

1994

# Resource Inventory and Preliminary Marketing Strategy for Economic Development

UMass Amherst Center Economic Development

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.umass.edu/ced\\_techrpts](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/ced_techrpts)

 Part of the [Economic History Commons](#), [Growth and Development Commons](#), [Public Economics Commons](#), [Urban, Community and Regional Planning Commons](#), [Urban Studies Commons](#), and the [Urban Studies and Planning Commons](#)

---

UMass Amherst Center Economic Development, "Resource Inventory and Preliminary Marketing Strategy for Economic Development" (1994). *Center for Economic Development Technical Reports*. 76.

Retrieved from [https://scholarworks.umass.edu/ced\\_techrpts/76](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/ced_techrpts/76)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Economic Development at ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Center for Economic Development Technical Reports by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@library.umass.edu](mailto:scholarworks@library.umass.edu).

**RESOURCE INVENTORY AND PRELIMINARY  
MARKETING STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**BARRE, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Spring 1994**

**Faculty/Staff Supervision:**  
**Ann Forsyth, Ph.D.**  
**Kate Griffin, MRP**

**The Center for Economic Development wishes to thank  
the Research Team**

**Chad Atkinson**  
**Christopher Campbell**  
**Kevin Green**  
**Amy Petrone**

This study was funded in part by the Barre Economic Development Industrial Corporation. The Center for Economic Development at the University of Massachusetts is part of the Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning Department, and is funded by the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce, and the University of Massachusetts.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	Page 1
	1.1 Purpose	
	1.2 Location	
2	Resource Inventory	Page 4
	2.1 Human Resources	
	2.1.1 Population, Race, and Age	
	2.1.2 Education	
	2.1.3 Workforce Skills	
	2.2 Physical Characteristics	
	2.2.1 Water Sources and Distribution	
	2.2.2 Sewer	
	2.2.3 Roads	
	2.2.4 Railroad	
	2.2.5 Electricity	
	2.2.6 Telecommunications	
	2.2.7 Land Use	
	2.2.8 Open Space	
	2.2.9 Agricultural Lands	
	2.2.10 Existing Industrial Sites	
	2.3 Cultural and Recreational Resources	
	2.4 Regional Resources	
3	Economic and Governmental Situation	Page 27
	3.1 Employment and Income	
	3.2 Travel Time to Work	
	3.3 Industry Projections	
	3.3.1 Statewide Industry Projections	
	3.3.2 Central Massachusetts Region Industry Projections	
	3.4 Government and Regulations	
	3.4.1 Zoning	
	3.4.2 Permitting Process	
	3.4.3 Taxes	
4	Preliminary Marketing Strategies	Page 39
	4.1 Targeted Industries	
	4.1.1 Water Dependent Industries	
	4.1.2 Computer Software	
	4.1.3 Printing and Publishing	
	4.1.4 Mail Order	
	4.1.5 Business Incubators	
	4.1.6 Business Services	
	4.1.7 Agriculture Diversification	
	4.1.8 Retail and Consumer Services	
	4.1.9 Dining and Accommodations	
	4.2 Recreation and Tourism Strategies	
	4.3 Industry Multipliers	
	4.4 Permitting Process Improvements	
	4.4.1 The Role of the Barre EDIC	
	4.4.2 Changing Barre's Regulations	
	4.4.3 Changing Barre's Permitting Process	
	4.5 Growth Management	
	4.6 New Sites Strategy	
	4.6.1 Barre Center	
	4.6.2 The Langley School	
	4.6.3 The Town Farm	
5	Conclusion	Page 80
6	Citizen Participation Groups (Revision of the Survey)	Page 81
7	Reference List	Page 83
8	Appendix	Page 89

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to begin to develop a plan for economic development, the Barre Economic Development Industrial Corporation (EDIC) has contracted for this study, a resource inventory and preliminary marketing strategy. Although Barre is not unique in most of its single characteristics, it has a notable mixture of central location in Massachusetts, industrial heritage, natural resources, cultural life, and a small-town character as yet unspoiled by large amounts of recent development.

A notable proportion of Barre's workforce is engaged in goods-producing occupations and industries. However, manufacturing has steadily declined in both Barre and its region. Barre has numerous promising physical characteristics, including rail service, "state of the art" telecommunications service, ample electricity and water, and some excess sewer capacity. Barre has an agricultural base and open space that contributes to its quality of life and provides recreation potential. Barre has an unusually broad array of cultural and recreational opportunities for a town of its size.

The local regulatory system has been identified as a potential barrier to economic development in Barre because of its age and inconsistency. This report provides suggestions about how the people of Barre might go about renewing their regulatory system. This includes suggestions on reforming procedures, on re-making local regulations, and on what role the EDIC can play. In addition, some general information has been included on managing growth and its effects on the local fiscal situation.

The preliminary marketing strategy is broad-based. The studio team recommends that the EDIC not focus exclusively on one group of industries but instead draw on many different strengths of the town in order to promote

itself to a variety of industries. These include: water dependent industries, computer software, printing and publishing, mail order, business incubators, diversified agriculture, retail and consumer services, and tourism. Each of these industries either draws upon a notable strength of Barre or is rapidly growing in Barre's region. None of these industries represent sure bets for economic development, and the list is not exhaustive of industries that might locate in Barre. However, these industries are some areas where Barre and the EDIC can focus its marketing energies with a better than normal likelihood of a return.

Since a large majority of the members of the EDIC identified tax base enhancement as the group's primary motivation in seeking out new economic development, the level of job creation by an industry was not one of the study group's primary criteria when looking at industries. However, the study group has included some job-creation information on various industrial sectors for comparison purposes.

Economic development in Barre will continue to be heavily influenced by decisions in the private sector. However, the public sector can still play an active role in charting Barre's economic future. This report contains practical examples of how it can do so. The EDIC can incorporate citizen participation through the use of focus groups. These will allow citizens to identify desirable economic futures and acceptable ways of making them a reality. Also, some potential sites for economic development in Barre are heavily influenced by the town government. Three sites are discussed in terms of their opportunities and potential pitfalls: Barre Center, the Langley School, and the Town Farm.

Finally, the study group recommends that this resource inventory and preliminary marketing strategy be only the first step in a process leading to a detailed marketing strategy and economic development renewal for Barre.

## 1 Introduction

To determine a suitable course of future action for the Town of Barre, the studio team inventoried the resources of the community, compiled a basic demographic profile of the community, inventoried public lands, assessed the zoning for economic development potential, and assessed natural and environmental constraints. It considered the town's economic and industrial history and profiled regional economic activity.

This report brings together under one cover a listing of the town's resources and constraints. It critically evaluates the potential contribution for economic development of resources widely believed to be key factors in Barre's future economic development. Additionally, this report includes descriptions of resources that are less commonly viewed as economic development assets, such as Barre's surprising number of cultural resources. Finally, this report considers the framework of regulation and policy in which Barre's economic development will occur.

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this studio project is to inventory the resources and create a preliminary marketing strategy for the Town of Barre. A community wide survey was to be designed to gain insights on the perspectives and strengths of the community, but as of the Barre Economic Development Industrial Corporation (EDIC) meeting on May 10, 1994, it was decided that citizen feelings could be more effectively and practically determined through focus groups (see Section 6).

This studio project was undertaken at the request of the Barre EDIC. Their goal is to increase the community's tax base in order to maintain the high standard of service within the community. Currently, with the

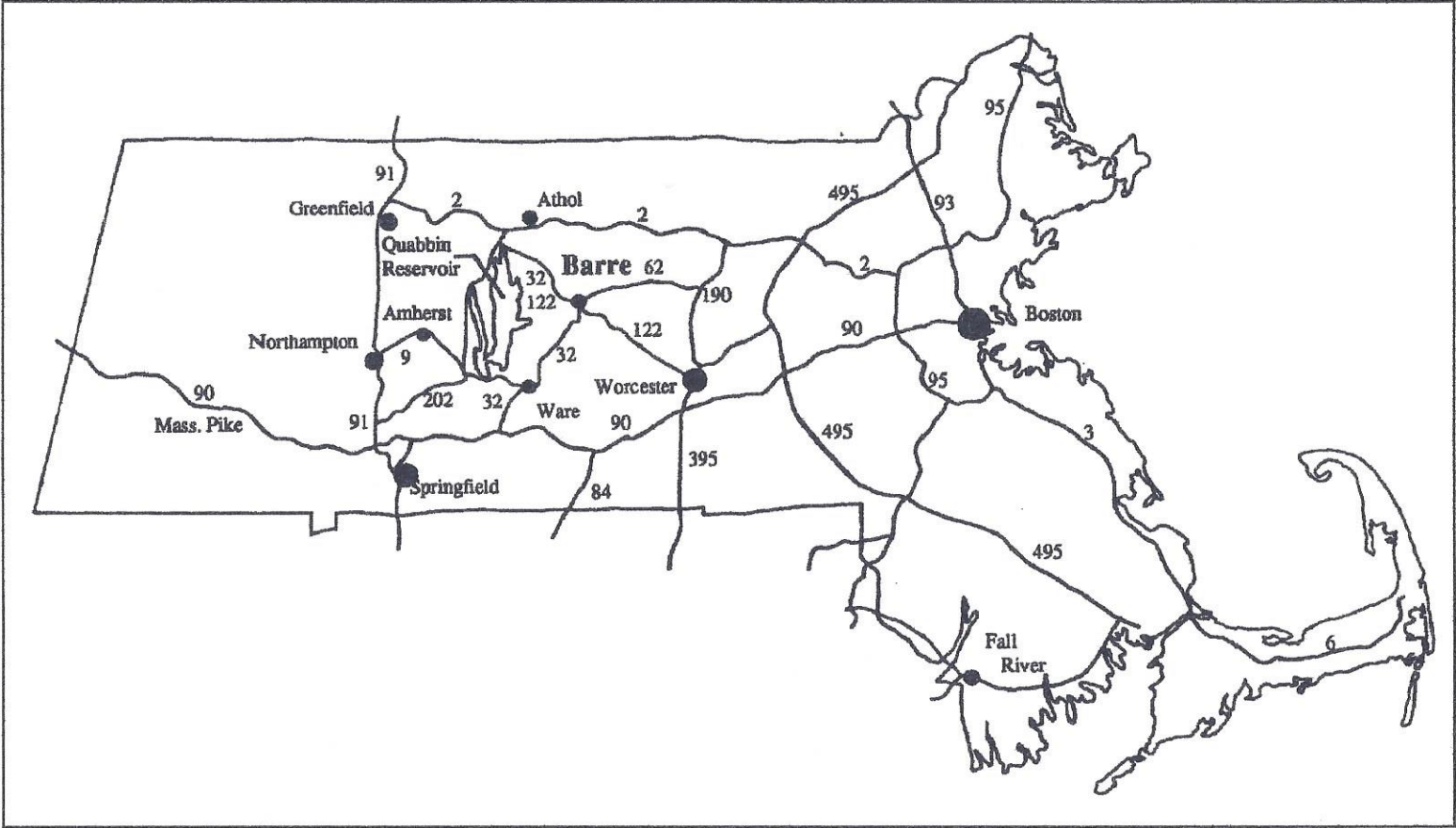


industrial sites underused or unused, 86% of the town's revenues come from personal property taxes.

## 1.2 Location

Barre covers an area of 44.82 square miles with 98.84 % being land and 1.16% representing water resources. The town is located in central Massachusetts approximately 25 miles northwest of Worcester, 65 miles from Boston and 197 miles from New York City. As can be observed from Figure 1.1, along with the specific location of the town, highway routes of 32, 122, and 62 direct automobile and truck traffic through Barre and connect in other parts of the state to routes 2, 90, 190 and 395.

Figure 1.1  
Location of Barre



Source: Valley Consulting Group 1989

## 2 Resource Inventory

This section describes the characteristics of Barre that affect its potential for economic development. Many people in town are already aware of some of these resources, while other resources may be commonly overlooked. The research team has gathered material from a variety of source materials: interviews, site tours, town and private documents, government statistics, and computer databases.

The resources and constraints of Barre can be divided into several broad categories: human, physical, cultural and recreational. Human resources are the people of Barre, whether they be members or potential members of the labor force. The physical characteristics include those services provided by the town or other bodies for residents or businesses, such as utilities and transportation. Also included as a physical resource is the land and how it is currently being used. The natural characteristics of Barre highlighted here are a high yielding aquifer and protected open space. Finally, the cultural and recreational resources of the town include activities and amenities such as the Barre Players Theater and the Ware River Line which can make Barre an interesting place to live or visit.

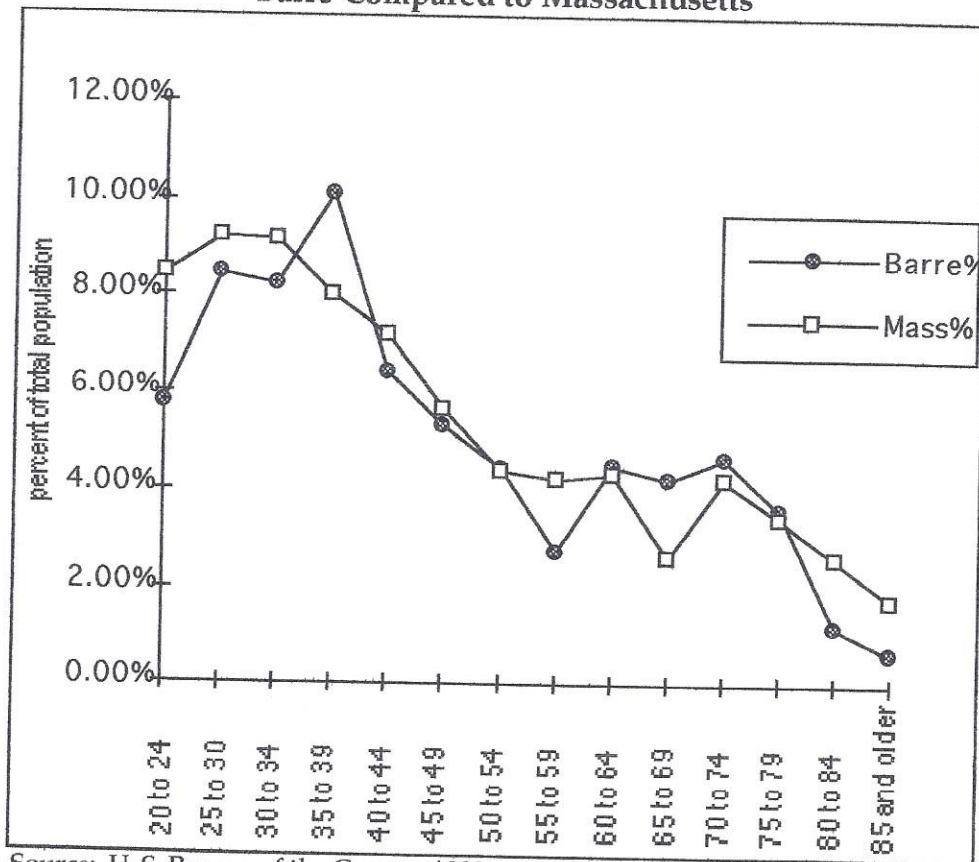
### 2.1 Human Resources

This profile of the human resources of Barre describes the characteristics and skills of Barre's local labor force. Included in this profile is demographic information on population, age, race, education, and workforce skills. This is information that the EDIC will find useful to provide for potential employers and retailers who will be able to adapt it to an assessment of their particular market and labor force situation.

### 2.1.1 Population, Age, and Race

Barre's population was 4,546 in 1990, up from 4,257 in 1980. The racial composition of Barre is 98.5% of White origin, 1% of Black origin and 0.5% of other minorities. Barre has a higher percentage of adults in their late thirties and late sixties than does Massachusetts as a whole (see Figure 2.1). There are also fewer young adults and people aged eighty or over.

**Figure 2.1**  
**Age of Adults 20 Years and Older:**  
**Barre Compared to Massachusetts**



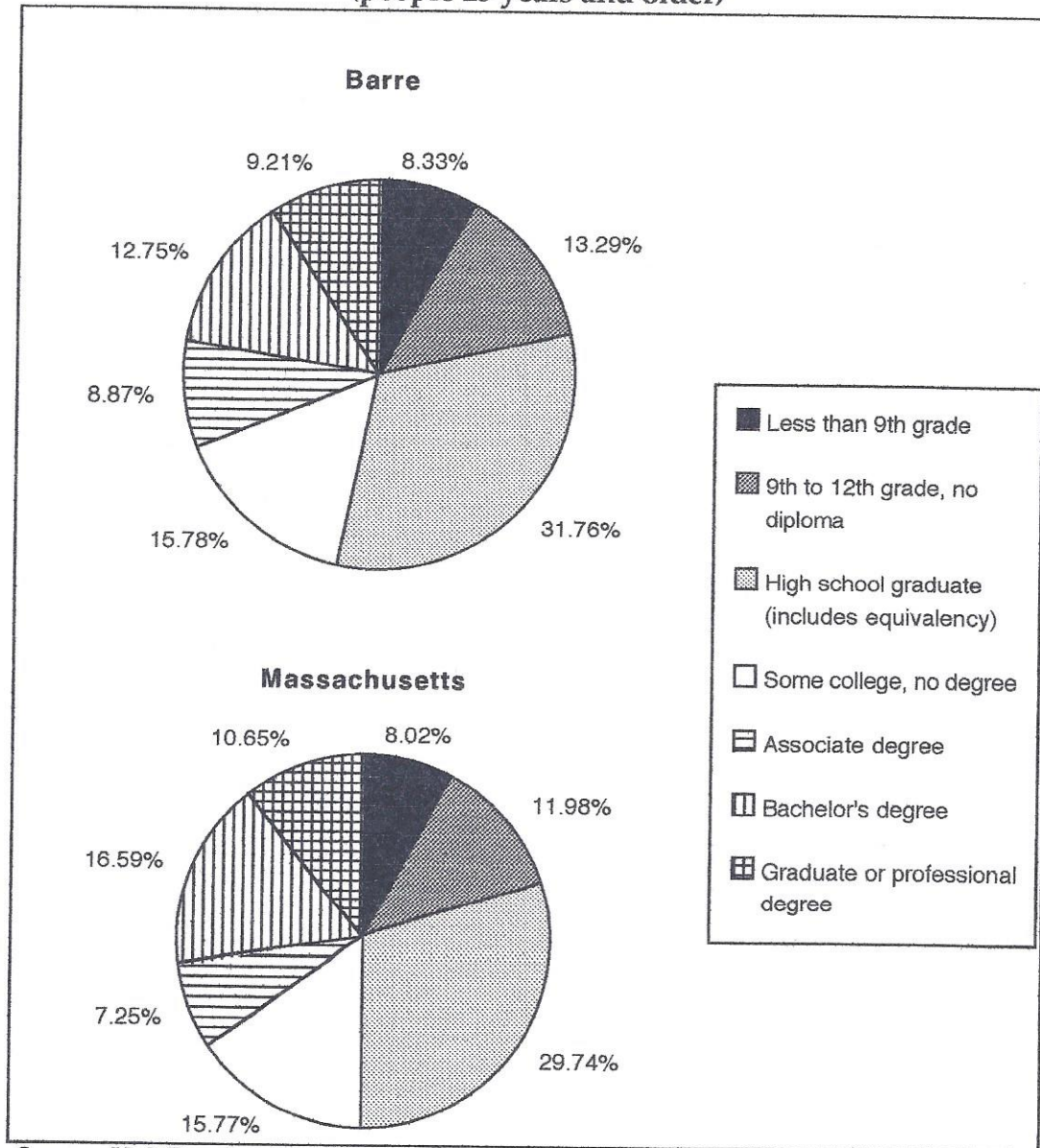
Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990.

### 2.1.2 Education

Compared with Massachusetts, Barre's population has a lower level of education, but the difference between educational attainment in Barre and

Massachusetts in many individual categories is for the most part not large (see Figure 2.2). The largest single difference in an educational attainment category was in people holding Bachelor's degrees, which is almost four percentage points higher in Massachusetts than in Barre.

**Figure 2.2**  
**Educational Attainment: Barre and Massachusetts**  
**(people 25 years and older)**



Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990.

The difference between Barre and Massachusetts is less for those holding more advanced degrees.

Barre is served by the Quabbin Regional School District. This district has undergone rapid expansion in the past few years. Barre voters recently expressed their support for local public education in Barre by approving a \$20 million junior-senior high school expansion. Their dropout rate for 1990-91 was only 3.4% (Worcester Business Journal 1993, 23). The vocational education needs of Barre students are met by Montachusett Technical School. The higher education needs of the region are served by a variety of two-year, four-year and graduate schools (see Figure 2.3).

**Figure 2.3**  
**Worcester County Colleges**

School	Type of School	Location
Anna Maria College	Four-year and graduate	Paxton
Assumption College	Four-year and graduate	Worcester
Atlantic Union College	Four-year	South Lancaster
Becker College	Two-year	Worcester
Clark University	Four-year and graduate	Worcester
College of the Holy Cross	Four-year	Worcester
Fisher College	Two-year	Fitchburg
Fitchburg State College	Four-year	Fitchburg
Mount Wachusett Community College	Two-year	Gardner
Nichols College	Four-year and graduate	Dudley
Quinsigamond Community College	Two-year	Worcester
Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine	Graduate	North Grafton
University of Massachusetts Medical Center	Graduate	Worcester
Worcester Polytechnic Institute		Worcester
Worcester Polytechnic Institute	Four-year	Worcester
Worcester State College	Four-year and graduate	Worcester

Source: Worcester Business Journal 1993, 24.

### 2.1.3 Workforce Skills

Examining the current occupations of the people of Barre, along with the industries in which they work, gives some insight into the current workforce skills of the people of Barre.

Figure 2.4 shows the percentages of workers in Barre and Massachusetts that work in various industries. The industry employing the largest percentage of Barre workers is the manufacture of durable goods. Dividing the industry percentages for Barre by the industry percentages for Massachusetts gives a measure of the relative concentration of Barre workers in different industries. Barre has a relatively high concentration of people working in goods-producing industries such as agriculture, construction, and durable goods. Many of the industries in which Barre has a low concentration of people working are service sector industries.

**Figure 2.4**  
**In Which Industries Do People in Barre Work?**  
**Percentage in Barre vs. Percentage in Massachusetts**

Industry	Barre %	Mass. %	Barre% - Mass.%	Barre% ÷ Mass.%
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fisheries	3.09	1.08	2.01	2.87
Construction	10.02	5.47	4.55	1.83
Manufacturing, Durable Goods	17.04	12.01	5.03	1.42
Health Services	13.58	10.29	3.29	1.32
Educational Services	11.24	9.50	1.73	1.18
Transportation	3.93	3.75	0.19	1.05
Manufacturing, Non Durable Goods	5.29	6.09	-0.80	0.87
Communications & other Public Utilities	2.06	2.44	-0.38	0.84
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	6.60	8.02	-1.42	0.82
Retail Trade	12.27	16.18	-3.92	0.76
Wholesale Trade	3.04	4.15	-1.10	0.73
Personal Services	1.73	2.60	-0.87	0.67
Other Professional & Related Services	5.20	8.25	-3.05	0.63
Business & Repair Services	2.90	4.68	-1.78	0.62
Public Administration	1.64	4.29	-2.65	0.38
Entertainment & Recreation Services	0.37	1.13	-0.75	0.33
Mining	0.00	0.09	-0.09	0.00

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990.

Figure 2.5 shows the percentages of workers in Barre and Massachusetts that work in various occupations. The largest occupation category for Barre workers is Professional Specialty occupation. Dividing the occupation percentages for Barre by the occupation percentages for Massachusetts gives a measure of the relative concentration of Barre workers in different occupations. Barre has a relatively high concentration of people working in farming, forestry, and fishing occupations, as handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers, and in transportation and material moving occupations. The occupations in which Barre has a low concentration of people working are protective services, sales, and administrative support occupations, including clerical.

**Figure 2.5**  
**In Which Occupations Do People in Barre Work?**  
**Percentage in Barre vs. Percentage in Massachusetts**

Occupation	Barre%	Mass.%	Barre% - Mass.%	Barre% ÷ Mass.%
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing Occupations	3.00	0.93	2.07	3.23
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, Helpers, and Laborers	5.20	2.96	2.24	1.76
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	4.96	2.89	2.07	1.72
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair Occupations	14.28	9.97	4.31	1.43
Technicians and Related Support Occupations	5.34	4.20	1.14	1.27
Machine Operators, Assemblers, and Inspectors	7.02	5.55	1.47	1.26
Private Household Occupations	0.28	0.26	0.02	1.08
Professional Specialty Occupations	18.07	17.41	0.66	1.04
Service Occupations, except Protective and Household	10.44	10.61	-0.17	0.98
Executive, Administrative, and Managerial Occupations	11.80	14.63	-2.83	0.81
Administrative Support Occupations, including Clerical	12.17	17.28	-5.10	0.70
Sales Occupations	7.26	11.36	-4.11	0.64
Protective Service Occupations	0.19	1.96	-1.77	0.10

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990.



This examination of employment skills is a factor in determining labor force opportunities and constraints for future economic development. However, it also must be paired with an examination of local and regional economic trends, which is contained in Section 3.

## 2.2 Physical and Natural Characteristics

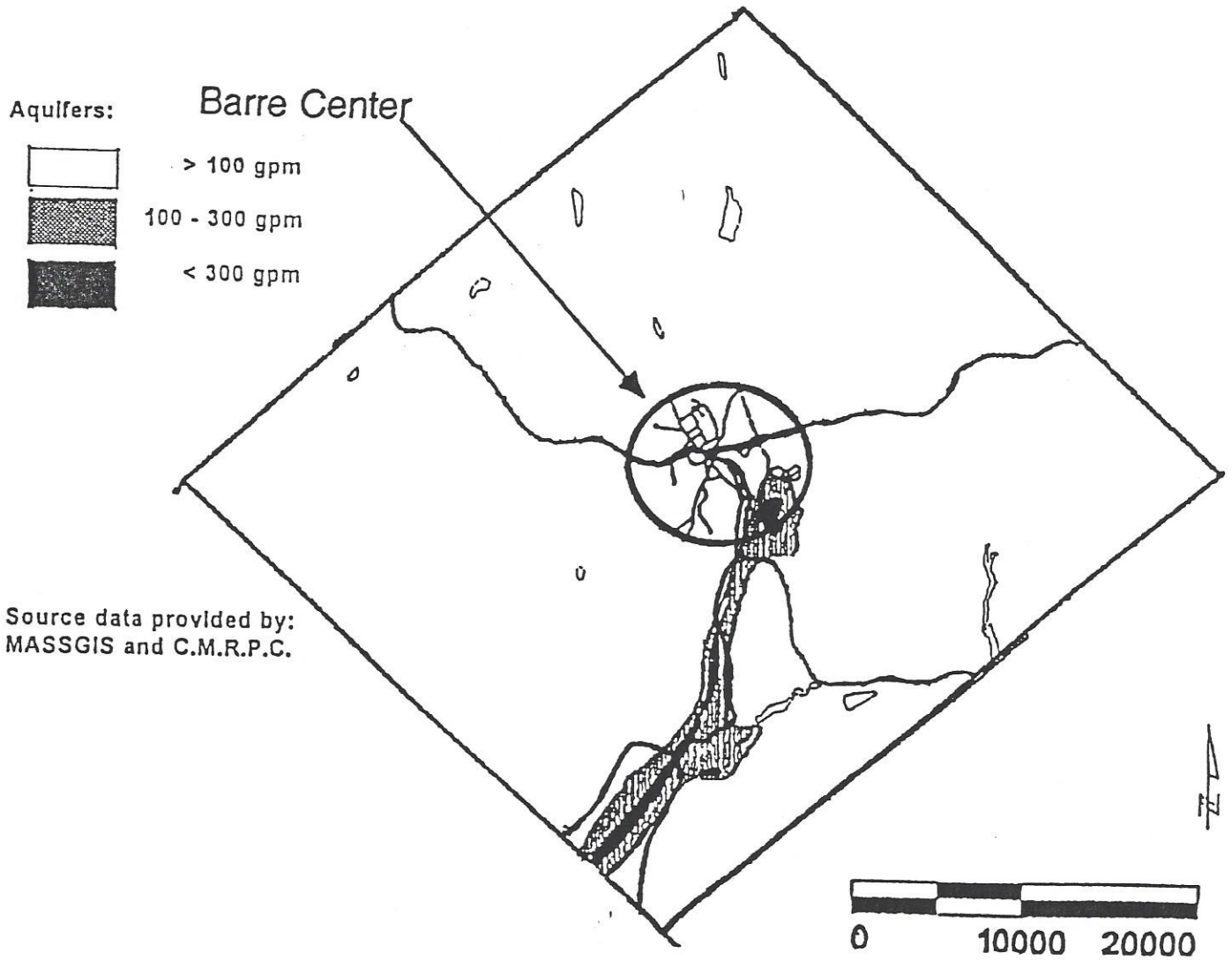
This section will examine the natural and physical characteristics of Barre. Barre's natural resources include high yielding, high quality groundwater supplies, an abundance of protected open space and recreational sites, prime agricultural lands and a considerable amount land which is suitable for all types of development. Water and electricity are plentiful and rail and telecommunications service have recently been updated. Barre's sewer system has some excess capacity available. The road network is sufficient for local access and is somewhat removed from major highways. Barre's existing industrial sites provide both opportunities and serious challenges for redevelopment, but much of Barre's land is involved in residential and agricultural intensive uses.

### 2.2.1 Water Sources and Distribution

A significant resource of the town of Barre is the quantity and quality of its water supply (see Figure 2.6). Based on surface and ground water studies the area has access to more than 5 million gallons of water per day (gpd) and of the 5 million, 2.5 million is of potable quality. Abundant supplies of high quality water is one of the major locational factors for many businesses. However, any withdrawals of greater than 100,000 gallons per day will require regulatory approval by the Department of Environmental Protection

Figure 2.6

# Town of Barre: Water Resources



pursuant to M.G.L. chapter 21G (Massachusetts Water Resources Administration, 1993).

Although, an abundance of high quality water is an asset, the effects of any water intensive business should be carefully evaluated and measures should be undertaken to ensure that the citizens of Barre will be able to enjoy this resource for years to come.

An important consideration for the protection of the ground water supply in Barre is well head protection. Well head protection is the practice of siting wells a certain distance apart from each other so that the production of one well does not decrease the production of other wells. Well head protection in Barre is addressed thoroughly in the 1993 Massachusetts Water Resources Administration report, **Groundwater Potential in Selected Aquifers near the Quabbin Aqueduct**, prepared by Weston and Sampson Engineers, Inc.

Barre has historically been well-known for its water resources and, these supplies have been a major factor in the business and industrial community. The ample supplies of clean water were initially used to grow water-intensive crops such as hemp and flax. The streams and rivers in town spurred the development of industries which harnessed their hydropower to fuel growing mill operations. Two major companies, the Barre Wool-Combing Company and the Charles G. Allen Foundry, chose to locate in the town primarily because of the ample water resources that were available.

In addition to an ample supply of surface waters, Barre is fortunate to have a high yielding aquifer beneath the town (see Figure 2.6). Three of the town's wells already draw 400,000 gpd from this source. Although this resource is a very positive asset for the town, it is located directly beneath the most intensely developed areas. As a result, steps should be taken to carefully

monitor the quality of this water supply to ensure that land uses in the recharge area are not degrading this resource.

In particular, the town's landfill remains precariously near the primary aquifer recharge zone as well as a state identified 21E site at the Barre Wool Combing site. These two particular sites should be of immediate concern and any future development should also ensure that their activities do not threaten the aquifer.

The present water system draws its water from four sources: three sand/gravel wells and one 13,000,000 gallon standby reservoir with a treatment plant (see Figure 2.6). The capacity of the system is 700,000 gallons per day and is presently only running at 400,000 gallons per day. The water lines connect forty-eight businesses, which comprise 10% of the businesses in Barre and 847 homes, which comprise 77% of the residential uses throughout Barre (Heyes 1994).

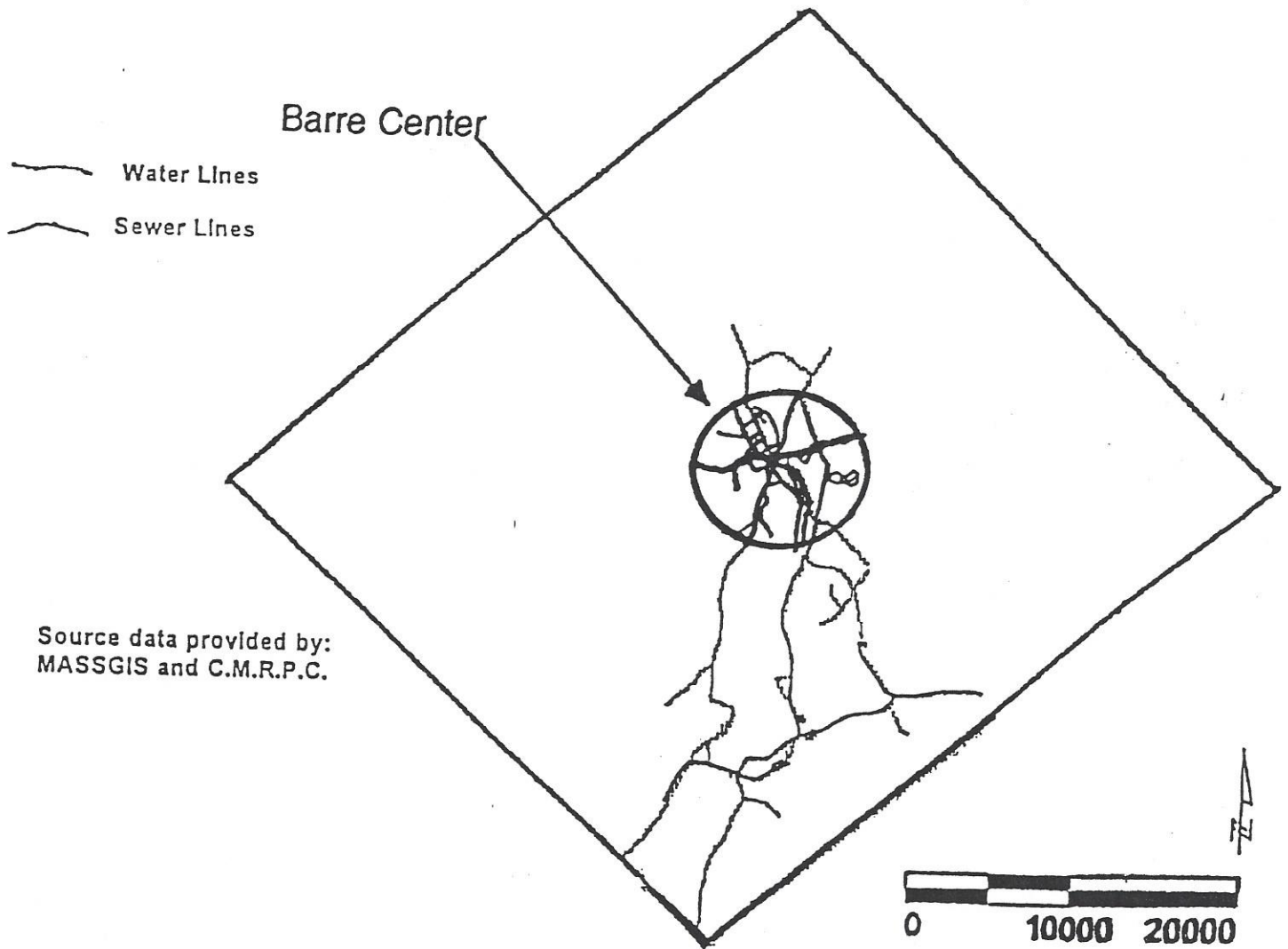
The system currently satisfies the town's needs, but if expansion were to occur outside the center of Barre and South Barre, problems could arise. The water lines follow the paths of the sewer system for obvious reasons, but this is a constraint to new growth (see Figure 2.7). The water pipelines run from the center of town southward. However, if zoning is changed to accommodate new commercial and industrial growth, then the water lines may have to be extended to satisfy developers. The capacity of the system clearly is satisfactory for the town's present needs, but may have to be expanded to adapt to changes in the business community.

### 2.2.2 Sewer

The sewer system is a great asset to the town of Barre. The current sewer system has a capacity to carry 300,000 gallons of sewage per day.

Figure 2.7

# Town of Barre: Water and Sewer Lines



Currently, the town is pumping only 150,000 gallons through the system. Over one thousand households are using the system representing over 60% of the town. The sewer pipeline stretches for sixteen miles and connects three villages (see Figure 2.7). The physical facilities consist of three pumping stations and one treatment plant, which uses an ultraviolet treatment system instead of a chlorine treatment process. So, while the process kills carcinogens, no bleach effluent is discarded in the waste water (Inman 1994).

Although the system is only five years old, the needs of the town could become too great for the present facilities for two main reasons. First, even though the system covers more than 60% of the town's residents, the area covered includes only South Barre and the center of town. If the zoning changed and a developer or a business desired to build outside those two areas, it would cost the individual a substantial amount of money to extend the path of the sewer lines. This could easily discourage new development in town. Second, since the process for the approval of the sewer system took nearly two decades, there will most likely be no expansion in the near future for lack of monetary support, unless private interests offer to fund the project (Inman 1994). Presently, there is no adequate state or federal funding or community support for an expansion of great caliber.

If businesses decide to enter Barre and choose to locate themselves where the sewer lines are already in place, then the businesses will have a state of the art treatment plant at their disposal. But, it could be discouraging to a new business to have to spend some of its budget to connect to a system if they wish to locate outside that area.

### 2.2.3 Roads

The four major routes that reach Barre are Routes 32, 122, 62 and 67 (see Figure 2.8). After examining local traffic studies, it was observed that the traffic on these major roads has steadily increased over the past seven years since a regional traffic count was conducted on Barre (Massachusetts Highway Department 1991). According to a representative from the Barre highway department, the main roads in the town are good to excellent, while the secondary roads still need some repairs (Jankauskas 1994). On the whole, if a business chooses to locate in downtown areas, then it will have easy access to local roads. Barre's access to major highways, however, is potentially detrimental to the town's growth because more major routes such as Route 9, 90 and 290 can not be easily accessed.

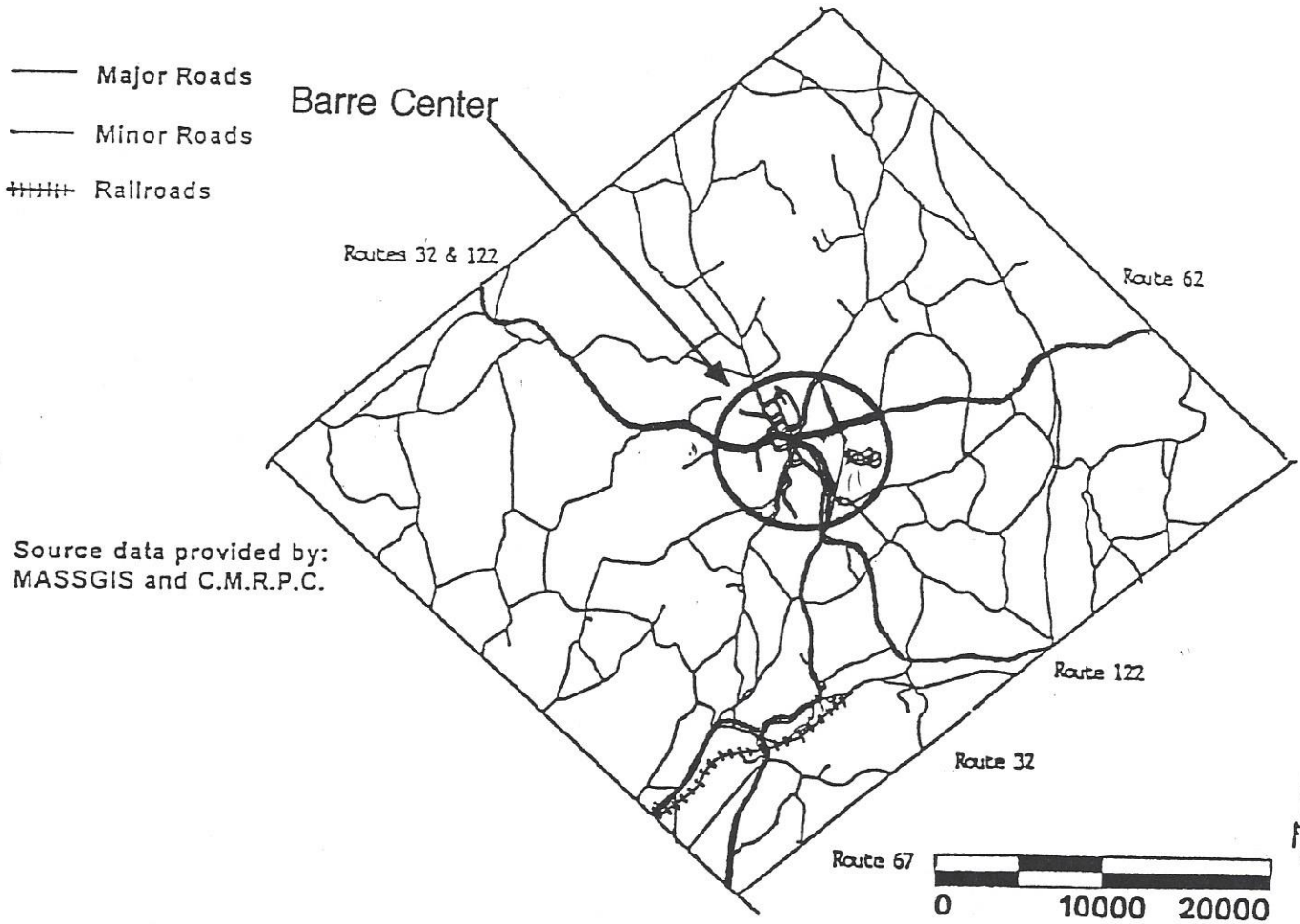
The town's minimal access to major highways could be Barre's greatest detraction, but only to some types of businesses. The condition of roads in town would satisfy the type of business that needs access mainly to local transportation routes for possible deliveries. Barre must emphasize other positive qualities since its roads and access are not particularly attractive to many businesses.

### 2.2.4 Railroad

The Mass Central Railroad operates tracks which originate in Palmer and travel 26 miles north through the towns of Ware, Hardwick, and South Barre. In Palmer Mass Central connects with, and interchanges traffic with the Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) and Canadian National-North America (Central Vermont) railroads. Existing customers receive various commodities including paper, plastic resins, coal, lumber, clay, agricultural feeds and building products. Also available are several bulk transfer and cross

Figure 2.8

# Town of Barre: Transportation Network





dock facilities. Mass Central operates a U.S. Customs bonded intermodal facility in Palmer for the import delivery and export shipment of international line containers. This varied intermodal transportation network operation of Mass Central is unique in providing its customers with multiple delivery and shipping combinations which provide the fastest and most efficient shipping methods available.

Though the railroad could service any business or industry within Barre, it is a particular asset to the Barre Wool Combing Company site which, is directly accessed by the railway (Trifilo and Sawyer 1993).

#### 2.2.5 Electricity

The Town of Barre has convenient access to electricity. Located in South Barre, abutting the former Barre Wool Combing Company property, is an electrical substation. The substation connects potential users to the New England Power Pool through high tension transmitting lines and can provide 13.8 KV of primary electrical power (Trifilo and Sawyer 1993).

#### 2.2.6 Telecommunications

The Town of Barre also possesses the "state of the art" infrastructure for current and future telecommunication needs. Because of security reasons the exact location of telecommunication services within Barre could not be disclosed, however, a representative of NYNEX stated that businesses locating anywhere in Barre could be served. He continued by expressing the enthusiasm and willingness of NYNEX to work with any potential future businesses in satisfying all their telecommunication needs (Zacowski 1994).

Though the "state of the art" telecommunication service available in Barre is not remarkably unique it does distinguish the town from other areas.

This distinction makes Barre a possible location for industries with a reliance on telecommunication capabilities such as software development and commercial printing.

### 2.2.7 Land Use

Land use trends in Barre from 1951-1985 reflect the demographic changes in town that have seen Barre evolve from an agricultural and manufacturing community to more of a bedroom community, where residential uses have come to dominate the local tax base.

Perhaps the most striking change in Barre's land use has been the loss of 2208 acres (28%) of prime agricultural lands. The lost farmland was primarily replaced by low density residential development which grew by a total of 765 acres (288%) in the same time period. Presently, nearly 72.8% of the town remains forested, 20% is agricultural or open space and the remaining 8% is divided amongst urban (3.6%), wetlands (3.0%), mining (1.0%) and recreational land uses (0.1%) (Town of Barre Conservation Commission 1988,12).

### 2.2.8 Open Space

By a variety of methods Barre has managed to set aside several critical parcels of land for protection from development. These lands are for the most part quite accessible to the general public, they are free of charge and offer many recreational opportunities to both residents and visitors to Barre. Activities which are enjoyed at these sites include walking, jogging, hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, and bird watching. The protected open space in Barre is an invaluable asset to the town. Efforts should be undertaken to link critical parcels and an informational guide should be developed to acquaint

residents and visitors with the variety of landscapes and recreational opportunities that are available to them.

### 2.2.9 Agricultural Lands

The rapid loss of prime agricultural lands is a trend which should be seriously addressed by the citizens of Barre. In some respects, this effort has already begun with approximately 6000 acres of farmland currently listed as Chapter 61A Lands. The 61A program grants the owner some tax relief, but this a temporary and fairly weak form of protection for these lands. They can still be purchased for development if back taxes are paid. But, it is an acknowledgment that these lands have agricultural potential and should be looked at further in terms of preservation. In addition, the Chapter 61A program requires an annual management plan to be filed for these farmlands. It is hopeful that these plans will incorporate effective soil conservation practices and perhaps serve as a platform for the attainment of A.P.R. status.

The State of Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program (A.P.R.) is a much more effective system of preserving farmlands. The development rights of prime farmlands are actually purchased by the state. At present, a few of the town's farms have successfully achieved A.P.R. status and there are more which are currently under consideration.

A concerted effort should be made to assist local farmers and to keep these prime lands from sprouting up single family houses instead of local produce and other agricultural products.

### 2.2.10 Existing Industrial Sites

From the beginning the town of Barre has been self sufficient. A sawmill was established in 1753 and citizens grew their own food and made

their own clothes. Flax and hemp were important products. In the 1800's agriculture was still the main economic activity, however, with several streams running through town, Barre became the site of several mills (Massachusetts 1979, 2-3).

The Charles G. Allen Company Foundry was started in 1874 producing agricultural implements. At its height the foundry employed over 200 people, but currently employs approximately 30 people (Barre Gazette 1993).

A second major industry, the Barre Wool Combing Company, was started in 1903 by Lord Barnby of Ashstead, England and grew to employ over 1,000 people. Lord Barnby built most of what is South Barre today. He brought in wool workers from England, Italy, Poland and Lithuania, and built homes around the mill for them to rent. The mill closed in 1974 and has since deteriorated with 20 years of disuse (Dempsey 1986). Prior to 1973 the Barre Wool Combing Company provided 15% of the Town's tax revenues (Massachusetts 1979, 8).

Because of Barre's industrial history there are two important industrially zoned areas presently in the Town of Barre; the Charles G. Allen Company, and the former Barre Wool Combing Company.

The foundry buildings owned by the Charles G. Allen Company have the most potential for immediate reuse. The vacant buildings are primarily wooden. The buildings were vacated last year. They are currently unheated, but in good condition and are being used by the Charles G. Allen Company to store inventory. The buildings are serviced by heating systems, sprinkler systems, and security systems. Water is supplied to the site by two artesian wells on the property owned and operated by the company. The total area of the buildings is 71,000 sq. ft (Goldsmith 1994).

The site is currently in the first phase of the 21E process. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is determining if there are any environmental contamination concerns at the site (Gibrey 1994). If it is determined that there are contamination concerns at the site any future redevelopment efforts could be hampered by increased costs.

The former Barre Wool Combing Company is composed of 10 buildings totaling 508,400 sq. ft. and only one of the buildings is currently being used. The other buildings which have been vacant for a number of years would require substantial renovation in order for them to be reused. The manager of the property, Peter Trifilo, stated it would be economically feasible to renovate only 3 of the buildings. Total area would be reduced to 253,300 sq. ft. by removing all other buildings (Trifilo 1994a).

The site has some positive attributes which would make it attractive to business or industry. As previously stated, the site has access to 13.8 KV primary electrical power which is ample for most industries, and is abutting an electrical substation. The property and buildings are sited on both sides of the Ware river. The central location of the property on the aquifer serving the Town of Barre gives the site access to in excess of 5 million gallons per day of combined surface and ground water of consistent quality, 2.5 million of which is of potable quality. In addition, a spur of the Mass Central railroad services the site (Trifilo and Sawyer 1993).

The site does have barriers to redevelopment. Existing buildings require costly rehabilitation or demolition. In addition, the site is a confirmed 21E, non-priority site as designated by the DEP. The site is currently in the second of four phases of the DEP's 21E process, which involves the assessment of the extent of contamination. This second phase is the longest and the most costly of the four phases (Massachusetts Dept. of

Environmental Protection, 1994). The non-priority designation means, though, that the site may not require clean-up (Gibrey 1994). Although the situation pertaining to the status of the Barre Wool Combing Company is confused, as of August 1991 the DEP had classified the material in question at the Barre Wool Combing property as Type 1 compost and that it is not hazardous. Further study concerning these sites should be performed by the town in order to better understand the situation and the appropriate measures that need to be taken by the town to avoid this unfavorable situation in the future.

### **2.3 Cultural and Recreational Resources**

The cultural resources of Barre are numerous, and help to provide Barre with a high quality of life. The town has two town commons; one located in Barre Center and the other in Barre Plains. The former is surrounded by the Town Hall, the Woods Public Library, several businesses and restaurants and the Barre Players Theater. This common provides Barre with the classic image of a New England small town. The second common has limited development and is presently utilized by small businesses and residences.

The Barre Players is the only troupe outside of Worcester in Worcester County that owns its own theater. The theater group only acquired the space in 1993. Prior to this move, the Barre Players performed in the Town Hall. The theater holds approximately two hundred people and the Barre Players, which were established in 1956, perform thirty-five performances each year, many of those sold out. Half of the audience for this amateur group comes from out of town (Paquin 1994).

The town also has various agricultural interests. The town holds an Annual Agricultural Fair for both youth and adults in July at Felton Field, which covers approximately twenty acres. The Fair lasts only for one day and events include a cattle show, arts & crafts, and ox and tractor pulls (Clark 1994). There are several dairy and produce farms still in existence. There are also farm businesses such as the Many Hands Organic Farm and the Hartman's Herb Farm. Agricultural-related businesses in Barre, such as specialty foods and farm supplies, have development potential through the utilization of farm products that come from within the town.

The loss of the Hotel Barre was a serious blow to tourism as it had anchored the tourism industry in town. However, tourist-related businesses are still important in Barre, despite this loss. There is a Ware River Line, a tourist train that runs from Ware to Barre on Sundays in the summer months, and also by special charter. Currently, the train usually stops in Barre only to provide passengers with a rest stop, but the operators of the line would welcome the opportunity to provide their passengers with more activities in Barre (Pease 1994). The Barre Pine Ridge Ski Slope serves day-trippers who desire to ski or snowboard. There is also a golf course in town called the Cold Brook Golf Course, which could be viewed by businesses as an amenity. Visitors could be accommodated at the two Bed & Breakfasts located in and about town.

A final attraction is unique and spiritual. The Insight Meditation Society (IMS) was founded in 1975 as a nonprofit organization that would provide a place for meditation. The organization is located on eighty acres of land in Barre and operates a retreat center with some retreats lasting longer than 118 days (Hastings 1994). IMS relates to Barre's marketing strategy

because of its success and satisfaction with the surroundings. It illustrates the appeal of Barre to visitors as a place of rural retreat.

## 2.4 Regional Resources

Although Barre in many ways lies in an isolated location, at the western edge of Worcester County and cut off from the west by the Quabbin Reservoir, it nevertheless is affected by the characteristics of nearby communities. As a final component of this resource inventory section, the studio team has chosen to look at Barre within the broad Central Region of Massachusetts.

There are several competitive advantages found in the Central Region of Massachusetts. First, there is an extensive ground highway system accompanied by rail service, which allows for access to deep water ports in Rhode Island. In addition, the Worcester Airport was designated a primary airport in 1986, which is the highest service classification. Second, educational resources are plentiful in the region. There are fifteen higher educational institutions located in this central region which offer a wide range of opportunities for higher education. Third, several facilities that participate in the transfer of research technology to commercial applications are located in this part of the state (Executive Office of Economic Affairs and the University of Massachusetts 1993, 136). These connections can allow for the development of partnerships between the two sectors of the market that depend on each other the most, which can foster success and expansion. Lastly, the workforce skills and availability are an incredible resource to this region of the state. There is a large pool of skilled labor in key industries such as plastics, machinery and fabricated metals (Executive Office of Economic Affairs and the University of Massachusetts 1993, 136). Barre's own resources,



combined with these regional assets, will support a range of economic development options.

### 3 Economic and Governmental Situation

The current state of the economy in Barre and its region, along with the manner in which the town regulates businesses, provides the framework in which economic development can occur. This section outlines the opportunities and constraints in the current situation.

#### 3.1 Employment and Income

Barre has a relatively high rate of unemployment, 8.7% as of September 1993 (see Figure 3.1). The average annual wage paid at establishments in Barre in 1991 was \$21,807 (Worcester Business Journal 1993, 9). This was lower than the average annual wage for Massachusetts, which was \$25,200 in 1989 (Massachusetts Dept. of Employment and Training 1991, 1).

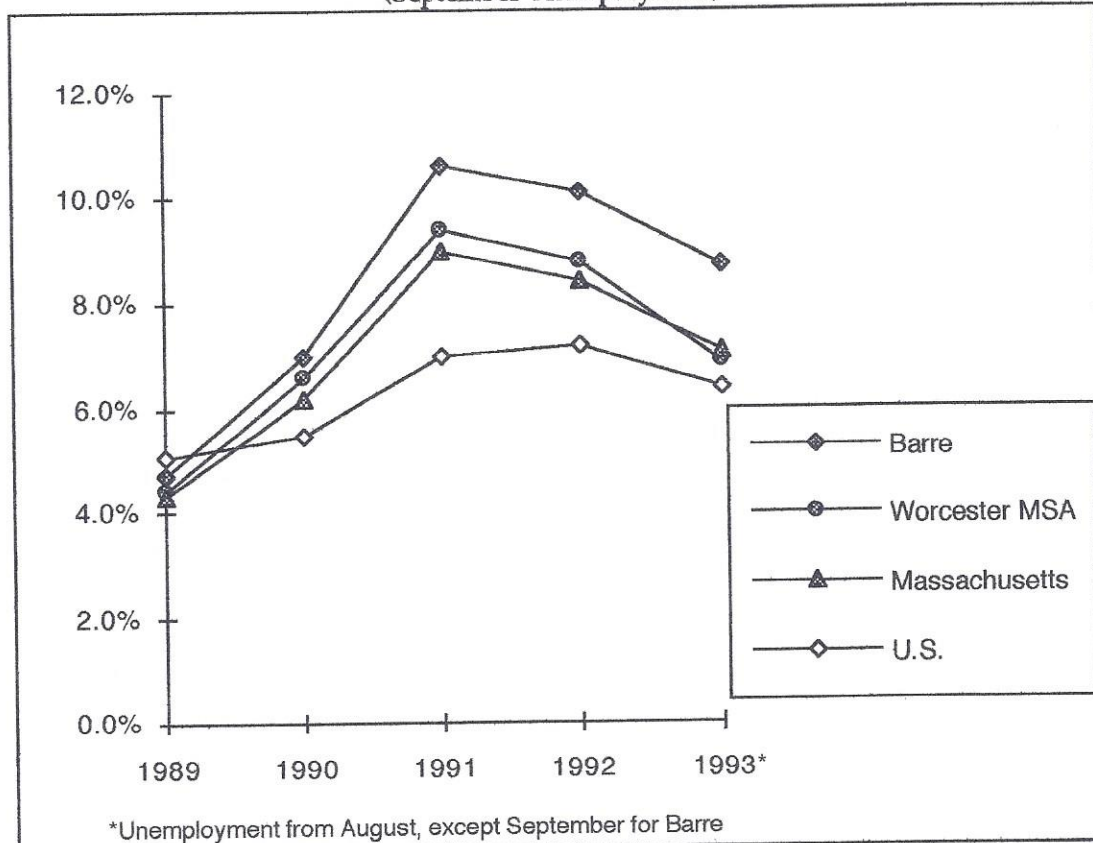
Barre's region continues to rely heavily on manufacturing, both for primary employment and to support secondary industries. Manufacturing accounts for 18.4% of the jobs in Massachusetts, but 28.7% of the jobs in the Northern Worcester Service Delivery Area (SDA). (Miscellaneous plastics accounts for more than a fifth of these manufacturing jobs.) Growth in its other industries depends principally on growth in manufacturing. (Massachusetts Dept. of Employment and Training, 1993b, 12-13)

Unfortunately, jobs have been declining regionally in sectors other than the service sector of the economy (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.3 shows that locally, the largest major industry division in terms of employment has been government. The single largest employer currently in town is the Quabbin Regional School System. Manufacturing has shown a steady decline. The wholesale and retail sectors have shown a

slow but steady increase in employment, even during the recession years. Services showed a dramatic increase up until 1988, but declined during the recession. Nevertheless, the level of service employment in Barre was higher in 1991 than 1982.

**Figure 3.1**  
**Unemployment Trends 1989-1993**  
 (September Unemployment)



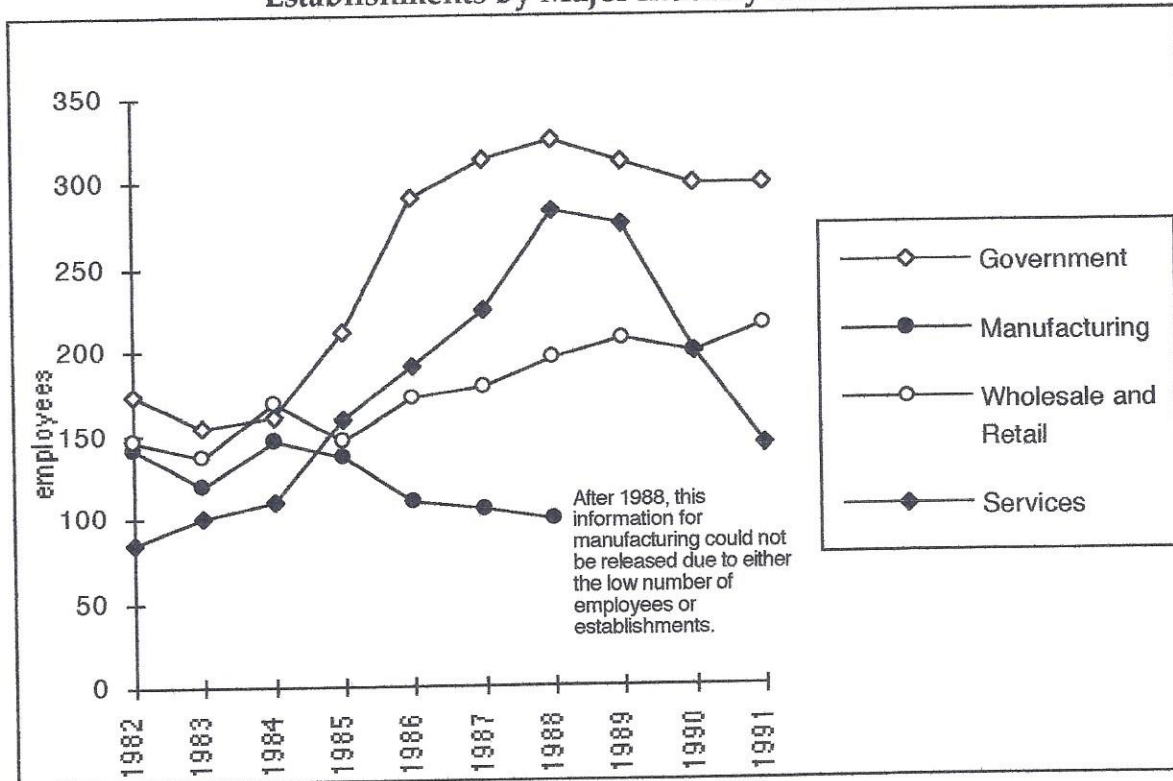
Source: Massachusetts Dept. of Employment and Training 1992, 1.

**Figure 3.2**  
**Regional Changes in Employment**  
**Goods vs. Service Producing**

Worcester MSA	% change in employment 1992-93
Goods Producing	-3.6
Service Producing	+6

Source: Massachusetts Dept. of Employment and Training 1993

**Figure 3.3**  
**Average Annual Employment at Barre**  
**Establishments by Major Industry Division**



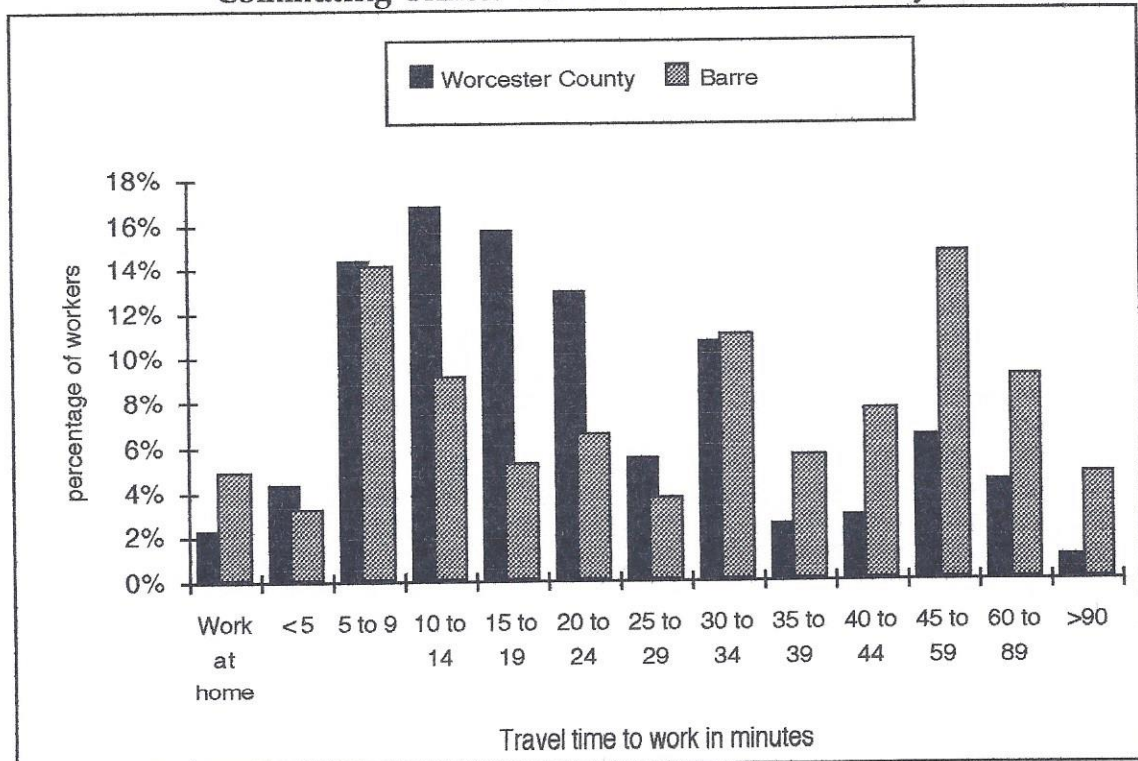
Source: Massachusetts Dept. of Employment and Training 1992

Thus while manufacturing has been important in the local and regional economy, it has been a declining sector, and there is no evidence that this trend will reverse. The largest private employment sector in Barre currently is the wholesale and retail sector. The EDIC should continue to attempt to attract manufacturing to Barre in situations where it is possible. However, the evidence of manufacturing's decline implies that Barre should attempt to diversify its economy. This suggests that the EDIC should adopt a strategy that includes attracting promising non-manufacturing industries to Barre.

### 3.2 Travel Time to Work

Many people in Barre commute beyond Barre and its immediately neighboring towns to cities such as Worcester, or Gardner. Some commute even as far as Boston. Figure 3.4 shows the commuting time for workers in Barre and Worcester County. A greater percentage of the workers in Barre make commutes of 30 minutes or more than in its neighboring region. The difference in percentages is especially noticeable in commutes that are even longer.

**Figure 3.4**  
**Commuting Times: Barre vs. Worcester County**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990.

### 3.3 Industry Projections

In order to compile a list of industries toward which Barre should market itself, one must examine the resources of the town; the growing

industries at the state and the regional levels; and other industry types chosen because their locational needs are complementary to Barre's existing resources. Next, the resource offerings of the town are compared with the locational needs of those industries. As a result of this examination process, some of the growth industries became less favorable marketing options for the Town of Barre for a variety of reasons such as projected employment trends and the locational needs of individual industries.

### 3.3.1 Statewide Industry Projections

In order to offer any type of marketing strategy for the Town of Barre, the projected growth industries in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts were explored. Massachusetts is the host to four industrial clusters that have helped define the state's unique character. The four clusters are health care, information technology, knowledge creation, and financial services. Major industries such as plastics, textiles and apparel, industrial machinery and equipment, paper and paper related products, fabricated metals and tourism do not fit neatly into any of the clusters, but are still an integral part of the Massachusetts economy (Executive Office of Economic Affairs and the University of Massachusetts 1993, 85). Although the plastics industry plays a major role in the state's economy presently, employment in that industry is projected to decline by as much as 19% by 2005 because lower production costs can be found elsewhere (Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training 1993b, 28). Ten promising business sectors were offered in the 1993 edition of *Choosing to Compete: A Statewide Strategy for Job Creation and Economic Growth*: advanced manufacturing technology; advanced materials, which includes innovations in plastics, metals, composites, biomaterials, electronic materials, and ceramics; biotechnology; educational technology;

environmental technology; high performance computing; marine science; software; telecommunications technology; and transportation technology (Executive Office of Economic Affairs and the University of Massachusetts 1993, 102-104).

Many of the industries that Barre's region has traditionally relied upon, which include plastics and manufacturing, are predicted to continue their decline or face stiff competition in the future. Many of the industries expected to grow the fastest are not ones to which Barre has traditionally played a host, such as the computer software industry or biotechnology. In Figure 3.5 the industries projected to be the fastest growing in Massachusetts into the next century are listed and include computer software and business services (see Figure 3.5).

**Figure 3.5**  
**Fastest Growing Industries in Massachusetts: 1991-2005**

Industry	Projected Growth Rate of Jobs
Computer Software & Related	90%
Residential Care Services	62%
Offices of Health Practitioners	52%
Credit Reporting Agencies	50%
Job Training & Vocational Services	49%
Accounting & Services	49%
Research & Testing Services	49%
Legal Services	48%
Nursing Homes	41%
Health Services	39%
Misc. Business Services	39%
Management & P.R. services	38%
Libraries & Voc. Ed. Schools	36%
Child Care Centers	35%
Individual & Misc. Social Service	35%

Source: Mass. Dept. of Employment and Training 1993b, 13.

### 3.3.2 Central Massachusetts Region Industry Projections

Barre is located in the Central Massachusetts Region which contained 729,674 people in 1990. The region covers 57 towns and four cities. In this region, from 1988 to 1991, business and social services jobs declined while employment in the fields of health, private education and engineering services was on the rise. The industries identified as having an above average regional concentration are computers and office equipment, biotechnology and medical instruments, nursing care facilities, manufacturing, printing and publishing, food products, and defense-related manufacturing. The areas of future growth potential are health care services, biotechnology and fiber optics (Executive Office of Economic Affairs and the University of Massachusetts 1993, 131-132).

To obtain an even clearer picture of Barre's situation, the research team chose to examine the industries within the Northern Worcester Service Delivery Area (SDA), an area that includes the Town of Barre and covers approximately the northern half of Worcester County, that had the highest levels of employment.<sup>†</sup> These are shown in Figure 3.6. From these data, the research team developed a sense of the types of employment people are engaged in within the half of the larger region where Barre is located. As is discussed in the Preliminary Marketing Strategies section, one of these industries, commercial printing, has been identified by the research team as having potential for expansion in Barre.

---

<sup>†</sup> The towns in this Massachusetts Dept. of Employment and Training region are Ayer, Bolton, Berlin, Groton, Harvard, Shirley, Townsend, Ashburnham, Ashby, Fitchburg, Leominster, Lunenburg, Westminster, Pepperell, Gardner, Hubbardston, Templeton, Winchendon, Barre, Clinton, Princeton, and Sterling.



**Figure 3.6  
Top Ten Industries in the Northern Worcester SDA**

Industry	Number of Employees
Schools (secondary & elementary)	5470
Miscellaneous Plastics	4440
Eating & Drinking Places	4330
Local Government	2890
Hospitals	2730
Grocery Stores	2590
Nursing & Personal Care Facilities	2030
Commercial Printing	1870
Communications Equipment	1410
Computer and Office Equipment	1410

Source: Mass. Dept. of Employment and Training 1991a.

### 3.4 Government and Regulations

The barriers to industrial growth in Barre are threefold. First, the existing zoning regulations are not conducive to industrial development or expansion. Second, the existing permitting process discourages potential developers. Third, the tax base is too narrow to allow for a stable economy because the town's revenues are mostly obtained through Residential property taxes. The research team examined these obstacles and offered suggestions to improve upon these predicaments.

#### 3.4.1. Zoning

The current zoning bylaws for the Town of Barre include areas zoned for Industrial, Business/Commercial, and Limited Business as well as Residential districts. Additionally, overlay districts have been developed for flood control and aquifer protection.

Parcel-specific analysis is not possible due to a lack of information. It is apparent however, from interviews and initial map

analysis that the existing lands zoned for industrial and business purposes are not conducive to any significant economic growth for the town in terms of new industrial or business sites.

The capacity of the few existing industrial sites is for the most part being fully utilized for their designed purposes. Sites which are now vacant are in need of major rehabilitation before any new business or industry can occupy the sites.

Considering the town's desire to attract new businesses to the area, it would seem that more lands need to be designated for industrial and business development.

#### 3.4.2 Permitting Process

The Town of Barre is interested in the expansion and diversification of the town's tax base. Through numerous interviews the permitting process associated with new or expanding businesses was recurrently cited as an unusual barrier to potential new businesses in Barre.

While conducting phone and personal interviews of existing businesses in Barre and local citizens, the studio team learned that people had been discouraged from starting their own business or expanding an existing business because of the disorganization of the permitting process. Still other respondents had mentioned that although they had followed the process closely, approval had taken a considerable amount of time.

Perhaps the best example of the current state of the permitting process in Barre is exemplified by the fact that the town Planning Board and Zoning Board only recently settled a long-standing lawsuit concerning which entity had authority in specific situations (Barre Planning Board Meeting 1994).

For a town, such as Barre, interested in expanding and diversifying its tax base, the permitting process for new businesses should not be an unusual barrier. The permitting process in Barre is currently an unusual obstacle to new businesses and should be examined. The process should be organized and efficient so that it is convenient for locally desirable new businesses to locate in Barre while protecting the interests, character and environment of the town (see Section 4.4).

### 3.4.3 Taxes

The Town of Barre uses the same tax rate of 14.72% for Personal, Residential, Commercial, and Industrial property. The in-migration of first-time home buyers coupled with the decrease of industry in Barre has dramatically increased the tax burden on Residential property as a revenue source for public services within the town. Between fiscal years 1985 and 1989, Residential property taxes have risen from 72% of Barre's total taxable property to almost 87% (Flynn and Goff 1990, 4). As of 1993, this trend was continuing with Residential property taxes, including open space, accounting for 87% of Barre's total tax base, while Commercial, Industrial, and Personal property accounted for only 13%. Of this 13%, Commercial property accounted for 7% of the total tax base, and Industrial Property taxes made up only 2% (Town of Barre and Office of Selectmen 1993, 2). These figures, however, do not take into account the recent merger of the foundry operation of the Charles G. Allen Company with an out of town competitor. Barre is probably more dependent on Residential property taxes for revenue than these figures suggest.

Perhaps through changes in both the zoning regulations and the permitting process, Barre will diversify its tax base, which will help to stabilize the town's economy.

## 4 Preliminary Marketing Strategies

The research team recommends to the Barre EDIC a variety of economic development strategies that target different aspects of the economic development problem. The first strategy consists of a listing of industries which the EDIC could target and attempt to attract. The second is a preliminary tourism and recreation strategy; a plan to attract to Barre a flow of visitors capable of sustaining additional businesses. The third strategy consists of recommendations for reforming the local permitting process. The final strategy identifies some sites in town that could host new economic development.

### 4.1 Targeted Industries

After compiling a resource inventory for the Town of Barre and examining both state and regional growth industries and particular industries that had locational needs complementing Barre's available resources, the research team developed a preliminary, multi-faceted strategy for the Town of Barre that includes several different industries. Although some of the industries discussed below have the potential to be large operations, there are many that could be smaller businesses.

This section is not a prediction of what industries will actually locate in Barre in the future or a thorough listing of all the industries that the Barre EDIC could conceivably attract. Many industries were examined as potential assets to economic development in Barre. As a result of this extensive examination process, some industries were not favored for a variety of reasons. Educational and training activities was an industry sector that was not offered for Barre because of the lack of a highly populated region from which to draw potential clientele. Nursing homes did not appear to be a

viable option for the town because there is no hospital or similar medical facility located in the area with which they could be associated. And even though the plastics industry is listed in the top ten industries in the northern Worcester Service Delivery Area the plastics industry is predicted to decline in the near future and so would not be among the preferred industries to offer for the Town of Barre to include in any future marketing strategy.

The following industries are, however, ones with greater than usual promise for Barre. The discussion of these industries is intended to provide preliminary information that will act as a starting point in the formation of a set of more detailed, industry-specific targeting strategies.

#### 4.1.1 Water Dependent Industries

For a number of industries, water is a significant part of daily operations. These industries can be categorized as needing large quantities of water, high quality of water, or perhaps a combination of the two. Of the two factors, water quality is a more important locational factor than quantity (Mullin et al. 1992, 35).

*Paper Recycling.* As concern for the environment has become an important issue in today's world, the recycling of our waste stream has become an important industry. A major part of this industry is the recycling of paper products. It is common place both in the home and at work to collect newspaper, white office paper, cardboard, and various other paper products for recycling. Massachusetts has a long history as a paper manufacturer, and it seems natural that the tradition should carry on to paper recycling.

Paper recycling operations use water in de-inking processes and to breakdown the paper fibers. The amount of water used in the recycling

process is dependent upon the specific recycled paper product being produced. Recyclers producing specialty paper products such as stationary use larger amounts of water than do newspaper recyclers.

It is important for a paper recycling operation to insure that there will be a supply of paper to be recycled. With Worcester only 25 miles away, there is a convenient source of paper to be recycled. The recycling operation could also benefit by the ready access to the Mass Central railroad in South Barre. The railroad could be advantageous in the import of paper to be recycled and the export of the finished product to various markets.

A concern that would need to be addressed before a paper recycling operation should locate in Barre would be the handling of sludge created in the process. Though the Barre sewer system is not currently operating at full capacity, further studies would have to be done to investigate the possibility of expanding the treatment facility to accommodate the waste produced by such a paper recycler (Mullin et al. 1992, 36-37).

*Non-Carbonated Drinks.* Non-carbonated drinks such as fruit juices, ice teas, and mineral waters have become popular as is evident by any trip into a local convenience store. Massachusetts has benefited from this market growth and is ranked fifth nationally in value of export shipments of non-carbonated drinks.

Although some companies locate their production facilities near the raw material, others ship a concentrate to a production facility where most of the water is used. Both water quantity and quality are major locational factors for non-carbonated drink manufacturers. Water is used not only as an ingredient, but also in other areas of the production process (Mullin et al. 1992, 37).

Barre could be an attractive place for a non-carbonated drink manufacturer to locate because of the available quantity of quality, inexpensive water. For example Middleton, Massachusetts charges Ocean Spray \$2.47 per 100 cubic ft. of water, and Littleton, Massachusetts charges VeryFine \$1.97 per 100 cubic ft. of water (Mullin et al. 1992, 38). In Barre, both the Barre Wool Combing Company site and the Charles G. Allen Company property have private wells. Water costs to Ocean Spray or VeryFine at these two locations in Barre would be the cost of extracting the water from the ground.

*Biotechnology.* Biotechnology is a recent technological industry using genetics to develop various new products such as disease or drought resistant plants. Massachusetts is a leader in biotechnology, and most of Massachusetts biotechnology companies are located in or around the research institutions in Cambridge and Worcester.

The quality of water is a very important locational factor for biotechnology companies. Biotechnology companies must treat all incoming water to make it pure. The most expensive part of water processing is the particulate removal process. Water clean of particulates means lower processing costs.

According to available literature concerning biotechnology, the most important locational factor for biotechnology companies, however, is the availability of low cost real estate financing. This is because Biotechnology companies are heavily regulated by the Federal Food and Drug Administration and the process can cost the companies the majority of their available capital. Money that a biotechnology company can save in locating



will help them to survive the FDA approval process (Mullin et al. 1992, 44-45).

Barre could potentially be an attractive site for biotechnology. Barre is only 25 miles from Worcester, an established biotechnology center, and has state of the art telecommunication capabilities. In addition, Barre has a large supply of clean ground water and has the potential to offer biotechnology companies a low cost site.

However, a biotechnology company, because of FDA regulations, could not use existing buildings of an existing industrial site in Barre and would have to build a new building on either existing industrial zoned land, or new industrial zoned land. Barre could make the locating process quicker by streamlining the permitting process or by having planned site approval for an industrial park before a biotechnology company desires to establish itself in Barre (Nichols 1994).

*Salty Snacks.* The Cape Cod potato chip company in Hyannis, Massachusetts is one of the best selling brands in New England. Salty snack producers are not large water users compared with previously mentioned industries. However, a supply of good quality water is important in the production process of the salty snack, and water is also a major part of the heat sealing process of packaging the product. The company is doing well and expects to continue to do well in the future even though it incurs expenses by having to truck its waste away, and to truck in all its potatoes from Maine (Mullin et al. 1992, 40).

Based on Cape Cods' success in the salty snack food industry, Barre has the potential to attract salty snack producers. In addition to an inexpensive supply of quality water, the Barre waste treatment facilities could handle the

amount of waste produced. In addition, Barre is in close proximity to a large market and major distribution center with Worcester only 25 miles away, and railroad access to import raw materials and export finished products.

#### 4.1.2 Computer Software

Computer software firms are extremely self-contained companies. They do not take much from the surrounding community nor are they influenced by many attributes towns can offer them. One of the main factors controlling their choice of location is the preference of the founder or the Chief Executive Officer for an area for personal reasons or for the quality of life which can include physical, cultural and recreational opportunities in the area. Primary location determinants do not include state government incentives and taxes; the availability of venture capital or proximity to educational institutions (Haug 1991, 875). Low rents are important, however (Mullin 1993, 62). Barre has a lower cost of real estate than the Boston or Worcester areas (Neylon 1994), where many computer software firms are located. This could be a competitive advantage for Barre in attracting these firms.

These software companies are influenced in their facility site selection process by the availability of a suitable facility and ample space for expansion (Haug 1991, 875). Barre has large plots of land which are connected to infrastructure and buildings that could be utilized by this flexible industry. Barre also offers a state of the art telecommunication infrastructure that is becoming increasingly important to information technologies.

#### 4.1.3 Printing and Publishing

Many of the workers in Barre have skills in traditional manufacturing. Printing and publishing is a traditional manufacturing industry which is doing well while other manufacturing jobs are declining. It is one of the few manufacturing industries which is predicted to continue doing well in Massachusetts, up 11% in jobs from 1991 to 2005 (Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training 1991b, 28). It is also currently one of the top ten industries in terms of jobs in Northern Worcester County (Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training 1993a, 15). Typically, printing and publishing have located in large cities. However, in the past 20 years printing and publishing jobs have moved away from unionized cities to non-unionized rural areas (Massachusetts Division of Employment Security 1987, 4).

Printing and publishing is made up of nine segments. These nine segments are Commercial Printing, Newspapers, Books, Blankbooks and Bookbinding, Periodicals, Miscellaneous Publishing, Printing Trade Shops, Greeting Card Publishing, and Business Form Printing. The largest and fastest growing segment of printing and publishing is Commercial Printing. This segment of the industry is technologically oriented and highly competitive. Commercial printing includes catalog and brochure printing and businesses survive by specializing (Massachusetts Division of Employment Security 1987,10).

Commercial printing could be viable in Barre. The telecommunication capabilities of Barre make the town attractive to a commercial printing operation as the level of technology and specialization increases in this industry and there is a de-emphasis on location versus capabilities and speed.

In addition, the business would have access to an educated and trainable workforce familiar with manufacturing industries.

#### 4.1.4 Mail Order Companies

Companies which specialize in mail-order sales need very little from the community in which they are situated. The number one concern is related to phone service, since their entire business depends on that type of communication. Telecommunications access is a must and the ability to utilize fiber optics would be an additional benefit (Blaisdell 1994). Shipping and distribution are not major issues because those types of services are offered at specialized sites that have better transportation offerings.

The factors that influence location choice are not easily predicted. One reason could be that the Chairperson of the Board grew up or resided in a certain community and there are familial ties to that region. Companies may also look for signs of the presence of a good quality of life in a selected few communities. Other reasons range from the available talent pool in the region to tax incentives (Blaisdell 1994). Many of these factors are not easily planned for in a community situation. Luck plays a large role in this type of industry's location choices, but Barre could advertise its telecommunications capabilities and amenity offerings to market itself to the mail order industry.

#### 4.1.5 Business Incubators

There are several different success factors for a business incubator. First, on-site business expertise must be available to incubator managers and tenants. Second, there should be access to financing sources within the community in which the incubator is located. Third is the amount of community support, which is an important asset to the company. Fourth are

entrepreneurial opportunities such as a network between major firms, emerging firms, and universities. In addition, entrepreneurial education for the future, when the incubator tenants will do business outside the incubator, should be offered. Last, a connection to a university could provide a mechanism for commercializing university research (Smilor and Gill 1986, 23).

Barre has several of the qualities that a business incubator could utilize in their business activities. Its small-town interpersonal network has the potential to develop a community-wide system of support for businesses because of the potential for jobs replacing lost jobs within the community. Barre has access to universities and colleges located both in Worcester County and in all of Massachusetts which can provide entrepreneurial information and the potential link between university research and commercial success. Barre must market itself as a community that would welcome and foster the growth of new industries in order to attract business incubators to the town.

#### 4.1.6 Business Services

Business Services is one of many suggested classification of industries which has potential to succeed in Barre and offer the economic development that the town is seeking. The classification of business services include such activities as legal services, accounting, computer data processing, general consulting, and "back" offices, which are smaller versions of a company's main office located closer to employees homes.

There are three reasons why business services are predicted to prosper in Barre. First, business services such as legal services, accounting services, computer data processing, etc., like other service related businesses, have enjoyed significantly higher growth rates in Massachusetts than other

industry sectors (Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training 1993a, 3). Specifically, computer software and related services, accounting, legal services, and miscellaneous business services have been identified as four of the 15 fastest growing industries in Massachusetts. Computer software and related services is predicted to increase by 90%, accounting by over 45%, legal services by over 45%, and miscellaneous business services by over 35% (Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training 1993a, 7).

In addition to these projections, the second reason recommending business services for Barre is statistics that suggest businesses engaged in business service activities are making more money per business in the Barre area than in the state as a whole. For example, business consulting services has 1.09 times as many business consulting services establishments in the Barre area as compared to the state as a whole, and these business consulting services establishments are making 3.49 times more money as compared to business consulting services establishments in the state as a whole. These kinds of statistics are known as location quotients (LQ). Other business service location quotients comparing the Barre area to Massachusetts follow: Computer and data processing services has an establishment LQ of 1.00, but a receipt LQ of 2.04, and business services as a whole has an establishment LQ of 1.08, but a receipt LQ of 1.54 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1987).

The third reason to encourage Business Services as part of Barre's economic development is that current Business Service establishments in Barre are perceived as doing well, which supports the previously mentioned location quotient data (Neylon 1994).

Projected industry growth in Massachusetts, Economic Census Data, and first hand data from Barre all indicate that Business Services are an industry with potential growth in Barre and the State as a whole, and that

Barre has an opportunity to fill a vacuum in that growing market. Business Services seem an ideal industry to fit the needs of Barre. Business Services could locate in existing or sympathetically designed buildings providing the expanded tax base the town seeks, without affecting the town character which residents wish to protect.

#### 4.1.7 Agriculture Diversification

Agriculture occupies nearly 20% of Barre's land. This figure has decreased steadily since 1971 (MassGIS 1985). Over the past decade, dairying in Massachusetts has also been on a steady decline. The Department of Food and Agriculture and the Extension Service are working together to aid in the stabilizing of the dairy industry in the Commonwealth through measures such as placing dairies at first-priority status in state farmland preservation programs and encouraging the farmers to supplement their incomes through the production of hay, vegetables and specialty foods. Diversification is an important concept for Massachusetts farmers because with the distinct regional climate, the only way farmers have been successful in the past was to use land-intensive practices to produce a wide variety of farm products (Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture 1988, 20).

Barre farms need to branch out to utilize related farming practices and products so that they do not become solely dependent on only one type of farm production. Farms could expand to include specialty foods production, which has become very popular in the state over the past decade. In order to keep up with the pace of agricultural trends, the farmers of Barre need to either work together or diversify their individual products.

#### 4.1.8 Retail and Consumer Services

Although it seems unlikely that Barre will become a major center of commercial activity in the near future, there are retail and consumer service niches available in Barre. Employment in the retail and wholesale sector has been steadily increasing in Barre during the recent past, even during periods of recession (see Figure 3.3). Since it is unrealistic to expect any one set of data to give a complete picture of the potential for retail and consumer service establishments in Barre, a number of sources were used. These sources were:

- *Economic Census Data.* The 1987 Economic Census, the latest Economic Census currently available, contains figures on the number of establishments and the amount of receipts in various retail and service sectors. The smallest area available that included Barre was the Worcester Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), minus the city of Worcester. The figures, establishments, and receipts in this area were compared against those of Massachusetts as a whole by way of a location quotient. Location quotients measure the extent to which something is concentrated in a region when compared to a larger whole. Of special interest were those sectors that had a higher concentration of receipts than of establishments.
- *Commercial Marketing Data.* The Lifestyle ZIP Code Analyst provides demographic and lifestyle information, broken down by ZIP code, giving a profile of the interests and characteristics of people in Barre (Standard Rate and Data Service 1992). This source provides an estimate of the percentage of people in Barre with an interest in various activities, and provides an indexed comparison of this percentage to the Boston Metro Area (including all of Worcester County) and the United States as a whole.
- *Interviews.* Team members asked townspeople with whom they conducted interviews questions asking what types of businesses they



wanted to see in town and what types of businesses they thought would be successful in town. Some types of retail businesses were mentioned often and this information was considered in this analysis.

Following are the niches accompanied by a description of the rationale for their selection.

*Electrical Repair Shops.* The main reason for the selection of this sector was the large concentration of receipts in this classification relative to the number of shops (a receipt location quotient of 3.09 versus the relatively low establishments location quotient, 0.93). This indicates that electrical repair shops in Barre's region were taking in an unusually large amount of money with an relatively small number of shops at the time that the Census was taken. This classification includes establishments primarily engaged in the servicing and repair of electrical and electronic equipment and electrical appliances, including such things as washing machines and vacuum cleaners, but excluding radio, television, computer and refrigerator repair (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1992, 404).<sup>†</sup>

*Apparel.* Several interviewees in town lamented the fact that there was no place in town at which to buy some basic clothing items. However, the information from the Economic Census on apparel and accessory stores is less promising for this sector. The location quotient for establishments was .85, while the location quotient for sales was .78. A store fulfilling this need

---

<sup>†</sup> In more detail, this category includes electrical appliance repair, electrical business machine repair, aircraft electrical equipment repair, except radio, electric razor repair, electric tool repair, electrical instrument and tool repair service, electrical instrument and tool repair service, electrical measuring instrument repair and calibration, hearing aid repair, electrical medical equipment repair, office machine repair, except computers and typewriters, sewing machine repair, telephone set repair, washing machine repair, and water heater repair. This list is intended to suggest the breadth of the category, not to recommend each of these activities individually as appropriate for Barre.

might do better within the context of the next category, general merchandise stores.

*General Merchandise Stores.* In Barre's area at the time of the Economic Census, general merchandise sales had an above-average concentration of sales, but a below-average number of stores. (The location quotient for sales of general merchandise stores was ahead of establishments, 1.28 and .85, respectively.) A general merchandise store could meet a portion of the retail needs of Barre residents who now must travel long distances to shop. An attractive rural-oriented general merchandise store could also benefit from an increased number of visitors to town.

*Specialized Food Stores.* Agriculture is still an important activity in the Town of Barre, and produces some other products in addition to the traditional agricultural product of dairy products. There is currently an existing farmer's market. A store selling some combination of high-quality local and non-local specialized food products might attract in-town shoppers as well as visitors. More than one quarter of the householders in Barre are estimated to have an interest in gourmet cooking or fine foods, 32% higher than the U.S. as a whole and 5% higher than in the Boston Metro Area (Standard Rate and Data Service 1992, 161-163). The manager of the local supermarket assumes that he is losing in-town customers because of his limited selection of food items (Trifilo 1994b).

*Nurseries and Garden Supply Stores.* Forty-five percent of the residents in Barre are estimated to have an interest in gardening, 31% higher than the U.S. and 36% higher than the Boston metro area (Standard Rate and Data Service 1992, 161-163). In addition, a nursery with plants growing on site would build on Barre's established agricultural base.

recommendations will help Barre base decisions on potential new development in Town.

**Figure 4.1**  
**Total number of jobs created by creation of**  
**one new job in selected industries**

New Construction	3.27
Textiles	1.88
Primary Metals	2.24
Motor Vehicles and Equipment	2.35
Wholesale Trade	1.93
Retail Trade	1.46
Finance	2.19
Hotels and Amusement	1.89
Health Services	1.67
Eating and Drinking Places	1.41
Business Services	1.57

Source: Lefkowitz 1993

In Figure 4.2 the values describe the effect that 100 tourists, on the average, have on employment levels in a community. It is a resource to evaluate the estimated effect of tourism on Barre which is a component of the research teams preliminary marketing strategies. For example, with 100 tourists a day in Barre an estimated 1.31 new jobs will be created in Construction.

Though Barre may not be able to, or may not want to, attract 100 tourists a day to town the values support the research teams evaluation of the potential economic benefit of tourism. A coordinated effort to market Barre to tourism can have positive impacts throughout the economy of the Town.

**Figure 4.2**  
**What 100 Tourists a Day Mean to a Community**  
**(jobs created)**

Construction	1.31
Manufacturing	7.05
Transportation	10.13
Communication and Utilities	1.72
Wholesale Trade	2.88
Retail Trade	38.41
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	3.98
Hotels and Amusement	22.67
Eating and Drinking	29.41
Services	16.84
Other	0.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>134.74</b>

Source: Lefkowitz 1993

#### 4.4 Permitting Process Improvements

##### 4.4.1 The Role of the Barre EDIC

Originally created as a liaison to a major developer, the Barre EDIC now has the choice of fashioning a new definition of its role in economic development in Barre. The EDIC could take on a variety of roles with respect to the future of economic development in the Town of Barre.

The group could serve as an advisory board for citizen groups or prospective developers to offer clarifications on misunderstandings having to do with new development. The group could also act as an advocate for certain development proposals and could even take the position as a process organizer to help developers avoid unnecessary delays or problems. It could advocate for certain reforms in the process or content of Barre's regulations. The EDIC could market the town to the types of firms that it would like to see in Barre. By hosting fund-raising events, writing grants, or applying for financing, the EDIC could also serve as a funding source for groups who

require additional funding for activities to promote or engage in economic development in Barre.

One way to assist Barre in the process of economic development would be for the EDIC to alter the traditional roles and responsibilities that town offices have maintained in the past. To further intensify its role as a liaison between businesses and the town, the EDIC could take a more active role in the levels of town government by acting as a liaison between the town's building inspector, planning, zoning, and select boards. This setup would allow for town offices to interact and share information regularly to avoid miscommunications and overlap of tasks. To decrease the level of confusion between the planning and zoning boards, the town could give the EDIC the role as an advisory board that would examine and critique developer's proposals. It could recommend improvements to a developer's proposal or speedy approval of development proposals if it could determine that it met all town requirements. The EDIC could act as a developer. This situation would serve the dual purposes of bringing well-thought out development proposals to the town and also to gain knowledge concerning the actual processes that meet potential developers in town.

These are a variety of suggestions for the roles the EDIC could take as part of Barre's economic development plan for the future. These roles are not mutually exclusive and would potentially be more effective if combined or connected. The EDIC needs to take a major role in the future development of Barre in order to lead it in a direction for which the town is most prepared.

#### 4.4.2 Changing Barre's Regulations

One option available to the Town of Barre is revise the content of its land-use policy to better reflect its current economic development goals. It is

premature to try to state what the exact content of those goals should be, since it is necessary that they reflect the will of the town. However, it is possible to lay out options for the process, and the pros and cons of some sample planning tools.

Barre's current zoning regulations are more than twenty years old. Barre's economy more than twenty years ago was different than it is today. The Barre Wool Combing Company was still in operation. The Hotel Barre still stood. Barre was less a part of the regional economies of Worcester and Boston. Many technological innovations that are transforming the national economy had not yet become widespread. In any new zoning scheme, the town should try to account for new and changed forms of business and industry.

Currently, most of Barre is zoned for residential use, and does not facilitate many forms of economic activity. Most business or industrial activity is grouped into a few broad categories. The majority of industrial zones are located at those sites that either are already in use or are in need of rehabilitation. Other business activities are limited to relatively small portions of town. The current zoning scheme in Barre is based upon a strict separation of uses by broad categories.

While this strict separation may be desirable for some uses, it may be unnecessary for others. Any rezoning process should include the development of a clear rationale for any restrictions. Barre may be able to limit noxious uses to a limited number of sites in town while opening up new areas to other kinds of business and industry that are less noxious. Regulation of height, bulk, lot size, and setbacks may be equally well suited to the concerns of residents in some cases as restrictions on use. Some business and industry might be attracted to greater flexibility in siting while some

restrictions or creates new development rights within itself. While this adds somewhat to the number of zones in town, it is less time-consuming than developing an entirely new town-wide zoning scheme.

One example of an area that might benefit from a special economic development district is the area around the Barre Wool Combing Co. property. The restriction of certain industrial uses of particular concern to residents or for environmental reasons, along with the specific permitting by right of other industrial uses could reduce the uncertainty associated with the redevelopment of this site. A plan for capital improvement for the area (addressing roads, sewer, or other infrastructure), either before or during development of the district, could help to address the needs of particular targeted industries. This is only a roughly-developed example. The development of special economic development districts will require its own planning process.

In summary, a wide-ranging planning process would give the Town of Barre the opportunity to ensure that its regulations and control complement each other and function well as whole. While such a process may include issues other than economic development, the Barre EDIC could ask that the town choose economic development goals and choose a plan that meets the needs of those goals. Some features may need simplification. Some regulations may need to include a wider variety of business and industry. A more narrowly focused strategy to develop economic development plans for certain districts would be less comprehensive, but would require less time and resources. Dealing with economic development in a planning and revision process would enable the town to develop an approach for dealing with economic development that is in line with today's situation.

Such a planning process and its effective implementation will require detailed knowledge of Barre on an ongoing basis. Outside groups working for short periods of time, such as the research team, can provide fresh insights into town strengths and weaknesses and can identify some under-considered strategies for economic development. However, outside consultants in general often suffer from a lack of intimate and detailed knowledge of a town and its people. Hiring a planner or an economic development specialist on at least a part-time, ongoing basis would allow either the town or the EDIC itself to have access to technical assistance throughout the development and implementation of an economic development plan. This would help the EDIC or the town to cultivate an "institutional memory" and to react on an ongoing basis to changes in circumstances and new development proposals.

#### 4.4.3 Changing Barre's Permitting Process

Currently the permitting process is identified as a barrier to economic growth in Barre. Changes in the form, interaction, and authority between Town agencies and the public could make the permitting process in Barre more efficient and accessible. A more efficient and accessible permitting process would help to change the permitting process from a negative attribute of the Town of Barre, to a positive attribute of the Town. Suggestions for improving the permitting process in Barre include: hiring a planner, consolidation of the permitting process, clear delineation of authority among town agencies, increased communication between town agencies, education of town employees, and increased citizen participation.

As stated earlier, the hiring of a planner would offer consistency over time and provide both potential businesses and the Town with a single



resource concerning development with the Town. This person could act as a liaison between potential businesses and the community.

The consolidation of the permitting process in one physical location in Barre such as the Woods Memorial Building would make the permitting process very accessible to potential new businesses by limiting time spent working through the permitting process from one town agency to another. This fragmentation of the permitting process leads to repetition of requirements, conflicting interpretations of permitting requirements, and confusion over who has authority regarding permitting matters. The consolidation of the permitting process in one physical location could also include the consolidation of the permitting process to one person or one Town board. Again, this would limit unproductive time, conflicting interpretations, and confusion over authority.

If the hiring of a planner or the consolidation of the permitting process are not probable options for the Town of Barre then the clear delineation of authority among Town agencies could help to improve the permitting process. A clear delineation of power among Town agencies as to their scope of authority pertaining to the permitting process would help to reduce the time taken for permitting and the conflicting interpretations. In addition it is attractive to a potential developer to know beforehand what requirements need to be met. This would be met by knowing what agencies has the authority to decide such permitting issues.

The following changes to the permitting process do not involve major changes to the framework of the Town government. Increased communication and increased citizen participation could begin with personal actions and therefore more attractive to implement early.

Increased communication between Town agencies would allow the existing government structure improve the handling of the permitting process. Increased communication could help to consolidate economic development efforts and decrease repetition and conflicting goals among Town agencies.

The creation of a booklet which details to potential developers the step by step permitting process in Barre would be a simple way to reduce the unusual barrier to development that now exists in Barre that does not involve a lot of time, resources, or risks.

The education of Town employees involved in the permitting process could also be a simple way to improve the permitting process in the short term. The education of the employees would help them more effectively address issues pertaining to the permitting process that may arise. The education of town employees could also be tied into the goal of clarifying the permitting process.

Citizen participation could improve the permitting process by increasing participation. Citizen participation could be part of the permitting process at an earlier stage than the Town meeting where approval or disapproval is currently decided. Consistent citizen participation would decrease wasted Town efforts toward development not wanted by the public, and would help ensure development that is responsive to the citizens of Barre.

#### **4.5 Growth Management**

One of the primary factors motivating the Town of Barre to seek out new economic development has been the effects of two trends on the town's tax base. The first trend has been the loss of industries in town. This

problem is the primary focus of this project. The second trend is the pressure that new residential development has put on town services. The town may also want to investigate ways of controlling growth. Some planning tools for growth management are outlined here as possibilities for further study and action.<sup>†</sup>

Many early attempts to control growth in rural and urban communities were based upon the use of large-lot zoning. While large-lot zoning does have the effect of limiting development by raising housing costs, it often results in a sprawling form of development, to which it may be more expensive to provide town services than more compact forms of development. Agricultural zoning is a form of large-lot zoning that is less conducive to sprawl. Agricultural zones have very large minimum lot sizes, large enough to support full-time farms. They restrict residential uses severely, usually limiting them to only one or very few per each farm-sized lot. This form of zoning would tend to promote the use of low-cost land uses in Barre, and also could be one aspect of a plan of agricultural preservation in Barre. However, this tool may cost some farmers a large part of the development value of their land.

Promotion of compact development can be one way to reduce the cost of town services. To this end, many growth management tools seek to concentrate development near already developed areas of town while limiting development in outlying areas. Sometimes development can be linked to the provision of water and sewer, public recreation lands or other public services. Development can be limited in the absence of these public

---

<sup>†</sup> Discussion of growth management tools here does not necessarily imply state authorization for their use in Barre at this time. The legal status of growth management tools may vary from state to state, depending on enabling legislation and court decisions.

services. A capital improvements program indicates the schedule by which the town will provide public infrastructure to new areas, thereby controlling the rate at which new development can occur. Promotion of clustered and planned unit development, which concentrate development on a site, leaving greater amounts of open space, can lower the cost of infrastructure on site.

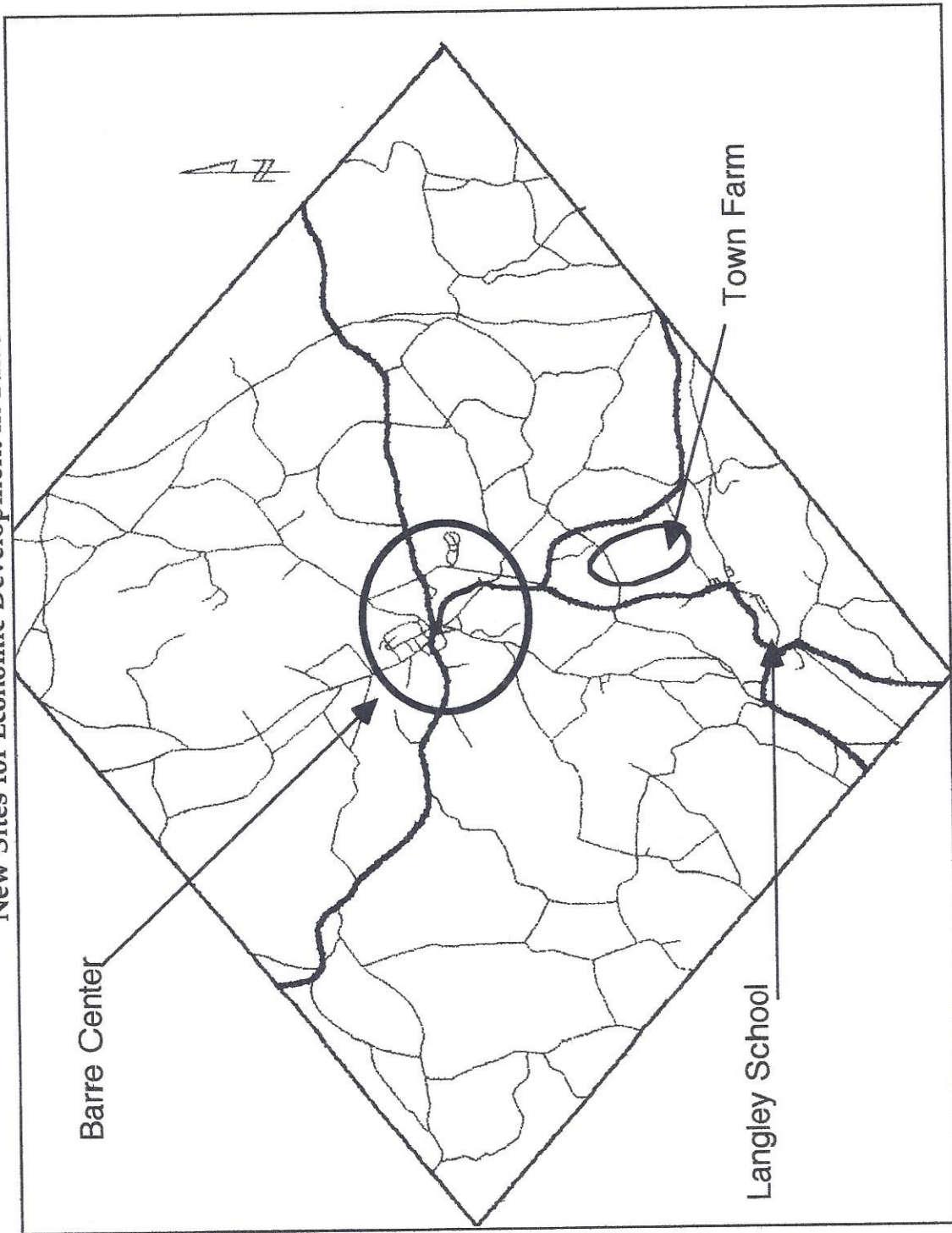
Finally, there are some growth management tools which seek to directly address the fiscal impacts of new development. Impact fees require developers to pay a one-time charge for provision of off-site public services to the extent to which the need for the services can be linked to the development if the development will also be the beneficiary of the service improvements. An improvement district tax can separate out a newly developing area of town to be taxed for the provision of new infrastructure not needed and not used by the rest of town.

Growth management should be the result of a careful planning process. Often there are exclusionary side effects of growth management controls, and these effects should be carefully considered. This overview is meant to be a starting point for a discussion of growth management tools in Barre.

#### 4.6 New Sites Strategy

The limited amount of land in Barre zoned for industrial and other business uses has already been mentioned. In addition, those industrially zoned lands previously used for business in Barre but currently underused or unused, such as the former Barre Wool Combing plant, have obstacles for some forms of redevelopment. It is logical that Barre should seek out some new sites serving different economic development roles.

Figure 4.3  
New Sites for Economic Development in Barre



We have identified three locations that could serve positive roles in Barre's future economic development. These are Barre Center, the Langley School and the old town farm property (See Figure 4.3). None of these sites is without constraints, but each is worth further investigation. Over time, other sites, privately controlled, may also become a factor in economic development. However, these sites were chosen as examples in part because the Town of Barre can affect their future development in unusually significant ways.

#### 4.6.1 Barre Center

This old site could be the focus of new economic activity in Barre. It is compact, attractive, and has a surprising amount of space to support new businesses. An advantage of having office and retail businesses locate in Barre Center is the interaction that can occur. An office worker may buy lunch at a restaurant that is nearby. Shoppers are given a pleasant place to shop and, if retailing can be encouraged, they are more likely to buy more than one thing. Visitors to town, attracted to Barre's traditional New England town common, would find a place to spend their money, and people living in one of Barre's more densely populated areas would have retail opportunities within walking distance. Currently, however, there is only a limited amount of space in the center where businesses are permitted. With the exception of the area immediately around the common, Barre Center is zoned residential.

In the current real estate market, the older, larger houses in Barre Center are selling slowly (Neylon 1994). Many of the houses in Barre Center might be attractive for small offices, studios, or some kinds of shops, thereby supporting their value. Although Barre Center is heavily built up in

comparison to the rest of town, there is still plenty of room for some higher density uses. Vacant lots on Barre Common, such as the old Victorian Hotel Barre site, provide an opportunity for further development in this area. An example of a recent development of office space in Barre Center is the Lighthouse Block. However, while larger projects may be slower in coming, conversion of existing structures provides an opportunity to take advantage of the economic development potential of many small or start-up businesses. Mixed-use zoning provides the opportunity to establish a more vibrant, economically active center for Barre.

If Barre opens this area up to more kinds of development, the town must keep a careful watch on this development in the Center so that it does not ruin the character of the town. While Barre should consider loosening its restrictions on some uses in Barre Center, if it does so it should establish regulations for such considerations as signs, building materials and size, lights, noise, screening of trash and machinery, and parking, so as to ensure that commercial uses enhance rather than destroy the character of Barre Center. A review process will be necessary to administer these regulations. The criteria for review must be clearly stated and illustrated, and the board that administers the guidelines must be knowledgeable about them.

The Town can take some immediate actions to enhance the attractiveness of Barre Center. The town should make sure that Barre Center is easy to find from any point in the town with a system of attractive and clear directional signs. These signs should encourage visitors to come to Barre Center. Once in Barre Center the town would have the opportunity to leave a positive impression in the visitors mind by putting its best foot forward.

#### 4.6.2 The Langley School

The old Robert Langley Elementary School, now owned by the town, sits four years vacant, and will likely deteriorate if nothing is done. Currently this site is zoned residential, and the only interest in the building that the town has received so far has been to tear it down and use the land for houses or a sand and gravel operation (Cirelli 1994). Neither of these uses would contribute to the town's tax base in the way that the town is seeking.

Rezoning the site and promoting it for office uses would better serve the goal of economic development.

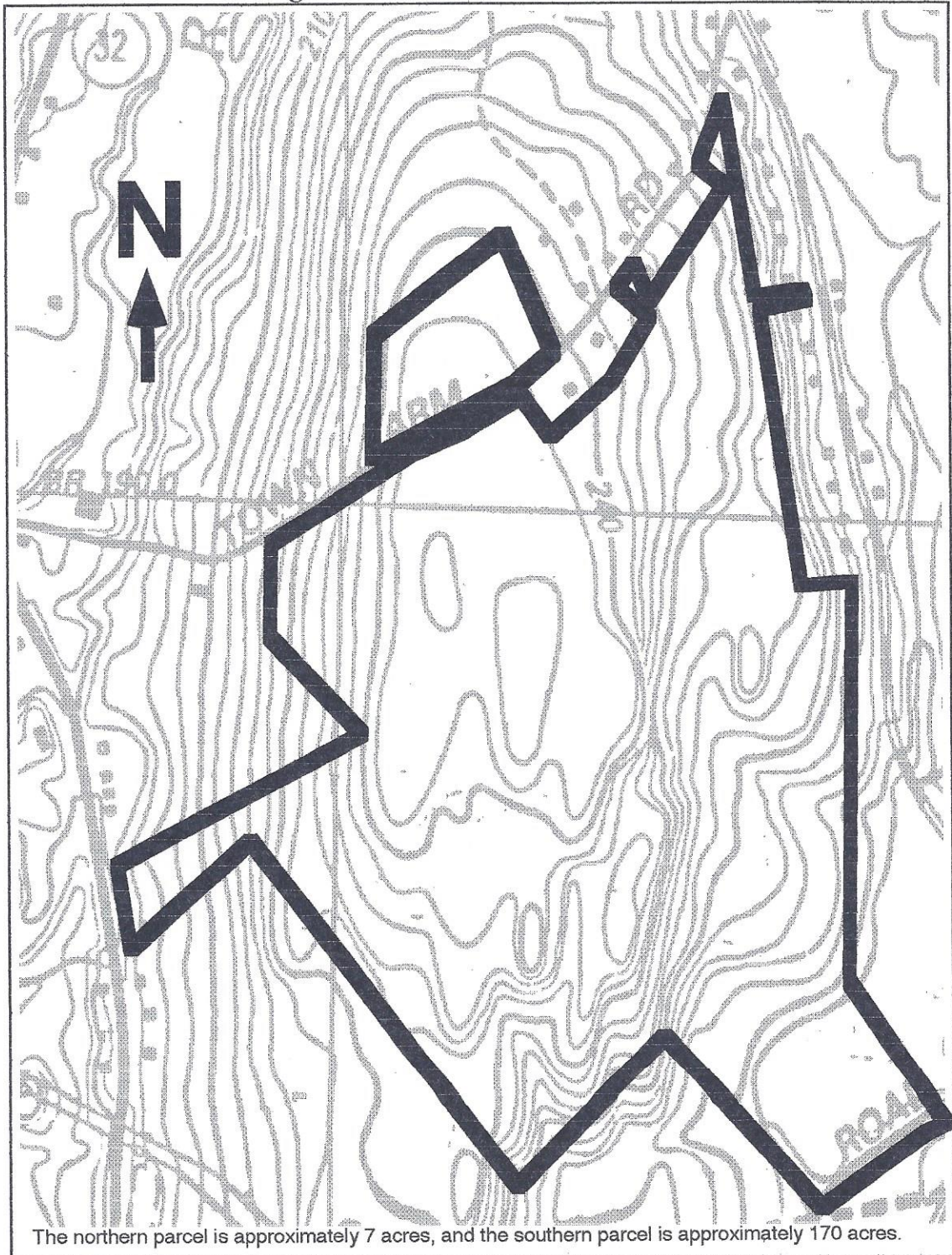
This building needs some physical rehabilitation before it can be reused. The roof needs some work and the boiler needs replacing. In addition, there is some asbestos in the basement, primarily around the boiler (Cirelli 1994). The town may need to offer a strong incentive for this building to be redeveloped, such as offering the building for free, but otherwise this property will likely wind up as a tax-base liability or as an eyesore. It is important that incentives result in actual reuse. The Langley property should only be offered free if there is a significant, secure financial commitment for its reuse.

#### 4.6.3 The Town Farm

Once serving those in economic need in Barre, The Town Farm property could now serve the town in its economic need. This parcel is shown in Figure 4.4, overlain on a topographic map. Its major advantages are its access to water and sewer lines, its proximity to Barre's major roads, its views, and its 170+ acres. By maintaining control of this property and being actively involved in its potential development, the town has the opportunity to overcome one of its major obstacles to new business, which is its confusing



Figure 4.4--The Town Farm Parcel



Sources: U.S.G.S. topographic map and Town of Barre Assessor's Map.

and uncertain regulatory process. By involving the town from the start in creating a plan from which the public can benefit and which it will support, Barre can offer a site where certain businesses could locate with fewer obstacles and uncertainties.

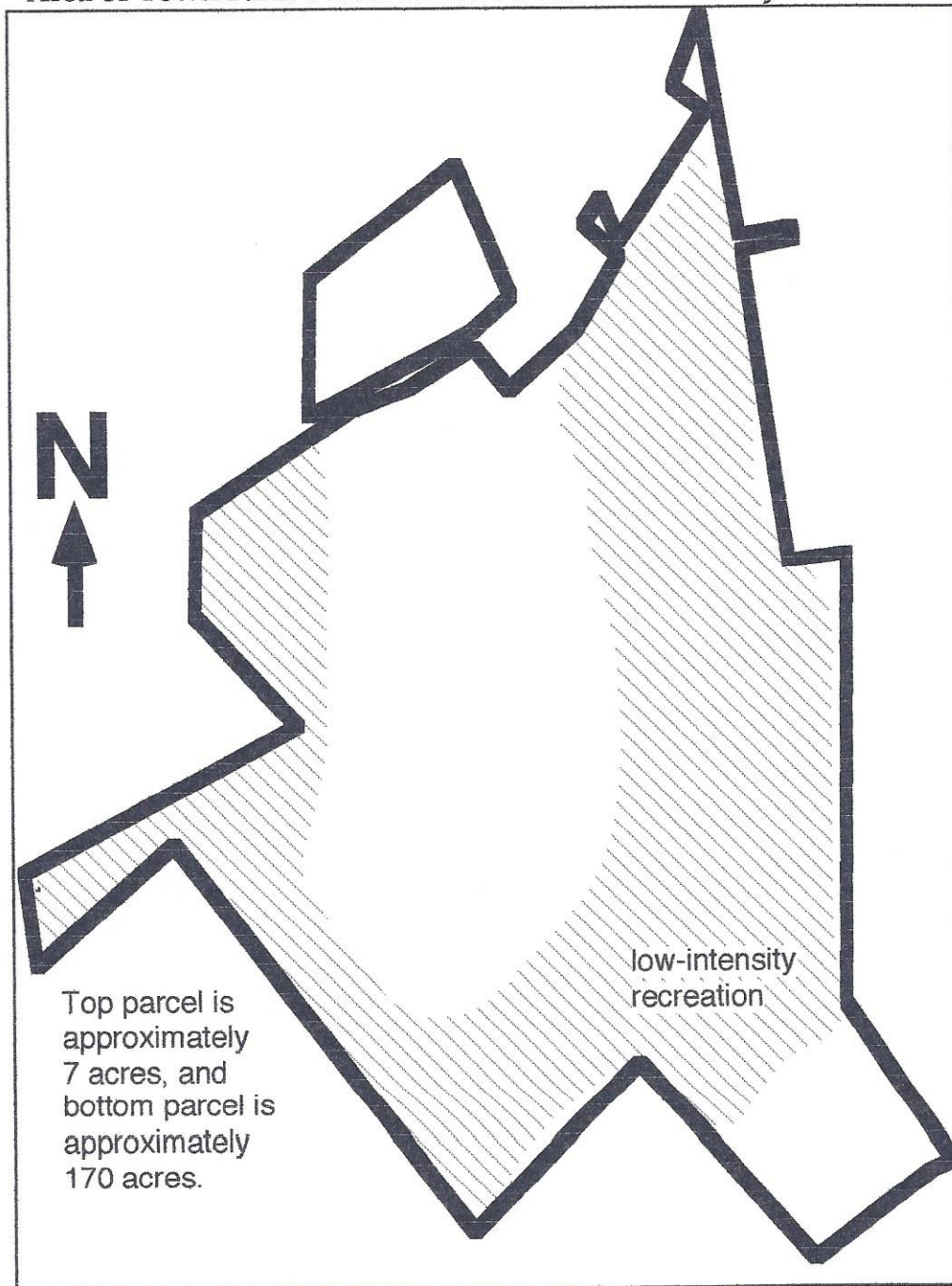
The main barriers to development on this site are the steep slopes covering portions of the site, the residential zoning, the potential for unsightliness, and the loss of some public open space. The key to overcoming the drawbacks of the site so that the town may take advantage of its potential will be the careful siting of multiple uses on the property as part of a planning process that involves a broad spectrum of townspeople.

This is a property that could serve a variety of uses. The development of public uses on this site is probably necessary in order to win public support, and can also be an aid in economic development. Public uses should occupy the greater portion of the site. The informal trail system on site might be enhanced to attract local and regional walkers, runners, cross-country skiers, and mountain bikers to town. Relatively low-intensity uses such as these would be best suited for much of the site, where steeper slopes predominate. Figure 4.5 shows the approximate boundaries of this area.

The plateau area of the property is the area best suited for more intensive uses. Some of these could be medium-intensity recreational uses. A lawn and simple stage for outdoor performances might be provided. This amenity, which could accommodate larger performances than the town's bandstand, could be promoted by the town. Townspeople may also be able to identify other needed recreational facilities.

The portion of the property where construction of any kind will likely be feasible is also on the plateau area on either side of Town Farm Road. Office or some kinds of manufacturing uses might locate here, especially

Figure 4.5  
Concept Diagram:  
Area of Town Farm Parcel Reserved for Low-Intensity Recreation



Approximate boundaries.

businesses that might find unattractive the heavy industrial character of Barre's existing industrial sites. One part of this area that might otherwise be left unused is the old dump section. Preliminary inspection reveals that this was not a major landfill, but mainly a dumping ground for white goods (appliances) which were discarded over a steep slope. By either cleaning up or capping this concealed mess, this portion of the property could become attractive for business development. It is already served by a rudimentary access road, and portions of it are relatively clear.

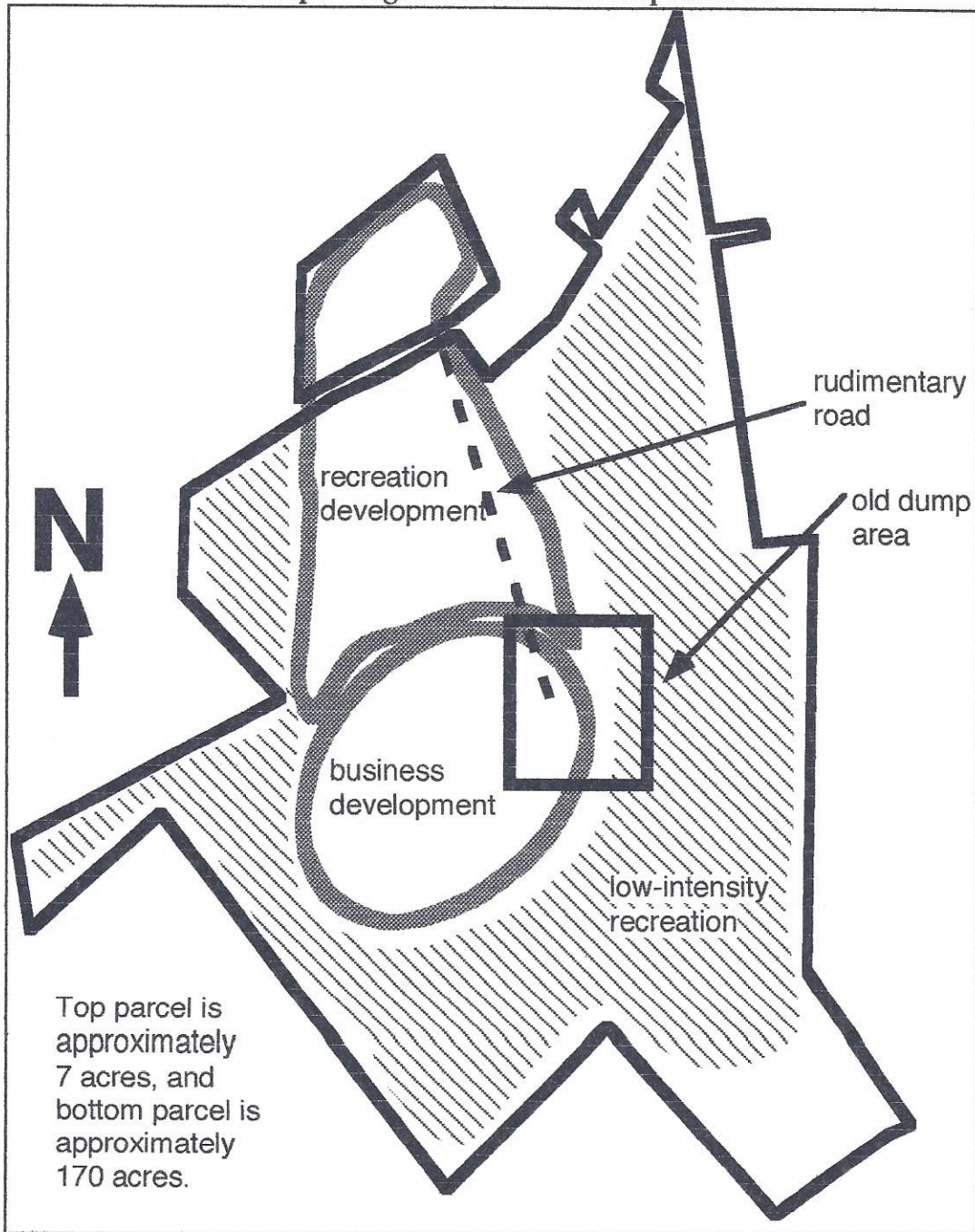
Other portions of the plateau area might be developed with buildings carefully sited so as to preserve as open space those areas that the town might consider most valuable, such as the former farm fields. It would be critically important for the town to maintain an active role in any such development in order to make sure that it does not detract from the town character. The location on a high point in town illustrates the importance of balance. An office building on the site could command attractive views of the surrounding countryside from upper stories. However, it would be important for the town to insure that such a building did not break up the visual line of the ridge or dominate the view of the plateau.

Figures 4.6 and 4.7 show two conceptual divisions of the plateau area between business and recreational development. Others would doubtless come out of a thorough site planning process. The first concept seeks to conceal the business development as much as possible from the road and from adjacent parcels. The second concept seeks to maximize the contiguousness of the medium-intensity and low-intensity recreational areas.

It is essential that there be a thorough planning process associated with the site and that in any subsequent construction the town work with a

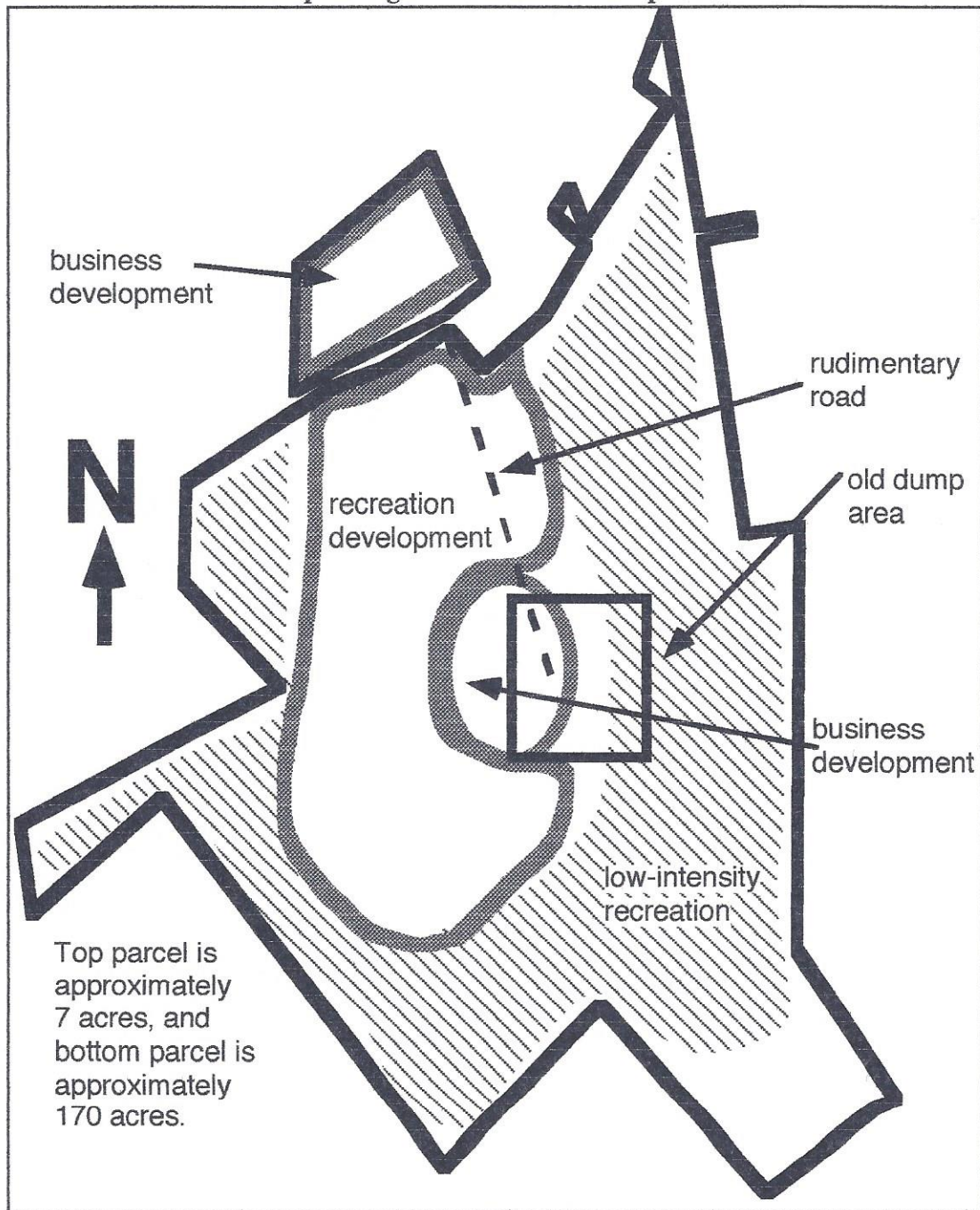
developer willing to use creativity and flexibility in order to preserve the attractive elements of the site.

Figure 4.6  
Concept Diagram of Site Development #1



Approximate boundaries.

Figure 4.7  
Concept Diagram of Site Development #2



Approximate boundaries

## 5 Conclusion

The research team recommends that Barre capitalize on various opportunities and market itself to several different types of industry. First of all, the town should concentrate on attracting a balanced mix of manufacturing, service, and retail businesses based on the quality of infrastructure, natural resources and amenities currently available in town, instead of simply trying to attract a single large employer to solve all the town's economic problems. Second, Barre should promote recreational activities and tourism in the town by utilizing cultural resources currently available. Third, Barre should undertake a reform of its development review process to eliminate some of the structural barriers to economic development. Finally, the town should plan for publicly acceptable new development through a guided process of opening up new sites for economic development.

The next step for Barre will be to develop a detailed marketing and economic development strategy. The inventory of resources contained in this report should be regarded as a reference for providing the EDIC, businesses, and citizen groups with information for planning purposes. The preliminary marketing strategies identify some immediate actions and some concepts for discussion and further study. Economic development is most likely to come to Barre through the ongoing efforts of many people and organizations. The study team wishes the Town and the EDIC continued progress.





will be responsible for those changes, what actions should be taken, and how citizens will know that the process of moving from probable futures to desirable futures has been completed or significantly started (Sarkissian Associates Planners 1986).

In the Barre example that would be how can the Town move from becoming a bedroom community to a town where the residents can get a job and make a decent living, without changing the character of the Town. As an example participants might say that they want to reuse the former Barre Wool Combing Property by renovating the usable building and removing the rest. To do this it might be the responsibility of the Town (Selectmen), or someone else, to buy the property and contract to renovate it. It might then be the responsibility of the EDIC, or someone else, to find new industries to occupy the renovated Wool Combing property. The industries would have to offer a majority of the new full time jobs to Barre residents. Reports of the status of action might be made at Town meetings. A goal might be set to acquire and renovate the property within two years, and attract at least one new industry of 30 jobs within a year after renovation.

## 7 Reference List

- Amidio, Mary, 1994. Administrative Assistant to Board of Health. Telephone Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 22 February, Amherst, MA.
- Barre Gazette. 1993. **Allen's Foundry announces merger with Montague Machine.** Barre Gazette. February 18, 1993.
- Barre Planning Board Meeting. 1994. Attended by Christopher Campbell, 7 March, Barre, MA. Town Offices.
- Blaisdell, Phil, 1994. P.C. Connections - Mail Order. Telephone Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 1 March, Amherst, MA.
- Calchenio, Steve, 1994. Northampton Center the Arts. Telephone Interview by Christopher Campbell, 28 February, Amherst, MA.
- Cilman, Bob, 1994. Northampton Arts Council. Interview by Christopher Campbell, 28 February, Amherst, MA.
- Cirelli, John, 1994. Former Principal of the Langley School. Telephone Interview by Christopher Campbell, 2 March, Amherst, MA.
- Clark, Betty, 1994. Felton Field Commission Member. Telephone Interview by Christopher Campbell, 28 February, Amherst, MA.
- Clough, Gwen, Town Clerk. 1994. Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 17 February, Barre, MA.
- Davies, Mary E., Pat Hardy, Joann M. Bell, and Susan Brown, 1985. **So-You want to be an innkeeper: The complete guide to operating a successful bed & breakfast inn.** San Francisco: Chronicle Books.
- Dempsey, James. 1986. **Allen tends dead plant.** The Evening Gazette. April 14, 1986.
- Executive Office of Economic Affairs and the University of Massachusetts, 1993. **Choosing to compete: A statewide strategy for job creation and economic growth.** Boston: Executive Office of Economic Affairs.
- Flynn, Catherine L. and Nancy J. Goff. 1990. **Fiscal and economic impacts of the patriot generating station: Town of Barre.** Amherst, MA: Center for Economic Development.

- Gibrey, Judy, 1994. Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Interview by Chad Atkinson, 4 April, Amherst, MA.
- Goldsmith, Harold "Steve", 1994. Manager of Charles G. Allen Company. Interview by Chad Atkinson, 11 February, Barre, MA.
- Hastings, Barbara, 1994. Insight Meditation Society. Telephone Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 1 March, Amherst, MA.
- Haug, P. 1991. Regional formation of high-technology service industries: the software industry in Washington state. *Environment and Planning A*, 23 (June): 869-884.
- Heyes, Alice E., 1994. Barre Town Collector. Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 2 March, Barre, MA.
- Inman, Kathlyn, 1994. Chairman of the Barre Sewer Commission. Telephone Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 22 February, Amherst, MA.
- Jankauskas, Richard, 1994. Working Foreman for the Barre Highway Department. Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 22 February, Amherst, MA.
- Landry, Michael, 1994. Barre Assessor. Telephone Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 22 February, Amherst, MA.
- Lattin, Gerald W. 1985. **The lodging and food service industry**. East Lansing, MI: Educational Institute of the American Hotel & Motel Association.
- Lefkowitz, Martin. 1993. **What 100 New Jobs Mean to a Community**. Washington, D.C.: Economic Policy Division of U.S. Chamber of Commerce.
- Leno, Lorraine. 1994. Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen. Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 17 February, Barre, MA.
- Massachusetts, Commonwealth of. 1979. **Resource inventory of the town of Barre**. Barre, MA.
- Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training. 1991. **Employment and wages: State summary 1989**. Boston: Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training Economic Research and Analysis Service.

- Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training. 1991a. **Analysis of employment trends in the northern Worcester service delivery area.** Boston: Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training Economic Research and Analysis Service.
- Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training. 1991b. **Massachusetts service delivery area job market reports: The northern Worcester SDA.** Boston: Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training Economic Research and Analysis Service.
- Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training. 1992. **Employment and Wages in Massachusetts cities and towns 1982-1991.** Boston: Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training Economic Research and Analysis Service.
- Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training. 1993. **Employment review.** Boston: Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training Economic Research and Analysis Service.
- Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training. 1993a. **Massachusetts industry projections: An analysis of industry employment to 2005.** Boston: Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training Economic Research and Analysis Service.
- Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training. 1993b. **Massachusetts occupational projections: An analysis of industry employment to 2005.** Boston: Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training Economic Research and Analysis Service.
- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. 1994. Telephone Interview by Chad Atkinson, 7 March, Amherst, MA.
- Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture. 1988. **The Massachusetts farm-and-food system: A five-year policy framework 1989-1993.** Boston: The Commonwealth Of Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture.
- Massachusetts Division of Employment Security. 1987. **Employment trends and technological change in the printing and publishing industry.** Boston: Mature Industries Research Department.
- Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS). 1993. Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

- Massachusetts Highway Department. 1991. **Traffic volumes 1991**. Boston: Massachusetts Highway Department.
- Massachusetts Water Resources Authority. 1993. **Groundwater potential in selected aquifers near the Quabbin aqueduct**. Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. quoted Matthew Trifilo and Gloria A. Sawyer. 1993(?). **A proposal for consideration to the Massachusetts semiconductor task force (MASIT)**. Barre, MA: Privately printed.
- Mitchell, Robert P., Amherst Town Planner. 1994. Interview by Amy Petrone and Chris Campbell, 4 May. University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA.
- Mullin, John R., Meir Gross, and Jeanne Armstrong. 1992. **Using water for local economic development: Springfield, MA**. Amherst, MA: Center for Economic Development.
- Mullin, John R. 1993. **Overall economic development program for the Gardner, MA labor market area**. Amherst, MA: Center for Economic Development.
- New England Foundation for the Arts. Date Unknown. **Economic Impact of the Arts in Massachusetts**. Cambridge, MA: Privately printed.
- Neylon, Billy, President of Barre Business Association. 1994. Telephone Interview by Christopher Campbell, 22 February, Amherst, MA.
- Nichols, Harold S., Building Commissioner. 1994. Interview by Amy M. Petrone, 17 February, Barre, MA.
- Paquin, Lester, Barre Players. 1994. Interview by Christopher Campbell, 1 March, Barre, MA.
- Park, Siyoung, and Lawrence T. Lewis. 1991. Developments in the location of selected computer-related industries in the United States. **Growth and Change**, 22 (Spring): 17-35.
- Pease, Mary, Ware River Line. 1994. Telephone Interview by Christopher Campbell, 3 March, Amherst, MA.
- Sarkissian Associates Planners. 1986. **Futures For Drummoyne: A Report On A Future Search For Drummoyne Municipality Council**. Lindfield, NSW, Australia: Privately printed.

Siegel, William L. 1977. **How to run a successful restaurant.** New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Smilor, Raymond W., and Michael D. Gill, Jr. 1986. **The new business incubator: linking talent, technology, capital, and know-how.** Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company.

Standard Rate and Data Service. 1992. **The lifestyle ZIP code analyst: A reference guide for consumer market analysis.** Wilmette, IL: Standard Rate and Data Service.

Trifilo, Matthew and Sawyer, Gloria A. 1993(?). **A proposal for consideration to the Massachusetts semiconductor task force.** Barre, MA: Privately printed.

Trifilo, Peter. 1994. **Local Businessman/Manager of the former Barre Wool Combing Company. Remarks made at Barre EDIC meeting, 15 February, Barre, MA. EDIC Meeting.**

\_\_\_\_ 1994a. Interview by Chad Atkinson, 17 February. Barre, MA.

\_\_\_\_ 1994b. Telephone Interview by Christopher Campbell, 22 February. Amherst, MA.

Town of Barre. 1991. **Assessors Maps.**

Town of Barre and Board of Selectmen, Town of Barre, 1993. **Proposal to develop a marketing strategy for Barre, Massachusetts.** Barre, MA: Town of Barre.

Town of Barre Conservation Commission, 1988. **Barre Open Space Plan.** Barre, MA: Privately printed.

Town of Barre and Office of Selectmen. 1993. **Proposal To Develop a Marketing Strategy For Barre, Massachusetts.** Barre, MA: Privately printed.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1987. **Economic Census.** Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1990. **Census of population and housing, summary file tape 3.** Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1992. **Industry and product classification manual.** Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Valley Consulting Group. 1989. **A New Village For Barre.** Amherst, MA:  
Center for Rural Massachusetts.

Worcester Business Journal. 1993. **Worcester business journal fact book 1993.**  
Worcester, MA: Worcester Publishing.

Zacowski, Joe, NYNEX. 1994. Telephone Interview by Christopher Campbell,  
March 10. Amherst, MA.

## 8 Appendix

### Draft Scope of Services

#### Resource Inventory and Preliminary Marketing Strategy Barre, Massachusetts

January 1994

- A. The Center for Economic Development (CED) at the University of Massachusetts (Amherst) hereby agrees to the following:
- 1) An inventory and assessment of town resources that could be marketable for economic development. This inventory would include land, public utilities and infrastructure, the nature and skills of the labor force and institutional support.
  - 2) Suggest economic sectors that might be best suited for the town based on comparative analysis and attempt to focus on economic development that would have a competitive advantage to locating in Barre.
  - 3) Design a community wide, needs assessment survey that could be administrated by the town to gain insights on community perspectives and strengths.
  - 4) Suggest preliminary marketing strategies based on the assessment of the resource inventory.
- B. For these services, The Barre EDIC will:
- a) Meet with the CED team on an appointment basis.
  - b) Assist the CED team, to the extent possible, in arranging meetings with town boards and other officials.
  - c) Make available a copy of any or all existing plans and studies currently available, at not cost to the CED.
  - d) Review and critique the draft report.
  - e) Formally accept the final report.
- C. The research team will comprise of three to five graduate students, directly supervised by two faculty members. The project will begin in the first week of February.
- D. The CED agrees to submit the draft report by April 15, 1994 and the final report in one month after the reviewed draft is returned to our office.