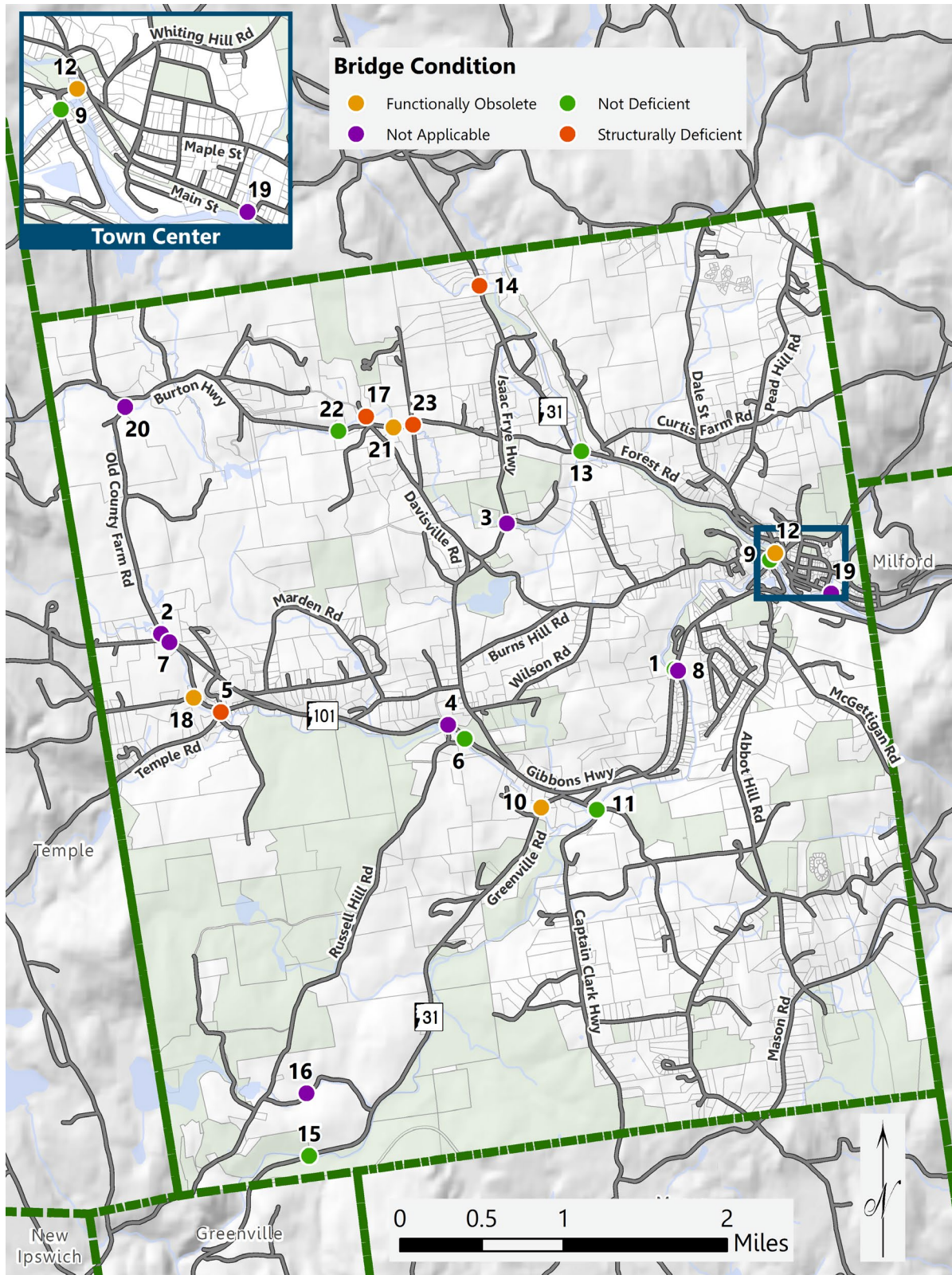
Table 5. Bridge Condition Report

Bridge	Bridge Number	Year Built/Rebuilt	Condition	Map Key
NH 31, NH 101 over SOUHEGAN RIVER	119/116	1954	Not Deficient	1
OLD COUNTY FARM RD over BLOOD BROOK	060/118	1950, 2013	Not Applicable	2
ISAAC FRYE HWY over MILL BROOK	098/131	1950	Not Applicable	3
BYPASSED HISTORIC over BLOOD BROOK	092/104	1860, 1973	Not Applicable	4
TEMPLE ROAD over BLOOD BROOK	063/105	1901	Structurally Deficient	5
RUSSELL HILL ROAD over BLOOD BROOK ("Red Bridge")	093/103	2003	Not Deficient	6
NH101 over BLOOD BROOK	059/115	1935, 1953	Not Applicable	7
BYPASS HISTORIC over SOUHEGAN RIVER	120/116	1916	Not Applicable	8
NH 31 over SOUHEGAN RIVER	129/126	1971, 2014	Not Deficient	9
NH 31 over BLOOD BROOK	102/095	1937	Functionally Obsolete	10
ISAAC FRY HWY over SOUHEGAN RIVER	110/096	1993	Not Deficient	11
NH 31 over STONY BROOK	132/127	1905	Functionally Obsolete	12
NH 31 over STONY BROOK	107/141	1928, 1985	Not Deficient	13
NH 31 over STONY BROOK	094/162	1929, 1983	Structurally Deficient	14
NH 31 over SOUHEGAN RIVER	077/052	1951	Not Deficient	15
KING BROOK ROAD over KING BROOK	074/060	1901	Not Applicable	16

FRYE MILL ROAD over MILL BROOK	080/145	1920, 2014	Structurally Deficient	17
KEYES HILL ROAD over BLOOD BROOK	060/109	1999	Functionally Obsolete	18
MAIN STREET over BROOK	140/123	1950	Not Applicable	19
OLD COUNTY FARM RD over MILL BROOK	053/151	1865	Not Applicable	20
BURTON HIGHWAY over MILL BROOK	083/143	1920, 2005	Functionally Obsolete	21
BURTON HIGHWAY over MILL BROOK	076/144	2002	Not Deficient	22
STAGE COACH ROAD over MILL BROOK	086/142	1940, 1960	Structurally Deficient	23

Data Source: NH DOT Quarterly Snapshot January 2019

Map 7. Wilton Bridge Condition



Data Source: NH DOT Quarterly Snapshot January 2019

Travel Patterns

Information on commuting is available from the 2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates and is shown in Tables 6 and 7, as compared to the 2010 ACS 5-year estimates. 82.8% of Wilton's workers commuted by single occupant vehicle in 2016, slightly higher than the national average of 76.4%. While the percentage of people who carpool to work has decreased since 2010, the percentage of people who work from home has increased 1.2%. The mean travel time to work in 2016 was 31 minutes, which is slightly higher than the national average of 25.9 minutes and a decrease of 3.6 minutes from 2010. As demonstrated in Map 7, the top three commuting destinations for Wilton residents are Wilton, Milford, and Nashua. Workers in Wilton primarily come from Wilton, Milford and Peterborough, as shown in Map 8.

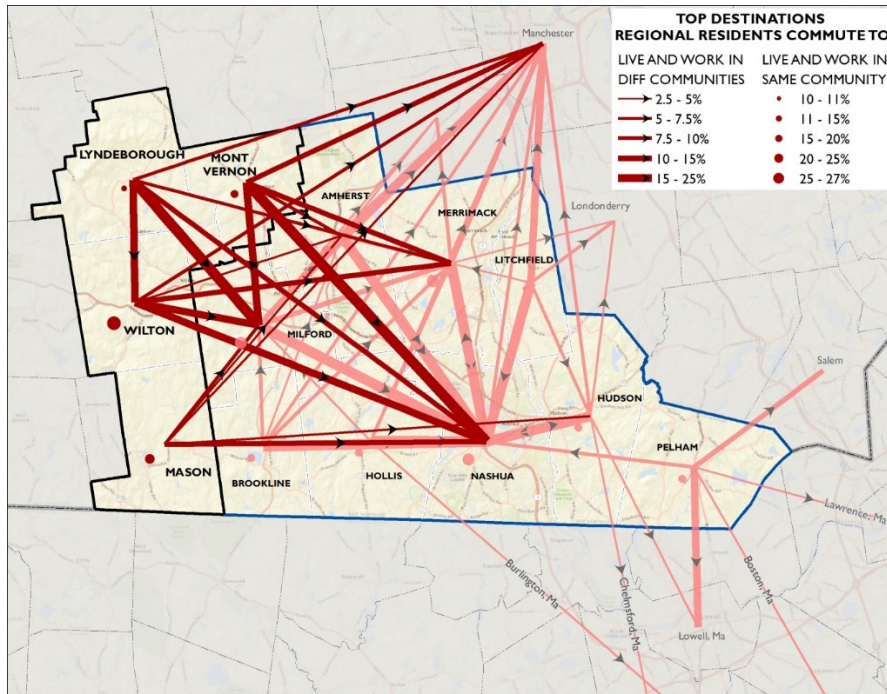
Table 6. Means of Transportation to Work (Workers 16 years and over)

Means of Transportation	2010 Census		2012 - 2016 ACS	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Drove alone	1,428	81.5	1,662	82.8
Carpooled	153	8.7	158	7.9
Public transportation (incl. taxi)	16	0.9	0	0.0
Walked	21	1.2	16	0.8
Motorcycle or other means	16	0.9	10	0.5
Worked at home	119	6.8	160	8
Total	1,753	100	2006	100

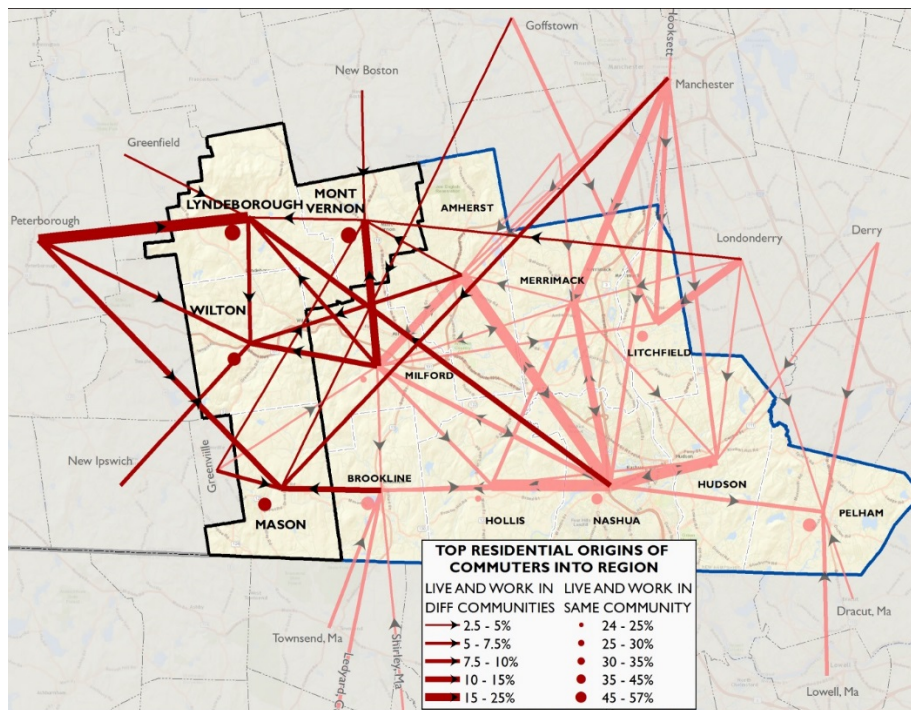
Table 7. Means of Transportation to Work (Workers 16 years and over)

Travel Time	2010 Census		2016 ACS	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Less than 10 minutes	188	10.7	332	16.6
10 to 14 minutes	175	10.0	273	13.6
15 to 19 minutes	154	8.8	195	9.7
20 to 29 minutes	254	14.5	231	11.5
30 to 44 minutes	524	29.9	545	27.2
45 to 59 minutes	216	12.3	191	9.5
60 or more minutes	242	13.8	239	11.9

Map 7. Destinations Residents Commute to



Map 8. Residential Origins of Commuters into NRPC Region



Rail

The 18.6-mile section of the Hillsborough Branch between Wilton and Bennington is owned by the State of New Hampshire and operated by the Milford-Bennington Railroad ([MBR](#)). Within Wilton, service is operated for over two miles of the State-owned track between Wilton and South Lyndeborough. This active track is maintained to [FRA](#) Class 2 standards which allows maximum speeds of 25 mph for freight, 30 mph for passenger rail and typically includes secondary main lines and regional railroads. The track passes over two at-grade crossing and five bridges, including trestles in Lyndeborough and Bennington.¹

The 16.36-mile section of the Hillsborough Branch from Nashua to Wilton, including transport through Milford, is owned and operated by Pan Am Railways ([PAR](#)). This branch, known by PAR as the Hillsborough Running Track, passes over eight bridges and 36 grade crossings and is categorized as Federal Railroad Administration ([FRA](#)) Excepted, which means that no passenger trains are permitted to operate along the line, there are limitations on hazardous material that can be transported and the maximum speed permissible is 10 mph.

MBR has been using the 5.36-mile stretch of Pan Am-owned track between Milford and Wilton for transporting stone and gravel even though its 12-year agreement with Pan Am which expired in 2004. Between 2004 and 2012, [MBR](#) continued to operate over this stretch of tracks pursuant to the terms of the expired agreement. Court ordered fees were then paid to Pan Am from [MBR](#) for the years 2012 through 2016. Since then, [MBR](#) has been operating pursuant to the terms of a 2017 draft track agreement.

On April 13, 2018, Pan Am Railways filed a request to the Surface Transportation Board – a federal, bipartisan, independent adjudicatory committee – to discontinue Milford-Bennington’s rights to operate on the line. On October 12, 2018, the Surface Transportation Board denied Pan Am’s request to discontinue Milford-Bennington’s right to operate.² The Town of Wilton overwhelmingly supported this decision and submitted public comments to the Surface Transportation Board. Maintaining the MBR from Bennington, through Wilton and onward to Milford is critical to protecting the condition of Wilton’s roadways and mitigating traffic concerns.

Regional Transportation Issues

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

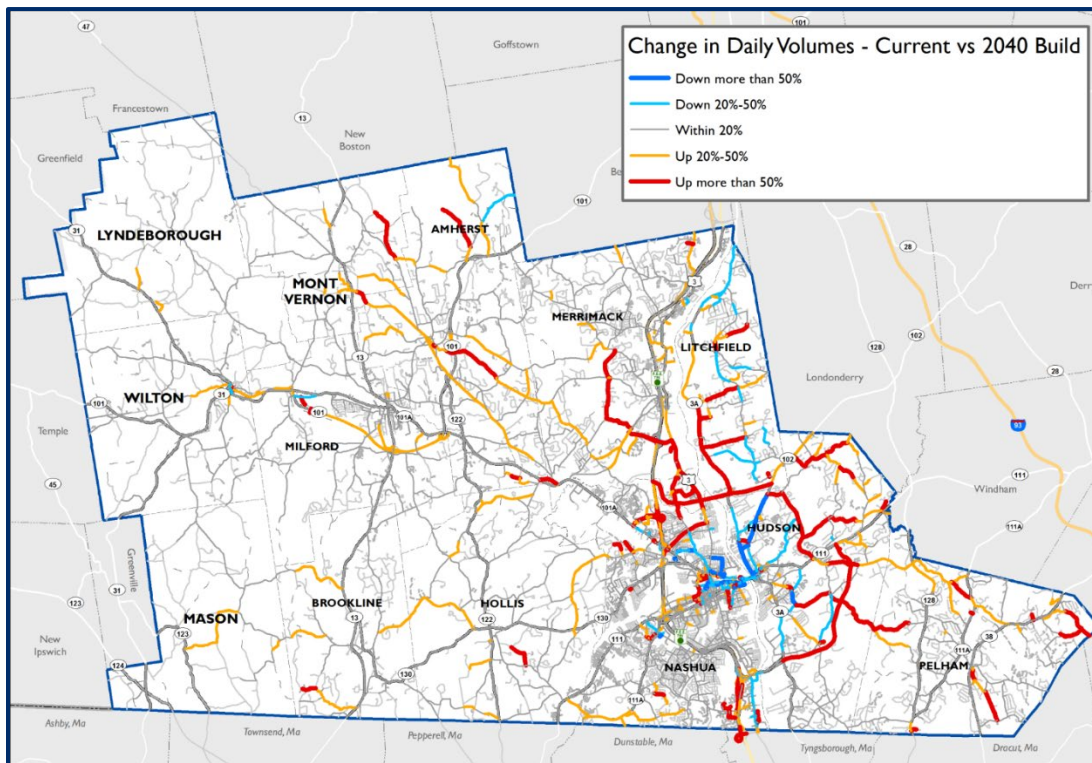
NRPC serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization ([MPO](#)) for the Nashua Urbanized Area, which includes the Town of Wilton. One responsibility of an MPO is to develop and maintain a Long-Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan ([MTP](#)). The [MTP](#) is a comprehensive, multimodal “blueprint” for transportation systems and services aimed at both meeting the mobility needs and improving the overall quality of life of residents in the region through the next 25 years.

¹ <https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/aerorailtransit/railandtransit/documents/FinalStateRailPlan.pdf>

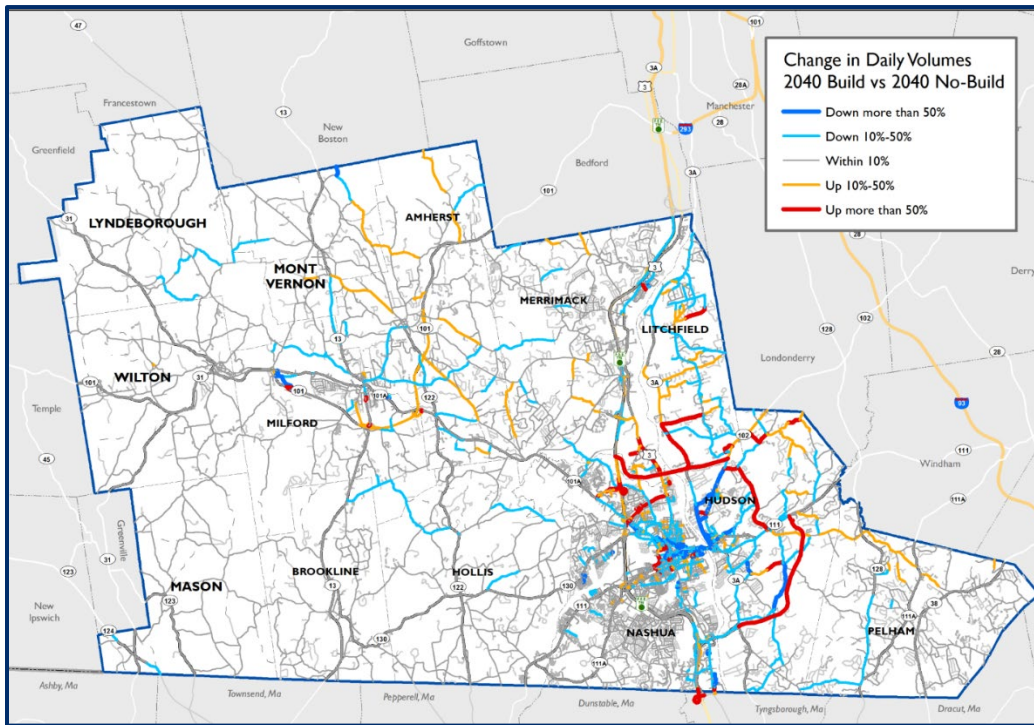
² <https://www.stb.gov/Decisions/readingroom.nsf/WEBUNID/190B951C78142F1F852583230081FFC4?OpenDocument>

For the 2017 -2040 [MTP](#), NRPC utilized its Travel Demand Forecasting Model to help predict the change in daily traffic volumes if all the projects listed in the [MTP](#) were built and implemented. The model can predict vehicular traffic under several scenarios such as planned development or other changes to the road network. The model uses the latest socio-economic and land use data and undergoes extensive calibration to produce predictions with a high degree of confidence, making it well-suited to support traffic planning on local, corridor and regional scales. As Map 9 shows, several roads in Wilton will experience an increase in the volume of traffic compared to current rates if all projects listed in the [MTP](#) were built. The roads that are projected to have greater traffic are local roads (such as Burns Hill Rd and Main St) that intersect with major collectors (such as Routes 101 and 31). However, as Map 10 shows, there will not be a significant change in traffic in Wilton whether the projects on the [MTP](#) are all funded and built or if no actions are taken. Map 11 shows that the travel time along Route 101 would decrease from 26.9 minutes to 24.3 minutes if the projects in the [MTP](#) were funded but would increase if they were not.

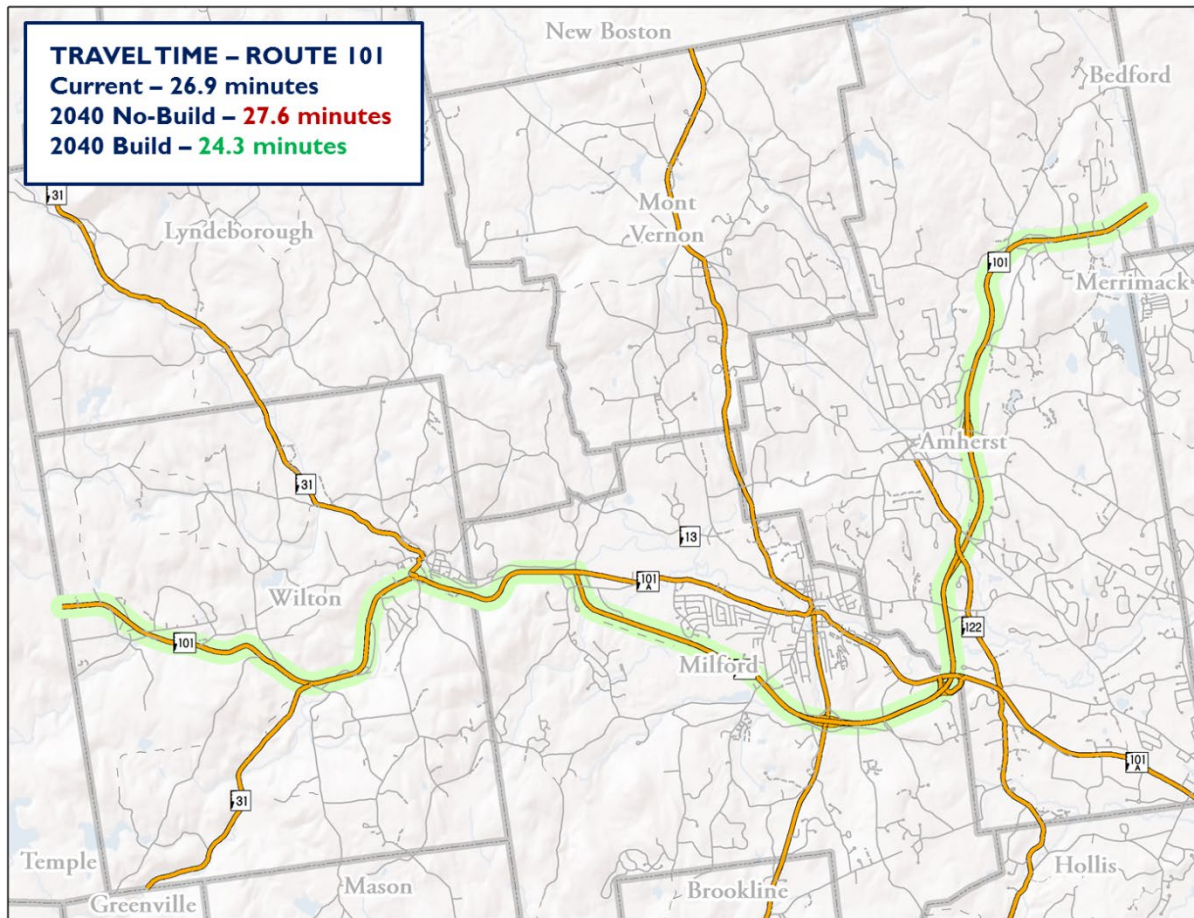
Map 9. Change in Daily Traffic Volumes if 2040 MTP Plan Implemented



Map 10. Comparison of Traffic Volume between 2040 MTP Implementation and No Change



Map 11. Comparison of Travel Time along NH 101 under differing scenarios



There are several projects listed in the 2019-2045 [MTP](#) that pertain to Wilton. NH 101 corridor improvements have been identified based on findings of the New Hampshire Route 101 Corridor Plan (September 2002). The Plan stated that NH 101 should have four travel lanes (two in each direction) from NH 114 in Bedford to western Milford, with a landscaped median (not a barrier) to control left turns. The stated purpose of the Plan was to improve safety and preserve the capacity of the roadway as land use patterns change along the corridor. The recommended Plan was designed to result in a better operating, more visually appealing arterial, as well as reduced traffic diversion to local streets.

In anticipation of the NH 101 widening, there are two other projects scheduled in Wilton. One project is preliminary engineering and obtaining a right-of-way to complete corridor improvements from NH 31 to Wallace Rd in Bedford, which is scheduled for 2019. Another will implement the traffic and safety improvements consistent with the intent of the 2002 NH 101 corridor study from Bedford to the intersection of Rt 31 in Wilton, which is scheduled for 2019-2021. The currently proposed funding years for this project are 2035 to 2038.

Critical Urban Freight Corridors

In 2018, [NHDOT](#) requested that all regional planning agencies/metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the state to recommend roadways within their regions as designated Critical Urban Freight Corridors ([CUFCs](#)) or Critical Rural Freight Corridors ([CRFCs](#)). Those selected by the [NHDOT](#) will be incorporated into the National Highway Freight Network ([NHFN](#)) and be eligible for federal funding that specifically supports the roadway freight system.

The NRPC has considered the following factors in developing its recommendations for nominating critical freight corridors:

- Truck volume reported by [NHDOT](#) along corridor segments;
- Corridor function for long-distance freight hauling;
- Corridors with ongoing improvement projects;
- Total corridor mileage that is commensurate with an appropriate MPO share of the State's allocated 75 [CUFC](#) miles.

The total recommended [CUFC](#) mileage is 28.64; [CRFC](#) mileage totals 4.55.

The corridors recommended by the NRPC staff for inclusion in the [CUFC/CRFC](#) network were reviewed by the [NRPC](#) Transportation Technical Advisory Committee ([TTAC](#)) at its June 13, 2018, meeting. The [TTAC](#) approved the list with one addition, continuing the designation of NH 101 as a [CUFC](#) from Wilton Rd. in Milford to NH 31 in Wilton. At its Commission meeting of June 20, 2018, the Nashua [MPO](#) reviewed the recommended plan and accepted the [TTAC](#) recommendation without a formal vote.

Alternate Modes of Transportation

Although most trips in Wilton are taken by automobile, opportunities are available to enhance the provision of bicycle, pedestrian and public transit facilities. Each trip taken by bicycle, foot or transit removes one private vehicle from the roadway, thereby enhancing the capacity of the road network and providing options for those who cannot or do not wish to drive.

Public Transportation and Paratransit

Areas with high densities, high populations of youth, elderly, and disabled persons as well as low median incomes, high poverty rates and lack of automobile availability typically have a significant need for public transit services. Introducing fixed route transit service in this area would facilitate mobility and increase access to employment opportunities, commercial and retail establishments, and potential commuter rail service.

Wilton is a member of the Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative ([SVTC](#)), a volunteer-based grassroots association of the six communities participating in the Souhegan Valley Rides bus service ([SVR](#)). [SVTC](#) was established in 2008 by residents and community leaders of Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, and Milford based on a documented need for local alternative transportation options. In 2013 and 2014, respectively, Mont Vernon and Wilton joined the collaborative. [SVTC](#) organized, implemented and

oversees the Souhegan Valleys Rides bus service. Each participating community is guaranteed a voice in the governance of the service and shares in the operating costs to provide the actual transit services.

Often referred to as “The Blue Bus,” Souhegan Valley Rides is a dial-a-ride curb-to-curb type bus service where passengers share rides within the six towns and to and from Nashua. [SVTC](#) purchases handicap-accessible vehicle and call center services from the Nashua Transit System ([NTS](#)). This arrangement was determined to be the most effective and efficient way to bring a handicapped-accessible transportation service to the Souhegan Valley without duplicating assets already on the ground.

The buses are wheelchair-accessible, feature step-less entry, and seat approximately 14 passengers. Souhegan Valley Rides operates Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 6:00 pm including travel time to and from the NTS garage. Pre-registration is required but this can be done easily by completing a one-page form available on the [SVTC](#) website or from [NTS](#). Riders must call at least 48 hours in advance on weekdays to schedule a ride, and at least 24 hours in advance to cancel a ride. For ease of use, registration, scheduling and cancellations can be done by calling one number at the [NTS](#) call center – (603) 880-0100. To facilitate use of the service by residents in greatest financial need, SVTC offers a free bus pass program that is funded solely by donations and is administered in conjunction with the local welfare offices and SHARE Outreach, Inc.

The focus for The Blue Bus continues to be on assisting those in greatest need – elderly residents, those living with a disability, and residents who are unable to drive. Other residents may use the service as space is available. Rides are provided principally for non-emergency healthcare appointments, including medical appointments, outpatient therapy, counseling, laboratory visits, addiction services and dialysis. In addition, rides are available to social service agencies, local pharmacies, town facilities and libraries, senior activity centers, local Meals-On-Wheels community dining centers, the Nashua YMCA and more. In 2018, rides for shopping were increased from three to five days per week to local and Nashua locations.

Based on passenger requests, community needs and available funding, [SVTC](#) periodically adjusts the service delivery plan to better meet local transit needs. [SVTC](#) frequently receives requests for work related transportation, rides to secondary education locations, and rides to connect with the Boston Express. Currently, funding limitations prevent expansion to specifically include those types of rides.

Since joining the [SVTC](#) in 2014 and through 7 months of the 2019 fiscal year, Wilton residents have utilized the service for nearly 1,000 rides and have accounted for approximately 4.8% of [SVTC](#)'s ridership during that time period. [SVTC](#) has reported that, during a study from July 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019, 92.5% of all rides coming from Wilton were to healthcare-related facilities, even though the service includes other destinations like grocery stores, department stores, malls and plazas.

Blue Bus services have been able to adjust and evolve as rider demands and preferences have changed. Usage among Wilton residents peaked in 2017 and accounted for approximately 10.6% of the total number of rides within the region. Across all other years, Wilton consistently accounted for less than 5% of total rides within the region. This could be indicative of the distance travelled by Wilton residents or

their awareness of the service of lacking thereof. Mont Vernon has experienced comparably low numbers (and therefore percentage use) throughout its inclusion in the [SVTC](#) while Brookline has consistently been on the high-end for number of rides and percentage in comparison to Wilton. The Town has at times shown the desire to utilize the service.

Pedestrian

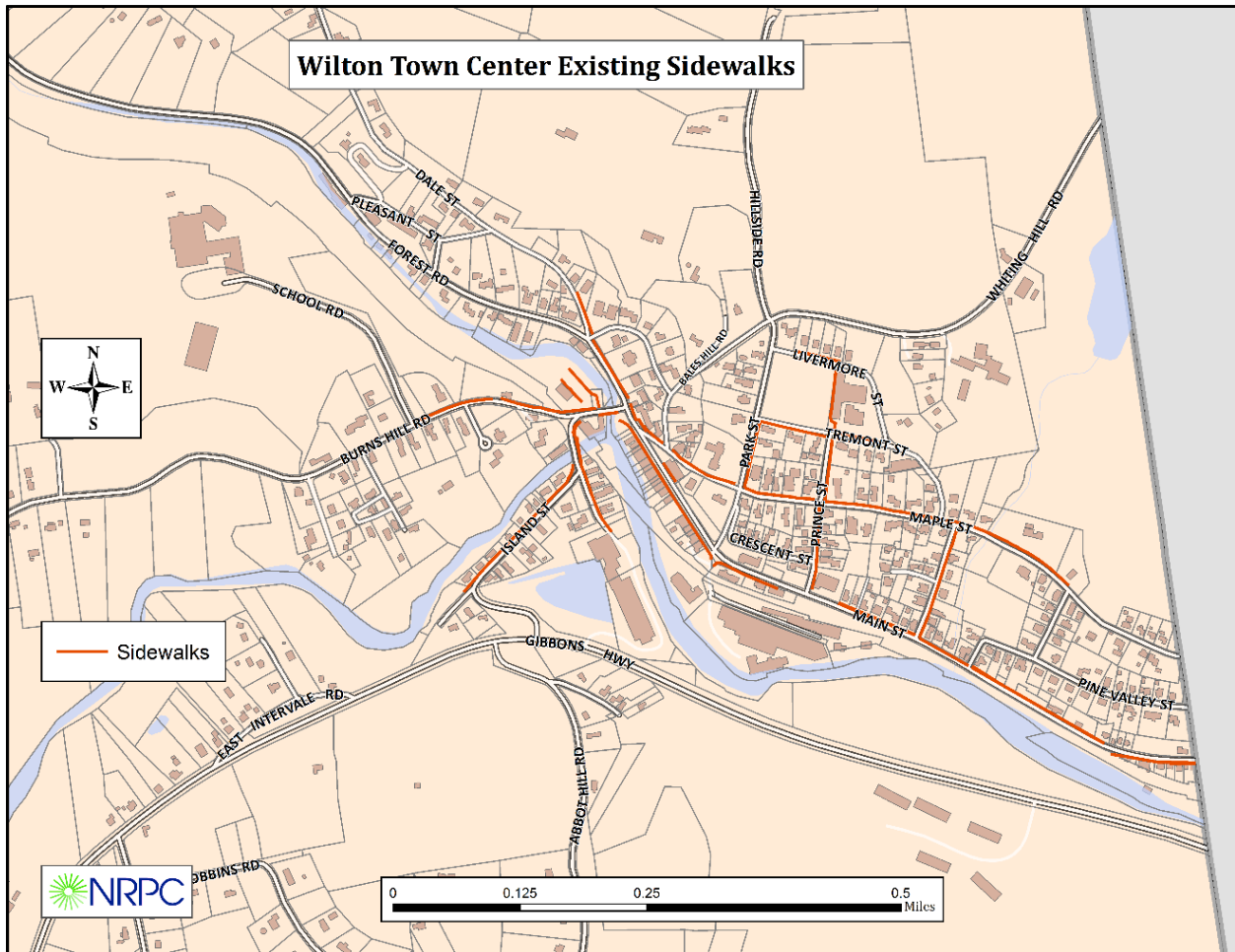
Facilitating for pedestrian traffic involves providing areas and amenities that allow people to get to their destination by walking, including sidewalks, crosswalks, and pathways. Adding amenities, such as benches and shade trees, can help to encourage walking. Another consideration is connectivity from one location to another. The proximity and safety between locations will be a deciding factor for some users. Sidewalks that don't connect pose a safety risk for pedestrians, especially those with physical challenges or strollers. It forces them to walk in the roadway or cross unpaved and uneven terrain.

The densest sidewalk network that exists in Wilton is within the downtown area. In 2017, [NRPC](#) assisted the Town of Wilton in completing a Safe Routes to School ([SRTS](#)) study to develop a strategy for encouraging a greater number of students to walk and bicycle to and from school. The study recommended implementing traffic calming measures to increase safety for pedestrians. Examples of these measures include creating a School Zone on Park Street, installing a Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon on Burns Hill Road between Main Street and Island, and creating a policy that all crosswalks be marked with the brightest material possible.

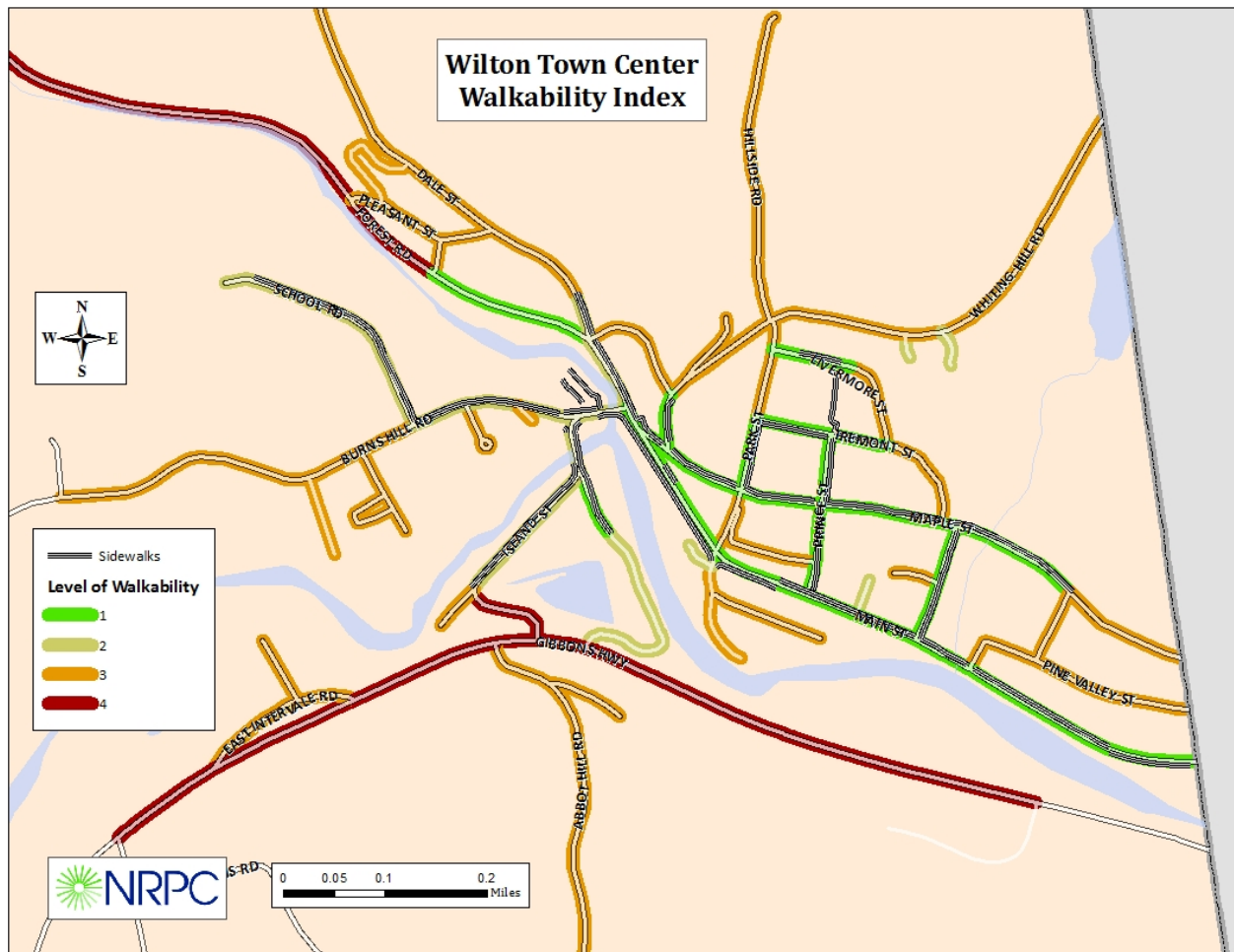
The Plan NH Charrette also identified Wilton's sidewalk network as a major asset for the community, by offering alternative means of connecting people to their homes, shopping, and educational needs. To build upon this, the report recommended extending the Stony Brook Riverwalk, to connect the Police Station walkway with Wilton House of Pizza and extending the pathway by the Proctor Parking lot along the street front of Main Street buildings and back through Main St Park and out to the Riverview Mill. The Town of Wilton is currently in the process of creating preliminary designs for options and cost estimates for the Riverwalk extension.

Implementation and improvement strategies for pedestrian infrastructure include those which address safety measures, community awareness and education, maintenance and repair, expansion and compliance. More specifically, the Town may consider updating signage, outreach programs, increasing enforcement, regularly scheduling assessments and maintenance, conducting more traffic counts and further committing to compliance standards for accessible public rights-of-way. Sidewalks are a vital element to the pedestrian network, as are curb cuts and ramps, crosswalks, bridges, paths and the street furniture along the way. It is important for the Town to provide a safe and reliable network which supports mobility throughout the town.

Map 12. Sidewalk Network in Downtown Wilton



Map 13. Walkability Index of Downtown Wilton



Bicycle Amenities

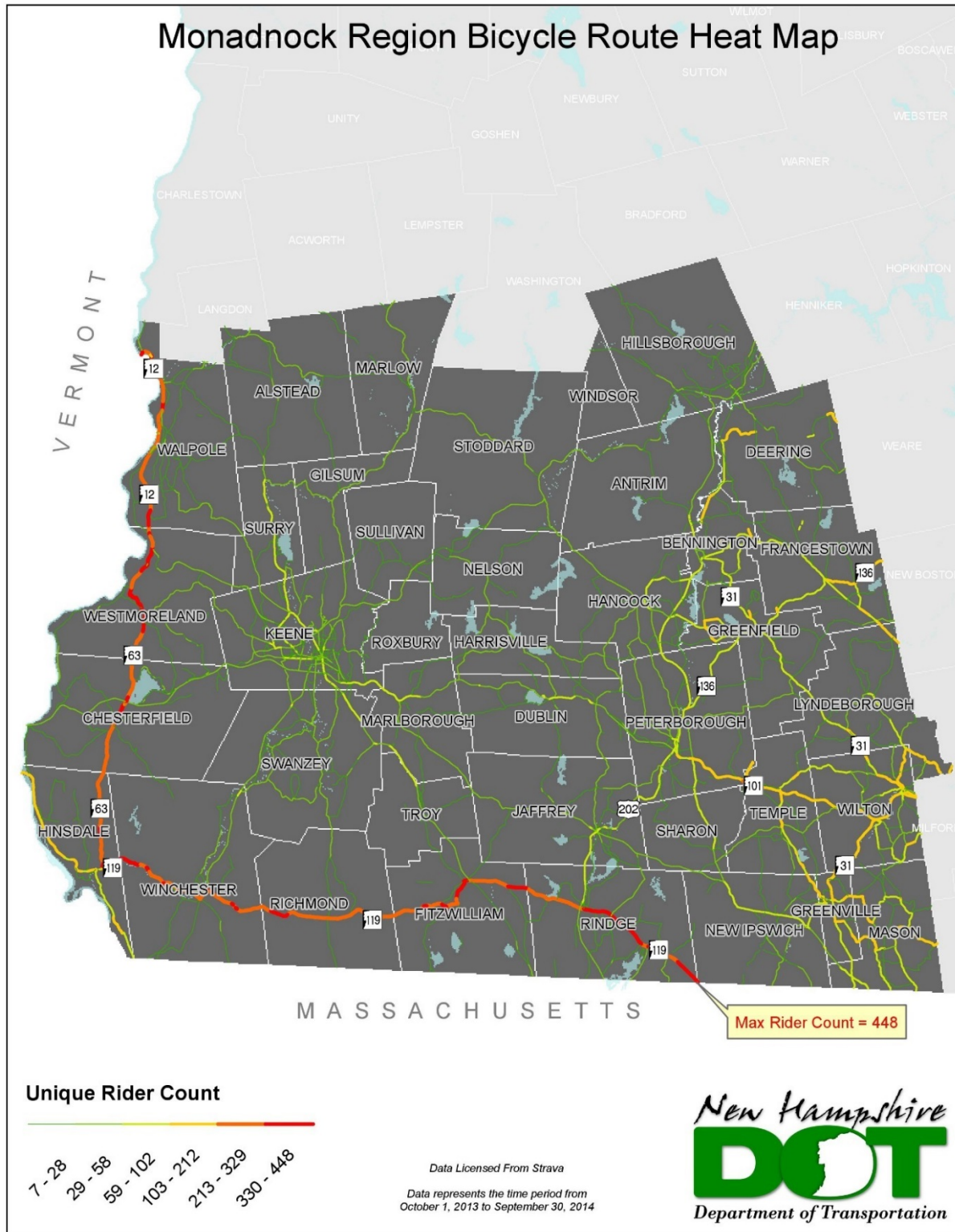
State highways can function as bicycle routes since they connect communities and/or town centers and involve greater distances than the average pedestrian would travel. These routes can also function to aid cyclists and pedestrians who are making shorter distance, in-town trips. As Map 14 shows, the Town of Wilton attracts a moderate number of cyclists along its regional routes (especially Route 31 and segments of Route 101).

Local routes are bicycle and pedestrian facilities that people generally use to ride or walk to work, school, social visits, town facilities, shopping and/or recreation attractions. They include most local residential roads. Segments of these routes may overlap with the regional and/or key connector bicycle and pedestrian routes.

While there exists some biking culture in Wilton, the Town’s terrain may discourage many casual or inexperienced riders. The Town may consider adding design and enforcement elements to local roads, especially along key connector routes that link to regional routes, which could increase safety for existing and/or potential riders. These elements may include improved sightlines, clearly marked bike

lanes and increased speed enforcement along heavily travelled routes which are shared by automobiles and cyclists. Improved signage throughout the municipality could increase safety for both drivers and cyclists, while also creating a more comfortable environment for those who share the roadways. Creating infrastructure for bicycles, such as bike racks along Main Street or resting areas along longer routes, should be done in conjunction with an outreach program to educate the community that it is a State law to share the road with bicycles.

Map 14. Monadnock Region Bicycle Route Heat Map



Other Transportation Issues

Road Salting

The low cost and abundant supply of salt makes it one of the cheapest and most efficient ways to clear ice and snow from winter roads. However, the impact of spreading vast quantities of road salt may cause higher total costs when other factors are included, such as salt-induced damage to agriculture and drinking water. Much of the salt applied to roadways eventually enters groundwater aquifers, leading to increased sodium levels in drinking water supplies. Road salt runoff from highways percolates into roadside soils, affecting salinity and alkalinity, as well as soil characteristics.

In 2013, under [RSA 503:22](#), the State granted liability protection to commercial salt applicators certified by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services ([NHDES](#)) under [RSA 489-C](#) – and property owners or managers who hire them – against damages arising from snow and ice conditions. The purpose of the voluntary certification program is to improve efficiency in salt use, reduce the amount of salt used and establish a voluntary system to track salt use and provide annual information.

In addition, [NHDES](#) has assembled several best management practices and technologies for snow and ice management professionals which would help guide future road salting policies for Wilton. Establishing a road salting policy is critical for the Town as its most heavily travelled roadways – Routes 101 and 31, and Burton and Isaac Frye Highway – lie within its Aquifer and Watershed Protection Districts.

Driveway Regulations

The Wilton Planning Board adopted Driveway Entrance Regulations in 2005 to improve safety, proper access, and drainage. In 2018, the Planning Board amended the regulations to address driveway slope. The purpose of this amendment was to better accommodate the Town's emergency services. Driveway regulations greatly depend on the continued work among the Planning Board, the Department of Public Works and the Fire Department to monitor the effectiveness of updates and make any changes as necessary.

Parking in Downtown

As part of the Wilton Downtown Sidewalk Improvement Project, [NRPC](#) developed and implemented a parking study in 2006 that included a parking space inventory, usage analysis and a business survey. Findings from the study indicated that there was enough on-street parking capacity at the time. There also seemed to be an adequate supply of off-street parking, although it was noted that the lack of signage distinguishing public spaces from private spaces could be an issue. Furthermore, the study indicated violations of the two-hour parking limit for on-street parking was not an issue. On January 30, 2017, the Wilton Select Board called on the Police Department to strictly enforce one-hour parking limits at designated spots to aid customers shopping at Main Street businesses. The Town should continue to monitor the effectiveness of this policy change and determine whether it should be expanded.

Cul-de-sacs

Wilton currently has road design standards and regulations for both circular cul-de-sacs and T-shaped hammerhead cul-de-sacs. Circular cul-de-sacs require a 75-foot radius minimum for residential subdivisions and a 100-foot radius minimum for commercial or industrial developments. Local regulations stipulate that T-shaped hammerhead cul-de-sacs require a 150-foot right-of-way, 120-foot-wide turning areas and a 25-foot radius.

Both design standards result in about 18,000 square feet of impervious surface area. The use of islands in circular cul-de-sacs could reduce and help manage stormwater runoff. The installation of a 30-foot radius island on a residential cul-de-sac would result in a 16% reduction in surface area; a 40-foot radius island would result in a 29% reduction in surface area.

A T-shaped hammerhead cul-de-sac may help alleviate the use of irregularly shaped lots, create a well-defined relationship between buildings and the street, and allow for future street expansion. However, this cul-de-sac design may also require 3-point turns for emergency vehicles whereas the circular design does not. Determining accessibility and ease for emergency vehicles to maneuver within the area should also consider the potential of parked vehicles within the cul-de-sac.

Signage

Signs are used as a visual method of communication to inform the public. Municipal signs are commonly used to convey regulations such as speed limits, provide wayfinding information such as direction to public facilities, bring attention to special areas like school or construction zones, warn people of impending dangers like sharp turns or falling rocks, and identify accessibility like handicapped parking and entrances. All municipal signs must comply with public signage regulations mandated by the [NHDOT](#), [FHWA](#) and the Americans with Disabilities Act ([ADA](#)).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The evolution of the transportation system, within a town and throughout a region, has a reciprocating impact upon the prevailing patterns of land development and the spatial layout of the town. Central to Wilton's identity is its scenic and rural character, and therefore, the careful balance of preservation, improvement and growth is crucial to the Town's overall transportation development. Based on the discussion above and the dual goals of supporting growth in Wilton without adversely affecting its rural character, the Wilton Planning Board recommends the following.

Transportation and the Town of Wilton

The Planning Board recommends that the Town identify and evaluate transportation issues and problems and increase public awareness by:

1. Establishing a volunteer committee to periodically review transportation related matters such as infrastructure inventory and conditions, safety concerns, bicycle and pedestrian network expansion, public input, impact fees, feasibility studies, etc.
2. Recommending that the Select Board include a Transportation Report in the annual Town Report which assesses of local and regional transportation developments and policy changes and their observed impacts on Wilton
3. Conducting annual public outreach events which solicits public input and/or educates the public about transportation matters through informational meetings, workshops, charrettes, surveys/questionnaires, brochures and/or roundtable discussions
4. Establishing a system for submitting public comments on the condition of roadways and bridges, problematic areas, lack of signage and sightline obstructions
5. Continuing to designate a representative to attend the monthly regional [TTAC](#) meetings with NRPC and report back to the appropriate boards and committees
6. Encouraging periodic interagency transportation meetings among Town officials, both Planning and Zoning Boards, the Conservation Commission, [NRPC](#) and others to educate and discuss regional developments, enforcement and budgets related to the [MTP](#) and [TIP](#)

Existing Transportation Network

The Planning Board recommends that the Town maintain a transportation inventory and periodically assess changes and opportunities when considering maintenance, improvements and/or expansions including by:

7. Maintaining a centralized transportation inventory database, periodically reviewing for updates including all roadway classes, scenic roadways, bridges and culverts, sidewalk and path/trail networks, signage/signals, amenities and their conditions – especially inventory that is maintained by the Town
8. Establishing a maintenance and inspection schedule for all transportation inventory, especially roadways and bridges
9. Maintaining a record of all Class VI roadways which are not recorded by [NHDP](#)

10. Periodically evaluating roadways for potential Scenic Roadway designations
11. Conducting traffic counts at designated locations, on a rotating basis and in accordance with [NHDOT](#) or requested by the Town
12. Continuing to identify, monitor and record problematic areas such as Main St, Maple St, and portions of NH 101 and NH 31 in addition to new developments that could affect Wilton roadways
13. Updating the parking study in the Downtown area
14. Considering the need and practicality for creating designated carpool parking areas
15. Annually reviewing all studies, counts and improvements on the existing transportation network; include such topics as study findings, evaluation of capacity versus demand, changes from year-to-year, expected wear, completed improvements and suggested actions – *include in Transportation Report section of the Town Report*

Alternative Modes of Transportation

The Planning Board recommends that the Town support and encourage a variety of transit options and infrastructure for other than single-occupancy vehicular travel by:

16. Obtaining public input and developing a town-wide plan mapping future sidewalks, pedestrian tails and bike paths
17. Implementing the recommendations from the 2017 Safe Routes to School Plan
18. Funding the Riverwalk expansion, to the extent it relates to the Downtown pedestrian traffic, by applying for federal funding for smaller-scale transportation projects like sidewalk improvements, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, etc.
19. Continuing to be a member of the SVTC and promote their service on Wilton website, at public events and relevant facilities
20. Working with [NRPC](#) and Nashua Transit System ([NTS](#)) in researching the feasibility of extending the bus routes from Nashua to Wilton
21. Requiring developers to consider plans for bicycle or pedestrian pathways or trails in proposed developments, where appropriate

Transportation Planning and Development

The Planning Board recommends that the Town proactively plan and develop for transportation improvements and regulations which contribute to a safer, more effective and reliable system which supports Wilton's growth and preservation of its rural character by:

22. Continuing to require Director of Public Works/Road Agent review for all subdivision plans, site plans and excavation plans
23. Continuing to work with the Director of Public Works/Road Agent and the Fire Chief to monitor the effectiveness of updated driveway regulations and make changes as necessary
24. Mandating that curb cuts should be provided at all sidewalk and driveway entrances
25. Annually inspecting and repainting all crosswalks as necessary

26. Improving wayfinding signage directing motorists on Route 101 to Downtown Wilton
27. Designing bike lanes using best practices rather than minimal standards wherever practical
28. Encouraging landscaping and other public improvements to walkways and open spaces within the Downtown area
29. Amending regulations for cul-de-sacs from geometric standards to performance-based standards
30. Implementing road salting policies which limit the impact of salt-induced damages to agriculture, ground aquifers and roadways and conform with [MS4](#) standards
31. Posting restrictions on bridges where necessary and advisable
32. Periodically reviewing design and zoning guidelines for commercial and/or industrial development along Route 101 and 31 to preserve scenic and rural character; including but not limited to setbacks, parking within setbacks, curb cuts and the distance between them.
33. Monitoring the Town's inclusion in the Critical Urban/Rural Freight Corridor, also include reviews of all railways and their business through Wilton
34. Continuing to support the freight transport operations in Wilton along the Milford-Bennington rail line to mitigate impact and wear on Wilton roadways and bridges
35. Supporting passenger rail options to Wilton and within the region to increase connectivity and economic activity
36. Strictly enforcing weighting and height restrictions for large, commercial truck traffic, excluding deliveries, through the Downtown Main Street area

TRANSPORTATION CHAPTER GLOSSARY

ACS	American Community Survey. An annual survey and source for detailed population, housing and workforce information administered by the US Census Bureau.
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act. A civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation and all public and private places that are open to the general public.
CUFC	Critical Urban Freight Corridor. These are public roads in urbanized areas which provide access and connection to other freight systems and facilities, ports and other intermodal facilities. Designation, as such, makes the corridor eligible for federal funding to support the NHFN system.
CRFC	Critical Rural Freight Corridor. These are public roads not in an urbanized area which provide access and connection to other freight systems and facilities, ports and other intermodal facilities. Designation, as such, makes the corridor eligible for federal funding to support the NHFN system.
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency. An independent agency of the US federal government which supports the protection of human health and the environment through the development and enforcement of regulations, financial grants and programs, environmental studies and technical assistance.
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration. An agency within the US Department of Transportation that supports State and local governments in the design, construction, maintenance, financial and technical assistance of the Nation's highway system.
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration. An agency within the US Department of Transportation which promotes and enforces rail safety regulations, administers railroad assistance programs
IRI	International Roughness Index. Measures the vertical movement, or bumpiness, that occurs along a route.
LOS	Level of Service. A term which denotes the type of operating conditions which occur along a roadway of at an intersection over a given period of time.
MBR	Milford-Bennington Railroad. Railroad company which operates rail service along the 18.6-mile section of the Hillsborough Branch between Wilton and Bennington. 18.6-mile section of track is owned by the State of New Hampshire.

MBR also operates rail service along a 5.36-mile section from Wilton to Milford, this shorter stretch is owned by Pan Am Railways.

MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization. Served by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission for the Nashua Urbanized Area. The MPO is the transportation policy-making organization for the region which administers the federal transportation process in order to acquire and spend federal money.
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan. A comprehensive, multimodal “blueprint” for transportation systems and services aimed at both meeting the mobility needs and improving the overall quality of life of resident in the region through the next 25 years.
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. MS4 refers to a collection of structures designed to gather stormwater and discharge it into local streams and rivers.
NHDOT	New Hampshire Department of Transportation. General functions include the planning, developing and maintaining of the NH transportation network, including regulation of transportation activities required by law.
NHDES	New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. A NH state agency responsible for ensuring water quality levels, ecological balance, recreational benefits, regulating emissions of air pollutants, fostering proper waste management and water resources.
NHFN	National Highway Freight Network. An established network of highway subsystems, such as CUFC and CRFC, designated for freight transportation. The network provides guidance to strategically direct federal resources and policies toward improved freight performance.
NRPC	Nashua Regional Planning Commission. Serves as a resource to support and enhance local planning, provide a community forum, coordinate land use, environmental and transportation planning at the regional level for its member communities.
NTS	Nashua Transit System. Public transportation provider within the Nashua area. Operates both buses and vans.
PAR	Pan Am Railways. Owner and operator of a 16.36-mile section of the Hillsborough Branch from Wilton to Nashua. MBR operates a 5.36-mile stretch of the rail from Wilton to Milford.

RSA	Revised Statutes Annotated, or RSAs. “Annotated” means including notes. Laws in New Hampshire are RSAs, they form the codified law of the state subordinate to the New Hampshire State Constitution.
SVR	Souhegan Valley Rides. Dial-a-ride, curb-to-curb bus service program provided by SVTC to its member communities. Often referred to as “The Blue Bus”.
SRTS	Safe Routes to School. An approach that promotes walking and bicycling to school through infrastructure improvements, enforcement, tools, safety education, and incentives.
SVTC	Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative. Volunteer-based, grassroots association established based on a documented need for local alternative transportation options. The collaborative, in coordination with NTS, provides SVR bus service to its member communities.
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program. A four-year program that lists all regionally significant and federally funded projects, as required by federal transportation legislation.
TTAC	Transportation Technical Advisory Committee. Charged under the NHDOT planning process to provide NRPC with technical guidance regarding transportation policy and projects in the region.

CHAPTER VI: HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Residents and visitors alike are drawn to Wilton by its mix of rural character, historical charm, and vibrant community. This unique combination is a product of Wilton's location and its historical and cultural heritage. Without appropriate protection, including preserving its history and promoting its cultural resources, the Town could lose much of its special character. Thus, it is essential that planning and development in Wilton respect, understand, appreciate, and enhance these resources.

This chapter recounts the Town's history, identifies its key historical and cultural resources, lists the tools and strategies that can be used to preserve, promote and protect them, and presents a set of recommendations to do so.

For purposes of this chapter:

- **Historical Resources:** comprise physical buildings or structures, typically more than 50 years old, associated with or conveying:
 - an important event, activity, or pattern of the Town's development;
 - the life of an important person;
 - an exemplary building form, style, engineering technique, or artistic value; and/or
 - information contributing to our understanding of the Town's history.
- **Cultural Resources:** institutions or conditions that are supportive or reflective, of a distinctive cultural character or a community.

This chapter is intended to inform the Land Use Chapter of this Master Plan and will assist the Planning Board and other Town leaders in making informed decisions, especially concerning resources that may need special protection.

Vision

Wilton's unique heritage will be well protected and regionally known, drawing visitors and prospective residents to Town. Even before setting foot in Wilton, they will hear about its traditional festivals and events, alongside impromptu art and cultural activities. Travelers who pass through Wilton by chance will be enticed to make unplanned stops in Town.

Wilton's schoolchildren will learn about its heritage through educational programs about the Town's history and be actively involved in the Town's art and cultural events. Residents of Wilton will take pride in the preservation of historical resources and the promotion of its culture. Wilton will continue to be a unique place to live, work, and play from one generation to the next.

Historical Background

The historical information below relies largely upon the 1888 book, *History of the Town of Wilton, Hillsborough County, New Hampshire*, by Abiel Abbot Livermore and Sewall Putnam (“History”).

The Abenaki People

Before the arrival of Europeans, various tribes of Abenaki people inhabited a vast region spanning what are now the New England states to Quebec. Although it is quite certain that Abenaki hunters traversed the present-day bounds of Wilton for game, no long-term native encampments have been found in Wilton, perhaps due to its hilly terrain. As reported in *History*, Town residents discovered a remnant of a hunting camp in the pine woods west of the current Sand Hill Road Reservoir around the time of the book’s writing. A few arrowheads, hatchets, and stone chisels were also found.

Three Abenaki tribes were active around Wilton: the Pawtucket, based in Pawtucket Fall (present-day Lowell, Massachusetts); the Pennacook, based in what is now Nashua, New Hampshire; and the Souhegan, based in present-day Amherst, New Hampshire. Natural landmarks across the region, including the Souhegan River, the Merrimack River, and Mount Monadnock, bear Abenaki names.

Around the turn of the 18th century, diseases introduced by European settlers ravaged the Abenaki people, as did armed conflicts with both Europeans and other native tribes. The early settlers of Wilton arrived near the end of this period and, fortunately, were spared from raids. Eventually, most surviving Abenaki people migrated north to French Canada, while the few who stayed assimilated with the local population.

The Beginning of Wilton

In 1735, Colonial Governor of Massachusetts Jonathan Belcher chartered the region around the present-day towns of Wilton, Temple, and Lyndeborough as Salem-Canada. Governor Belcher granted land to veterans from Salem, Massachusetts, who had served under Sir William Phips in the war against French Canada several decades earlier. In 1749, Section Number Two of Salem-Canada, which includes present-day Wilton, was part of a royal grant given to John Tufton Mason and several other proprietors, who subsequently sold their lands to settlers. Jacob and Ephraim Putnam, John Badger, and John Dale were among the first settlers on Number Two.

Named after an ancient borough in Wiltshire, England, the Town of Wilton was incorporated on June 25, 1762. By 1773, Town residents had built a log



Wilton Center in the late 19th century, the Town House and First Unitarian Church are visible on the right
Image credit: John Hutchinson Collection, Wilton Historical Society

meetinghouse, the Town Pound, the first schoolhouse, and the Vale End Cemetery in Wilton Center. A more formal meetinghouse was also under construction.



*Putnam Mill in the early 19th century
Image credit: Wilton Historical Society Collections*

Early development in Wilton concentrated around the meetinghouse at Wilton Center but two other villages gradually emerged: West Wilton, on the road to Temple (at the confluence of Blood Brook and Temple Brook where Temple Road meets West End Highway), and East Wilton, on the road to Milford (at the confluence of the Souhegan River and Stony Brook; present-day downtown).

Until the mid-19th century, Wilton was a farming community with several water-powered mills for agricultural and artisan manufacturing needs. By 1839, Wilton contained 8 sawmills, 5 gristmills, 3 tanneries, 2 fulling mills and a bobbin manufacturer. Many of these enterprises were located in West Wilton, which was the industrial center of the Town until the arrival of the railroad.

Shift to Manufacturing

In the mid-19th century, the extension of the railroad from Nashua to Wilton allowed a convenient flow of raw materials and finished goods into and out of the Town, as well as direct access to lucrative urban markets from Nashua to Boston. The first railroad station in Town was built in 1851 in East Wilton. Taking advantage of the railroad connection and local water power, large mills were built along the Souhegan River to make cloth, furniture and wooden boxes. Merchants' names such as Colony, Whiting and Abbott came to figure prominently in Town activity.



*East Wilton circa 1895, with the first Railroad Station at center
Image credit: Glass negative in the Wilton Historic Society General Collection*

As Wilton prospered, the center of commerce and politics shifted to East Wilton to be closer to the river and the railroad. The neighborhoods on both sides of the Souhegan River grew to house the many mill workers, while businesses on Main Street expanded to serve a growing clientele.

Agriculture also thrived at this time. Dairy farming grew because the railroad allowed a morning milk run to Boston in just over an hour. The Whiting Dairy (later known as Hampshire Hills Dairy Farm) just above East Wilton was one of the region's largest dairy producers. The railroad also spurred the apple growing business, especially after a regional wholesaler by the name of Joseph P. Sullivan began distributing apples from small to medium-sized orchards. Wilton orchards – Badger Farm, Batchelder's, Holt's, Heald's, Kimball Heights, McLeod's, Parker's, Pomme-a-Lane, Stevens', Tallarico's, Whiting's and Woodmont's - developed a significant apple growing, processing, and packing industry. The agricultural boom in Wilton lasted until the mid-to-late-20th century when large-scale commercial agriculture in other parts of the country overwhelmed smaller New England producers.



A working apple orchard in Wilton
Image Credit: Wilton Historical Society Collections



The County Poor Farm near West Wilton
Image credit: Wilton Historical Society Collections

In addition to the commercial and industrial development in Town at this time, from 1867 to 1895, Hillsborough County operated a County Farm near West Wilton, an offshoot of efforts to improve overall living conditions for the state's "paupers, insane, and infirm." At the height of its use, there were more than 500 residents on the County Farm.

Tourism and the Three Fires

Around the late 19th century, many well-off urbanites across the country began to seek retreat from their city lives in rural environments. Located at the end of a rail line, Wilton became a popular location for summer homes and rural retreats. Wilton Center, the old center of Town, became the locus of a new summer community as new residents from Boston and as far away as New York bought up old homes and built new ones. Some purchased underperforming farms and converted them into “gentleman farms,” while others built trails and cabins deep in the woods. This wave of development introduced a diverse mix of architectural styles to Wilton, as well as new residents.



*Vacationers at Whiting House Hotel, sometime in 19th Century before the hotel was burnt down in 1874.
Image credit: Wilton Historical Society Collections*

The Honorable David A. Gregg of Nashua, a summer resident of Wilton, donated land, money, and an endowment for the construction and operation of the Town’s public library. The Gregg Free Library was dedicated in 1908 and remains a cultural center of Wilton today. Aside from hosting many cultural events, the Library also houses the Wilton Historical Society and Jacob Abbot’s Rollo Farm Collection – a collection of agricultural tools, machinery and items donated to the Library when the farm was closed.

Not far from the Library, hotels were built to accommodate the influx of tourists by train, including the four-story Whiting House Hotel. Passenger rail service to Boston and beyond was frequent and brought tourists to the Town year-round.



*Left: Wilton Public Library, also known as the David A. Gregg Free Library, and the adjacent Masonic Hall, circa 1908.
Image credit: Wilton Historical Society Collections*



*Right: Aftermath of the 1874 Main Street Fire, with rubbles of the Whiting House Hotel visible on the right
Image credit: Wilton Historical Society Collections*

Despite devastating fires on Main Street in 1874, 1881, and 1885, and the destruction of the Whiting Hotel in the 1874 fire, tourism in Wilton continued to thrive into the early 20th century. Main Street was rebuilt three times in 11 years and, after the seat of Town government moved to East Wilton in 1883, the present-day Wilton Town Hall was completed in 1885 on the site of the old Whiting Hotel.

From 1926 through 1936, Wilton was best known for its Winter Carnival. The Carnival drew many visitors every year and featured a variety of activities and events across Town, including a quarter-mile-long toboggan run down Carnival Hill.



*Winter Carnival Toboggan Run, sometime between 1926 and 1936
Image credit: Bob Lorette Collection, Wilton Historical Society*

Changing Times and Unique Institutions

Times were changing in the mid-to-late-20th century: local industry, agriculture and tourism all experienced major declines due to then-prevailing economic trends. As industrial activities slowed and companies either left Town or closed, the mill buildings became vacant, fell into disrepair, and, with few exceptions, were demolished. With fewer tourists and increasing automobile access, the use of passenger railroad services declined and finally ended for Wilton in 1952.

Like adjacent communities, Wilton became a bedroom town for the greater Nashua region, providing more affordable housing options and a more rural setting to those who worked in urban centers, especially after the completion of Highway 101 in the 1950s. The statewide population boom in the 1970s brought four decades of high population growth to Wilton and it was only in the 2010s that population growth slowed. From the mid-20th century to the present day, large agricultural tracts were subdivided for residential development, including some sizable residential subdivisions beyond the Town center.



*Main Street looking west in 1952
Image credit: Wilton Historical Society Collections*

Alongside new residents, innovative ideas and institutions found their way to Wilton. During this period, Wilton saw the establishment of High Mowing School, Pine Hill Waldorf School, Andy's Summer Playhouse, and the Temple-Wilton Community Farm. These institutions, among others, continue to shape Wilton's culture and are an integral part of Wilton's identity today.



*1989 Old Home Days Parade, celebrating Wilton's 250th Anniversary
Image Credit: Wilton Historical Society Collections*



*Late 20th century Art and Film Festival
Image Credit: Wilton Historical Society Collections*

The Three Town Centers and the Countryside

Downtown Wilton (East Wilton)



*Downtown Wilton — looking south on Main Street
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*



*Downtown Wilton – looking north on Main Street
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*

Downtown Wilton is located where Stony Brook meets the Souhegan River, which is also where the railroad crosses the River. This source of water power and the railroad in East Wilton promoted industrial development and were key to the Town's growth in the mid-19th century, resulting in a small but developed downtown area that contrasts with the rural countryside beyond it. Downtown's architectural styles largely date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, reflecting the rebuilding after the Town fires. Only one building – the former Town jail that currently houses a business – survived all three fires.

Industrial sites lined both sides of the Souhegan River while the civic and commercial heart of downtown ran along Main Street. Residential neighborhoods were, and still are, located uphill from Main Street, except for the neighborhood known as the "Island" immediately next to the former Colony Mill. Main Street is now characterized by a line of predominantly brick buildings with ground-level storefronts on its riverside, and civic buildings, including Town Hall and the Library, on the hillside. A series of steel-truss railroad bridges cut across the river, which is visible behind Main Street Park.

The First Wilton High School and Second Congregational Church on the north and the 1925 Wilton Train Station on the south bookended Main Street. While the Train Station building now houses commercial offices, the single railroad, owned by the Milford-Bennington Railroad, is still active today for transportation of gravel from quarries located off Route 31 in Wilton.



*Wilton Train Station
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*



*Former Colony Worsted Mill, also known as Abbott Mill
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*

There are several large industrial buildings along the river to the south of the Train Station, with the Souhegan Wood Product manufacturing facility most prominent. To the west, the former Colony Worsted Mill (also known as Abbott Mill) is visible beyond the railroad bridges and across the river. This building is the best-preserved example of the Town’s 19th-century mills and is ripe for redevelopment.

North of the industrial buildings and toward the Second Congregational Church are recently completed accessible trails, information signs and benches on both sides of Stony Brook, as well as the Town’s War Memorial on Forest Road, dedicated in 1924 and restored in 2020 – all part of the ongoing Wilton Riverwalk project.



*A stone bench in front of Stony Brook – part of the Wilton Riverwalk
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*



*The Wilton War Memorial on Forest Road, restored in 2020 as part of the Wilton Riverwalk
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*



*Homes along Park Street
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*



*Whiting Park and the Florence Rideout Elementary School
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*

Behind Main Street, Park Street leads uphill to the largest residential area in Downtown Wilton. Featuring several elegant homes along the way, Park Street ends at Whiting Park and the Florence Rideout Elementary School. Most of the homes in this area were built between the 1860s and 1880s, in the clapboard neo-colonial architecture style.

Just north of Whiting Park, Park Street becomes Whiting Hill Road, which runs uphill toward Carnival Hill about 2,000 feet away. Carnival Hill is now a recreational area with open fields and other facilities.

Wilton Center

Wilton Center, the original Town center, was built on top of a hill above Blood Brook. The main part of Wilton Center runs along Isaac Frye Highway. The former Baptist Church (now a private residence), the Town House (present-day Andy’s Summer Playhouse), and the First Unitarian Congregationalist Church define the south end of Wilton Center. A partially-restored remnant of the colonial-era Town Pound is located behind the Unitarian Church. A stone marker commemorates the Second Congregational Church that once stood south of the Town House.



*Wilton Center – The Town House (Andy’s Summer Playhouse) on left, and the First Unitarian Church on right
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*



*The partially restored remnant of the Wilton Town Pound
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*



*Wilton Center – the “Red Brick House” and tree-lined Isaac Frye Highway running through the former town center
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*



*Looking down Wilton Center Road toward Wilton Center
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*

Except for Andy’s Summer Playhouse and two buildings owned by the Unitarian Church – the church building and the red brick house across the road – present-day Wilton Center is residential. Along Isaac Frye Highway and intersecting roads is a collection of private residences from different eras and in different architecture styles:

- Late-18th-/ early-19th-century colonial homes,
- Late-19th-century craftsman-style vacation homes, and
- 20th-/ 21st-century neo-colonial homes.

Not far beyond Wilton Center lie three cemeteries, including two of the oldest cemeteries in Town – Vale End Cemetery and South Yard Cemetery. These cemeteries, as well as most others in Town, are managed and maintained by the Wilton Cemetery Board of Trustees.

West Wilton

West Wilton is located at the confluence of Blood Brook and Temple Brook, where Temple Road meets the West End Highway.



*West Wilton Bridge
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*



*19th-century brick houses on Pettey Road at the center of West Wilton
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*

The double-arch West Wilton Stone Bridge across Blood Brook and the two flanking 19th-century brick houses on Pettey Road mark the center of West Wilton. Spreading out from the center of West Wilton in both directions is a collection of 19th-century colonial-style houses intermixed with several 20th-century neo-colonial and Cape Cod-style homes.

Two early mills – Red Mill and Seldon Mill – sit on either end of West Wilton, one along Blood Brook and the other along Temple Brook. Witnesses to Wilton’s agricultural-artisan era, these mills have long since become private residences.

North of West Wilton and beyond Gibbons Highway / Route 101 is Old County Farm Road, which runs north to Burton Highway. Along this road was the site of the former Hillsborough County Farm. Sometime after the Farm closed in 1895, the County subdivided and sold the land. The former Supervisor’s House and the Poor Farm Barn are all that remain of the Farm’s buildings today. The Supervisor’s House is now a private residence.



*Red Mill located on the west end of West Wilton
Image Credit: Wilton Historical Society*

The Countryside

Many historical sites in Wilton are located outside the Town centers, including homes, mills, cemeteries, agricultural buildings and Town infrastructure.



*Hamblet-Putnam-Frye House
Image Credit: Wilton Historical Society*

Historical Homes: Some of the Town’s most notable residences were built in the countryside, including three homes listed on the National and State Historic Registries: the Whiting Homestead and the Hamblet-Putnam-Frye House are listed on the National Register and Jonathan Livermore House is listed on the State Register. The Whiting Homestead was a large house built in the 1800s on the former Old Whiting Farm, which was also the County Poor Farm. The Hamblet-Putnam-Frye House is a 17th-century residence adjacent to the Frye’s Measure Mill. The Jonathan Livermore House is located on Russell Hill Road, just south of Wilton Center, and features Georgian-style architecture.

Mills: As in West Wilton, there were many mills built along the various brooks in Wilton, particularly in the northeastern part of Town, including the area known as Davisville. The Frye’s Measure Mill (also known as Daniel Cragin’s Mill), a box-making craft shop that has been in operation under various owners since 1858, is also a tourist attraction today. Others, such as the Baker Mill, Livermore Mill and Hopkins and French Mill, were demolished or destroyed over the years, but the Heritage Commission has installed commemorative placards at a few of the sites.



Frye’s Measure Mill

Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC



South Yard Cemetery just outside of Wilton Center

Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC

Cemeteries: There are five historical cemeteries in Wilton, four established by the Town and another originally established as part of the County Farm. Wilton’s Cemetery Board of Trustees manages the South Yard, Vale End, and Laurel Hill cemeteries and assists with the management of Mt. Cavalry Cemetery. The County Farm Cemetery, on the other hand, is not managed or overseen and remains largely inaccessible over private properties. Often overlooked among more prominent historical sites, cemeteries are actually among the most valuable resources, providing a trove of information about the Town’s early residents, their religions, and lifestyles, and the genealogy of The town.

Agricultural Operations: Even though the heyday of agriculture in Wilton may have passed, several agricultural facilities have either been maintained as working farms or are otherwise still known today, the most notable being Four Corners Farm and Barrett Hill Farm. Four Corners Farm is operated as the Temple-Wilton Community Farm (see more information below under Cultural Resources), and its farm buildings and fields are protected by a conservation easement.



Four Corners Farm/Tempel-Wilton Community Farm

Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC

Barrett Hill Farm, named after its first owner Ebenezer Barrett and also known as Stonyfield Farm, is a well-preserved example of what was a rural gentleman’s

hill country farm of the 19th century. There, in 1983, Samuel and Louise Kaymen founded the organic yogurt maker Stonyfield Farm, which is now based in Londonderry, New Hampshire. The farm is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



*Livermore Bridge over Blood Brook
Image credit: Liesl Clark Photography*

Town Infrastructure: Some Town infrastructure has recognized historical value based on its age and significance to Town development, including several bridges.

One notable Town bridge is the Livermore Bridge, spanning Blood Brook at the former Russell Hill Road (current road rerouted through a new bridge located to the south) and Route 101, the only known example of a timber, half-through, pony-lattice truss in North America. It was built in 1860 and extensively rebuilt in the 1930s.

Inventory of Wilton's Historical Sites

Table 1. Wilton's Historical Sites

Map Key	Date	Site	Comments
1	ca. 1800	Oliver Whiting Homestead (County Farm between 1867-1896; now also known as the Old County Farm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 19th-century Federal-style brick house was built by Oliver Whiting, and the barn with a Gothic Revival cupola was built later in 1846. • In the early 19th century, the property was the center of the largest dairy farms in the region until the property was sold to the Hillsborough County to become the County Farm. • The county-run farm was used to house "paupers, insane, and infirm" and added a multistory almshouse, water supply infrastructure and a "pest house", all of which were dismantled after the farm's closure. • In the early 20th century, the original homestead buildings were transformed into a summer estate by the Beebe family. • Listed on the National Historic Register • Now a private residence
2	1885	Old County Farm Road Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the Old County Farm and an example of a 19th century stone arch bridge • Listed on the National Historic Register • Presently closed to vehicular traffic
3	1867	Old County Farm Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mass cemetery for the residents of the Old County Farm • Access through private properties

Map Key	Date	Site	Comments
4	ca. 1761	Hamblet-Putnam-Frye House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two-story wood-frame house was built by Hezekiah Hamblet, among the earliest houses built in town. The property also has a circa 1840 barn, circa 1900 carriage house that has been converted into a garage, and a small circa 1900 ice house. • The house was acquired in 1808 by Eliphalet Putnam who operated what is now called Frye's Measure Mill next door. A series of mill works, canal, and sluice gate was added in the early 19th century. • In the late 19th century, the property including the house was altered to serve a more recreational purpose. • Listed on the National Historic Register • Now a private residence
5	1800s	Mill Brook Dam at Frye's Measure Mill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created the reservoir for powering the mill
6	1817	Frye's Measure Mill (also known as Daniel Cragin's Mill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An operational example of Wilton's early mills • Listed on the National Historic Register • Now a private workshop and gift shop
7	1803	Barrett Hill Farm (also known as Stonyfield Farm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fine example of rural architectural forms of the 19th Century • Former Home of Stonyfield Farm Rural Education Center and founding place of the organic yogurt maker Stonyfield Farm • Listed on the National Historic Register • Now a private residence
8	1760	Campbell-Greenman House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originally built in New Ipswich, NH and then moved to the current site and restored in 1980. • The house contains a set of interior murals by Rufus Porter, authenticated by the Rufus Porter Museum in Maine • Now a private residence

Map Key	Date	Site	Comments
9	ca. 1760	Burton Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the earliest homesteads built in Wilton • It was the homestead of Deacon John Burton, who served variously as Town Clerk and Selectman in Wilton in the late 18th century to early 19th century. Deacon Burton was the father of Captain Jonathan Burton and also an ardent Free Mason. • Now a private residence
10	ca. 1850	Langdell Homestead House and Barn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located on both side of Isaac Frye Highway, the house and barn are part of the farm built by Asa Baldwin ca. 1800 • The barn has been an auction barn while the house is vacant
11	ca. 1750	Ephraim Putnam House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 17th-century house of one of the original European settlers of Wilton • Relocated from a site near the intersection of the roads near Vale End cemetery to the current location • Now part of a private residence
12	1752	Vale End Cemetery (also known as the North Yard Cemetery in the past)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The oldest burial ground in Wilton – first burial took place in 1752 and became a Town cemetery in 1778 • This cemetery is managed by the Wilton Cemetery Board
13	1746	Curtis Farm Barn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the oldest extant structures in Wilton • Now a private residence
14	ca. 1840	Red Mill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of Wilton's early mills • Now a private residence
15	ca. 1810	West Wilton Stone Bridge (Temple Road over Blood Brook)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of a 19th century dry stone arch bridge
16	ca. 1840	Sheldon Mill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of Wilton's early mills • Now a private residence
17	ca. 1770	Old Tannery Mill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built by Uriah Smith and operated for years by Marden Brook, this was one of the first tanneries in Wilton • Only part of the mill building and the old milldam remains today • Now a private residence

Map Key	Date	Site	Comments
18	ca. 1909	Harry Gregg House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of a 20th century Queen Anne house, built by Harry Gregg on the site of a previous 1832 brick house owned by Asa Jones/Oliver Boynton. • Harry Gregg was the son of David Gregg (the namesake of the Wilton Public Library, 38 in this table), and the father and grandfather of two former New Hampshire Governors. • Now a private residence
19	1773	Wilton Town Pound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A colonial-era enclosure for lost animals • Remnant was partially restored
20	ca. 1800	597 Isaac Frye Highway (known as the Red House or the Brick Store at different times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The was at several points a store, a post office, meeting hall, place of worship, and first Masonic Hall in Wilton • Was once home to the family of former U.S. Attorney General William French Smith, who served in President Reagan's administration • Now a house of worship for the Unitarian Congregationalist Society
21	1860	Town House (Third Meeting House)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built to replace the Second Meetinghouse in Wilton Center which burned in 1859 • The building was, at various time, Citizens Hall, the Advanced Grange Hall, home to the Wilton Lions Club, and part of the Pine Hill Waldorf School • Now Andy's Summer Playhouse
22	1827	581 Isaac Frye Highway (Former Baptist Church)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first and only Baptist Church in Wilton • Now a private residence
23	1860	First Unitarian Congregationalist Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built on the same site of the Second Meetinghouse after it burned in 1859, to house the Congregationalist Church community • Remains a house of worship
24	1770	Jonathan Livermore House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of an 18th-century Georgian-style house built for the Town's first minister, Rev. Jonathan Livermore, who was also given 240 acres, an annual salary and an allotment of firewood • Listed on the State Historic Register • Now a private residence


Map Key	Date	Site	Comments
25	ca. 1936	Livermore Bridge (over Blood Brook; also known as the Old Russell Hill Bridge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Originally built ca. 1760 but destroyed in the Great Flood of 1936. It was rebuilt using the traditional materials and designed of the old bridge. Closed to vehicle traffic after Russell Hill Road was rerouted through a new bridge located to the south The only known example of a timber, half-through, pony-lattice truss in North America
26	ca. 1809	South Yard Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The second oldest burial ground in Wilton This cemetery is managed by the Wilton Cemetery Board
27	1978	Recycling Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the oldest recycling centers in NH Remain in operation
28	ca. 1849	King Brook Road Arch Bridge (over King Brook)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A prime example of a dry stone arch bridge
29	ca. 1770	Frye Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seven generations of the Frye Family have farmed this land The agricultural fields are protected by a conservation easement Remain an active farm today
30	ca. 1760	Four Corners Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An example of an 18th-century farm Listed on the State Historic Register The farm buildings are protected by historical preservation easement and the agricultural fields are protected by a conservation easement. Still operating as part of the Temple-Wilton Community Farm
31	1869	55 Burns Hill Road (known as the Fountain House)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An example of a 19th-century Victorian-style house, built by David Gregg Now a private residence
32	1852	Second Congregational Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built by the Second Congregational Church, former members of the First Congregation Church who left after a doctrinal split. The second church building built for the Second Congregational Church (see Y in Table 4) Remains a house of worship

Map Key	Date	Site	Comments
33	1871	First Wilton High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also the former Odd Fellows Hall from 1897 to an uncertain time • Now a private residence
34	1866	Bales and Putnam Blacksmith Shop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of a 19th-century horse-drawn carriage manufacturer • Now vacant
35	1908	Wilton Public Gregg Free Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town's public library built with donations from the Honorable David A. Gregg • Listed on the National Historic Register
36	1898	Masonic Temple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains a meeting place for the local Masonic Society
37	ca. 1850	Wilton Falls Building	Part of the Colony and Abbott Worsted Mills
38	1929	Wilton National Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wilton National Bank began in 1928 by a group of Wilton businessmen who operated out of the Selectman's Office until the present building was constructed in the following year. • The Bank operated under various corporate entities until it was closed by its final owner, Santander Bank. • Now vacant
39	1885	Wilton Town Hall Theater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed on National Historic Register • The building houses the town hall and two theatres (a main theater with 220 seats and a smaller theater with 60 seats). The building is open to the public during business hours and events.
40	ca. 1800s	43 Main Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a jailhouse, this building was the only one on Main Street that survive the three downtown fires in the 19th century • Now a private business
41	1882	Former Colony Worsted Mill (also known as Abbott Mill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A prime example of Wilton's 19th-century industrial mills • Now vacant
42	1888	79 Main Street (known as the Stanton Block)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built not long after the last great Main Street fire, it was home to Stanton's Grocer • Now the Town's Post Office

Map Key	Date	Site	Comments
43	1880	David Whiting Residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built by David Whiting, prominent Wilton business owner (Whiting's Mill, Whiting's Dairy, etc.) • Now a private residence
44	ca. 1885	Frederick Colony House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of a 19th-century Victorian-style house • Now a private residence
45	1869	Bent-Burke Legion Post Building (former Liberal Christian Church)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built by a group that split off from the Second Congregationalist Church in the East Village over doctrinal issues. The churches later re-united under a single pastor, but the congregation lasted only until 1945, when the building was sold to E.J. Abbott and the Hillsborough Mills. • Mr. Abbott donated the building to the Legion in 1946, which was renamed after two Wilton men who were killed in World War I and World War II, respectively. • Remains the meeting place of the American Legion Bent-Burke Post #10
46	1892	Wilton Rail Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The third and last rail station built on the same site • No longer used for rail operations even though the railroad is still in operation • Now houses a mix of private residence and business
47	ca. 1865	Abbott Machine Shop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The older wooden building was home to a number of mills in the 19th century. The brick structure is a later addition built ca. 1950 to house the growing Abbott Machine Shop, which manufactured mill machinery. • Now the Riverview Artist Mills
48	1895	Florence Rideout Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The second site of the Town's High School • Now the Town's elementary school
49	1881	49 Maple Street (former Sacred Heart Church)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formerly the Sacred Heart Church • Now a private residence
50	ca. 1840	41 Tremont Street (former Episcopal Church)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased by the Episcopal Congregation in Wilton in 1916 to serve as their permanent place of worship. The Building later served as the Town Barn. • Now a private residence

Map Key	Date	Site	Comments
51	ca. 1900	Abbott House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built by David Whiting and later purchased and expanded by E.J. Abbott. Now a private residence
52	1857	Whiting Dairy Barn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 19th-century agricultural facility that operated until the 1960s Now a machine foundry
53	1926	Carnival Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the location of the Wilton Winter Carnival Now a public park with recreational facilities
54	1854	Laurel Hill Cemetery (also known as East Cemetery and Village Cemetery in the past)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First burial took place in 1854 but only became a Town cemetery in 1864 This cemetery is managed by the Wilton Cemetery Board
55	Mid- to late- 18 th century	Mount Calvary Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by the Diocese of Manchester, which the Wilton Cemetery Board assisted in managing the cemetery

Table 2. Wilton’s Listings on the National Register of Historic Places

Map Key	Listing	Date Added to Register	Picture
2	Old County Farm Road Bridge (over a tributary of Stony Brook)	5/14/1981	 <p><i>Image credit: Jess MacMartin</i></p>
35	Wilton Public Gregg Free Library	1/11/1982	 <p><i>Image credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC</i></p>






Map Key	Listing	Date Added to Register	Picture
1	Oliver Whiting Homestead (also known as the Old County Farm)	3/9/1982	 <p><i>Image credit: Wilton Historical Society</i></p>
6	Frye’s Measure Mill (also known as Daniel Cragin’s Mill)	3/23/1982	 <p><i>Image credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC</i></p>
7	Barrett Hill Farm (also known as Stonyfield Farm)	8/3/1983	 <p><i>Image credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC</i></p>
4	Hamblet – Putnam- Frye House	6/22/2000	 <p><i>Image credit: Wilton Historical Society</i></p>
39	Wilton Town Hall Theatre	4/20/2009	 <p><i>Image credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC</i></p>

Table 3. Wilton’s Listings on the State Register of Historic Places

Map Key	Listing	Date Added to Register	Picture
30	Four Corners Farm	7/28/2003	 <p><i>Image credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC</i></p>
24	Jonathan Livermore House	10/25/2010	 <p><i>Image credit: Wilton Historical Society</i></p>

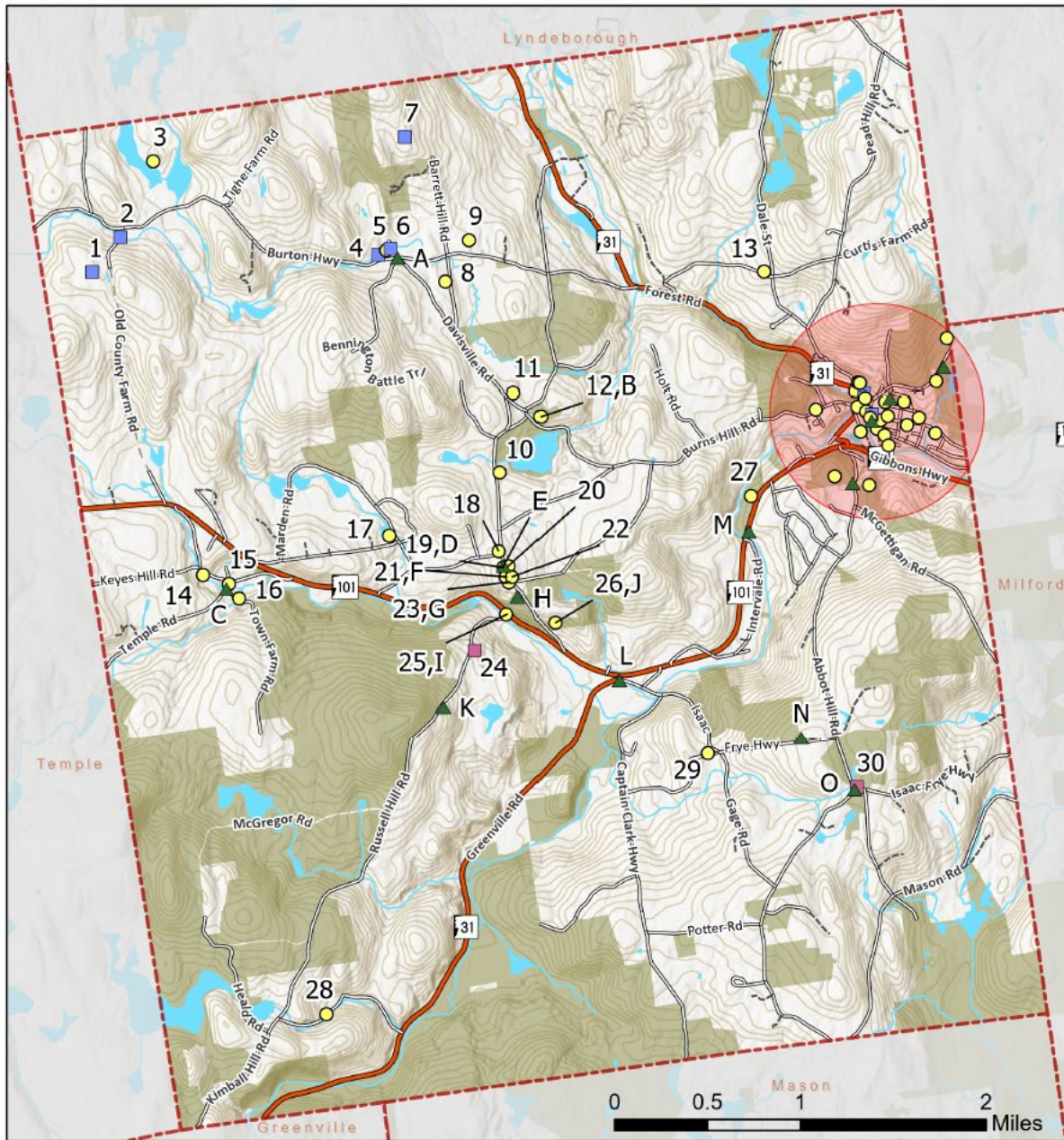
Table 4. Wilton’s Historical Markers

Map Key	Install Date	Marker	Comments
A	2000s	Davisville	• Historical Marker Program
B	2000s	Vale End Cemetery	• Historical Marker Program
C	2000s	West Wilton	• Historical Marker Program
D	2000s	Wilton Town Pound	• Historical Marker Program
E	2000s	Wilton Center	• Historical Marker Program by the Wilton Historical Society
F	2000s	The Town House	• Historical Marker Program
G	2000s	The First Unitarian Congregational Church	• Historical Marker Program
H	c.1856	Original Congregationalist Church Stone Marker	• Marks the site of the original Second Congregationalist Church, which had moved to East Wilton in 1852 (see 36 in Table 1)
I	2000s	Old Russell Hill Bridge	• Historical Marker Program
J	2000s	South Yard Cemetery	• Historical Marker Program

Map Key	Install Date	Marker	Comments
K	Early 19 th century	Captain Sam Greeley Stone Marker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marks where Wilton's renowned Captain Sam Greeley died in 1798. Captain Greeley fought in the Battle of Lexington, was a prominent figure in Town, and was buried at the Vale End Cemetery.
L	2000s	Gray's Corner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
M	2000s	French Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
N	2000s	The Frye Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
O	2000s	Abbot Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
P	2000s	Wilton Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
Q	2000s	Town Hall Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
R	2000s	The East Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
S	2000s	Whiting Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
T	2000s	Liberal Christian Church American Legion Post #10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
U	2000s	The Railroad in Wilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
V	2000s	The Frog Pond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
W	2000s	Carnival Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
X	2000s	Laurel Hill Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Marker Program
N/A	Since 2004	71 House plaques on old houses across Wilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House Plaques Program by the Wilton Historical Society • Locations not inventoried for mapping

Map 1. Wilton Historical Sites

Wilton Historical Sites



Historical Sites

- Wilton Historical Sites
- Sites listed on National Register
- Sites listed on State Register
- ▲ Historical Markers
- See Downtown Area Map for details

Streets

- State Route
- Local Road
- Private Road
- Class VI Road

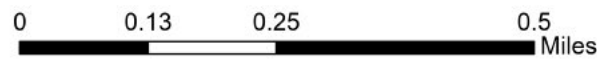
Town Boundaries

- Conserved Lands
- Open Water
- ~ Stream
- ~ 20 Ft Contour Lines



Map 2. Wilton Historical Sites within Downtown Area

Wilton Historical Sites within Downtown Area



Historical Sites

- Wilton Historical Sites
- Sites listed on National Register
- Sites listed on State Register
- ▲ Historical Markers

Streets

- State Route
- Local Road
- - - Private Road
- - - Class VI Road

- - - Town Boundaries

- Conserved Lands
- Open Water
- ~ Stream
- ~ 20 Ft Contour Lines



Threats to Historical Resources

Historical resources are precious, fragile and non-renewable. They can be lost or destroyed by obsolescence, development or mere passage of time unless steps are taken to preserve them.

Lack of Appreciation

If the Town's historical resources are not valued, they will not be protected. Therefore, it is essential to remind the Town of how important history is to its present identity and to continually reinforce residents' sense of that history. Awareness of this link will inform Town planning, and development will be addressed through the lens of Wilton's unique historical character. Ideally, the Town and its property owners will protect and preserve historical resources not merely to comply with applicable law but based on a sincere appreciation of their intrinsic value.

Deterioration and Obsolescence

Historical structures deteriorate with age. Other historical resources disappear without management or care. Prominent Wilton landmarks such as the Town Hall and Public Library are supported by municipal funding and community effort. For less prominent or privately-owned historical resources, keeping them in productive use is often the best way to assure their preservation.

That said, the design and layout of historical structures and sites are often inconsistent with new uses. While some, like the Frye's Measure Mill, may function as working businesses, museums, or memorials, repurposing others would be a significant undertaking requiring substantial effort and investment.

Development

Historical resources, including potential archaeological sites, can be threatened by development itself. Development can take various forms: a new residential subdivision located near a historical resource, the rehabilitation and reuse of an old mill, an array of new solar panels installed on the roof of a historical building. The Town must strike a balance between promoting new development and preserving the historical nature of affected resources.

Archaeological Areas

Sites that may be archaeologically important pose unique preservation problems compared to architectural and other types of historical resources. Unlike historical structures, archaeological resources are more difficult to identify and protect. Each site is unique and fragile, and information is lost when a site is disturbed. Ironically, increased appreciation represents a very real threat to archaeological resources.

Acquisition of land or land development rights is often the only way to preserve archaeological resources effectively, although there are some laws, including those that require certain projects to be reviewed by a Federal agency, that require assessment of their prospective impact on archaeological resources. Mining laws and permitting processes for dredge and fill may also have similar review requirements.

Much of the region's development is undertaken by the private sector and does not require prior archaeological evaluation. The State Division of Historical Resources has limited ability to review private projects for impact on archaeological resources.

Tools for Protection of Historical Resources

Awareness of their intrinsic value, sensitive planning, development and regulation, and local and other incentives can help protect historical resources and preserve their unique contribution to a community's character. There are many tools available to local governments and private parties to encourage and support the preservation or restoration of historical resources. Certain tools restrict development, architectural or structural changes, while others are incentive-based. These tools are usually most effective when used in thoughtful combination and when tailored to the local environment and population.

Wilton and its residents have adopted and/or utilized several such tools to facilitate protection of the Town's historical resources.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of historical resources across the United States worthy of preservation. Established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and administered by the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior, the National Register lists properties of local, state and/or national significance in the areas of American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. Resources may be nominated individually, or in groups, as districts, or as "multiple resource areas" and must generally be older than 50 years. Any proposed historic district must gain the approval of a majority of property owners within it.

The primary benefit of National Register listing is the recognition it affords and the appreciation of local resources that generally follows. The National Register requires a review of the effects that any federally funded, licensed, or assisted project, most notably highway projects, might have on a listed property or one eligible for listing. National Register standing can also make a property eligible for certain federal investment tax credits and charitable deductions.

Contrary to common belief, the National Register listing does not interfere with a property owner's right to alter, manage, dispose of, or even demolish a property unless federal funds are involved. Nor does a National Register listing require an owner to open the property to the public. If the owner of a privately-owned property opposes the listing nomination, the property will not be listed. National Register listing can be an important catalyst to change public perception and increase historical awareness, but cannot in itself prevent detrimental alterations or demolition.

Statewide, there are now more than eight hundred National Register listings, of which approximately a hundred are historic districts. The current list of Wilton's seven National Register listings can be found above in Inventory of Wilton's Historical Sites.

State Register of Historic Places

The State Register of Historic Places program, administered by the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, encourages the identification and protection of historical, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources in New Hampshire. Listing on the State Register encourages awareness of historical significance, but does not mandate protection. Benefits of State Register listing include public recognition, mandated consideration in the planning of local- and state-funded projects, qualification for state financial assistance for preservation projects (i.e., LCHIP), and special consideration or relief in the application of some access, building and other regulations. There are over 450 listings on the State Registry, two of which are in Wilton. The current list of Wilton's listings can be found above in Inventory of Wilton's Historical Sites.

Local Historic Districts and Neighborhood Heritage Districts

The term "historic district" can refer either to a historic district established by Town Meeting vote (pursuant to RSA 674:45) or to a National Register Historic District. Both designations can be useful preservation tools, and one area can be both locally and nationally designated. Several communities within the region, including Amherst, Hollis, Mont Vernon, and Nashua, have enacted local historic district ordinances. Wilton has not yet done so.

The purpose of a local historic district established under RSA 674:45 is to protect and preserve areas of outstanding architectural and historical value from inappropriate alterations and additions that might detract from an otherwise distinctive character. The district-enabling ordinance typically includes an architectural review process, as well as the review standards, which allow Town officials to exercise authority over the construction and alteration of buildings within historic districts, including single-family dwellings.

A common misconception about historic districts is that structures in them are subject to strict limitations on their exterior, or even interior, elements, and costly requirements for any renovations. Although most historic district ordinances regulate exterior elements of buildings to preserve the character of the district, they can nevertheless be designed to strike a balance between protecting historical resources and overburdening property owners. Moreover, towns can help property owners navigate the review process with guides and public information.

Historic districts should not attempt to "freeze" time, but should preserve what is significant while accommodating new construction and renovation as determined by local consensus. It is not generally appropriate to designate an area where properties are widely scattered as a historic district.

Certified Local Government (CLG) Program

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 provides for matching grants-in-aid to the states from the Historic Preservation Fund for preservation programs and projects. Federal law requires at least ten percent of each state's Historic Preservation Fund grant to be designated for transfer to eligible local governments that apply for the money. A local government can participate in the program once the State Preservation Office certifies that the community has established its own historic preservation commission, district, and a program meeting certain federal and state standards. Matching grants are

made each year to certified local governments for survey and planning projects, including preparation of National Register nominations and historical resource surveys. Currently, the CLG program represents the only source of state funds available for communities interested in preservation planning. In the Greater Nashua Region, the only communities designated as CLGs are Nashua, Amherst, and Hollis.

As noted, the CLG program is only available to communities that have established a historic district.

Building Code Provisions

Building code requirements may help or hinder the use or rehabilitation of a historical building. Some communities have elected to amend local building codes to exempt historical structures from certain code requirements, other than life safety provisions, allowing them to continue to be used safely without requiring them to meet modern standards that could involve extraordinary cost or undermine the historical character that makes them special.

It should be noted that Chapter 12 of the International Existing Building Code (IEBC), adopted by the State and applicable in Wilton, specifically addresses the need to treat historical structures sympathetically. It provides some exceptions to code requirements for buildings identified as being of historical significance. Sections 1202 through 1206 of IEBC Chapter 12 explain how repairs, alterations, fire safety, changes in occupancy and structural issues can be addressed in historical buildings while simultaneously maintaining their character and satisfying applicable code requirements.

Demolition Review Protocol

In 2018, the Wilton Building Department adopted a review protocol as part of its demolition permitting process. The protocol requires the Heritage Commission to be allowed to review the proposed demolition of buildings and structures over 100 years old with a gross floor area of 300 square feet or more, as well as a meeting with the applicant to explore alternatives to demolition. Under the protocol, the Commission does not have the authority to deny a permit, but can request an opportunity to document both the exterior and interior of the structure before demolition.

Because this review protocol is not part of the Building Code, applicants for demolition permits may not be aware of it.

Innovative Land Use Controls and Other Planning and Zoning Opportunities

New Hampshire land use laws give communities the authority to adopt a range of land use laws and regulations, as well as innovative land use controls, which can support a community's character and protect its historical resources. Open space development, also known as cluster development, is an example of land use controls relevant to preservation.

Among other things, open space development is potentially an alternative to development that could affect historical resources. Wilton's Land Use Laws and Regulations currently allow cluster developments in the General Residential and Agricultural District, and the Residential District for tracts of land 15 acres or greater but require setting aside 40-50% of the tract for open space, depending on its proximity to downtown. Cluster developments can offer density bonuses not available to other developments.

Historic Resource Survey

Preservation through documentation is a basic, essential and noncontroversial preservation strategy. In addition to providing a permanent written and photographic record of local architecture, a good inventory is a foundation for other preservation initiatives. It can support grant applications or nominations for listings on the National or State Registers.

Maintaining a historic resource survey (HRS) also supports understanding and appreciation of historical structures and sites. HRS's are also necessary to environmental reviews required for projects receiving Federal funding, such as highway construction.

Historic Structures Report

A historic structures report (HSR) describes buildings' physical history and condition and provides specific information for implementing maintenance or renovation plans. An HSR can be used to analyze the potential of a building to continue to be used, to the benefit of the community, and the possible costs thereof.

Historical Highway Marker Program

Originated by the New Hampshire Legislature in 1955, the aim of the Historical Highway Marker Program is to identify events, people, and places of historical significance to the State. Communities that would like to be considered for a marker submit a request to the State Highway Department and Division of Historical Resources.

The State-funded program is limited to approximately 10 markers per year, which can be placed only on the State highway system. There is generally no cost involved to erect a marker on a State-maintained road. Alternatively, co-operative markers can be ordered at cost when State funds have been exhausted or for placement on local roads or municipal lands. However, sponsors of co-operative markers must assume full responsibility for the cost of the marker and future maintenance through a formal agreement with the State.

Whether State-sponsored or cooperative, these markers enhance the awareness of historical sites and events and thereby can support preservation efforts.

Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive

In 2017, the Town voted to adopt NH RSA 79-E, Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive, which allows the owner of a qualifying structure who intends to rehabilitate or replace it to apply for property tax relief. The applicant must be in Wilton's eligible district, defined by the downtown center. The rehabilitation project must be substantial and provide a public benefit. This tool can be used to help private owners restore buildings downtown and create new housing opportunities.

The program has not seen much use thus far – only one downtown property owner has considered taking advantage of it recently.

Historic Building Rehabilitation Federal Tax Incentives

The Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (HTC) was formally introduced by Congress in 1979. Previously, there was a 10% credit for the rehabilitation of historic non-residential buildings in service

prior to 1936 and a 20% credit for structures that the National Park Service deemed historic. New tax legislation signed at the end of 2017 (Public Law No: 115-97) eliminated the 10% credit.

To qualify for the 20% tax credit, a building must be a certified historic structure per the National Park Service. The structure must be used for a business or other income-producing purpose, and a substantial amount of the tax credit must be spent on the rehabilitation of the building.

Investment tax credits provide some incentive to rehabilitate and preserve older buildings rather than undertaking new construction. Unfortunately, these credits do not cover non-income-producing residences.

Preservation Easements

Across the country, preservation easements have proven an effective tool for protecting significant properties. An easement is a right encumbering or restricting the use of a property or structure thereon that can be sold or donated to an organization eligible to hold such easements. Just as a conservation easement can protect open space, scenic areas, waterways and wildlife sanctuaries from incompatible uses and development, so too an architectural easement can protect the exterior appearance of a building or its use. In this way, the historical character of a property can be protected in perpetuity.

The donation of an easement to a qualifying organization may produce certain tax advantages for the donor. If the property is listed on the National Register, the donor is eligible under the Tax Treatment and Extension Act of 1980 to take a deduction in the amount of the value of the easement. The donation may also reduce estate and local property taxes.

The cost of acquiring an easement may be significantly lower than buying a property outright to protect it, particularly if the easement is donated. Significant resources can remain in private hands but are protected from inappropriate alteration as the organization holding the easement generally has the right to review any proposed change to the structure or property or its use.

Aside from easements, property owners can impose future restrictions on the use of land or structures thereon by recorded covenants or deed restrictions. These tools can protect historical properties but rarely qualify for charitable or other tax deductions.

Other Actions by Private Individuals and Organizations

Most building renovations are undertaken by private individuals, developers, or groups. Unfortunately, even well-intentioned improvements often employ techniques or materials inconsistent with or insensitive to an older building. As a result, the historical or structural integrity of the building can be compromised and even actually damage the building it was intended to improve. A wealth of specialized information covering topics sensitive to the needs of older buildings is available from the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources.

Preservation Action to Date

Notwithstanding the failure of a proposal in the 1980s to establish a commission to investigate the designation of Wilton Center as a historic district, the Town has undertaken several efforts to preserve its historical resources over the years. Voters consistently approve funds to renovate the Town Hall (new windows, handicapped access, and painting) while preserving the building's architectural style. Renovations to the Wilton Public and Gregg Free Library have included restoration efforts and updates accomplished in accordance with the building's style and history.

In the 1980s, five sites in Wilton were approved for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Since 2000, two additional sites have been added to the National Register and two sites have been added to the State Register of Historic Places. Private groups and individuals, as well as Town agencies, have collected and preserved historical data that illuminate the development of Wilton and its character.

Wilton Historical Society

The Wilton Historical Society was organized in 1908. It was inactive during World War I but reorganized in 1937, inspired by the upcoming 200th anniversary of the Town in 1939. At some point after that, the Society again became inactive but re-formed in October 1971. It has continued in existence ever since.

The Society and its Historical Room are housed on the top floor of the Wilton Public Library; the Society meets monthly. The Society maintains a collection of artifacts, documents and photos, including Jacob Abbot's Rollo Farm Collection. The ever-growing collection is both interesting to the casual viewer and useful to those doing historical research. It is open to the public on Thursday afternoons.



*The Rollo Farm Collection at the Wilton Public Library
Image Credit: Wilton Historical Society*

The Society also published brochures and historical sketches for the Town's and the nation's bicentennial celebrations.

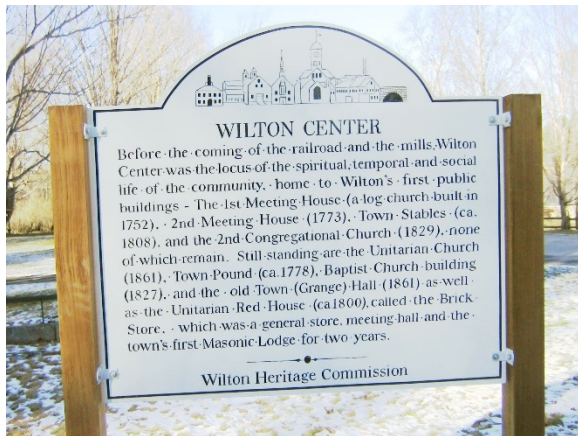
In recent years, the Society has hosted 4th-grade classes from the Florence Rideout Elementary School studying local history. Society members have also been instrumental in preparing applications for listing Wilton's historical sites on the State and National Registers.

Wilton Heritage Commission

Established at the 2000 Town Meeting, the Wilton Heritage Commission is a non-regulatory advisory committee that works to identify and protect Wilton's historically and culturally significant buildings and sites. New members are appointed by the Select Board after being recommended by the Commission. The Commission works closely with other Town Boards and organizations, including the Historical Society and the Cemetery Board of Trustees.

Since its inception, the Commission has worked to preserve many of Wilton's historical assets, including its successful effort to list the Wilton Town Hall on the Federal Register. The Commission also created and actively maintains a historical resources inventory. The Commission monitors The Four Corners Farm for compliance with the New Hampshire Land Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) Conservation Agreement pertaining to the building's exterior.

One of the Commission's main projects is developing historical signage for the Town. The Commission produces historical markers that are placed throughout Wilton, explaining the significance of selected areas and districts. Twenty-three markers have been produced and the Commission continues to replace and refurbish older markers. The Commission also submitted two historical site marker applications to the State Highway Department and Division of Historic Resources in 2002. One application received initial authorization but ultimately failed due to funding issues.



*The historical marker at Wilton Center
Image Credit: Wilton Historical Society*



*One of the many house plaques on Wilton's old houses
Image Credit: Wilton Historical Society*

The Commission also manages the Historical House Plaque Program, a volunteer program under which eligible homeowners can purchase and install historical house plaques on their houses. Eligibility is based on research done by the Commission, which has traced ownership and construction data of houses built from the 1700s through 1850. Since the program's debut in 2004, over 70 homeowners have purchased the plaques. Further research is underway to extend the program to homes that date from 1850 to 1900.

The Commission maintains a digital archive of documents and photographs, with new materials continually being added, as well as a digital archive of oral history. Making use of these materials, the Commission has published a self-guided tour brochure, "the Wilton Heritage Trail Project," available for purchase in Town Hall, and organizes historical presentations periodically.

In June 2003, the Commission submitted an inventory of historical resources to the Conservation Commission for approval. This list was not an all-inclusive inventory but identified major sites within Wilton and has been updated throughout the years.

Cemetery Board of Trustees

Since 2006, Wilton has maintained a three-person elected Cemetery Board. The duties of the Board are to manage the South Yard, Vale End, and Laurel Hill cemeteries and assist with the management of Mt. Cavalry Cemetery. The Board responds to inquiries about family history and burial sites. The Board works with the Heritage Commission to map the cemeteries and repair broken headstones. The Board has also partnered with the Daughters of the American Revolution on projects, including the placement of permanent markers on the graves of John and Mary Dale, descendants of John and Mary Ellinwood Dale, in Vale End Cemetery on October 14, 2006.

Wilton Main Street Association

The Wilton Main Street Association (WMSA) is a volunteer organization of citizens and merchants working with Town officials to improve the look and economic vitality of Wilton's downtown. The WMSA is chartered specifically to preserve and restore historical buildings, collect historical data and photos, and improve public awareness of Wilton's historical and cultural resources. In 1998, as a result of efforts by the WMSA, Wilton was accepted to the Main Street America Program, a national program aimed at preserving and revitalizing commercial downtown areas. Since then, WMSA has helped obtain façade improvement grants and managed and helped maintain the historical Wilton Falls building for many years.

WMSA also owns and maintains the Main Street Park, a pocket park that overlooks the Souhegan River and the railroad bridge over it. The park is host to many cultural events, including concerts and small festivals.



*Main Street Park
Image Credit: Wilton Planning Board & NRPC*

Town Website

In 2018, Wilton introduced a new municipal website to address inquiries about governance and other matters, as well as promote awareness of the Town and its resources. The Heritage Commission and the Economic Development Leadership Team worked together on sections devoted to Wilton's history and historical resources, including a timeline of key events in the Town's history, accompanying photographs, and descriptions and pictures of all 22 of the Town's historical markers.

Wilton's History Series

Hidden In Plain Sight is a series of short sketches written by Michael G. Dell'Orto, the current Chair of the Heritage Commission, which illuminates the intriguing historical oddities that have made Wilton such an interesting town. Some of these articles were originally published in 2002-2005 for the WMSA, and capture information not otherwise documented in other historical records.

Other Efforts

As noted above, the Town has adopted other tools, including demolition review protocols, innovative land use controls and the community revitalization tax relief incentive authorized by RSA 79-E, intended to facilitate the rehabilitation and preservation of its historical resources.

In addition, the Four Corners Farm is encumbered by the only historical preservation easement on private property in Wilton. The easement was the result of negotiation between the property owner (the Temple-Wilton Community Farm) and multiple government agencies, including LCHIP, which owns and administers the easement. In exchange for the easement, the owner secured essential funding from the Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program to renovate the property and operate the farm.

Most recently, the Temple-Wilton Community Farm sought to install a set of ground-mounted solar collecting systems as a sustainability effort. Working with LCHIP, which evaluated the nature and impact of the project, the owner was able to secure site plan approval for the solar energy system from the Wilton Planning Board – an example of Town government finding a balance between preserving historical properties and supporting appropriate improvements on them.

Cultural Resources

A town's cultural resources often have their origins in historical resources. This chapter, however, differentiates cultural resources as institutions or conditions that are supportive or reflective, of a distinctive cultural character or a community.

With changing population and trends over time, cultural influences frequently ebb and flow – old ones vanish, new ones spring up, while others are short-lived. Various Town traditions, events and cultural groups have developed over the years in Wilton, many of which, in one form or another, are also commonly found among other New England towns. Nevertheless, the unique way they have developed in Wilton has helped to shape the Town's present character.

While many elements of Wilton's unique culture can, and perhaps should, be further promoted and nurtured, some cultural resources unique to Wilton merit special attention – those that clearly set Wilton apart from other New England towns.

The Waldorf Schools – High Mowing School and Pine Hill Waldorf School

In 1942, Beulah Hepburn Emmet founded High Mowing School to offer children an education based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, which he called anthroposophy, that the spiritual world can be fully explored through human experience.

In practice, Waldorf education values the personality and gifts of every student and seeks to help students reach their full potential both inside and outside the classroom, through a holistic yet personalized method of engagement and learning. Rather than focusing on the key academic skills and assessing academic success through quantitative testing, Waldorf education integrates the arts in all academic disciplines and evaluates each student's success qualitatively.



High Mowing School
 Image Credit: Kendal J. Bush for High Mowing School



Pine Hill Waldorf School – part of High Mowing School since 2017
 Image Credit: Kendal J. Bush for High Mowing School

High Mowing School was the first Waldorf high school founded in North America and is still the only Waldorf boarding school in the United States.

Pine Hill Waldorf School, an elementary school founded in 1972 to extend the Waldorf education curriculum to younger ages, merged with High Mowing School in 2017.

Over the years, the Waldorf schools have attracted many educators, students, and parents from across the country and abroad. This unique community also spurred the development of the Hearthstone Community, a housing cooperative unique to Wilton, and promoted the Temple-Wilton Community Farm, which offers a Community-Supported Agriculture program. The community remains an influential part of the Town today.

Andy's Summer Playhouse

Named after Clarence William Anderson, a celebrated author and illustrator of children's books, Andy's Summer Playhouse is an innovative summer youth theater located in one of Wilton's original meetinghouses in historical Wilton Center. Founded in 1971 by two teachers, Margaret Sawyer and William Williams, the Playhouse produces original works performed by children aged eight to eighteen, with direction and mentoring by professional artists from all over the country. Performances are given and workshops on various theater arts are held at the Playhouse, as well as at venues across the region. The Playhouse boasts many well-known and award-winning alumni and teachers, as well as a reputation widely recognized in youth theater.



"The Arrival" performed at the Andy's Summer Playhouse, adapted from the book by Shaun Tan, directed by Orange Grove Dance
 Image Credit: Andy's Summer Playhouse

Town Hall Theatre

The Wilton Town Hall Theater, on the upper levels of the Town Hall, was first the site of traveling shows and vaudeville, and was then converted in 1912 to a silent film house. In recent years, the Town Hall Theater has hosted movie festivals and continues to show movies of all types, from recently released features to vintage films. The Theatre is well-known throughout the region for the range of its offerings and its contribution to the appreciation of the film industry and its history in America.



*Volunteers and friends of the Town Hall Theatre, with Dennis Markaverich, the Theatre Operator, at center.
Image Credit: Robin Maloney*

Other Arts

Surveys of the community's vision for Wilton consistently identify support and development of the arts generally as essential to its character. Wilton is home to a budding visual arts community that includes a group of artists who work in studios at the Riverview Artists Mill. In addition, a growing number of creative businesses, including art galleries, artisan boutiques and restaurants with live performances are being established in Wilton, which has in the past also been known as a venue for folk and other music from the region and beyond.



*A jewelry crafting session taking place at the Riverview Artists Mill
Image Credit: Sussy-Rose Shield*

Protecting and Promoting Cultural Resources

A small town can rarely count among its assets the continuing unique cultural influences like those enjoyed by Wilton. Protecting cultural resources usually depends on a community's dedication to identify, support and promote them by raising awareness of their existence, character, and, in some cases, facilitating, by zoning or otherwise, their operation and expansion.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are intended to balance the importance of preserving Wilton's historical and cultural resources with its goal of thoughtful growth.

The Town should consider:

Preserving Historical Resources

1. Continuing to promote awareness of its historical sites and structures, their value to the character of the community, and the importance of preserving them, through educational outreach programs, the Town's website, and other opportunities like the *Hidden in Plain Sight* history series.
2. Explaining and promoting, on the Town's website or otherwise, the availability and impact of existing incentives to preserve historical resources, including opportunities for listing properties on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, tax relief under NH RSA 79-E, the Federal Historic Rehabilitation tax credit, and potential tax benefits associated with donating preservation easements. In connection with these efforts, the Town might explore why the Section 79-E program has not been popular in Wilton.
3. Providing guidance to property owners on how to maintain historical properties, including identifying resources such as the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for renovating or rehabilitating them, and links to advisory and financial resources.
4. Reassessing the demolition review protocol with both the Building Department and the Heritage Commission to determine whether it should be enhanced or documented as a specific requirement under the Town's Building Code. The Town should consider addressing the use of historic structure reports (HSRs) and external changes to historical structures that do not rise to the level of demolition.
5. Re-examining the benefits of establishing a historic district or multiple districts in Town and, in that context, making efforts to inform the public fully about the purpose, process and implications to property owners of district designation. If a historic district is established, the Town should consider joining the Certified Local Government Program to open up grant opportunities.
6. Continuing to support the preservation and protection of the Town cemeteries, including by securing and maintaining public access to the County Farm Cemetery.
7. Maintaining an inventory, with available documentation, of Wilton's historical resources, including historical markers, properties with the historical house plaques, and newly identified historical resources.

8. Encouraging owners of qualifying historical properties to apply to list them on State and National Registers, and supporting the expansion of the Town's historical marker and plaque programs.
9. Reevaluating existing Wilton land use ordinances, including its open space development ordinance, in the context of further preserving historical resources and/or facilitating their repurposing and continued use. The Town might consider involving the Heritage Commission as an advisor or reviewer of proposed new development or rehabilitation not involving demolition.
10. Exploring Wilton's pre-colonial history by conducting archaeological investigations in partnership with educational institutions and/or requiring developers to report any findings in the course of their work. If sites are identified, the Town should consider developing a process to address and fund their preservation, including consultation with the State Division of Historic Resources.

Promoting Cultural Resources

11. Developing a specific Plan for the Arts at the Town level, which could address, without limitation, incentives promotional opportunities, an inventory of venues and events in Wilton, opportunities for the creation of public art and murals, funding resources, and guidance on how to leverage tourism and economic development in connection with the growth of the artists' community.
12. Identifying and publicizing the zoning districts where artistic and cultural uses are permitted.
13. Continuing to strategically promote Wilton's unique cultural resources, as well as its other attractive characteristics, on the Town's website and otherwise.

CHAPTER VII: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Economic development is a critical component of Wilton’s vision for the future. This chapter begins by outlining key findings gathered through both local and regional data analysis as well as public outreach efforts. Wilton residents offered their visions for Wilton’s economy at public forums, (including a town hall-hosted economic development forum) as well as through a web-based survey.

“This was the town I wanted to raise my family in. It was small and friendly with the stores that I needed at the time.”

- Wilton resident (Master Plan Survey)

The chapter highlights desired economic development in Wilton as well as a summary of strengths, opportunities, challenges, and threats related to economic growth in Wilton. The chapter concludes with economic development goals, strategies, and recommendations consistent with the Town of Wilton’s Economic Vision outlined below.

Vision

The Town of Wilton supports a vibrant and diverse small business environment. Downtown Wilton will remain the cultural heart of the community, as well as its chief destination and gathering place. Wilton will encourage landscaping and other public improvements like sidewalks and open spaces within the downtown area to support and cultivate this vibrancy. Wilton will welcome new development and investment that is consistent with the community’s small town and rural character and job opportunities will be available at a diversity of skill levels. Wilton will encourage growth that supports broad community objectives including those in retail, agriculture, education, and hospitality, and projects that preserve historic structures or foster the arts.



Key Findings

- Wilton's population and labor force has remained relatively stable since 2002. However, the population has aged over that time and private jobs located within the community have declined by 12 percent.
- Wilton's employment base has shifted significantly from a primarily goods-producing economy to one that is much more service-oriented over the last 10 years.
- Median incomes closely track the regional averages.
- Approximately one-in-five town residents work in Wilton, however townspeople are much more likely to commute to jobs in communities to the east, including those in Milford, Nashua, Merrimack and Manchester.
- Wilton's historic downtown is widely recognized as a significant economic asset for the community, however there is widespread concern about the vacancy rates of storefronts, and the downtown could benefit from an improved appearance, activity, and marketing effort.
- Although Wilton's pastoral character is prized by residents, the town faces economic headwinds common to many rural communities in the state, including: an aging citizenry, stagnant population growth, out-migration of young adults, and challenges in attracting new industries.
- Wilton residents identified several economic advantages unique to the community, including; destinations like Andy's Playhouse and the Town Hall Theater, the town's private schools, strong local agriculture and rural character, a quaint downtown, absence of fast food restaurants and traffic lights, attractive natural environment and conservation lands, a strategic location on State Route 101, and the town's concentration of artists.
- Wilton residents identified a number of economic challenges unique to the community including a lack of marketing or messaging, a downtown that is bypassed by major state routes, concern that communities to the east siphon away businesses, perception that public schools are substandard, perception of high property taxes, onerous planning/zoning regulations, limited housing options, and a lack of community gathering venues and events.

Population

Over the last several years, Wilton's population has declined slightly, falling by 2 percent (a loss of 76 residents) between 2000 and 2010. The Census 2013 population estimate for Wilton is virtually unchanged from 2010. This is a significant departure from the 1980s and 1990s, when Wilton enjoyed brisk population growth, including increases of 17.2 percent between 1980 and 1990 and of 20 percent between 1990 and 2000.

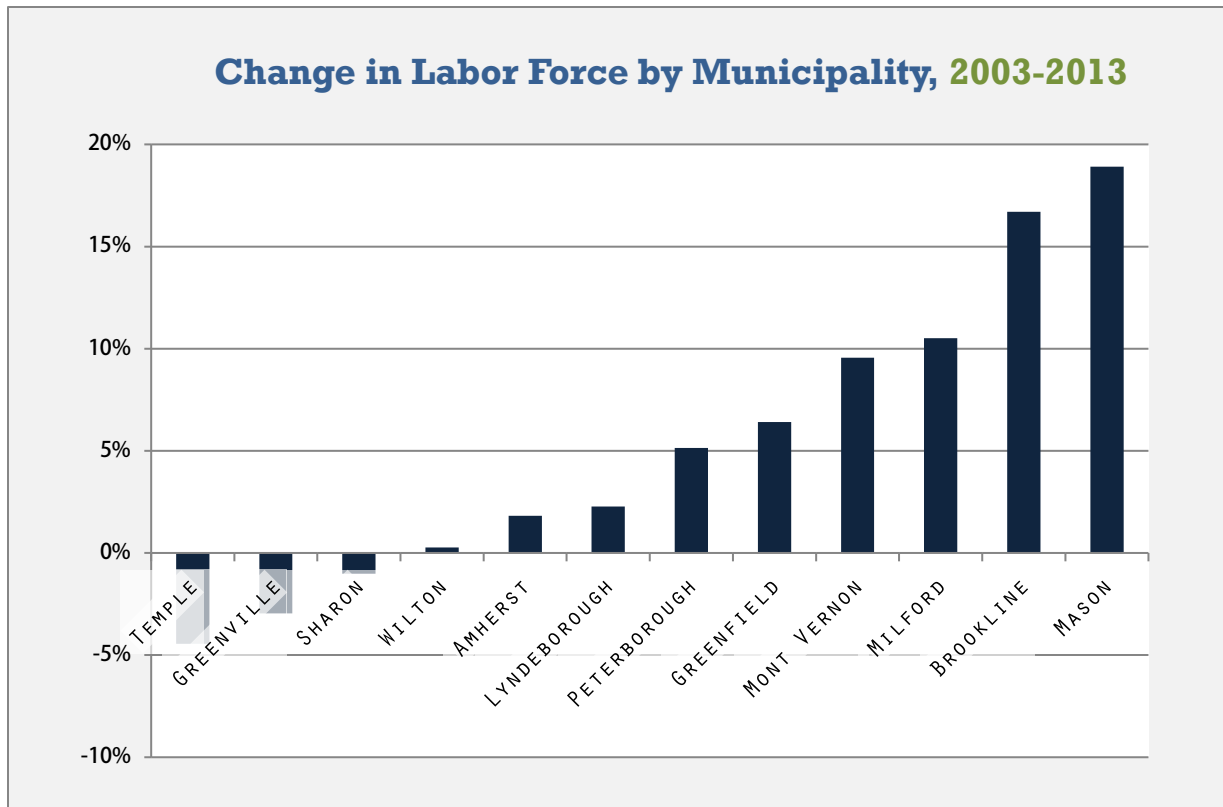
“Our town is a little weird, different, off the level... This character is what is attractive. Wilton is a destination for a special kind of resident, one who is connected to and cares about the small community and its place in the world. This is our advantage if we choose to embrace it.”

- Wilton resident (Master Plan Survey)

A stagnant or declining population imparts clear economic impacts, in part because it translates to fewer customers for town-based small businesses and forces a higher reliance on consumers from surrounding communities. Greenville and Sharon were the only other towns in the surrounding area to record a population decline over the same period.

Additionally, Wilton's population, like much of New Hampshire's, has aged over time. According to the U.S. Census 2009-2013 American Community Survey, Wilton's median age is 44.4. This reflects a statewide trend. Some of Wilton's neighbors are older, including Sharon, with a median age of 52.5, and Peterborough at 49.1. The youngest communities in the surrounding area, though slightly older than the nationwide median age, include New Ipswich at 37.6, Milford at 39.9, and Brookline at 41.9.





Source: Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, NH Employment Security, 2015

Employment / Labor Force

Wilton’s economy has transitioned from a primarily manufacturing-based employment center to one that is more service-based in nature. This transition has been particularly pronounced over the last 10 years. Between 2004 and 2014, the town lost approximately 314 goods-producing jobs, but gained 168 service-providing jobs. This trend is likely to continue, as several factors have created significant headwinds related to manufacturing employment in New England. These factors include increasing automation in manufacturing processes, the region’s comparatively high electricity costs, and continued offshoring of manufacturing employment to low-cost nations.

Overall, the number of private jobs in Wilton declined by approximately 12 percent falling from 1,220 in 2004 to 1,074 in 2014. This likely reflects the trend of Wilton transitioning into more of a bedroom community, with most residents commuting to other areas for work. It also reflects the increasing geographic concentration or clustering of jobs in the region along the F.E. Everett Turnpike corridor in Nashua and Manchester. Neighboring Milford lost an even higher 15 percent of all private jobs over the same period.

Over the last several years Wilton's labor force has remained remarkably stable, growing by only six workers between 2003 and 2013 from 2,173 to 2,179. According to NH Employment Security, the labor force includes all persons 16 years of age and over who are employed, or unemployed and actively seeking employment. Those involved in a labor-management dispute are also included. The "civilian labor force" excludes members of the armed forces and the institutionalized population.

Wilton's labor force has remained virtually unchanged even as the town's population has declined slightly, between 2000 and 2010.

The unemployment rate in May 2015 in Wilton was 3 percent, according to the NH Economic Labor Market Information Bureau, a rate that compares favorably to surrounding communities and the state rate. It also marks a decline from 2013 when the town rate was pegged at 4.7 percent. Among surrounding towns, Greenfield claimed the lowest rate at 2.7 percent and Greenville claimed the highest rate at 5.2 percent. The state rate for the same period was 3.8 percent. Over the last 10 years, Wilton's unemployment rate has consistently trended below the state average. Approximately 27 percent of Wilton residents work in town. Among those workers, a slight majority (or about 15 percent of all residents), work from home. This marks the highest share of residents who work from home of any community in the Nashua Region (across the entire region, approximately 5 percent of all workers work from home). Most residents commute to towns or cities located to the east of Wilton. Approximately 11 percent of residents commute to workplaces in Massachusetts.

Top Seven Commuting Destinations of Wilton Residents

(American Community Survey, 2008-2012)

- 1.) *Wilton (in town commute trips)*
- 2.) *Milford*
- 3.) *Nashua*
- 4.) *Merrimack*
- 5.) *Manchester*
- 6.) *Peterborough*
- 7.) *Bedford*

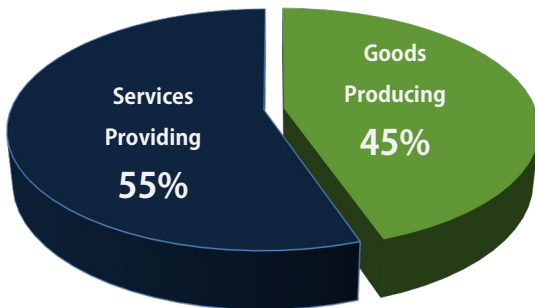
“Send middle and high school kids to a larger town for education --A town where they could be offered more opportunities. These two small towns cannot afford to continue to support the HS. It costs too much for too few kids. People cannot afford to live here.”

- Wilton resident (Master Plan Survey)

Wilton Private Employment, 2004



Wilton Private Employment, 2014



The nature of jobs in Wilton has changed markedly in over the last 10 years. Services oriented jobs have jumped from 35 percent of the town’s private employment in 2004 to 55 percent in 2014.

Source: NH Employment Security



Wages/Income

Wilton's median household income of \$68,693 closely tracks the rate in neighboring Milford (at \$68,451). It ranks well above rates in neighboring Temple and Greenville (at \$51,875 and \$53,508), but below the rates in the neighboring communities of Lyndeborough and Mason (at \$85,457 and \$88,750 respectively). The town's median household income is higher than the rate for New Hampshire (at \$64,925), but slightly lower than the median rate for all of Hillsborough County (at \$70,472).

Household incomes are well distributed across all brackets in Wilton. Approximately 28 percent of households earn less than \$35,000, while the same share of households in town earns \$100,000 or more. Household incomes track higher in outlying areas of Wilton relative to the Downtown area. A review of 2010 Census Block data indicates that median household incomes were 24 percent lower in Central Wilton than in outlying rural and residential areas.

Among jobs based within the Town of Wilton, average weekly wages are \$760. Accounting for inflation, that's an increase of approximately 5.5 percent over 2003 levels. Government jobs pay slightly higher than private sector jobs (\$766 vs. \$759), though goods-producing private jobs earned the highest weekly wages at \$860.

Education

According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, approximately 28 percent of Wilton residents over the age of 25 have earned at least a bachelor's degree (11 percent have earned a professional or graduate degree). Though that share closely tracks the national average of 28.8 percent, it is below most surrounding communities as well as the New Hampshire share of residents who have earned at least a bachelor's degree at 33.7 percent. Only Greenville exhibits a smaller share of residents with at least a bachelor's degree in the surrounding area (and much lower, at 11.4 percent).

Public input on local education showed many residents were concerned regarding perceptions of the quality of the town's public school system.

Standardized test scores are only one component of educational quality, and according to many experts they are too often overemphasized. However, they do allow for a relatively quick comparison to performance in surrounding communities. In the 2013-2014 school year, 11th graders in Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School scored above the state mean in mathematics, but below in reading and writing. Grade 8 students in the district performed below the state mean in all subjects (see comparisons to neighboring school districts in the appendix of this chapter).

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School's graduation rate does track below the state average and that of surrounding communities.

Graduation Rate, 2013-2014

		State Rank*
Souhegan Coop.	96.70%	7
Milford	95%	17
Mascenic	94.10%	21
Hollis-Brookline	93.50%	24
Contoocook Valley	93.10%	27
State Average	88.70%	
Wilton-Lyndeborough	82.80%	63

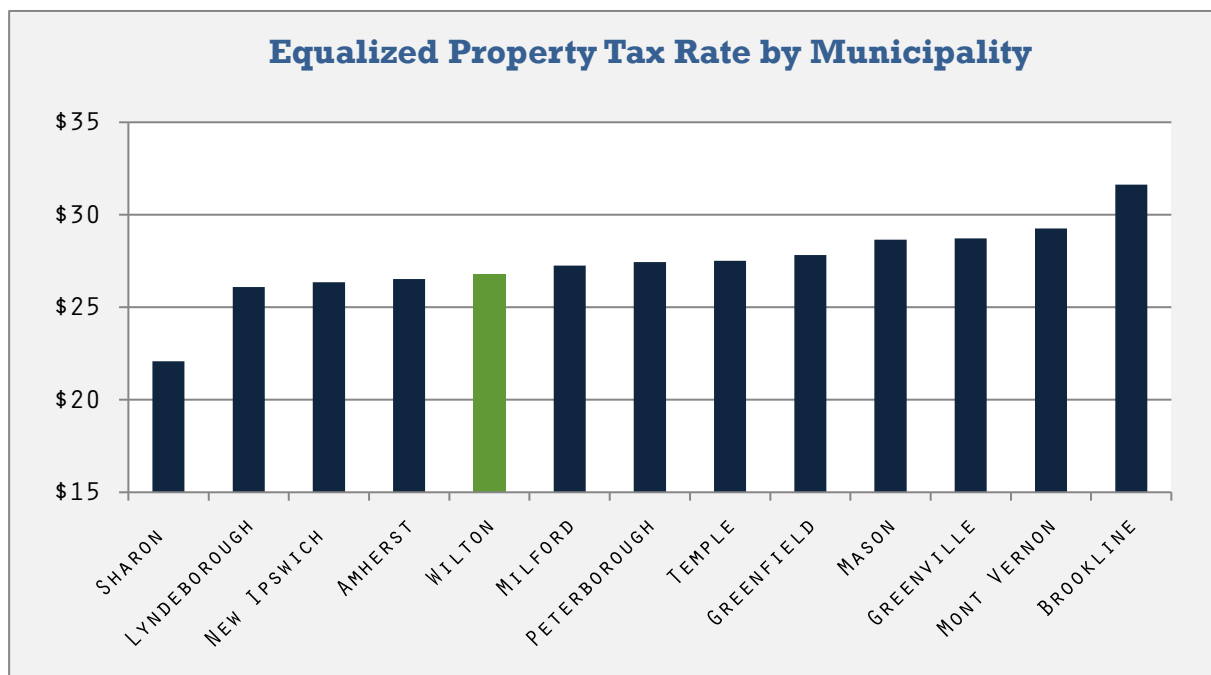
*- There are 77 public high schools in New Hampshire

Source: NH Department of Education

Property Taxes

Wilton property owners paid \$25.80 per \$1,000 of assessed value in 2014. Approximately 86 percent of property taxes go toward town government and school district functions, while 14 percent are allocated to the county and state. In the surrounding region, Wilton’s property tax rate falls toward the lower end. Compared with twelve neighboring communities, Wilton residents have a higher tax rate than four communities and lower than eight communities. When an equalization ratio is applied, Wilton’s standing relative to neighboring communities remains consistent (see related graphs).

As a share of property taxes in Wilton, 69.6 percent of funds are dedicated toward the school district while the remaining 30.4 percent of funds support all other town government functions. This funding

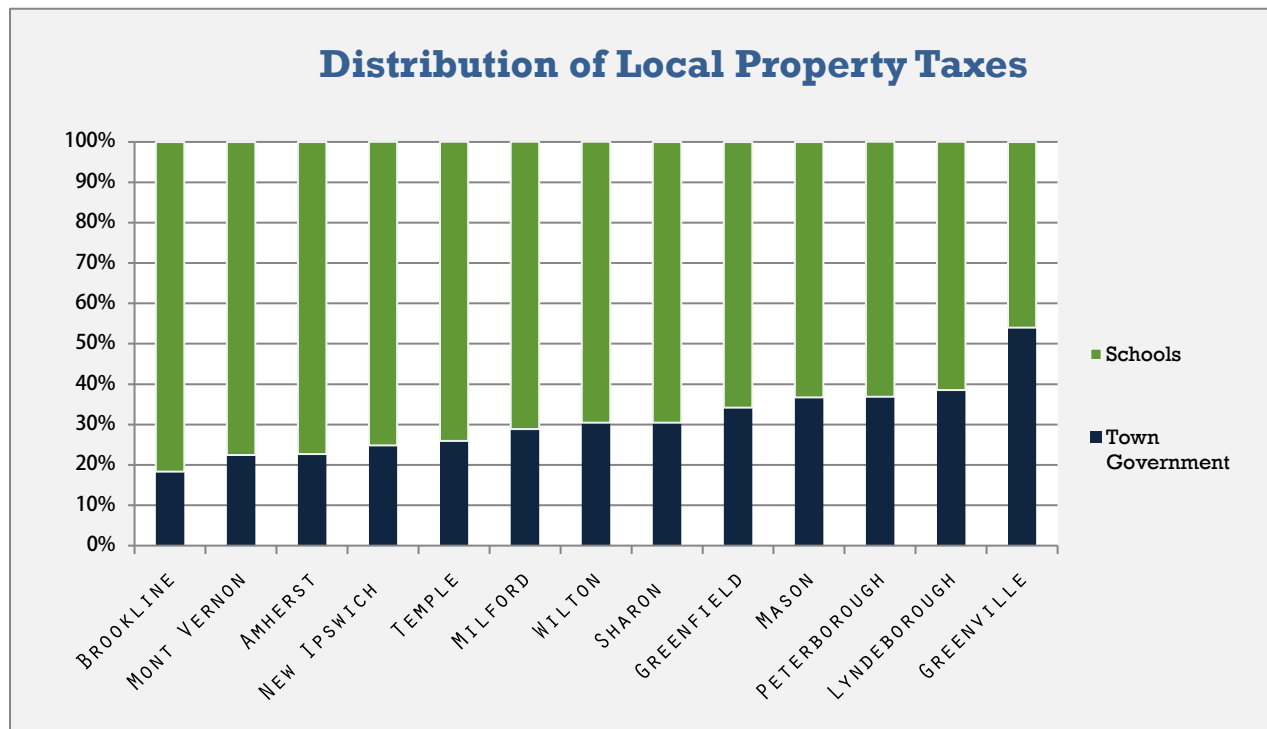


Source: NH Department of Revenue Administration, 2014 Tax Rates

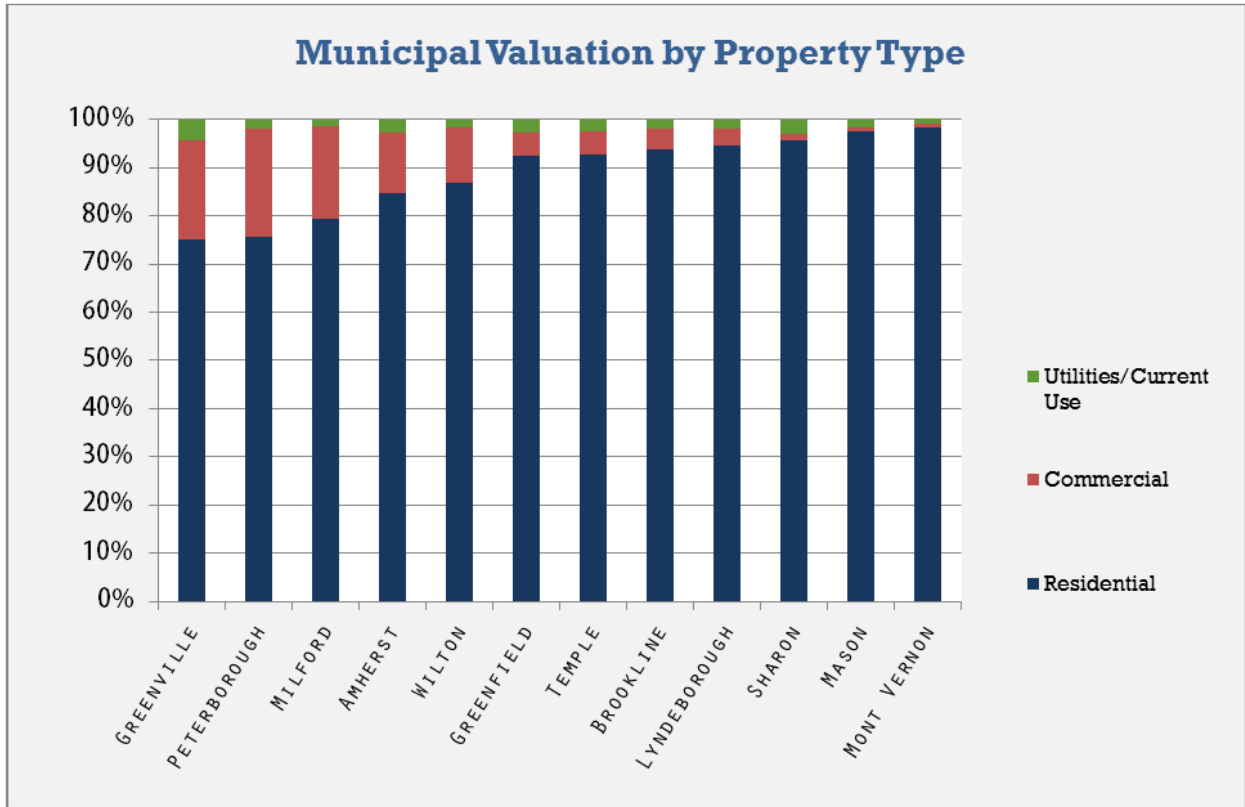
allocation is fairly typical among 12 neighboring communities. In fact, six towns in the area dedicate a greater share of tax revenues to town government than Wilton while six towns contribute a greater share to local school districts. Among nearby communities, the towns of Brookline and Mont Vernon allocate the highest shares of property tax revenues to school district funding, while the towns of Lyndeborough and Greenville spend the most toward town government functions (Greenville is the only town in the area where local town government spending surpasses school district funding).

Wilton relies on residential taxpayers for 87 percent of its property tax receipts; however that share is not unusual among surrounding towns (see Municipal Valuation by Property Type graph on following page). Only Greenville, Peterborough, Milford and Amherst garner a higher share of property taxes from commercial, industrial and utilities/current use sources. Wilton’s equalized valuation (the total value of taxable property in the town) has remained steady since 2010, rising by 0.8 percent over the five-year period, a rate generally consistent with surrounding communities.

During public engagement efforts for this plan, many residents protested that tax rates in Wilton were burdensome. Increased commercial and clean industrial investment in Wilton, if well planned, would reduce tax burdens on homeowners over time. Absent renewed commercial investment, other strategies exist to help moderate property tax pressures over time, including cost-sharing agreements or shared services with surrounding communities.



Source: NH Department of Revenue Administration, 2014 Tax Rates



Wilton’s downtown features a number of historic mill buildings, many of which might be good candidates for adaptive re-use projects.

Source: NH Department of Revenue Administration, 2014 Tax Rates

Business Centers

Downtown Wilton

Downtown Wilton represents the heart of the town's small business community as well as its largest population center and its most walkable area. Settled around several textile mills powered by the Souhegan River, the downtown area includes several small and independent shops and restaurants located in historic structures dating back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The historic Wilton Town Hall Theater and the Riverview Artists Mill, which serve as regional destinations, help anchor the district. Approximately 40 percent of Wilton's households are located within ½ mile of the downtown area.

"We need a vibrant Main Street with access to basic needs so we can keep our dollars local... I would like to see a food coop and/or other opportunities for fresh, local and organic food."

- Wilton resident (Master Plan Survey)

There is broad agreement that Downtown Wilton, with its historic building stock, riverside location and walkable atmosphere, represents a key economic asset for the community. Many residents describe the area as quaint and eclectic with a classic small town Main Street appearance. However, there is also significant concern that the district has declined, and currently lacks the street activity and amenities of a vibrant town center. Vacancies are conspicuous in certain areas and some structures, lacking investment, have deteriorated in condition over time. Several potential causes for the district's economic decline have been identified by residents, including; a lack of coordinated marketing or branding, a lack of infrastructure investment, the need for a higher population center of gravity, a location bisected by major state routes, and a need for more anchor destinations.

Route 101 Corridor

State Route 101, one of New Hampshire's busiest east-west highways, bisects Wilton and includes many of the town's commercial and industrial lands, largely centered around the Route 101 and Route 31 junction and the stretch of the highway that runs parallel to Intervale Road. There is sufficient vacant land to expand these uses over time.

Route 31 Corridor

Route 31 in Wilton includes some industrial uses, including some mining operations, scattered among the corridor. However, as a whole the route remains largely rural in nature. There is some undeveloped industrial land near in the northern stretch of the corridor near the Lyndeborough border. Additionally there are several tracts that fall within the Office and Research Park Overlay District near the Greenville town line.

Opportunities

As noted earlier in this chapter, Wilton is unique for its number of destinations, including the Riverview Mill Artists, Andy's Summer Theater, the Town Hall Theater, and the High Mowing and Pine Hill Waldorf Schools. Additionally, several unique small businesses, farms and eateries located in Wilton represent destinations in themselves. A large percentage of Wilton's land area remains undeveloped and the town maintains a very strong rural and agricultural character. There are several opportunities to promote tourism surrounding the Downtown and Wilton Center districts as well as the town's agriculture lands and pristine natural areas.

Although Wilton is slightly challenged in attracting large businesses due to the larger communities directly to its east, it does have the advantage of attracting niche businesses and a more robust tourism economy due to existing destinations and unique landscapes.

Wilton already includes a significant number of residents who work from home and recent broadband investments in the community should continue to make those opportunities more attractive.

Challenges

Wilton faces several challenges outlined earlier in this chapter that are shared with many rural communities across the state, including the out-migration of young people, and difficulty in expanding industries and broadening the town tax base.

Wilton borders the Town of Milford to the east, and much of Wilton's population lives near the Milford border (Downtown Wilton is located only ½ mile from the town line). With a population approximately four-times the size of Wilton's and extensive commercial and industrial zoning, many businesses choose to locate in Milford, or municipalities to the east on the Route 101A corridor. Traffic counts and population densities are higher in communities to the east. While this has helped the town avoid sprawl patterns of development noted in areas to the east, it has also deprived the town of a key source of tax revenue.

Goals

I. A Multi-Generational Community

Promote Wilton as an attractive community for all age groups, including young adults and young families, and ensure the town maintains a sustainable labor force.

Ensure adequate opportunities for seniors to fully participate in economic opportunities.

- *Continue Wilton's involvement with the Souhegan Valley Rides dial-a-ride bus service.*
- *Consult with surrounding communities to consider feasibility of a regional start-up business incubator or 'makers space' to promote local collaboration and innovation.*
- *Consider hosting more community-wide events to bring residents of all demographic groups together.*



II. A Diverse Tax Base

Broaden Wilton's tax base to reduce burdens on residential property owners. Review cost-savings opportunities related to existing town government and school district practices.

- *Consult surrounding communities regarding cost-sharing opportunities, research feasibility and benefit of providing shared services for certain town government and school district functions.*
- *Form a town economic development advisory committee to make recommendations relating to economic development to the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen.*
- *Continue to address the lengthy development review phase with a streamlined process, improved marketing, and a Guide to Opening a Business in the community.*
- *Invest financial resources in professional economic development services.*

III. A Vibrant, Livable Downtown

Support growth and investment in Downtown Wilton and promote it as the hub of civic, business and social activities in the community. Take steps to improve its appearance and broaden marketing efforts.

- *Undertake a parking study of Downtown Wilton to determine if additional parking may be necessary or where lots are currently under-utilized.*
- *Consider adoption of design guidelines for new construction or redevelopment in Downtown Wilton to ensure a walkable and attractive streetscape.*
- *Consider adoption of provisions of NH RSA 79-E relating to property tax relief incentives to encourage redevelopment of underutilized downtown buildings.*
- *Improve wayfinding signage directing motorists on Route 101 to Downtown Wilton.*
- *Establish a Façade Improvements Program.*
- *Establish a program for street beautification in the downtown and surrounding area.*
- *Partner with the Wilton Main Street Association to better market downtown and Wilton as a destination.*
- *Pursue grant funding to improve downtown.*

IV. A Destination

Market Wilton's existing destinations, promote tourism-based cross partnerships, and review existing regulations, to ensure they support Wilton's rural and agricultural character as well as town goals related to economic development and livability.

- *Consider feasibility of adopting an agri-tourism ordinance to promote rural character and increased economic use of Wilton's farms.*
- *Determine which town department or organization could take the lead on updating the new website to prominently advertise local destinations, events, artists, and businesses.*
- *Collaborate with the Wilton Main Street Association to improve tourism.*
- *Partner with local and regional organizations to draft literature and online content relating to day-trip activities in Wilton and surrounding communities.*
- *Support local efforts to promote a commuter rail connection in Nashua.*
- *Work with the regional planning commission, and snow mobile club to map town trail systems and market the town's recreational opportunities.*

V. An Excellent Home Base

Recognizing that a majority of Wilton residents commute to other communities, Wilton will ensure that the town remains an attractive place to live and commute or telecommute from, and maintain strong ties with surrounding communities and regional partners.

- *Participate in regional transportation discussions to ensure Wilton's voice is represented and that major east-west commuting routes for Wilton residents are free of congestion.*
- *Promote more home-based businesses by creating and marketing a brochure outlining the steps necessary to do so in Wilton.*

- *Foster the rural character and support existing farms. Review land use regulations to ensure that agriculture and associated farm stands are supported.*
- *Continue to promote and market Wilton's access to high speed internet.*

APPENDIX

Employment and Wage Data

INFLATION ADJUSTED ANNUAL INCOME, 2012

- Per capita income = \$36,840
- Median 4-person family income = \$82,721
- Median household income = \$68,693
- Median male earnings (full time, year round workers) = \$51,741
- Median female earnings (full time, year round workers) = \$40,612

Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012

- Percentage of working residents working in community of residence = 27.4%
- Percentage of working residents commuting to another NH community = 61.3%
- Percentage of working residents commuting out-of-state = 11.3%

Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012

LABOR FORCE

Annual Average	2003	2013
Civilian Labor Force	2,173	2,179
Employed	2,088	2,076
Unemployed	85	103
Unemployment Rate	3.9%	4.7%

Source: NH Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, Community Profiles

EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES -

Annual Average Covered Employment	2003	2013
<i>Goods Producing Industries</i>		
Average Employment	799	532
Average Weekly Wage	\$677	\$866
<i>Services Providing Industries</i>		
Average Employment	440	563
Average Weekly Wage	\$506	\$659
<i>Total Private Industry</i>		
Average Employment	1,240	1,095
Average Weekly Wage	\$616	\$759
<i>Government (Federal, State, and Local)</i>		
Average Employment	502	199
Average Weekly Wage	\$448	\$766
<i>Total, Private plus Government</i>		
Average Employment	1,742	1,294
Average Weekly Wage	\$568	\$760

*Source: NH Employment Security, Economic and
Labor Market Information Bureau, Community Profiles*

<http://www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/products/cp/profiles-htm/wilton.htm>

Tax Data

PROPERTY TAXES

- 2014 Town Valuation = \$369,750,689
- 2014 Town Tax Rate = 6.79
- 2014 Local School Tax Rate = 15.53
- 2014 State Education Tax Rate = 2.28
- 2014 County Tax Rate = 1.20
- Total Tax Rate = 25.80
- Tax Commitment = \$9,489,302

Source: NH Dept. of Revenue Administration

Largest Businesses in Wilton

LARGEST EMPLOYERS IN WILTON

Business Name	Product/Service	Employees	Established
Label Art, Inc.	Pressure sensitive labels	160	1963
Bur-Bak Machine Corporation	Injection molding	85	1970
Kimball Physics, Inc.	UHV electron	50	1973
General Machine & Foundry	Aluminum castings	30	1969
Souhegan Wood Products	Core plugs, winding cores	20	1940

Source: NH Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, Community Profiles

Employment and Wage Data

INFLATION ADJUSTED ANNUAL INCOME, 2012

Municipality	Per Capita Income	Median 4-person Family Income	Median Household Income
Amherst	\$49,086	\$121,858	\$113,260
Brookline	\$37,653	\$112,581	\$102,785
Greenville	\$23,917	\$63,250	\$53,508
Greenfield	\$32,002	\$82,614	\$72,321
Lyndeborough	\$35,637	\$93,611	\$85,457
Mason	\$35,928	\$91,042	\$88,750
Milford	\$32,855	\$82,383	\$68,451
Mont Vernon	\$37,148	\$94,492	\$93,828
New Ipswich	\$34,041	\$93,688	\$85,056
Peterborough	\$38,554	\$88,911	\$59,609
Sharon	\$39,657	\$79,286	\$79,643
Temple	\$28,802	\$61,964	\$51,875
Wilton	\$36,840	\$82,721	\$68,693

Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012

According to the US Census, 2013 per capita income was \$34,390 for Hillsborough County and \$33,134 for the State of NH.

LOCATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Municipality	% of working residents working in community of residence	% of working residents commuting to another NH community	% of working residents commuting out-of-state
Amherst	21%	62.7%	16.3%
Brookline	17.5%	57.8%	24.7%
Greenville	11.9%	70.4%	17.7%
Greenfield	29%	62.6%	8.4%
Lyndeborough	9.3%	79.6%	11.1%
Mason	13.9%	52.9%	33.2%
Milford	26.4%	61.6%	12%
Mont Vernon	14.9%	74.2%	10.9%
New Ipswich	29.1%	46.8%	24.1%
Peterborough	54.2%	40.8%	5%
Sharon	21.6%	68.1%	10.3%
Temple	29.9%	66.5%	3.6%
Wilton	27.4%	61.3%	11.3%

Source: American Community Survey, 2008-2012

ANNUAL AVERAGE LABOR FORCE, 2013

Municipality	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Amherst	6,109	5,823	286	4.7%
Brookline	2,816	2,665	151	5.4%
Greenville	1,148	1,061	87	7.6%
Greenfield	1,012	968	44	4.3%
Lyndeborough	1,036	985	51	4.9%
Mason	855	811	44	5.1%
Milford	9,332	8,856	476	5.1%
Mont Vernon	1,387	1,327	60	4.3%
New Ipswich	2,467	2,307	160	6.5%
Peterborough	2,942	2,797	145	4.9%
Sharon	194	187	7	3.6%
Temple	730	686	44	6%
Wilton	2,179	2,076	103	4.7%

Source: NH Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, Community Profiles

EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES, 2013

Municipality	Goods Producing Industries		Service Providing Industries		Government (Local, State, Federal)	
	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wage
Amherst	812	\$1,069	2,824	\$757	588	\$951
Brookline	147	\$1,097	239	\$919	194	\$650
Greenville	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	42	\$559
Greenfield	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	37	\$582
Lyndeborough	25	\$1,552	53	\$1,072	27	\$437
Mason	21	\$670	105	\$444	43	\$589
Milford	1,853	\$1,054	3,522	\$641	735	\$817
Mont Vernon	19	\$496	46	\$1,431	69	\$615
New Ipswich	579	\$970	225	\$712	224	\$755
Peterborough	895	\$977	3,187	\$788	603	\$864
Sharon	6	\$1,458	12	\$592	0	\$0
Temple	25	\$746	79	\$476	14	\$634
Wilton	532	\$866	563	\$659	199	\$766

Source: NH Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, Community Profiles

Property Tax Data

PROPERTY TAXES, 2014

Municipality	Town Valuation	Town Tax Rate	Local School Tax Rate	State Education Tax Rate	County Tax Rate	Total Tax Rate	Tax Commitment
Amherst	\$1,572,808,150	5.20	17.74	2.49	1.23	26.66	\$41,536,403
Brookline	\$499,992,287	5.32	23.75	2.53	1.25	32.85	\$16,319,374
Greenville	\$97,723,710	12.20	10.39	2.29	1.23	26.11	\$2,491,334
Greenfield	\$136,117,692	7.73	14.87	2.77	1.26	26.63	\$3,596,834
Lyndeborough	\$168,664,550	8.45	13.48	2.27	1.13	25.33	\$4,247,520
Mason	\$162,581,917	7.55	12.99	2.21	1.06	23.81	\$3,828,539
Milford	\$1,283,934,378	6.83	16.85	2.40	1.22	27.30	\$34,838,790
Mont Vernon	\$247,400,246	5.37	18.53	2.34	1.21	27.45	\$6,735,102
New Ipswich	\$371,409,433	6.00	18.15	2.38	1.19	27.72	\$10,161,271
Peterborough	\$590,394,096	9.80	16.80	2.62	1.34	30.56	\$17,874,912
Sharon	\$50,059,629	4.99	11.38	2.57	1.21	20.15	\$1,005,036
Temple	\$139,749,959	5.70	16.27	2.44	1.20	25.61	\$3,565,344
Wilton	\$369,750,689	6.79	15.53	2.28	1.20	25.80	\$9,489,302

Source: NH Dept. of Revenue Administration

NECAP Test Data

**New England Common Assessment
Program (NECAP) Mean Scaled
Score by Grade/District**
2012-2013 School Year

Grade 11**Reading**

1	Hollis-Brookline Milford Souhegan Coop.	1150
2	Mascenic	1149
	<i>State Mean</i>	<i>1148</i>
3	Wilton/Lyndeborough	1147
4	Contoocook Valley	1146

Mathematics

1	Hollis-Brookline Milford	1139 1137
2	Souhegan Coop. Wilton-Lyndeborough	
3	<i>State Mean</i>	<i>1136</i>
	Mascenic	1136
4	Contoocook Valley	1135

Writing

1	Hollis-Brookline	7.5
2	Souhegan Coop.	7.2
3	<i>State Mean</i>	<i>6.8</i>
	Milford	6.8
	Contoocook Valley	6.7
4	Mascenic	
5	Wilton-Lyndeborough	6.5

**New England Common Assessment
Program (NECAP) Mean Scaled
Score by Grade/District**
2012-2013 School Year

Grade 8

Reading

1	Amherst Boynton	854
2	Hollis-Brookline	853
3	South Meadow	852
4	Milford	851
	<i>State Mean</i>	850
5	Wilton-Lyndeborough	844

Mathematics

1	Hollis-Brookline	848
	Amherst	
2	Milford South Meadow	845
	<i>State Mean</i>	843
3	Boynton	843
4	Wilton-Lyndeborough	841

Writing

1	Boynton	845
2	Hollis-Brookline	844
3	Amherst	842
	<i>State Mean</i>	841
4	Milford South Meadow	841
5	Wilton-Lyndeborough	838

Source: NH Dept. of Education

CHAPTER VIII: LAND USE

Introduction

The Land Use chapter is a critical component of the Wilton Master Plan. Decisions regarding how Wilton uses its land impact everything from its transportation network and community design to its natural resources and economic vitality. Two key issues emerge from Wilton's land use vision and influence the content of this chapter. The first is a need to balance future development opportunities with the preservation of Wilton's natural resources, rural character, and sense of community. The second is the promotion of economic vitality and employment opportunities in Wilton, with a particular focus on redevelopment opportunities in the downtown.

Section 1: Wilton Today

1.1 Current Conditions and Existing Land Uses

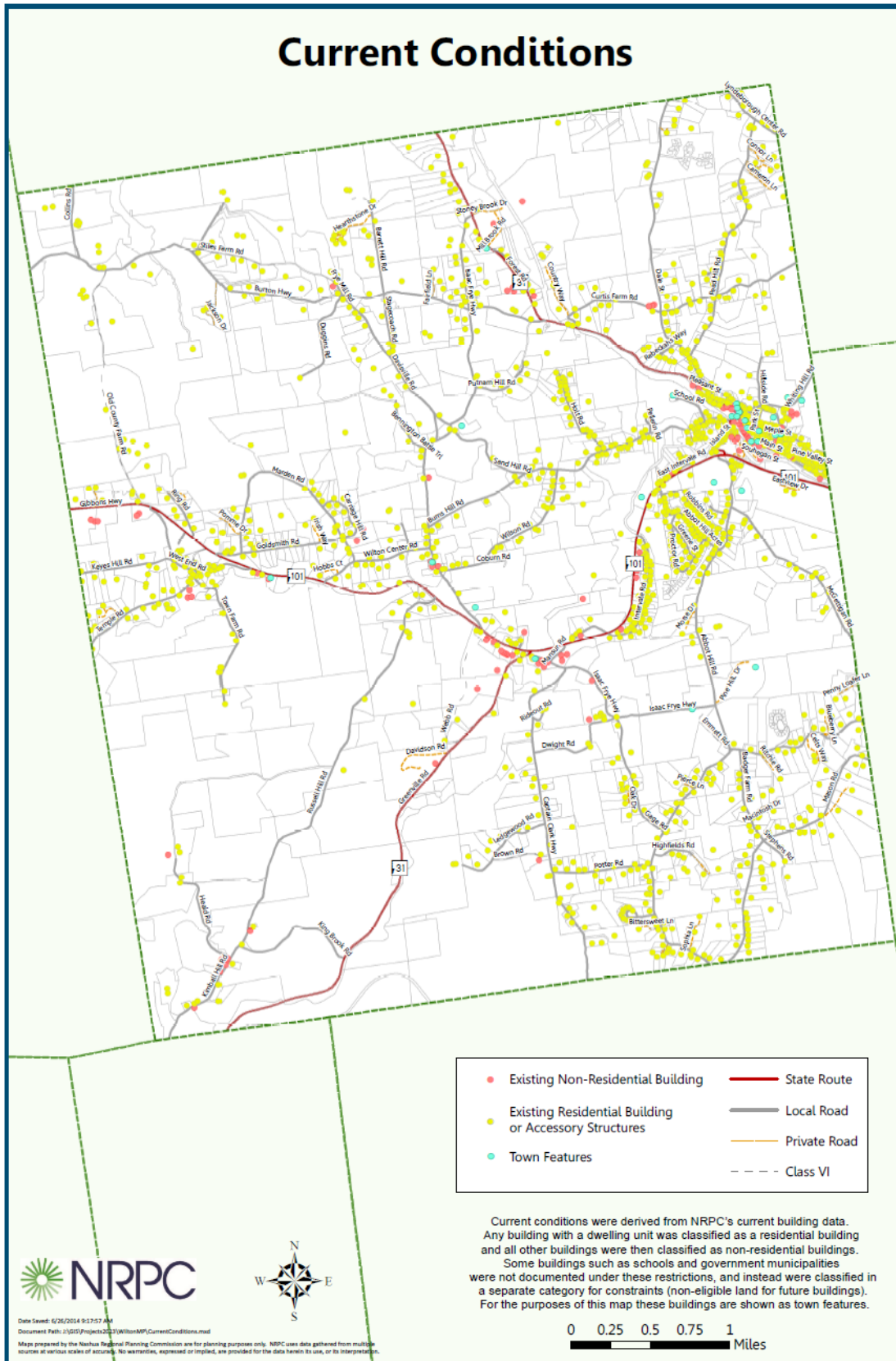
Current Conditions

The Town of Wilton is a rural, residential community. Existing residential development is located throughout town, with the highest concentrations in the downtown/Main Street area and the Abbot Hill Acres/Intervale Road area. Non-residential development is primarily concentrated along Main Street and Route 101. The southwestern portion of Wilton is very rural, with abundant natural resources and little existing development.

The Current Conditions map depicts Wilton's rural character and residential focus. Dots on the map represent existing buildings and correspond to the location of the structure on the parcel.

Map—Current Conditions

Current Conditions



Current conditions were derived from NRPC's current building data. Any building with a dwelling unit was classified as a residential building and all other buildings were then classified as non-residential buildings. Some buildings such as schools and government municipalities were not documented under these restrictions, and instead were classified in a separate category for constraints (non-eligible land for future buildings). For the purposes of this map these buildings are shown as town features.

Existing Land Uses

Land use simply describes the type of activity that occurs on a parcel of land. Existing land use is influenced by natural resource constraints and opportunities, accessibility, and zoning. The land uses described and mapped in this chapter were derived by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission using a combination of assessing data interpretation, field surveys, parcel based data, and input from the Wilton Planning Board. They are meant to be general in nature. Classifications and calculated acreages are based on Town assessing data from March 2011. For the purposes of this Master Plan, land uses in Wilton have been consolidated into the following categories:

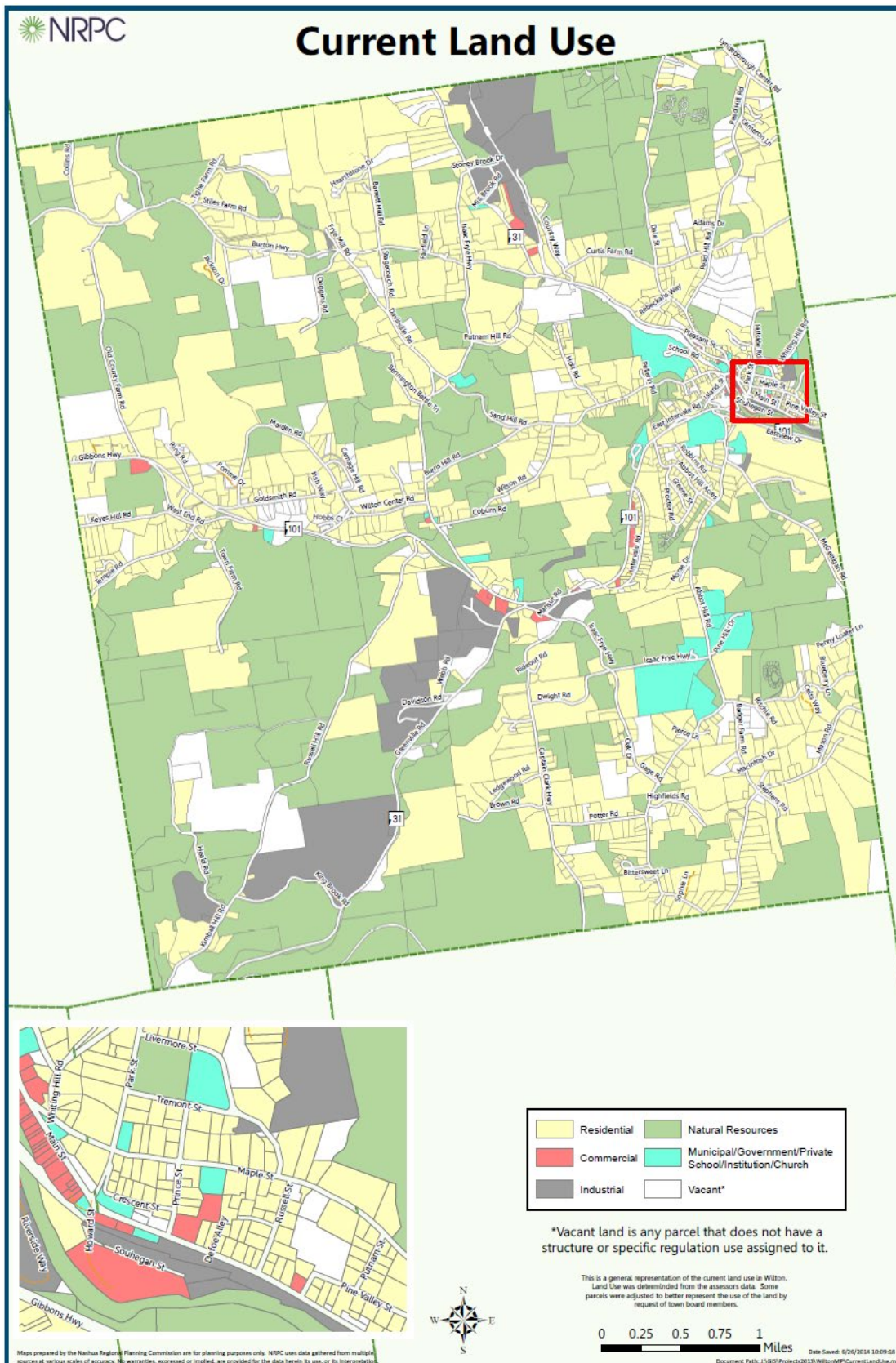
- Residential—this category includes single family, two family, and three family dwelling units. In Wilton, residential development primarily consists of single-family homes. Residential land can be found throughout town, with the highest densities in the downtown and Abbot Hill Acres area.
- Commercial—Wilton has very limited commercial land use. The highest concentration of commercial activity is located along Main Street, with additional development along Route 101 and Route 31.
- Industrial—in addition to industrial development, this land use category includes utilities and mining and waste disposal. Industrial activity does not comprise a substantial portion of land use in Wilton, although there are several large industrial parcels. Sand and gravel operations make up a majority of industrial land use, occupying over 450 acres in the southwest portion of Wilton along Greenville Road and roughly 180 acres in the northern portion of town along Forest Road.
- Natural Resources—this land use category includes agriculture, open space, recreation, and surface water. Natural resources are an essential component of Wilton’s rural character and quality of life. According to the Town of Wilton’s 2009 “Natural Resources Inventory,” over 3,200 acres or roughly 20% of Wilton’s land is permanently protected. The following table, taken from the same report, highlights important natural resources in town, their acreage, and level of protection. Note: some natural resource types overlap, so the percent of land base values do not add to 100%.

Natural Resource	Acres in Wilton	% Land Base	Acres Protected	% Protected
Forest Cover	12,690	78.0%	2,711	21.4%
Productive Forest Soils	11,892	73.0%	1,850	15.5%
Best Agriculture Soils	1,596	9.8%	214	13.4%
Agriculture Land Use	1,335	8.2%	254	19.0%
Wetlands and Hydric Soils	1,489	9.2%	325	21.8%

Riparian & Shoreland Buffers	2,786	17.1%	572	20.5%
Aquifers	3,370	20.7%	675	20.0%
Drinking Water Protection Area	1,740	10.7%	223	12.8%
Wildlife Habitats	2,414	14.8%	707	29.3%

- Municipal/Government/Institutional—this category includes municipal government facilities, such as Town Hall, Police Department, and Ambulance Service; the library; public and private schools (not including daycare centers); and churches. This category does not include town-owned recreation lands, which are included under natural resources. Wilton’s municipal facilities are located in the eastern portion of town near the downtown. High Mowing and Pine Hill Schools occupy several large parcels along Abbot Hill Road and Pine Hill Drive. Churches can be found along Route 101 and Isaac Frye Highway.
- Vacant—vacant land is located throughout town and is defined as any parcel that does not have a structure or specific use assigned to it.

Map—Current Land Use



1.2 Land Use Relative to Zoning

Zoning ordinances divide the municipality into special districts and establish regulations concerning the use, placement, spacing, and size of land and buildings within the respective district. Zoning is intended to avoid disruptive land use patterns by preventing activities on one property from having detrimental effects on other properties.

Zoning is an essential tool for implementing Master Plan goals, protecting community resources, and guiding new development. In turn, the Master Plan can be used to guide future zoning. There should be a clear link between zoning ordinance requirements and the goals of the master plan.

All land in Wilton is located in one of the following primary zoning districts: residential, general residence and agricultural, commercial, industrial, and office park. In addition, Wilton utilizes the following overlay zones: research and office park, gravel excavation, floodplain conservation, wetlands conservation, aquifer protection, elderly housing, watershed, and personal wireless service facilities.

Residential District

- **Acreage**—464 acres (2.82%)
- **Location**—primarily located in the eastern portion of town along Intervale Road, Burns Hill Road, between Gibbons Highway and Abbot Hill Road, and north of Main Street.
- **Permitted Uses**—single family and duplex family dwellings and accessory uses, multi-family dwellings containing three dwelling units with site plan approval by the Planning Board.
- **Current Land Use Relative to Zone**—the Current Land Use map shows that the actual land use in the Residential District is consistent with zoning.
- **Implications for Future Land Use**—this district requires a minimum lot size of one-half acre per dwelling unit when served by both public water and sewer and one acre per dwelling unit for lots not served by both public water and sewer. Therefore, future expansion of public water and sewer would impact the density of housing in this district.

Residence-Agriculture District

- **Acreage**—14,984 acres (90.97%)
- **Location**—throughout Wilton
- **Permitted Uses**—single family and duplex family dwellings and accessory uses, multi-family dwellings containing three dwelling units with site plan approval by the Planning Board, all general farming and forestry activities
- **Current Land Use Relative to Zone**—the Current Land Use map shows that the actual land use in the Residence-Agricultural District is consistent with zoning. It should be noted that several large parcels in the Residence-Agriculture District along Route 31 fall under the Gravel Excavation overlay district. Given the limited amount of residential land use in this area, disruption to private residents is likely to be minimal.
- **Implications for Future Land Use**—the minimum lot size in the Residence-Agriculture District is two contiguous acres of land per dwelling unit. This requirement will help to preserve Wilton's

rural character. With the exception of approved home occupations, no commercial, industrial, or office activity is permitted in the Residence-Agricultural District. This limits the amount of non-residential development that can occur in Wilton given that this district encompasses 90% of the Town.

Commercial District

- **Acreage**—62 acres (0.38%)
- **Location**— Commercially zoned parcels can be found along Main Street, Frye Mill Road, at the intersection of Isaac Frye Highway and Greenville Road, and the south side of Route 101 near Temple Road.
- **Permitted Uses**—any use permitted in the General Residence-Agricultural District; duplex and multi-family dwellings, inns, tourist courts, cabins, and bed & breakfasts; restaurants and other retail establishments; garages, parking lots, and filling stations; business and professional offices; theaters, halls, clubs, and amusement centers; greenhouses and florist shops; funeral homes; wholesale establishments in connection with permitted retail establishments, warehousing, or merchandise for retail sale within the District; houses of worship; hospitals, emergency medical centers, and clinics; schools, kindergartens, preschools, and daycare centers, including in-home childcare.
- **Current Land Use Relative to Zone**— Current land use in the Commercial District is consistent with the zoning. A variety of uses can be found in this zone, including residential, office, retail, houses of worship, professional services, salons, theaters, and restaurants.
- **Implications for Future Land Use**—although this zone is small, non-residential commercial uses are also permitted in the industrial zone. Even so, these zones represent a small portion of Wilton, which limits the amount of commercial development that can occur in town.

Industrial District

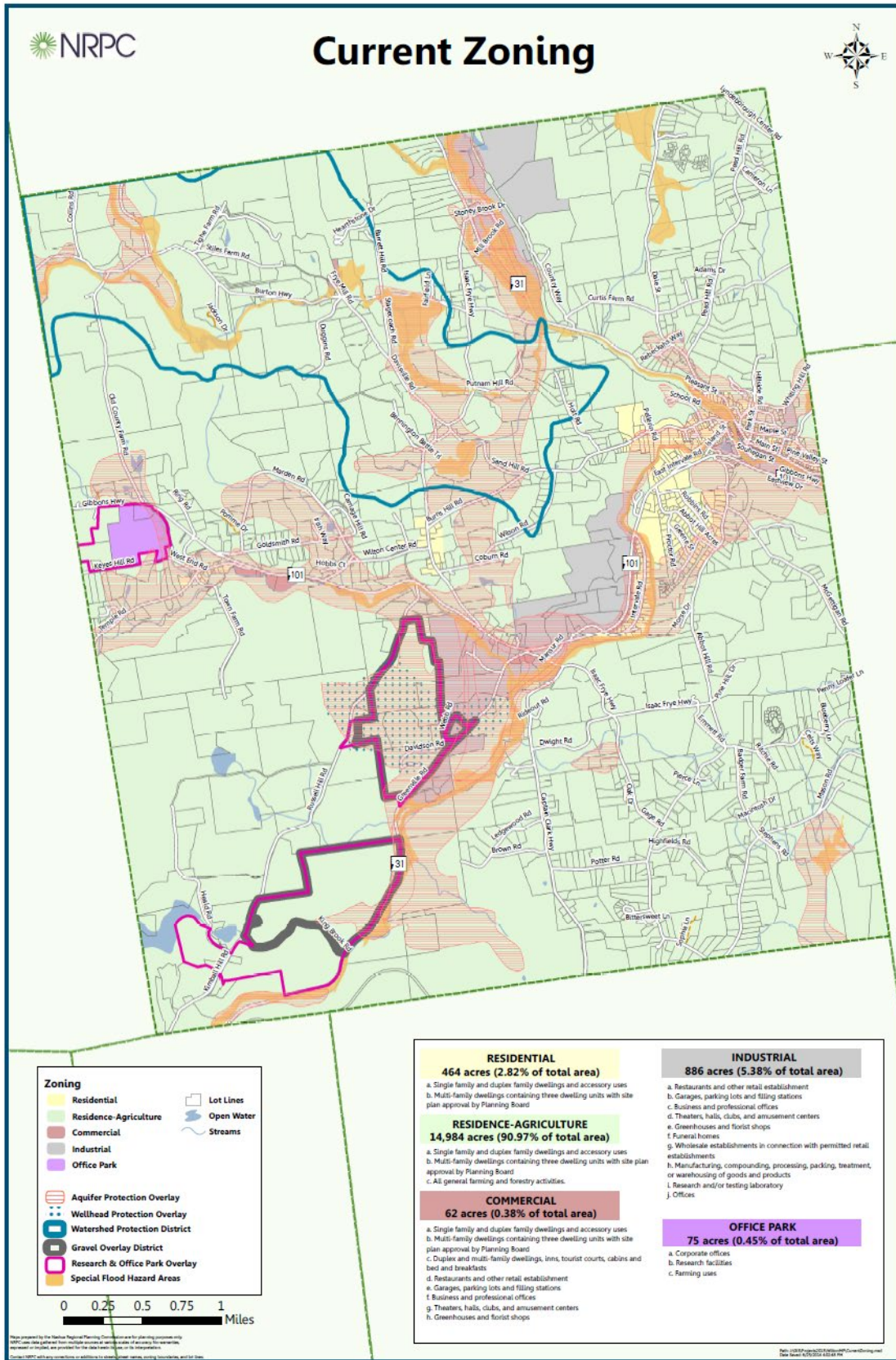
- **Acreage**—886 acres (5.38%)
- **Location**—Industrial zoning can be found along Route 31/Forest Road, south of Main Street along the Souhegan River, and along Route 101/Gibbons Highway and Greenville Road.
- **Permitted Uses**—manufacturing, compounding, processing, packing, treatment or warehousing of goods and products; research and/or testing laboratory; offices; non-residential commercial uses
- **Current Land Use Relative to Zone**—permitted uses in the Industrial zone are wide ranging and as such, so are the current land uses found in the zone. They include land uses traditionally thought of as industrial such as sand and gravel, auto salvage, and aluminum casting operations. However, they also include large parcels of natural resources as well as smaller pockets of commercial and grandfathered residential development.
- **Implications for Future Land Use**—given that commercial activities are allowed in the industrial zone and that there are more industrial zoned acres than commercial acres, it is possible that

future commercial land use could be accommodated in the industrial zone. There is a cluster of industrial zoned parcels on the east side Route 31 in southern Wilton between King Brook Road and the Everett Well that have no natural resource constraints and could be developed. Additional industrial zoned parcels can be found along Route 101 in the Intervale Road area, however, their development potential is somewhat limited by environmental constraints.

Office Park District

- **Acreage**—75 acres (0.45%)
- **Location**—two parcels west of West End Road between Gibbons Highway and Keyes Hill Road.
- **Permitted Uses**— corporate offices, research facilities, farming uses.
- **Current Land Use Relative to Zone**—the larger parcel (C-127, 68.28 acres) is currently categorized as having a natural resources land use, which falls under the permitted farming use. The smaller parcel (C-127-1, 6.4 acres) is currently categorized as commercial and is an office park.
- **Implications for Future Land Use**—although the Office Park District only includes 2 parcels, there is opportunity for additional office land use on parcels included in the Research and Office Park overlay district. In addition, parcel C-127 in the Office Park District has limited natural resource constraints and could be developed into corporate offices or research facilities.

Map—Current Zoning



Section 2: Future Land Use

2.1 Where Can Future Development be Located?

Future development in Wilton will be driven by the availability of developable land and opportunities for redevelopment.

Developable Land

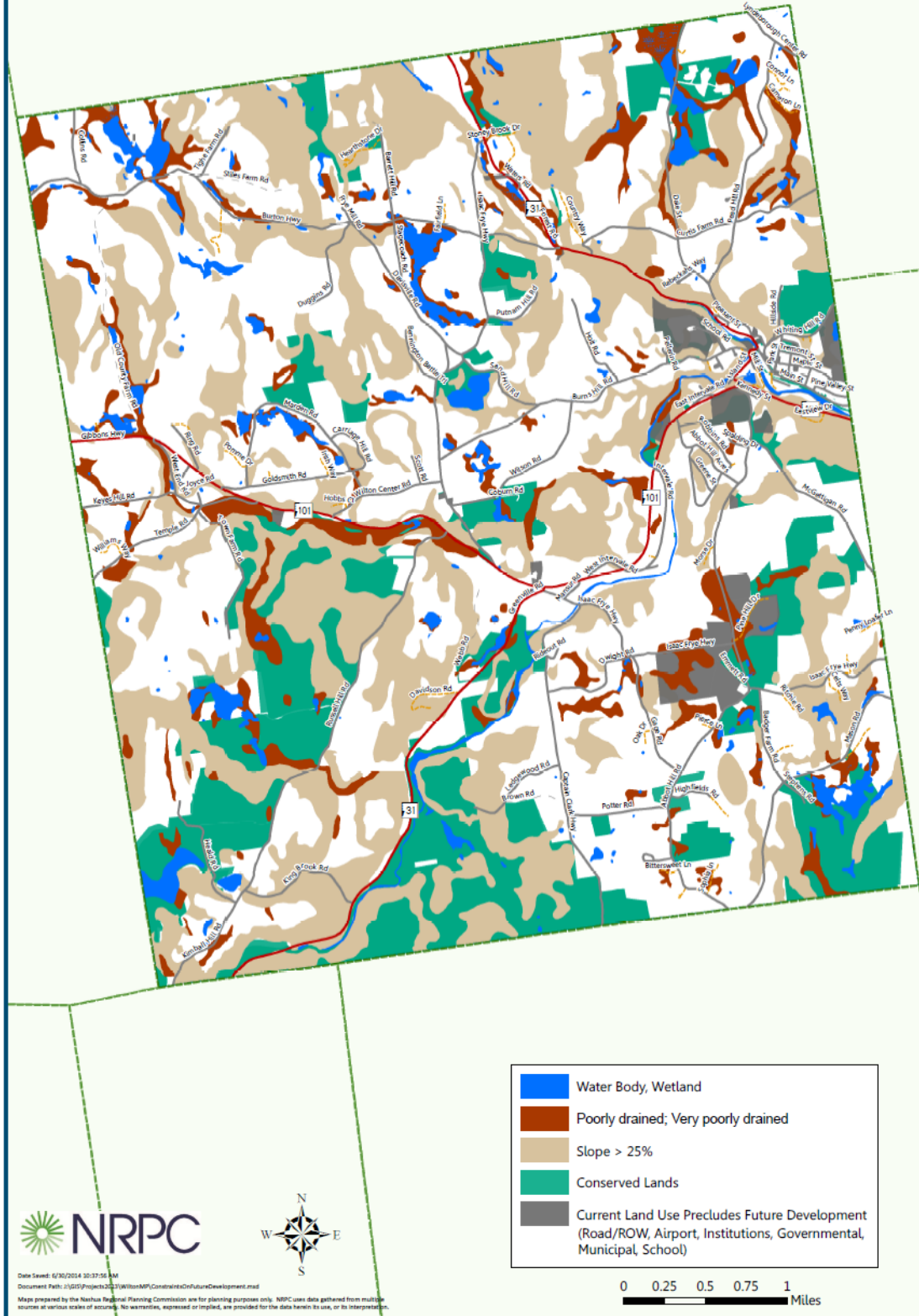
Developable land can be thought of as vacant or partially developed parcels with no significant natural, legal, or practical constraints on their development. For the purposes of this Master Plan, constraints on future development in Wilton include:

1. **Water Bodies and Wetlands**—water bodies and wetlands can be found throughout Wilton. According to the 2009 Natural Resources Inventory, 1.1% (182 acres) of Wilton's total land area is surface water (lakes, ponds, rivers), 0.1% (24 acres) is forested wetlands, and 1.3% (208 acres) is non-forested wetlands. National Wetlands Inventory data was used to map these features.
2. **Conserved Land**—as of the 2009 Natural Resources Inventory, more than 3,200 acres or roughly 20% of Wilton's land area was permanently protected. These lands can be found throughout town, with the largest concentrations in the southwestern quadrant. NH Granit Conserved Lands Type 1 data was used to map these features.
3. **Steep Slopes**—this includes parcels with slopes greater than 25%. Steep slopes limit development potential due to site grading and erosion considerations. Wilton has a hilly topography, with steep slopes found throughout large portions of town. The NH Granit SSURGO database was used to map these features.
4. **Current Land Use**—in some cases, current land use is unlikely to change and therefore precludes future development. In this plan, current land use constraints include roads and road right of ways, municipal/government facilities, and schools. There are a limited number of parcels that fall under this category in Wilton. The Nashua Regional Planning Commission GIS database was used to map these features.
5. **Poorly and Very Poorly Drained Soils**—these soils result from repeated, prolonged periods of saturation or inundation. They pose significant challenges to development and their active use for development purposes is prohibited under the Wetlands Conservation District. The NH Granit SSURGO database was used to map these features.

Wilton's constraints map illustrates that a significant portion of town has limitations on its development potential. Steep slopes can be found throughout town and large parcels of conserved land are prevalent in the southwest quadrant.

Map—Constraints

Constraints



Redevelopment Opportunities

Redevelopment opportunities should also be encouraged to accommodate future growth in Wilton. Sites that have already been developed often provide additional economic benefits since they are able to utilize existing infrastructure. In addition, empty storefronts have a significant impact on the local economy. These include lost sales, lost loan demand to local banks for the building and business, lost business profits and owner compensation, lost employee payroll, lost rents to the property owner, and lost property management fees. Redeveloped properties, on the other hand, not only bring in additional revenue for the community, but also enhance the value of surrounding properties. Furthermore, successful developments encourage additional investments, creating a revitalized and economically vibrant community.

The most likely area for redevelopment in Wilton is the downtown. This includes changes in use to existing businesses as well as filling currently vacant buildings. Sand and gravel pits in Wilton may also offer additional redevelopment opportunities. NH RSA 155-E sets out reclamation standards for areas affected by excavation activities. The ultimate goal of the reclamation is to restore the former mining site so that it can be redeveloped without any environmental restrictions. However, it should be noted that many of the existing sand and gravel operations are located in the Residence-Agricultural district, which prohibits their redevelopment for commercial or industrial uses.

2.2 Where Should Future Development be Located?

Land Use Vision

1. To encourage the balance of residential, commercial, and clean industrial development while protecting the town's natural resources, rural character, small town feel, and the integrity of existing residential neighborhoods.
2. To promote economic vitality, employment, and the tax base of Wilton by redeveloping existing downtown areas and building new commercial and clean industrial development along major transportation corridors where appropriate in accordance with existing regulations and goals.
3. To guide development and redevelopment that encourages commercial investment in the downtown, improves its function and image, and creates a destination to work, visit, and play.
4. To enhance the community character and rural visual, natural, and historic look of the Town.
5. To protect valuable agricultural land and productive soils.

New Commercial and Industrial Development Opportunities

There are limited opportunities for future commercial and industrial development in Wilton. Future development will likely occur along a main transportation corridor, such as Route 101 or Route 31. Route 31 South has several limitations on its development potential. A number of large parcels along

the corridor are conserved while others fall within the flood zone, aquifer protection overlay, and wellhead protection overlay. Route 31 North has natural resource constraints related to Stoney Brook and traffic to access these developments would flow through downtown, which would be undesirable. Route 101 has fewer environmental and logistical limitations on its development potential.

Support for development along Route 101 was somewhat mixed among 2012 Wilton Master Plan survey respondents. 34.1% of the 128 respondents to this question stated it was very important to attract development to Route 101 and 27.0% said it was somewhat important. At the same time, 18.3% thought it was not important and 16.7% thought it was undesirable.

There is a cluster of industrial zoning along Route 101 in the Intervale Road vicinity that could support new clean industrial or commercial development. However, development opportunities on many of these parcels may be limited by steep slopes. In general, development along Route 101 would likely have less impact on Wilton's rural character if it were scattered along the corridor and properly buffered and set back rather than consolidated in large strips.

Opportunities

The 2012 Wilton Master Plan Survey asked respondents to rate how important they felt it was to attract particular types of businesses to Wilton. According to this survey, local restaurants, small retail, and small office are the most important types of business to bring into Town. 56.8% of the 128 respondents to this question stated it was very important to attract local restaurants and 38.4% said it was somewhat important. 54.3% of respondents stated it was very important to attract small retail, such as a pharmacy, florist, or butcher, to Wilton and 32.3% said it was somewhat important. 43.5% of respondents stated it was very important to attract small office-based businesses, such as a dentist, CPA, lawyer, and insurance to Wilton and 42.7% said it was somewhat important.

Concerns

Large retail, such as strip malls, Target, Wal-Mart, and Home Depot were viewed as undesirable businesses to attract, according to 59.1% of the 128 respondents. Furthermore, 42.5% stated that it was undesirable to attract franchised restaurants to Wilton.

Wilton residents are also concerned about the appearance of commercial and industrial development. 76.3% of the 135 respondents to this question stated that the town should require the maintenance of adequate buffers and setbacks at lot boundaries for new development and 73.1% said the town should require design standards to maintain rural/New England character.

Downtown Redevelopment Opportunities

Encouraging downtown development was viewed favorably by respondents to the 2012 Wilton Master Plan survey; 57.9% of the 128 respondents to this question stated that it was very important to attract downtown development and 31.7% said it was somewhat important.

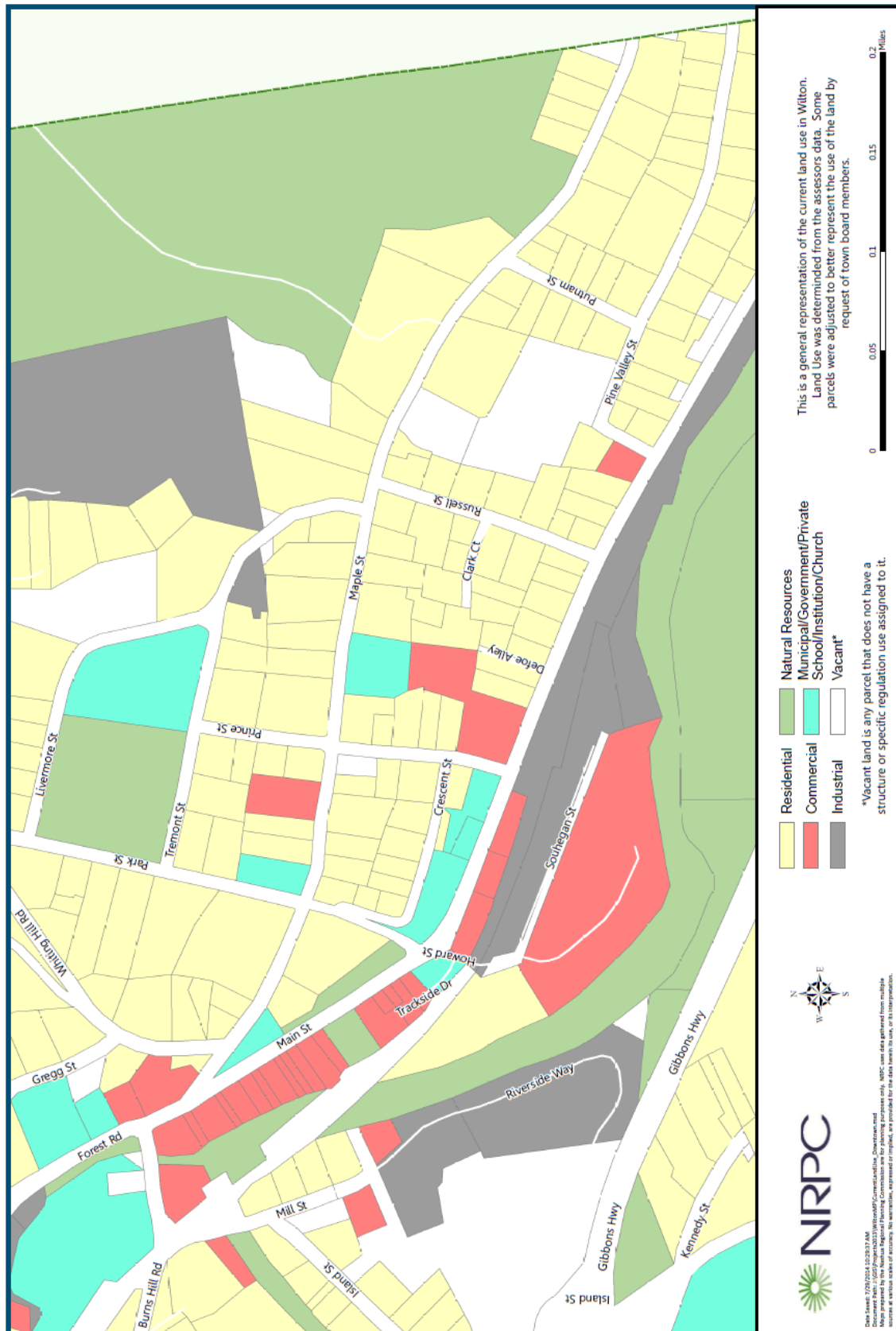
Opportunities

Small retail, small office, and local restaurants are all desirable types of development to Wilton residents and all are suitable for downtown locations. It only takes one successful business to spark interest in Wilton's downtown and once a few businesses are successful others will follow. Wilton already has a number of unique downtown offerings to build upon, such as the Town Hall Theatre and Riverview Mill.

Concerns

Despite these unique businesses, many people outside of Wilton still are not aware that the downtown is a commercial destination. Main Street does not receive significant traffic and convenient parking is somewhat limited. More needs to be done to promote downtown businesses.

Map—Downtown Land Use



Section 3: Strategies and Recommendations

Goal 1—Preserve and enhance Wilton’s rural character, historic look, and small town feel.

Respondents to the 2012 Wilton Community Survey were asked to identify the five features most important to making Wilton a desirable place to live. 83.5% of the 139 respondents to this question answered “small town atmosphere” and 71.9% identified “rural character.” In addition, 88.9% of the 127 respondents rated rural character as an economic strength for Wilton. Given the prominent role these qualities play in making Wilton the town it is, their preservation is essential.

- **Recommendation 1.1**—promote the use of buffer zones to minimize the potentially negative visual, auditory, and ecological impacts of new development on important natural features and key community resources.
- **Recommendation 1.2**—define design requirements for new commercial and clean industrial development to protect and enhance the rural character of the town (*1999 Wilton Master Plan*). Update the Site Plan Review process as necessary to administer design guidelines.
- **Recommendation 1.3**—guide new housing growth to minimize its impact on Wilton’s open space and small-town rural character.
- **Recommendation 1.4**—identify historic structures and sites worthy of preservation and consider benefits and drawbacks of establishing a Historic District.
- **Recommendation 1.5**—obtain public input and develop a town-wide plan mapping future sidewalks, pedestrian trails, and bike paths. Investigate a variety of funding options to help implement the plan.

Goal 2—Identify and protect Wilton’s critical natural resources.

Natural resources contribute to Wilton’s rural character, quality of life, and recreation opportunities. They also provide valuable services to the Town free of charge, including drinking water, flood storage, clean air, water purification, productive soils, wildlife habitat, waste recycling, and temperature moderation. Loss of these services would impact human health, safety, the economy, and quality of life.

- **Recommendation 2.1**—update the 2009 Natural Resources Inventory and use it to develop a policy-related, strategic conservation plan for Wilton (*2009 Natural Resources Inventory*).
- **Recommendation 2.2**—review current land use laws and regulations to ensure adequate measures are in place to minimize the impacts of future development on private wells and drinking water supply.
- **Recommendation 2.3**—monitor the wetlands conservation, aquifer protection, and watershed overlay zoning districts to ensure they are accomplishing the community’s environmental protection priorities.

- **Recommendation 2.4**—ensure that subdivision and site plan review regulations require the placement of septic systems in accordance with the highest standards for public health.

Goal 3—Maintain valuable agricultural land and productive soils in Wilton.

As of the 2009 Natural Resources Inventory, there were 1,335 acres of actively farmed lands in Wilton, representing roughly 8% of the town’s total land area. Only 19% of these acres were protected at that point. In addition to providing local sources of food, farmlands contribute to Wilton’s rural character and sense of community.

- **Recommendation 3.1**—identify and implement incentives to encourage the use of farming practices that conserve and protect water quality, retain wildlife habitats, and maintain high soil quality.
- **Recommendation 3.2**—consider establishing a farmland conservation overlay district to regulate new residential development in critical farmland areas in order to preserve agricultural land uses and protect prime soils.
- **Recommendation 3.3**—review Wilton’s Land Use Laws and Regulations to ensure policies do not impede farming business options.

Goal 4—Encourage and support appropriate economic development initiatives, local employment opportunities, and an expanded tax base in Wilton.

Respondents to the 2012 Wilton Community Survey identified the following as their top three concerns both now and in 10 years—high town taxes, high school taxes, and lack of local jobs. The Town’s zoning policy must be consistent with its economic development interests. Wilton has zoned a relatively small amount of land for commercial, industrial, and office use, limiting its ability to expand the tax base and create local job opportunities. At the same time, economic development efforts must not conflict with the town’s rural character and residential feel.

- **Recommendation 4.1**—establish a Town Economic Development Committee to plan for and promote economic growth in Wilton. Expand the local business association to incorporate businesses throughout the entire town, not just the downtown, and include home businesses. Consider inviting businesses from surrounding towns to participate.
- **Recommendation 4.2**—conduct a comprehensive review of Wilton’s Land Use Laws and Regulations to ensure there is an appropriate quantity of commercial and industrial zoned sites in areas with adequate road access and infrastructure in order to achieve economic development goals.
- **Recommendation 4.3**—review provisions of the Home Occupation ordinances to ensure they provide sufficient opportunities for this type of economic activity in Wilton.

- **Recommendation 4.4**—develop an inventory of parcels most suitable for targeted economic development in Wilton, with a focus on redevelopment opportunities.
- **Recommendation 4.5**—streamline administrative procedures as necessary to ensure that the development application and review process is thorough yet efficient.
- **Recommendation 4.6**—determine if current infrastructure (water, sewer, road network, utilities) is adequate to accommodate desired future economic development and begin planning for expansion if necessary.

Goal 5—guide development and redevelopment that encourages commercial investment in the downtown, improves its function and image, and creates a destination to work, visit, and play.

The downtown area is a visible indicator of Wilton’s economic health, character, and heritage. A vibrant downtown provides a prime location for independent businesses, helps to reduce sprawl, and deters further strip-like development along Route 101. It also improves surrounding property values and offers an area for community members to interact.

- **Recommendation 5.1**—simplify/expedite the process to redevelop buildings in the downtown.
- **Recommendation 5.2**—support existing arts, entertainment, and dining venues in downtown and encourage additional establishments that increase the vibrancy of the downtown by creating activities and attracting visitors.
- **Recommendation 5.3**—work with the local business, civic, and community organization to help implement the recommendations established in this Master Plan.
- **Recommendation 5.4**—require or encourage landscaping and other public improvements to walkways and open spaces within the downtown area (*1999 Wilton Master Plan*).