

Economic Development

1. Introduction

Chapter Overview

The Economic Development Chapter addresses the town's labor and employment profile, business environment, and revenue sources. It also summarizes major themes raised during community engagement activities, introduces innovative practices being implemented elsewhere, and recommends goals and strategies toward achieving the vision for Hatfield 2040.

The purpose of the economic development chapter of a comprehensive plan is to assess a community's existing economic conditions and develop strategies both to take advantage of opportunities and to address challenges. This can be done through an evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and the engagement of residents regarding their desired vision for local business activity. While market conditions will drive what types of businesses ultimately choose to locate in Hatfield, the Town can be proactive in encouraging preferred businesses through its zoning bylaws, permitting processes, and infrastructure improvements. With careful planning, it will be possible to increase the commercial base while maintaining the community's valued rural environment.

Connecting Themes

Themes related to economic development that emerged from community engagement activities included:

- Maintain the rural character of Hatfield while also supporting existing businesses.
- Agriculture is still a strong economic sector, but farmers face challenges such as the high cost of land, extreme weather, and difficulty accessing resources.
- Ideally, the Town Center would be a node of small business activity that serves local residents; however, its location in a flood zone is a concern.
- Larger-scale commercial and industrial uses can be directed to the existing industrial land and along Route 5/10 and North Hatfield Road.
- Small, local businesses need support and resources.
- Local businesses can continue to be connected to the town through their participation in events and local initiatives. There is a Hatfield Business Association with an on-line presence.

2. Existing Conditions

Hatfield is a rural-residential community on the Connecticut River in Western Massachusetts with significant agricultural activity and a small manufacturing base. More than one third (37%) of Hatfield's acreage is classified as prime farmland. The Town is also located

adjacent to several regional employment centers, with most Hatfield residents working outside of town boundaries.

Labor and Employment

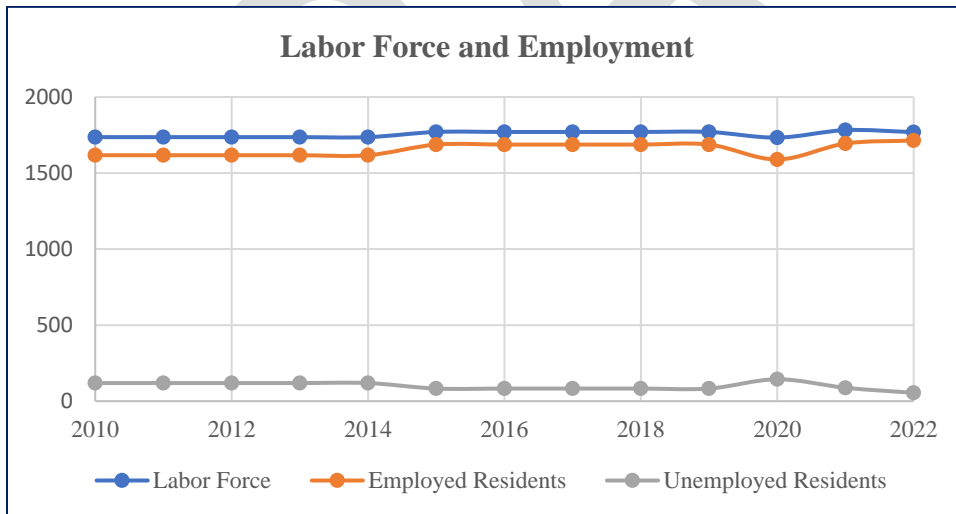
Hatfield is a small town of about 3,400 people, of which 1,769 are in the labor force. The unemployment rate is currently very low, at 3.1%. The two most recent national economic downturns (in 2008-10 and 2020) are reflected in Hatfield’s data.

Table 1: Labor Force and Employment for Hatfield Residents

Year	Labor Force	Employed Residents	Unemployed Residents	Residents' Unemployment Rate
2010	1736	1617	119	6.9%
2015	1770	1687	83	4.7%
2020	1733	1589	144	8.3%
2021	1782	1694	88	4.9%
2022	1769	1714	55	3.1%

Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

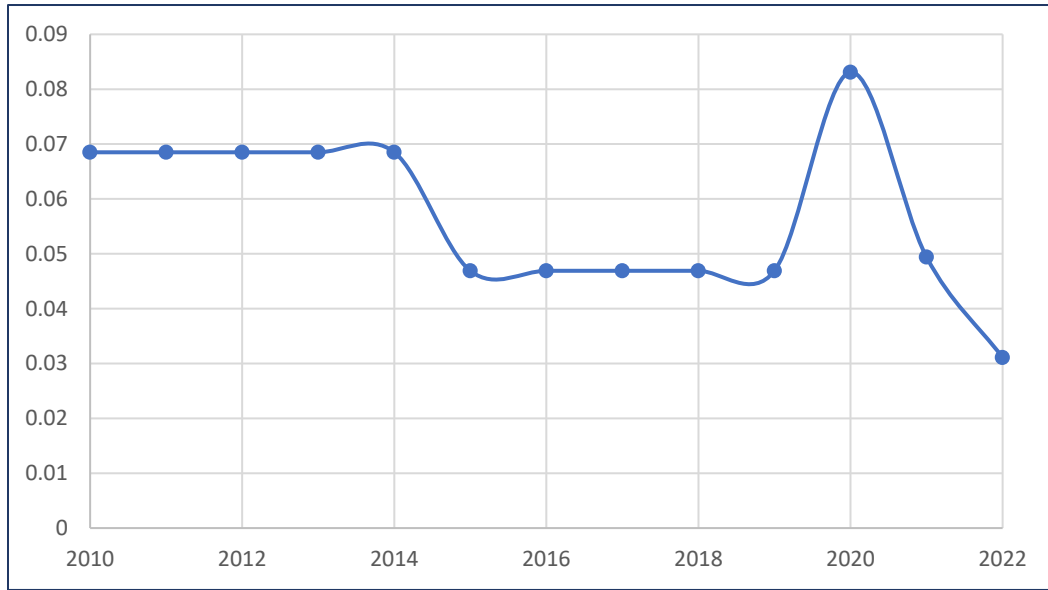
Table 2: Labor Force and Employment



Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

Like other communities in the region, Hatfield saw unemployment rise sharply during the economic shutdown implemented in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, but it has recovered to an even lower unemployment rate than previously. Sometimes this occurs because some residents may technically “leave” the labor force and therefore their unemployment is not being counted, but in Hatfield’s case, the population and the labor force have remained stable.

Table 3: Hatfield Unemployment Rate



Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

The highest wages in Hatfield are in the information sector, with second highest wages in wholesale trade, followed by construction, transportation/warehousing, and manufacturing. Wholesale trade also employs the largest number of people, with two C&S Wholesale Grocers facilities and other wholesale enterprises in town. Like many other communities in the region, Hatfield also has a high number of health care and social assistance businesses and organizations (18 total) but has a wide range of other types of businesses as well.

Other than C&S, employers in Hatfield are relatively small. There is a variety of economic activity, including agricultural activities, retail, personal care, and manufacturing. However, the town does tend to attract wholesalers with warehouse and distribution needs, particularly in the agriculture and food industries and the homebuilding industry.

Table 4: Hatfield Employment by Industry

Description	No. of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages
Information	6	73	\$ 1,786
Wholesale Trade	15	980	\$ 1,208
Construction	19	114	\$ 1,188
Transportation and Warehousing	7	71	\$ 1,135
Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing	4	65	\$ 1,025
Manufacturing	6	73	\$ 999
Retail Trade	10	73	\$ 977
Administrative and Waste Services	15	78	\$ 966
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	4	31	\$ 848
Health Care and Social Assistance	18	142	\$ 723
Professional and Technical Services	11	80	\$ 699
Other Services, Except Public Administration	8	35	\$ 647
Accommodation and Food Services	7	48	\$ 414
Total, All Industries	137	1973	\$ 1,068

Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2021

Table 5: Major Employers in Hatfield

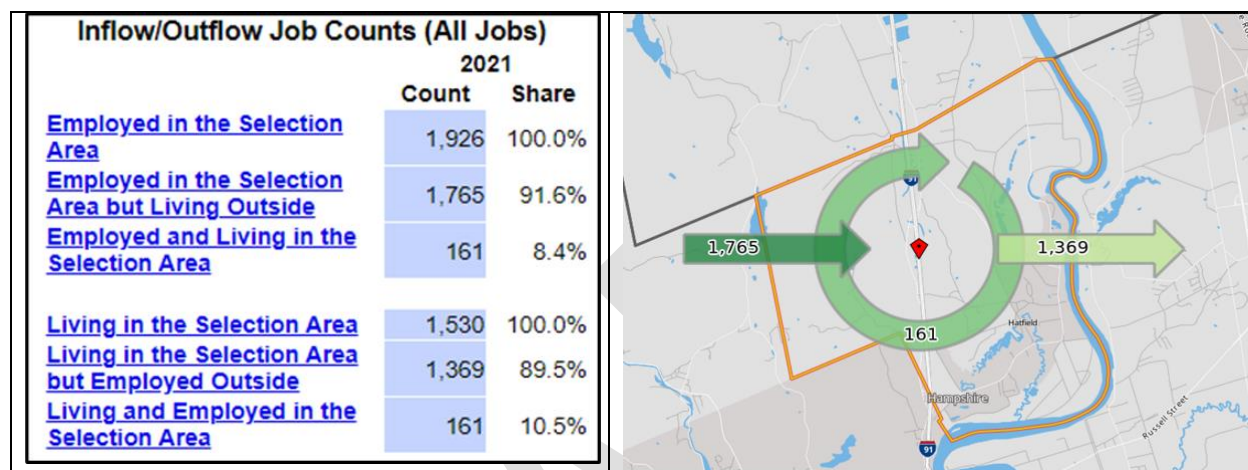
Company name	Address	Area	Number of employees
C & S Wholesale Grocers Inc	N Hatfield Rd	Hatfield	1,000-4,999
Hatfield Public Schools	School St	Hatfield	50-99
Brockway-Smith	Chestnut St	W. Hatfield	50-99
TurfCare Supply	Dwight St	Hatfield	50-99
Helina Agri-Enterprises	Elm St	Hatfield	20-49
Cooley Dickinson Medical Group	West St	W. Hatfield	20-49
R K Miles	West St	W. Hatfield	20-49
Fishtales Bar & Grill	School St	Hatfield	20-49
Myers Produce	N Hatfield Rd	Hatfield	20-49
G & S Industrial	Linseed Rd	W. Hatfield	20-49
Town of Hatfield	School St	Hatfield	20-49
Spring Valley Landscape	Elm St # 1	Hatfield	20-49
Stiebel Eltron Inc	West St	W. Hatfield	20-49
Northeast Solar	Elm St	Hatfield	20-49
Szawlowski Potato Farm	Main St	Hatfield	20-49
Verizon NE Service Depot	N Hatfield Rd	Hatfield	20-49
Prospect Meadow Farms	West St	W. Hatfield	20-49

Source: Department of Economic Research Labor Market Information | Mass.gov
Employer information is provided by Data Axle, Omaha, NE © 2023 All Rights Reserved.
Edited and Updated by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Workforce Composition and Commuting Patterns

Most Hatfield residents, some 1,369, travel to jobs outside of Hatfield. With a total of 1,926 jobs available within Town, only 161 of these jobs are held by Hatfield residents. The remaining 1,765 jobs are held by workers commuting to Hatfield (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Inflow / Outflow for Jobs



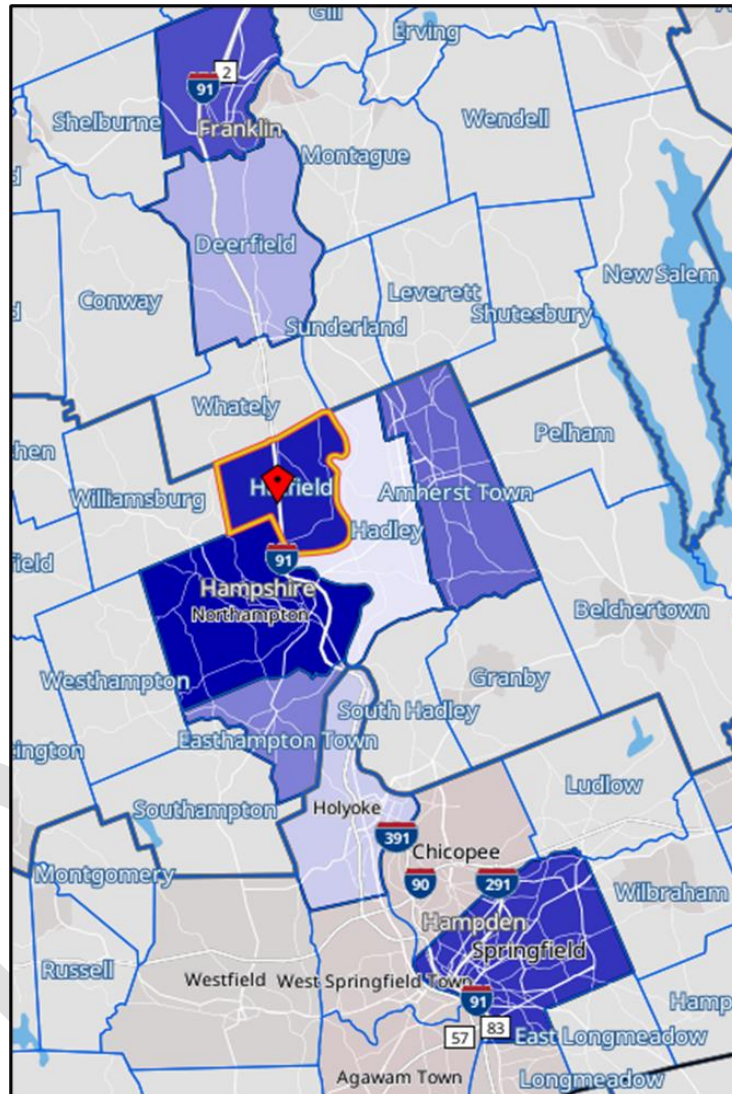
The most common origin of workers coming to jobs in Hatfield is the city of Springfield, followed by Holyoke, Northampton, and Chicopee. Many workers also commute from Greenfield, Easthampton, Westfield and even Worcester. However, most employees live somewhere other than these nearby population centers: a full 52.6% live in other locations spread out across Massachusetts (See Table 6 below).

Table 6: Jobs Counts by Where Hatfield Workers Live

Community	Count	Share
All Places	2081	100%
Springfield, MA	216	10.4%
Holyoke, MA	132	6.3%
Northampton, MA	126	6.1%
Chicopee, MA	108	5.2%
Greenfield, MA	99	4.8%
Easthampton, MA	84	4.0%
Hatfield, MA	74	3.6%
Westfield, MA	62	3.0%
Worcester, MA	52	2.5%
Turners Falls, MA	33	1.6%
All Other Locations	1095	52.6%

Conversely, many Hatfield residents travel to and are employed in the same urban centers from which local workers commute. This includes Northampton (by far the most common), Springfield, and Greenfield. Some Hatfield residents commute longer distances, such as Boston, and some work in neighboring towns, such as Northampton and Hadley. Many (592 or 39%) travel to a variety of other workplaces.

Figure 2: Locations Where Hatfield Residents Work



Source: 2020 US Census¹, "On the Map"

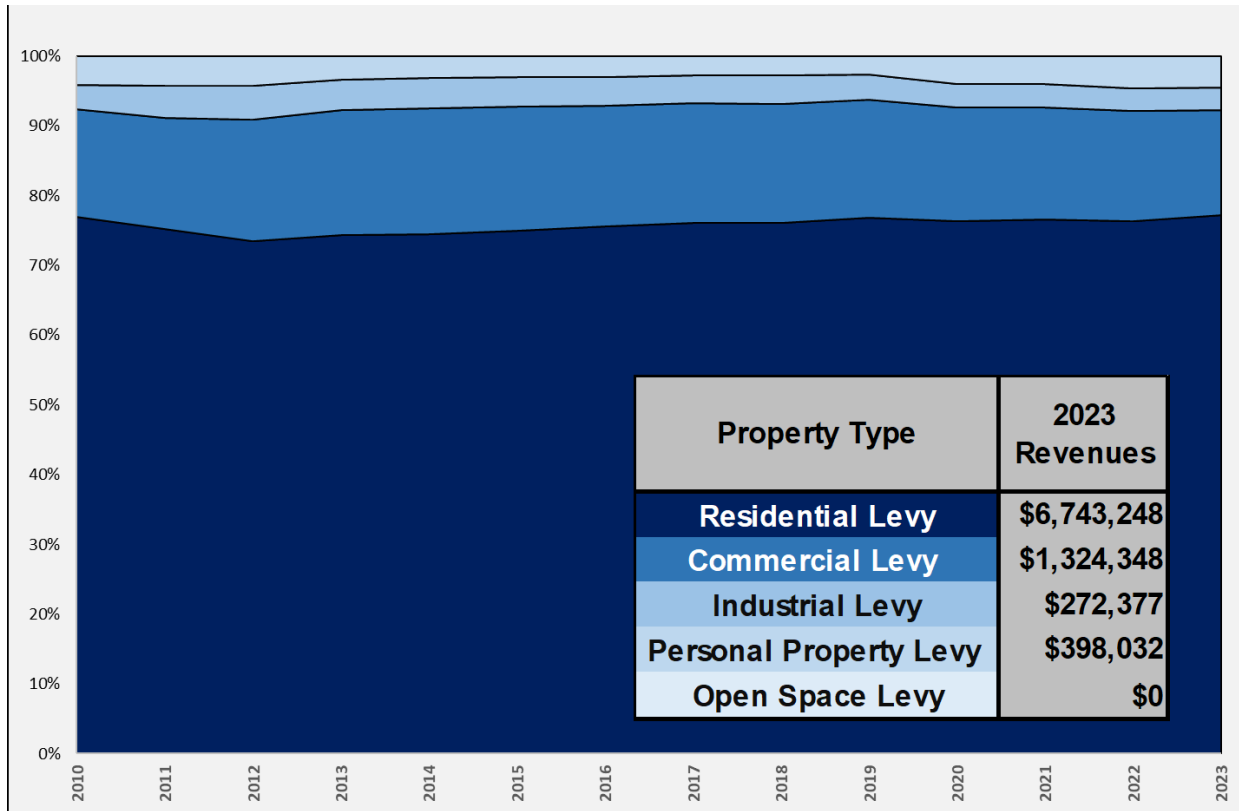
Tax Revenues

Hatfield's tax revenues are primarily derived from residential properties. Commercial properties contribute about 15% of the town's tax revenues, while industrial uses contribute about 3%. The proportion of business-related revenues has fluctuated slightly over time, but in general is less than it was in the mid-2010s. The town has 742 acres of municipally-owned

¹ Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD)

land and nearly 3,000 acres of land under Chapter 61. Thus, over one-third of Hatfield’s total acreage (10,752 ac.) is tax exempt.

Figure 3: Town of Hatfield Tax Revenue Sources



Source: Tax Levies by Class (state.ma.us)
Division of Local Services, DOR

General Business Environment

Hatfield’s location along Interstate Route 91 and less than 20 miles north of the Massachusetts Turnpike has made it a destination for certain types of businesses, particularly those utilizing highway transportation and/or requiring high numbers of employees (such as C&S Grocers, Brockway-Smith, and others) or needing to draw many customers (such as Danco Modern or Pioneer Valley Indoor Karting). The combination of highway access with a rural location has also drawn businesses associated with homebuilding and recreational vehicles.

This commercial growth, which has been expanding north along Route 5/10 from Northampton for some time, has led the Town of Hatfield to consider expanding public utilities to serve these developing areas. In 2021 the Town initiated work on an extension of water and sewer along the Route 5/10 corridor as far as Rocks Road. There remains strong sentiment to prevent Route 5/10 from developing into a commercial strip devoid of local character, but at the same time, there is a need for tax revenues to support existing municipal

infrastructure. Much of the remaining commercial and industrial land elsewhere in Hatfield is subject to environmental constraints, limiting potential in those locations.

In contrast to the highway corridor and commercial environment that bisects the Town, Hatfield village center retains a rural atmosphere. The village center area is home to municipal services and a couple of small businesses. While other small towns have experienced the impact, both positive and negative, of major arterials running directly through their centers, the Town's village center has been spared this outcome. This has resulted in a secluded center that is desirable for town services and residential uses but does not support significant commercial activity. The town also does not have a sufficient customer base within its own borders to support additional services in the town center, such as a bank or more shopping opportunities, and it faces overwhelming competition for these amenities in nearby Northampton.

The Town has generally not engaged with local businesses and does not conduct outreach or business retention activities. The Hatfield Business Association ([Hatfield Business Association \(HBA\)](#)) was created by a local resident and business owner and has a comprehensive list of local businesses and resources.

Economic development trends

The Town has attracted several significant business sectors, including wholesaling, logistics, as well as housing construction and remodeling. Agriculture is a sector of its own and underlies many of the other businesses, most recently with a fruit and vegetable distributor relocating from Hadley (Myers Produce). These kinds of uses may well continue to grow and farm-based businesses may grow as well, with additional on-farm sales and agriculture-related industry. As noted in the Farm chapter of this Comprehensive Plan, however, this sector is beset by numerous challenges, including climate change (both extremes in heat and downpours), restricted land access for new farmers in particular, decreased soil fertility, and limited labor supply. Overcoming these challenges will be key to ensuring this sector continues to thrive in Hatfield.

With the aging and possibly declining population and potential worker shortages, other additional uses might be ideal for Hatfield's stretch of rural and agricultural highway. Already several health care operations are located on Route 5/10, including a Mass General Brigham/Cooley-Dickinson Hospital outpatient facility, home health care businesses, and a behavioral health center. Medical office buildings and services are increasing in other parts of the region, with a general trend toward economic growth in the health care sector.² There is also a need for senior living facilities. These types of uses may find Hatfield suitable as land in more densely settled areas of the Pioneer Valley is no longer available.

² *The healthcare market is experiencing significant growth, with projected revenue of [\\$57.86 billion](#) in 2023. This upward trend is expected to continue, as the market is predicted to exhibit an annual growth rate of [10.4%](#) (CAGR 2023-2027), reaching a projected volume of [\\$85.95 billion](#) by 2027. [Medical Office Buildings As An Investment \(forbes.com\)](#)
[Medical Office Building Trends: Part of a Bigger Healthcare Picture | Mortenson](#)*

Another significant trend is in renewable energy and green jobs. Some emerging strategies that could help the traditional resource economy adapt to the changing global market and sustain itself over the long term include production and distribution of renewable energy, such as wind, solar, methane from livestock, and geothermal; and green jobs in former rural manufacturing plants converted to produce, distribute, install, and maintain green energy facilities and distribution networks. As an example, entrepreneurs seeking to site wind farms and solar installations also give consideration for the related manufacturing and maintenance facilities, potentially providing new higher-paying jobs. Most of these strategies, however, will probably require changes to existing zoning and development codes.³

3. Challenges and Opportunities

The Town of Hatfield has unique challenges and opportunities as an agricultural community that straddles an interstate highway, with its town center and many other areas located in the floodplain and about a third of its land in more upland areas. It is located just north of the thriving college town and urban center of Northampton and is a gateway to the more rural parts of the Pioneer Valley region. The dense development along Route 5/10 in Northampton has crept northward to Hatfield's border and beyond and has been limited only by lack of infrastructure. As a transitional community between urban/suburban and truly rural land uses and activities, Hatfield faces difficult issues and decisions. Some of these are outlined below.

Zoning Issues

Patchwork zoning throughout town, including Route 5/10 corridor

Many parcels in town were zoned according to their existing uses at the time of establishing the zoning map; however, some uses have changed, and others have not but exist as "islands," particularly commercial and industrial uses within the Rural Residential area. The Town may consider re-evaluating the zoning to fit the desired future uses in these areas as well as the ability of the land to support them. As discussed below, many of the Industrial zones are in wetlands or other unsuitable land. An area along North Hatfield Road was proposed for an industrial park in the 2010s and was rezoned to light industrial. Additionally, the Route 5/10 corridor is a patchwork of Residential, Business, Light Industrial, Industrial, and areas with Mixed Use Overlay Districts. There have been proposals to rezone Route 5/10 to entirely commercial; however, there are existing residential areas along this corridor that do not fit this designation.

The zoning along Route 5/10 has continued to evolve in a piecemeal fashion over the past several years. Various rezoning requests have come before the Town from individual owners, primarily applications to rezone Rural Residential land to Light Industrial. The Town is now extending water and sewer north along Route 5/10, and the pressure for development will increase on these properties.

³ [Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Rural Planning, Zoning, and Development Codes \(epa.gov\)](#)

Environmentally sensitive and flood prone lands zoned for intensive uses

Much of the land currently zoned Industrial, Light Industrial and Town Center Business is in floodplains or wetlands. This includes the industrially zoned land along the railroad tracks that is almost entirely wetlands. This area has not attracted development, and the rail sidings are used only minimally. High water tables in this corridor have also slowed the new water and sewer extension project. Since commercial/industrial and residential tax rates are currently the same in Hatfield (\$13.67 per thousand), this has not been an issue for the landowners.

Agriculture

Although agricultural activities have existed in Hatfield for centuries, the continued health of this sector will require support. Larger, highly mechanized operations exist alongside smaller farms, and wholesale activities next to local farmstands. The larger farms will need state-level assistance as well as local support regarding access, local bylaws, and other factors. Smaller farms may need assistance with setting up a farmers' market and/or community-supported agriculture activities.

A relatively newer trend is for farming operations to broaden their revenue sources, including catering activities and tourism. Prospect Meadow Farm has a farm store, café, catering business, CSA farm share, and a vocational services program, among other initiatives. Black Birch Vineyard grows a variety of grapes, makes wine, and raises sheep, while also hosting tours, tastings, and retail operations. These kinds of activities benefit farmers but also create jobs, generate more revenue for the community, and draw outside visitors.

Utilities in commercial/industrial areas

There is sufficient water service along the Route 5/10 corridor, as the Town has previously installed improvements to support the operations of major employers, including Brockway Smith and C&S Grocers. These included a water tank and a loop system, both of which resulted in increased water pressure and fire protection. Additional water service and a sewer extension was approved at Town Meeting in the spring of 2023 and are under construction for Route 5/10 from Linseed Road/Church Ave north to Rocks Road. The project has faced delays and cost increases, but will ultimately allow Brockway-Smith to expand their footprint and create 10 new jobs. It will also open up opportunities for other large developments, large and small, and will most likely result in new rezoning requests.

A map of existing utilities can be found in the *Facilities and Services Chapter* of this plan.

Need for tax revenue to support local services

A significant incentive for the Town to allow and encourage commercial and industrial activity is the return in tax revenue, which is higher relative to land area than for residential or agricultural land uses. However, this needs to be balanced with the residents' desire to maintain rural character. Certain types of economic growth, well-designed and sited, can contribute to the town's budget while not creating strip commercial development along a rural route.

Workforce needs

While major employers now exist in Hatfield, and others may also choose to locate in town, the availability of a suitable workforce is an important factor. As described earlier in this chapter, most Hatfield residents travel out of town for work. Hatfield workers commute from a wide variety of locations, many of which are quite distant. While the town is situated in the Five College region, these college graduates are not generally tapped for employment in the logistics, advanced manufacturing, and service industries that are located in Hatfield. With local and regional populations generally staying level or declining, this will be an ongoing challenge.

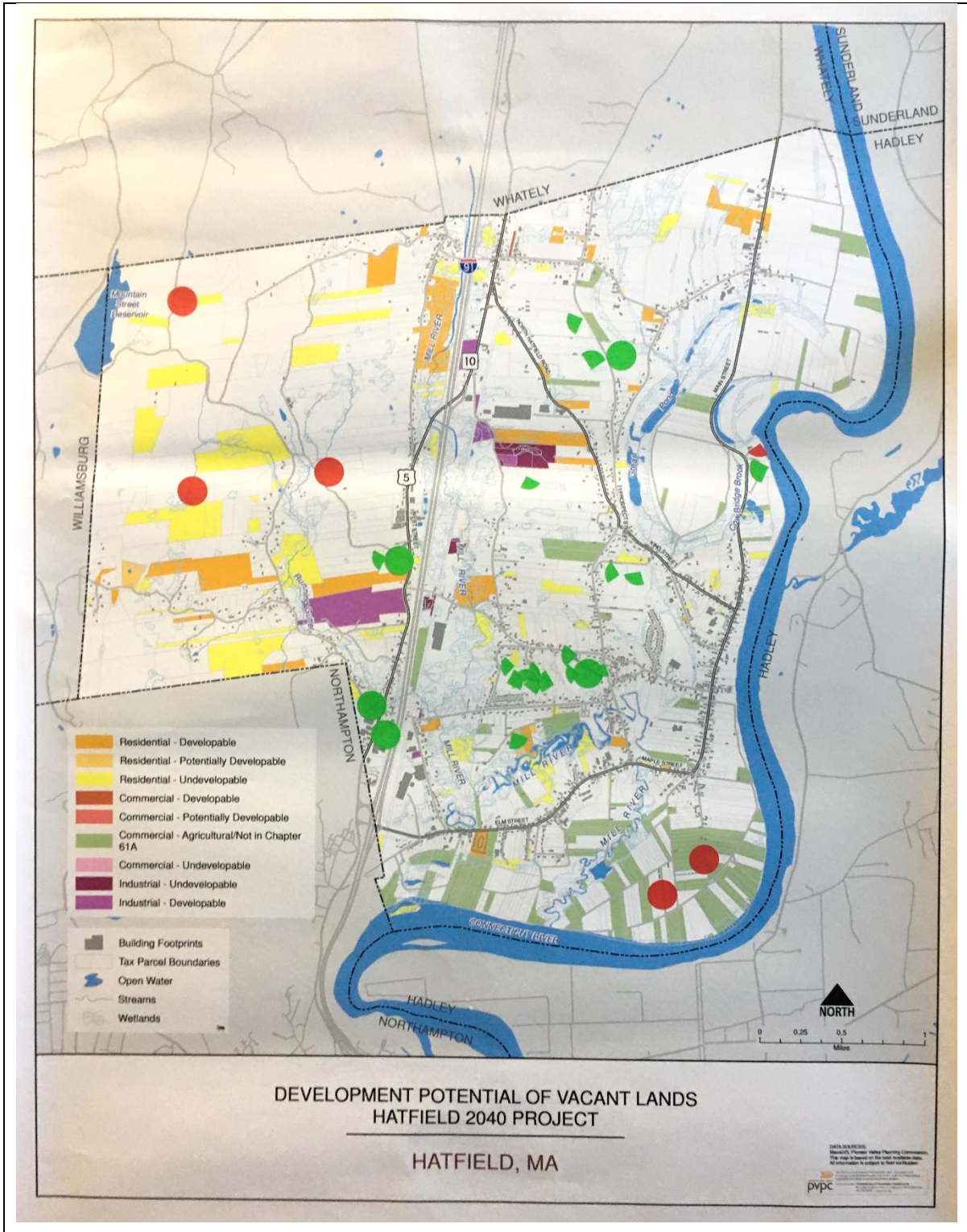
Agrivoltaics

The emergence of agrivoltaics and the state's support of such dual use of farmlands presents a potentially important opportunity for Hatfield.

Community input on future development

The map in Figure 4 shows development potential as envisioned by local residents at a workshop in 2023. Large red circles indicate areas not considered appropriate for development, while green circles are located in areas regarded as conducive to development. Participants designated commercial/industrial areas along the southern half of Route 5/10 as desirable for growth and development.

Figure 4: Development Potential of Vacant Lands – 2023



4. Examples from other Communities

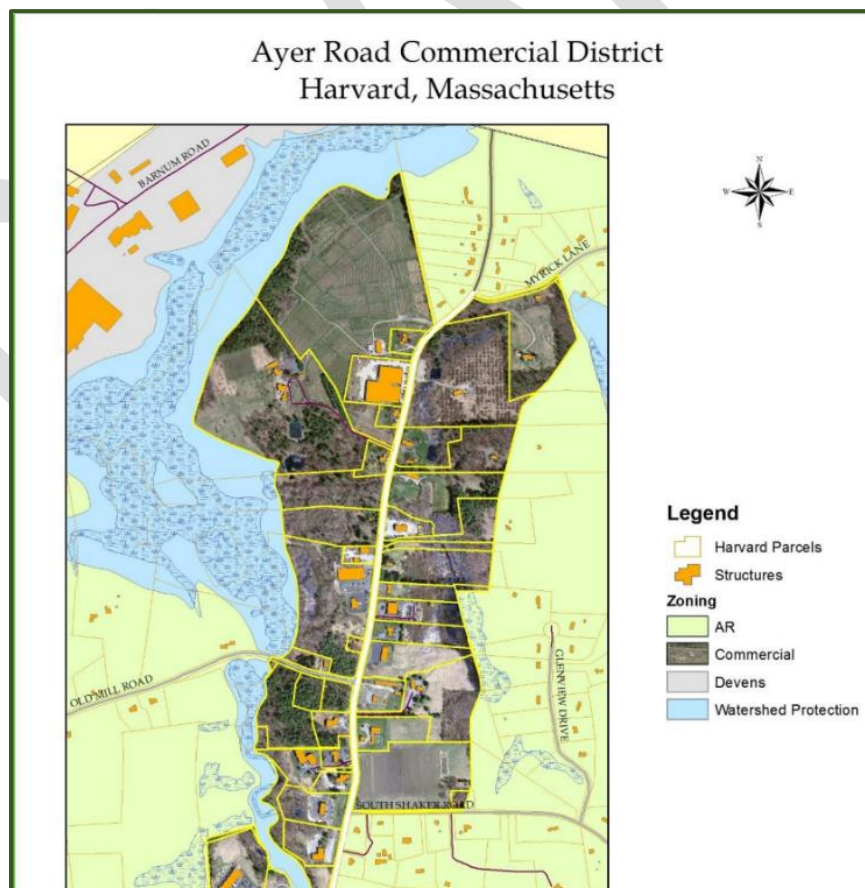
Managing Rural Highway Corridors

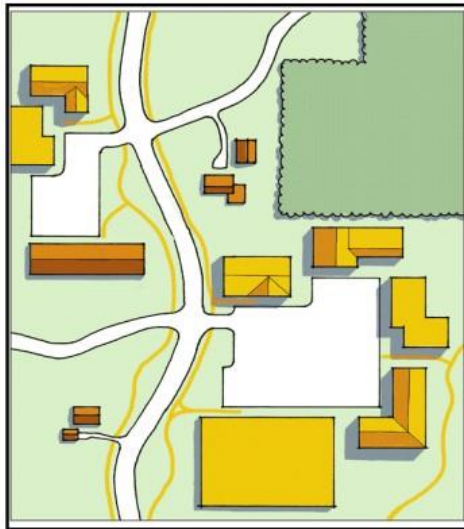
Harvard, MA Design Guidelines ([harvard commercial design guidelines 10-3-2016 3.pdf](#))

To foster growth that enhances the scenic beauty and built environment of Harvard, the Town worked to develop guidelines that promote principles of good design in new development. The Commercial Design Guidelines apply only to the Commercial District (C District), the area located along Ayer Road north of Route 2 to about one-quarter mile south of the Ayer town line. These Guidelines specifically apply to development proposals in the C District for projects that require a building permit for new construction, an addition, or exterior alteration, or are subject to site plan review and/or a special permit granted by the Planning Board. The document provides essential information to professional engineers, designers, and land developers to understand the type of development Harvard wishes to promote for the C District and overall helps provide for a smooth approval process by local boards and officials.

Prior to issuance of the guidelines, the Town conducted a detailed assessment of existing conditions in the Commercial District and the zoning bylaw standards that promoted unsustainable development. This included an inventory and examination of existing conditions along the roadway and descriptions of how to implement the guidelines.

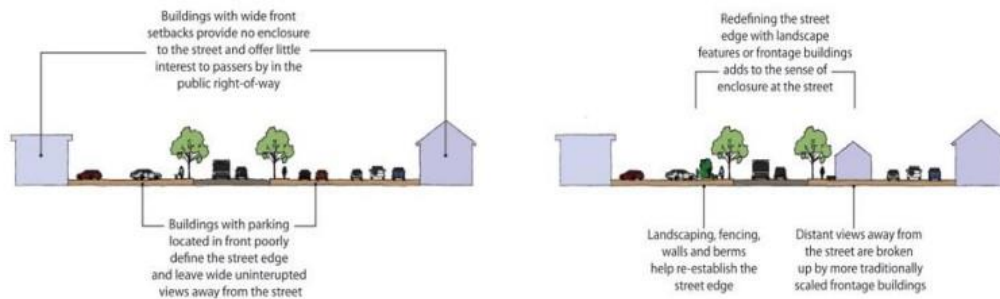
Figure 5: Harvard, MA Commercial District Assessment





Phase 1 Report, *Harvard Master Plan*
Brown Walker Planners, and Wolf Landscape Architecture

- ❖ Clustered, mixed use development concept for Ayer Road, with several small commercial buildings sharing a common parking lot and a single curb cut.
- ❖ Sidewalks and fewer driveway crossings reduce vehicle conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists. Internal paths connect uses within a site and with adjacent properties.
- ❖ Village concept allows unified architectural theme and compact development pattern, leaving sufficient buffer for residential neighborhood behind.
- ❖ “Creating a density of uses encourages non-vehicular circulation between uses, allows for shared infrastructure, and provides opportunities for the creation of public spaces for circulation and gathering.” (Master Plan Phase 1 Report, page 16.)



Source: Cape Cod Commission

From [DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT \(harvard.ma.us\)](http://harvard.ma.us), p.3

Prior to establishment of the design guidelines, the existing rural landscape in Harvard, MA was similar to many other rural Massachusetts and New England towns. These images below show Ayer Road in Harvard just off of the Route 2 exit. The pictures evoke Route 5/10 in Hatfield, with vacant and less maintained buildings and historic structures amidst a backdrop of woods and meadows.

View heading north from Route 2:



View heading west toward Route 2 on-ramp in Harvard, MA from Route 111:



The following images show results derived from using the local Design Guidelines on this same street (Route 111). These new developments have provided jobs, tax revenues, and services, and they enhance rather than detract from the rural highway environs.

Two photos heading north on Route 111:



Closer view of development; note that it extends quite deeply beyond the highway:



Bennington, VT

In 2002, the Town of Bennington decided to tackle the commercial strip problem head-on with the development of design standards for its Planned Commercial district. Several new buildings had recently been built in the district that epitomized commercial strip architecture, and the consensus in the community was that standards were needed to direct new growth.

The standards, approved in 2004, brought together in one document a variety of provisions that were already in the town's zoning bylaw, including requirements for sidewalks, landscaping, and parking. It also added new provisions related to architectural design, building materials, and window placement. Most important, the standards incorporated a series of drawings that illustrated exactly what a developer had to do in order to meet the standards, with elements in each drawing labeled and keyed to specific requirements in the text (similar to the Harvard, MA example).

There have been a variety of development projects in the district in the five years since adoption of the design standards. The difference that the standards have made is clear to see, with much more attractive and pedestrian-friendly designs in recent years than before the standards were adopted. Both developers and the Development Review Board have expressed appreciation for the clarity and specificity of the standards, as they make the process quite straightforward. While it will take decades to replace all of the auto-oriented development in the district with more compact and well-designed projects, the process is now well underway.

The lesson here was that high-quality illustrations are absolutely essential to the success of design standards, as they offer much more clarity and certainty than text alone.

Sources: [Commercial Design Control District – Bennington – Vermont Natural Resources Council \(vnrc.org\)](https://www.vnrc.org/)

Charlotte, VT

As roadside development spread along the Route 7 corridor in the communities neighboring Charlotte, residents decided to protect the views and character of their community and avoid excessive strip development. They implemented an Access Management strategy to ensure that Route 7 remained a functioning major arterial rather than a congested access for scattered businesses and housing developments. The [Access Management Standards](#) were incorporated into their zoning bylaw as general regulations, which subjected property with frontage on Route 7 to special access standards.

[Access Management – Charlotte – Vermont Natural Resources Council \(vnrc.org\)](#)

Framingham/Natick, MA Highway Overlay District

Clearly the region enjoys considerable economic benefits as an outcome of this substantial development. However, it is equally apparent that benefits to be realized must be carefully weighed concurrently with the adverse impacts such growth can also engender. Rapid development in the absence of an overall growth strategy is likely to result in an erosion of environmental quality, traffic congestion, declining air quality, visual discordance, an impoverished landscape and undue pressure on water supply networks and sewer system capacity.

Source: Controlling Strip Development: Case Studies From New England - 1998 APA Proceedings (quaytest.net)

Ferndale, WA

A successful approach to typical retail development was developed in 2008 by the City of Ferndale, WA. Established by ordinance, this three-pronged [approach to retail development, including big-box stores](#), includes a scorecard called EAGLE: Energy efficiency, Advanced technologies, Greater good, Low impact, Economic development.

Typical highway commercial development is appropriately oriented towards automobile traffic, but often erases the natural character of the landscape and reduces highway functionality by creating too many closely-spaced intersections. Auto-oriented development also is typically lower density, consuming development acres less efficiently and yielding lower property tax revenues per acre. This style of development fragments habitat and imposes higher infrastructure maintenance costs onto communities. However, with care, highway commercial development can be made more context-sensitive, attractive, ecological, efficient and even more bikeable/walkable.

Large national chain stores are far more economically fragile than previously anticipated and are vulnerable to growing e-commerce. Unlike rows of interchangeable national chains on the edge of town, a more diverse ecosystem of small locally owned businesses can rapidly respond to consumer need while offering experiences that can't be replicated through e-commerce. Before cities zone more land for large format development, focused work to support smaller, more accessible and high-quality retail is a must, along with easing the zoning that often exclusively mandates suburban-style big box and strip-mall developments. These zoning districts often require extensive areas of parking and large setbacks from the

road while prohibiting common non-retail uses, including residential, light industrial, and office space.

Source: [Best Practice | GreenstepCities \(state.mn.us\)](#)

Home Occupations and Farm-Based Businesses

Farm-based businesses are allowed in every zoning district in Hatfield. Along with farming itself, farm stands, commercial greenhouses, and tree farms are allowed by right in all districts. Other farm businesses, such as retail or wholesale operations, are allowed by Site Plan Review from the Planning Board.

Home occupations, which may or may not be agriculture-related, are allowed in all districts with varying levels of review, from Special Permit only or Site Plan review only to both Special Permit and Site Plan review, all conducted by the Planning Board.

Orange, MA

[About | LaunchSpace \(launchspace-orange.com\)](#)



Town Center Vitality

Festivals and/or Pop-Up Markets

Hatfield has a good basis for cultural programming as there is a municipal Celebration Committee that supports some of the regular annual events. Plans for a large pavilion in Smith Academy Park are moving forward, and the site will be used for many community gatherings once it is constructed. Perhaps some signature events such as an art festival or market with vendors could be added to the town's annual offerings like the Luminarium. There could be funding sources such as the [Festivals and Projects grant](#) from the MA Cultural Council.

Mattoon Street Festival in Springfield, MA

<http://www.mattoonfestival.org/>

Holiday Market in Foxboro, MA

<https://theprofoundmarket.com/>

At the same time that cultural activities are occurring, as well as other times during the year (perhaps monthly), the town could encourage mobile vendors in the town center. Due to the lack of commercial offerings/local amenities in the community center and few available sites to develop as well as the location in the floodplain, the town could host farmers' markets, food trucks, and other vendors.

- Example of a Western MA coffee truck and espresso bar on wheels:
<https://www.pourthingscoffee.com/>
- A fashion vendor in Boston: <http://www.fashiontruck.com/about-emily>
- Mobile food vendors – there are many, and here is one example:

North Kingston, RI

The Town could allow the use of accessory buildings for commercial spaces as in North Kingston RI [Draft Brown Street Guidelines \(northkingstownri.gov\)](#) (see page 21 of document).

5. Recommended Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: Examine current town policies, such as bylaws, zoning, and taxation structure to evaluate alignment to the vision of making economy viable and sustainable in the long-term, fortifying the town's tax base.

- Develop and implement an economic incentive program that could include grant writing assistance for new businesses coming to/starting in town incentivizing small and local business generation in town, including new farm businesses that are less than 5 acres in size.
- Explore linkage between economic base, revenue growth, and revenue stability to pursue fiscal health that meets the needs of constituents.
- Rezone Route 5 and 10 in Hatfield to allow appropriate commercial uses along the full extent of the corridor.

The existing land uses along Route 5/10 *north of the existing Business District* are primarily residential and agricultural/open space and include the North Hatfield National Register Historic District. With water and sewer infrastructure expanding to a longer section of this road, there will be pressure on the adjacent properties to develop more intensely. Rather than entertaining individual rezoning requests in a piecemeal approach, the Town should determine what uses are desired along this corridor and rezone accordingly.

- Consider extending the Mixed Use Overlay District or at least the performance and design guidelines along all of Route 5/10 corridor.

Currently, performance and design standards only apply in the mixed use zone – but these would be helpful for ALL development along the corridor.

This would involve implementing performance standards and design guidelines to maintain adequate vegetation and screening; limiting access points along the highway, and providing pedestrian pathways. Many of these provisions are required within the existing Mixed Use Overlay Districts but should also apply to other areas.

- Rezone vacant Industrial Districts that are in wetlands and/or floodplain to a more compatible use.

Many of the existing industrial districts are vacant and will remain so because they are not developable. To align the zoning with the reality of environmental constraints, it makes sense to rezone for possible agricultural and low-density residential use or designate these lands under a water protection overlay district.

Goal 2: Assess the potential for renewable and alternative energy production and associated manufacturing and services.

- Determine appropriate locations, siting requirements, and regulations to encourage green industry and jobs.

Examples include more sustainable agriculture practices; production and distribution of renewable energy such as wind, solar, methane from livestock, and geothermal; and green jobs in former manufacturing plants or warehouses converted to produce, distribute, install, and maintain green energy facilities and distribution networks. These approaches may require changes to existing zoning and development codes.

Goal 3: Fortify and deploy Town Hall resources to establish strong relationships with local businesses.

- Identify a staff position within Town Hall to lead coordination on economic and business development who would actively maintain business database, update website and social media, and lead organization of events/forums.
- Develop database of local business owners with their contact information so information can be shared easily with businesses.

Goal 4: Encourage temporary commercial uses in the Town Center to avoid future losses due to flooding.

- Utilize existing buildings, including accessory buildings, and existing spaces such as parking lots to host pop-up and mobile commercial offerings.

In the post-pandemic, online shopping, fast-delivery world, in-person events and retail opportunities remain compelling but must offer something that cannot be more easily obtained online. Local products, handcrafted items, and specialty foods would be a draw for residents if they are conveniently located. The ability to host temporary events and retail venues in town could provide the revitalized atmosphere that is desired in the town center, where there are few commercial buildings.

Goal 5: Understand where agricultural lands are most threatened by development and explore approaches that might allow these areas to stay in production.

DRAFT