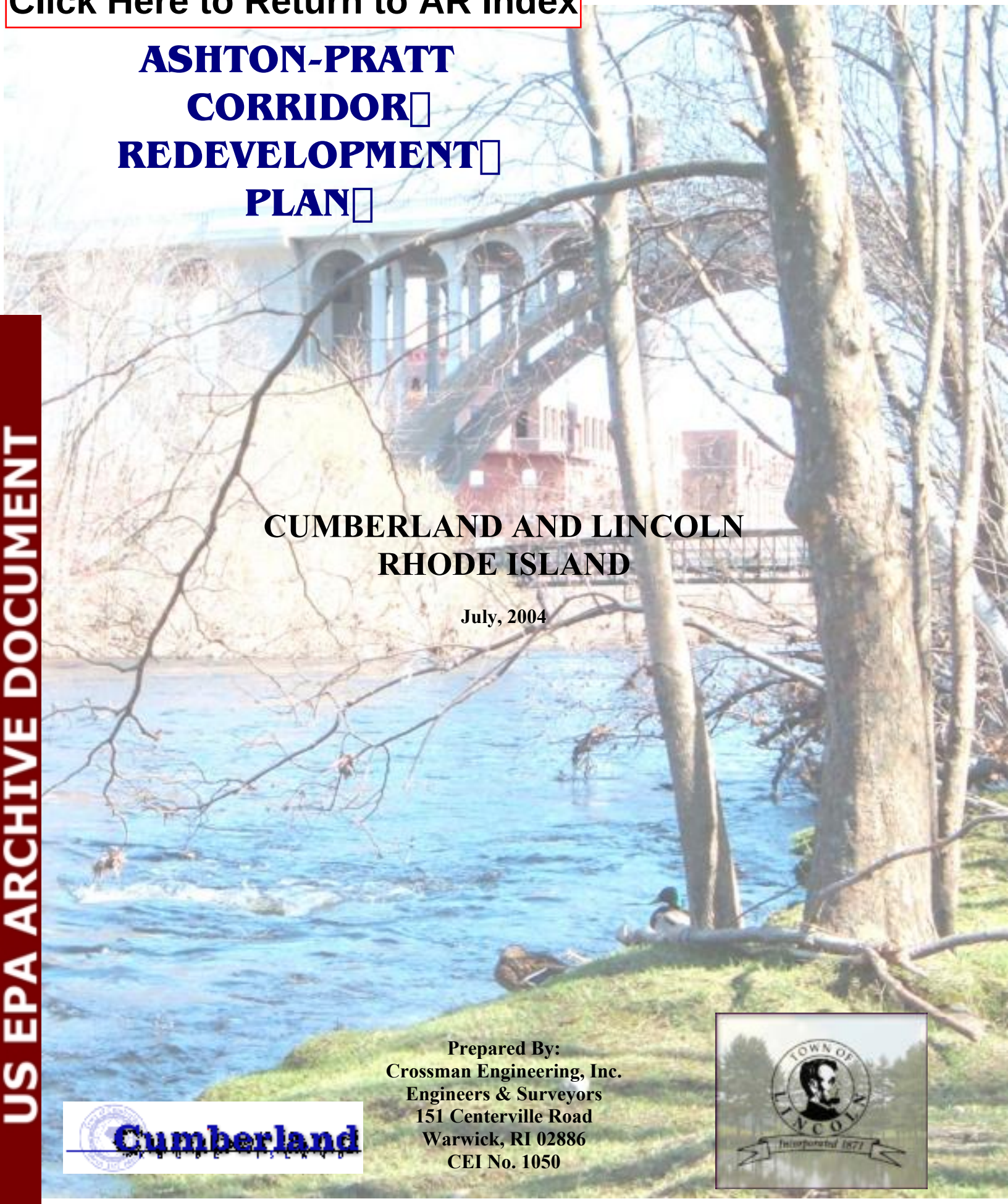
ASHTON-PRATT CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



CUMBERLAND AND LINCOLN
RHODE ISLAND

July, 2004

Prepared By:
Crossman Engineering, Inc.
Engineers & Surveyors
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CEI No. 1050

TOWN OF LINCOLN
100 Old River Road
P.O. Box 100
Lincoln, Rhode Island 02865

OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK
KAREN D. ALLEN
333-8451

RESOLUTION 04-26

TO ENDORSE THE ASHTON-PRATT CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, the Towns of Lincoln and Cumberland were granted $100,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI) Pilot Grant to perform an analysis of the Ashton-Pratt Corridor, and

WHEREAS, the primary goal of this analysis included evaluating existing land uses within the project area, determining the potential future land uses based on the needs and recommendations of the towns, citizens, existing property owners, and developing a future land use redevelopment plan for the Ashton-Pratt Corridor, and

WHEREAS, the redevelopment plan will provide the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with the information needed to assist in properly establishing cleanup standards and design appropriate protective remedies for the continued use and future anticipated reuse if the land within the project area,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Lincoln hereby endorses the Ashton-Pratt Corridor Redevelopment Plan, July 2004, prepared for the Towns of Lincoln and Cumberland by Crossman Engineering, Inc.

Adopted this the 21st day of September 2004.

Attest:

Karen D. Allen
Town Clerk

R-04-56
TOWN OF CUMBERLAND

RESOLUTION to adopt the "Ashton-Pratt Corridor Redevelopment Plan"

Be it resolved by the Town Council of the Town of Cumberland as follows:

Whereas: The Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln, Rhode Island were awarded a one hundred thousand ($100,000) dollar grant by the Environmental Protection Agency for the research, preparation and presentation of a Land Use Redevelopment Plan for the Peterson/Puritan, Inc. Superfund Site; and,

Whereas: the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln hired the firm of Crossman Engineering to facilitate this process and draft the Plan; and,

Whereas: public consensus was generated through several public workshops, meetings and interviews with stakeholders and interested Town citizens, organizations and administrative staff; and,

Whereas: the recommendations contained in the Plan are reasonable and recognize both the historic growth patterns and the future needs of the Town of Cumberland; and

Whereas: this Plan provides the Environmental Protection Agency with the information needed to assist in properly establishing cleanup standards and design appropriate protective remedies for reuse and continued use of the land in and adjacent to the Superfund site.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Town Council of the Town of Cumberland, as follows:

Section 1. THE CUMBERLAND TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY ADOPTS THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT TITLED ASHTON - PRATT CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AND DIRECTS THE TOWN ADMINISTRATION TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE PLAN'S IMPLEMENTATION.

Section 2. THAT THIS RESOLUTION SHALL BECOME EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY UPON ITS PASSAGE BY THE CUMBERLAND TOWN COUNCIL.

DATE ADOPTED: August 18 2004

A TRUE COPY, ATTEST: L. Jean Simoneau

L. JEAN SIMONEAU, TOWN CLERK

07/29/04
Planning

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1.0 Project Overview

In the summer of 2002, the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln, Rhode Island were granted funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI) Pilot Grant to perform an analysis of the Ashton-Pratt Corridor. This analysis included evaluating existing land uses within the project area, determining the potential future land uses based on the needs and recommendations of the towns, citizens, property owners and users, and developing a Redevelopment Plan for the Ashton-Pratt Corridor. This plan will provide the EPA with the information needed to assist in properly establishing cleanup standards and design appropriate protective remedies for reuse and continued use of the land within the project area.

The SRI Pilot Grant program is the EPA's nationally coordinated effort to facilitate the return of the country's hazardous waste sites to productive use, by selecting cleanup remedies that are consistent with the anticipated future use of the sites. EPA's goal is to make sure that at every cleanup site, the Agency and its partners have an effective process and the necessary tools and information needed to fully explore future uses, before the cleanup remedy is implemented. This gives the Agency the best chance of making its remedies consistent with the likely future use of a site. In turn, EPA gives communities the best opportunity to productively use sites following cleanup.

Because of its location along the Blackstone River, the Peterson/Puritan Superfund site is of strategic importance to various local and regional revitalization initiatives. In particular, the Blackstone River is a federally designated "American Heritage River " and the site is within the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. Moreover, the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln, Rhode Island share the boundaries of the project area. Through the use of the Pilot funding, the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln collaborated with a wide-range of federal, state, local and private organizations on the reasonably anticipated future uses for the project area.

The project area consists of land within and adjacent to the Peterson/Puritan Inc. Superfund Site and follows the Blackstone River for approximately 2.5 miles from the Ashton Dam to the Pratt Dam as shown in Figure 1. The limits also extend to Old River Road (Route 126) in Lincoln west of the Blackstone Canal and Mendon Road (Route 122) in Cumberland east of the Blackstone River.

The remainder of this document summarizes the assessment of existing conditions within the project area (Section 2.0), describes the public process (Section 3.0), presents the Redevelopment Plan recommended for the Ashton-Pratt Corridor (Section 4.0) and provides an implementation strategy to guide the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln in insuring that this plan comes to fruition and becomes reality (Section 5.0).

1.1 Acknowledgements

This plan has been prepared for the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln with the help and recommendation of the steering committee, which was comprised of the following people:

Katia Balassiano, Planning Director, Town of Cumberland

Albert Ranaldi, Jr., Town Planner, Town of Lincoln

David Newton, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

John Podgurski, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Johanna Hunter, Blackstone Woonasquatucket River Navigator

Halford Welch, John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

Louis R. Maccarone II, R.I. Department of Environmental Management

The two Towns supervised and directed the work of the Committee in providing recommendations and feedback in the development of the plan.

Appreciation is expressed to the many citizens and officials who assisted the project team in the data collection, review of work in progress and attendance at the many informal sessions and public meetings. Special thanks to:

Cumberland Town Officials

Lincoln Town Officials

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Cumberland Business Association

Blackstone River Watershed Council

John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (JHCBRVNHC) Commission

R.I. Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM)

R.I Department of Transportation (RIDOT)

Their suggestions and recommendations were of critical importance in shaping the final recommendations.

1.2 Project Team

The Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln hired the team led by Crossman Engineering, Inc. to evaluate the various aspects of the project area and to develop a Redevelopment Plan for the area. The project team consists of:

Crossman Engineering Inc. – Prime consultant responsible for the engineering components of the study, transportation systems and utilities.

Beckman/Weremay, Ltd. – Responsible for the urban planning, public relations and landscape architecture components.

New England Economic Development Services, Inc. – Responsible for the economic analysis and development to support the redevelopment plan.

Hoffman Engineering, Inc. – Responsible for the environmental assessment within the project area.

1.3 Scope of Work

The following summarizes the scope of work for the assessment of the Ashton-Pratt Corridor and the development of a feasible, viable and publicly backed redevelopment plan.

Meetings and Public Participation

From the very start of the project it was evident that public participation was critical to the success of the project. In order to obtain comments from the public relative to the challenges and opportunities within the project area, public coordination and input were crucial. During the assessment of the project area and development of alternatives, multiple participation opportunities were offered to the public including neighborhood input workshops, one-on-one interviews with key property owners and stakeholders and public meetings. The input from the public participation guided the development of the plan.

Data Collection and Review

In order to gain an understanding of the project area, a myriad of different resources such as plans, reports, and miscellaneous pertinent documents were reviewed by the team. Site visits were also conducted to observe cultural and historic resources; existing buildings and their current use; parking patterns, vehicle movements through intersections, and pedestrian and bicycle activity; existing utilities; previous well field sites; and commercial and industrial activities. Various evaluations have been performed within the project area for the EPA, Town of Cumberland, Town of Lincoln, Blackstone River Watershed Council, JHCBRVNHCC, and other agencies. A list of the documents that were reviewed as part of this project has been provided in the Appendix A.

Project Area Analysis and Assessment

The project area was evaluated with respect to the historic and scenic character; pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic circulation conflicts, constraints and opportunities; existing and proposed uses of the site and buildings; recreational facilities, including the Blackstone River, pedestrian facilities and bicycle paths; economic factors, tax base and economic make-up; and utilities including storm water, sewer, water, electric and well fields.

Development and Assessment of Alternatives

Based on the needs and desires of the public, various alternatives were developed within the project area. The components of the project, including transportation and access; economic factors; drainage and utilities; environmental risk assessment; environmental permitting and aesthetics were evaluated for each alternative. These alternatives were then compared relative to meeting the needs and desires of the public; overall feasibility; cost; and practicality.

Redevelopment Plan

Following the public interviews and meetings, a preferred direction emerged. This preferred plan incorporated the results of the project area analysis and assessment and included modifications inspired by ideas and comments from the public. This 'hybrid' recommendation was the basis for the final Redevelopment Plan for the area.

2.0 Summary of Findings

To create a Redevelopment Plan and vision for the Ashton-Pratt Corridor, the team had to learn more about the opportunities available to, the needs of and the challenges facing the Towns of Lincoln and Cumberland. This was done through a series of interviews, public workshops, discussions with town officials and public meetings. The following general information was derived from this process and was the basis for the Redevelopment Plan.

2.1 Historical and Scenic Characteristics

The project area has been in existence as an industrial area since the early 1800's. The canal system was constructed after 1820. Mills and homes have been in existence there ever since. As a result, the project area is rich with historical features and architecturally significant structures. Additionally, the river is dramatically beautiful with areas of waterfalls, chutes, rapids, abundant vegetation on the banks and wildlife, all enhancing the scenic characteristics of the project area.

A wealth of information is available from the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission and additionally at the Web site of the National Park Service.

The following is a summary of key features located within the project area.

Blackstone River and Blackstone Canal

The project area includes the Blackstone River and Canal from the Ashton Dam to the Pratt Dam, approximately 2.5 miles along the river. The Blackstone River extends 48 miles from its headwaters in Worcester, Massachusetts to the head of Narragansett Bay in Providence, Rhode Island. Its watershed encompasses twenty-four communities and more than 350,000 acres, and includes the second and third largest cities in New England. The Blackstone has a total length of 48 miles with a drainage area of 540 square miles.

Ashton Dam


Pratt Dam

The river is the second largest freshwater tributary to the Narragansett Bay. The Blackstone River is an important natural, recreational, and cultural resource to both Rhode Island and Massachusetts and specifically to those towns that make up the Blackstone Valley. The Blackstone Valley has been designated a National Heritage Corridor. The river was the original backbone of the area and served as the mode of transportation of goods and produced power for the many mills along the river.

Much of the Blackstone River and its tributaries, including the Site, are impaired due to biodiversity impacts, pathogens, hypoxia, nutrients, ammonia (un-ionized), and metals (copper and lead). Under the umbrella of the Federal regulation known as the Clean Water Act, the State of Rhode Island has identified the Blackstone River, including the segment that runs through the Project Area, as a Class B1stream. The B1 classification indicates that while all Class B uses must be supported by water quality, primary contact recreation may be "impacted due to pathogens from approved wastewater discharges" (RI WQR, Rule 8(B)(1)). The State of Rhode Island has an overall objective to "restore impaired sections of the Blackstone River and its tributaries".

Further, the Draft Rivers Policy and Classification Plan under development by the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program identifies the Blackstone River segment from Manville Dam to the Valley Falls Marsh as Open Space Waters. This category includes water bodies that have high scenic value, have relatively undeveloped banks, provide good fish and wildlife habitat, support or could support recreational use, and are typically situated in low-density rural areas (although they may traverse historic village centers). They may function as open space corridors, natural areas, or greenways. These waters are generally suitable for both contact recreation such as swimming and fishing, and non-contact recreation such as canoeing. Currently, this river segment, which includes the project area, is designated as non-contact recreational. The State also supports and maintains a trout fishery stocking policy below the Ashton Dam and within the project area.

On February 4, 1997, President Clinton announced the American Heritage Rivers Initiative supporting community-led efforts relating to rivers that spur economic revitalization, protect natural resources and the environment, and preserve historic and cultural heritage. The President chose 14 American Heritage River designations of which the Blackstone and Woonasquatucket River systems are one such designation. The American Heritage Rivers initiative is a commitment by the federal government to try to provide those applicable programs and resources, identified by the community and paid for by taxpayers, in the most efficient and

effective manner possible. In the case of the Peterson/Puritan, Inc. Superfund Site and its location along the Blackstone River, the Superfund process and the American Heritage Rivers Initiative are engaged to meet common goals for the affected communities and to partner with State and local governments where assistance and coordination on plans and projects may have some commonality, significance, or influence relating to the remediation goals for the site.

As part of the industrial revolution and with the surge of mills, many towns in New England had a need to provide housing for mill workers. As a result, mill villages sprung up along all the major rivers in New England including the Blackstone River. Several mill villages within the project area have recently been renovated or restored and are an integral part of the community.

Mill Houses

Kelly House

The Kelly House property (formerly called the Mackland Farm) is located in Lincoln on an island between the Blackstone Canal and the Blackstone River. The Kelly House itself is a 19th century former mill manager's house that was recently restored by Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and currently serves as a museum. The museum exhibits focus on the changing industrial landscape along the Blackstone River and Canal. The transformation's theme features

transportation technology, shifts from maritime to industrial trade and changes from agrarian settings to mill villages. Outdoor exhibits include intact sections of the Blackstone Canal and towpath. Parking is available for visitors but is generally restricted to visitors of the Kelly House.

Floodplain Area Just North of the Pratt Dam

The area just north of the Pratt Dam has undergone a great deal of change over the past several decades. The area from the proposed Berkeley Commons development to the western bank of the canal previously was undeveloped land for the floodplain, river and canal. This area has seen natural changes in the course of the river over the years as well as topographic changes as a result of human activities. The river corridor has evolved and changed as a result of human activities, such as with the completion of the canal in the early 1800's, construction of the railroad in the late 1840's, the development and rise of industry in the early 1900's, and finally with the recent dumping activities from 1954 through 1986. After reviewing historical aerial photos, it is seen that this wetland (formally known locally as "Moody's Beach" or "New River"), held considerably more water prior to the modifications to the flood control structure, which permanently drained the waterway behind the dam and subsequently allowed for the excavation and filling operations to proceed at the J.M. Mills Landfill and adjacent parcels. Thus, the easterly wetland, the un-named island, and the course of the river, are not presumed to be unimpaired by past human activities.

John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

The John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (JHCBRVNHC), a unit of the National Park System, was the second heritage corridor of its kind to be designated by Congress in 1986. Today there are 23 National Heritage Areas designated with an additional 25 pending in Congress. The JHCBRVNHC is managed by the National Park Service and overseen by a 19 member federal panel appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. The Corridor consists of 24 cities and towns in RI and MA, totals an estimated 400,000 acres, nearly the entire Blackstone River watershed. The RI and MA state historic preservation offices have identified over 10,000 historic structures within the Blackstone Valley with nearly half eligible for National Register designation. In addition, the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation office has listed the Blackstone Canal on their "Top 10 most endangered historic resources" list.

The Corridor is managed by a Federal Commission, which consists of federal, state, and local representatives, as well as private citizens. The Commission's ability to leverage a relatively small federal investment with state and private funds has made it a model for historic preservation, conservation and economic development. Although the Commission owns no land, it is responsible for preserving and interpreting the significant stories and landscape features of the Corridor.

The Commission invests in activities such as community and land use planning, heritage tourism, downtown revitalization, river restoration, recreation development along the river, interpretation, and environmental education. Many mill villages and communities throughout the valley have realized the importance of working together. Many of the old mills have been retrofitted for a new century, supporting incubator businesses, housing, and retail. Mill villages recognize the importance of maintaining their historic character while developing sustainable economies. The river itself is now looked upon as an asset again. The Blackstone River Valley Explorer, a river classroom vessel has carried over 70,000 people on the river for tours and educational field trips.

Communities throughout the Corridor recognize that a clean river is critical to revitalization. In a major restoration effort, Federal and state agencies are working with communities and organizations to improve the environment along the riverway. The Commission understands the need to work at both a grand scale (that will take years and need major investments) as well as at the grassroots level. Most importantly, the river has once again become a focal point for communities and businesses.

Blackstone Valley Aquifer

The project area is situated on one of the State of Rhode Island's most productive aquifers. The current groundwater classification at the site is "GAA-NA". The "GAA" classification, as designated by the RIDEM Rules and Regulations for Groundwater Quality, is defined as "groundwater resources which the Director has designated to be suitable for public drinking water use without treatment." The "-NA" classification is defined as "areas that have pollutant concentrations greater than the groundwater quality standards for the applicable classification."

Generally the EPA and the State of Rhode Island considers this aquifer within the project area as an important potential future drinking water resource. Under Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), sometimes called the Superfund Act, and the National Contingency Plan (NCP), EPA is directed to meet certain expectations in addressing ground water contamination. Under the NCP regulations, EPA is expected to return usable ground waters to their beneficial uses wherever practicable within a time frame that is reasonable, given the circumstances of the site. When restoration of the ground water to beneficial uses is not practicable, EPA expects to prevent further migration of the plume, prevent exposure to contaminated ground water, and evaluate further risk reduction.

The Blackstone Valley aquifer is currently providing a portion of the drinking water for the Town of Cumberland from the Manville well field and the Town of Lincoln from the Lonsdale well south of the site. The majority of Cumberland's water supply comes from Town reservoirs, while Lincoln is serviced by the Providence Water Authority. Within the project area, both the Quinnville well field in Lincoln and the Lenox Street well in Cumberland, are currently closed due to groundwater contamination detected above acceptable drinking water standards. Both communities continue to investigate the potential for either re-activation of these wells or installation of new wells as replacement wells on other suitable parcels.

2.2 Land Use

The project area has areas of varying land uses and zoning districts. As shown on Figure 2, Cumberland has seven (7) and Lincoln has six (6) different zoning districts within and adjacent to the project area. The following summarizes the existing land uses grouped by the geographical location:

Interstate 295 Interchange

The land uses near the interchange of Mendon Road (Route 122) and Interstate 295 (I-295) are predominantly commercial. Due to the proximity of the interstate and ease of access this is an optimum location for this type of use. This use also coincides with the current zoning.

Route 116 (George Washington Highway)

The Route 116 corridor from Mendon Road into Lincoln consists of primarily office, public facilities and light industrial uses. There is some land to the north and south of Route 116 in Lincoln that is undeveloped and currently zoned for business development, which coincides with the current adjacent uses.

Mendon Road (Route 122)


Mendon Road

Along Mendon Road from the Interstate 295 interchange to the Stop and Shop Plaza there is a diversity of uses, which include residential, office, commercial, retail and mixed commercial/residential. Many of the buildings directly abut the roadway with very little room for on-street parking or widening of the roadway. Many of the businesses along Mendon Road are small, family-owned businesses that are not franchised or corporately owned. Several side streets take off from Mendon Road to the north and south. Many south of Mendon Road are either cul-de-sacs or loops that do not have a crossing over the Blackstone River or railroad. The only two roadways within the project that provide a crossing over the Blackstone River, Blackstone Canal and railroad are Martin Street and Route 116. These two roadways are the only links between the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln within the project area and therefore are highly used and important connections.

Currently there are two developments planned along Mendon Road on vacant parcels of land between Mendon Road and the Blackstone River. Construction recently started on the Berkeley Commons development near the intersection of Mendon Road and Marshall Avenue. This

development includes 162 residential units and 21,000 square feet of commercial space on the 31-acre parcel of land between Mendon Road and the wetland (former location of Moody's Beach). The second development is the River Run subdivision neat the intersection of Hardwick Street and Mendon Road adjacent to the cemetery. This development includes 62 single-family homes on the 34.6-acre parcel. Both developments have their access to and from Mendon Road, with no connections or crossings over the river or railroad.

Martin Street

The existing dominant use along Martin Street is industrial. A few recreational facilities are mixed in with the industrial uses. Both the Boys & Girls Club of Cumberland and Lincoln and a publicly owned baseball field are located among the industrial businesses. This area also has a few undeveloped parcels that front on Martin Street, including parcels within the floodplain across from and adjacent to the ball field. Future development of these parcels adjacent to the ball field is limited since the entire parcel is within the floodplain of the Blackstone River. One other parcel that is undeveloped is the Fleet property, which is currently being used for gravel mining operations. This property is outside of the floodplain, and is one of the few properties available for future development within the project area.

Martin Street also provides one of the few crossings of the Blackstone River and Canal. This bridge is a vital access point between the Towns of Lincoln and Cumberland and was recently closed by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation in order to replace the inadequate bridge with a new bridge and improve access to the bikeway.

Lonsdale Mill Complex

The Lonsdale Mill Complex, located just south of the project, has a mixed use of commercial and light industrial that coincides with the current zoning district. This area is in need of improvements both with respect to aesthetics and infrastructure. Many of the mill buildings are empty and in need of repair. This area was included in the Draft "Blackstone River Visioning" document prepared by Dodson Associates, Ltd. dated November, 2003. As part of that project, Dodson Associates conducted a design charrette for the Lonsdale Mill Complex and identified conceptual design recommendations. Copies of these documents are included in Appendix B.

Route 126 (Old River Road)

The majority of the land within Lincoln that abuts the Blackstone Canal is currently residential. A few exceptions are scattered among the residential properties that include the Kelly House, the previous location of the Quinnville well field and the Town-owned land on Route 126 overlooking the river valley. These three properties are undeveloped and provide opportunities for passive recreation. Based on the current zoning it is anticipated that these uses will remain and continue to be the dominant use on the Lincoln side of the project area.

2.3 Recreational Facilities

The recreational facilities described below are within the project area, many of which are focused around river and river-borne activities or providing access to the river corridor (see Figure 3). These facilities are congregated around Martin Street. Public comments strongly indicated that access to the river was insufficient. Public comment also indicated that active recreational facilities (sports fields) are minimal at best and should be increased.

Blackstone River

The Blackstone River is a major active and passive recreational opportunity. Recreational activities around the river include fishing, canoeing, kayaking, walking and hiking, bird watching, etc. Public parking along the river is limited. Access to the river for boating is limited, but several plans are in motion to construct boat ramps, portages, etc. An opportunity exists to canoe or kayak down the river and paddle back up the canal, forming a canoe-kayak loop trail and affording a unique water-borne recreational opportunity in Rhode Island.

Bike Trail

The Blackstone River Bikeway is a 48-mile bi-state facility connecting New England's second and third largest population centers of Providence, RI and Worcester, MA. The bikeway is located along the western banks of the Blackstone River in the Town of Lincoln. Much of the trail is located on the island formed by the canal and the river. The bike trail has parking facilities associated with it at the north and south ends of the project. A pedestrian bridge providing access across the river exists under the Route 116 bridge. Bicyclists and walkers alike heavily utilize the trail.

The Bikeway began as an idea in the mid 1980's and moved towards implementation in the early to mid 1990's. This 48-mile bikeway has been designated as an official section of the 2,600 mile East Coast Greenway. In Rhode Island, the Bikeway is constructed by the Department of Transportation but owned and maintained by the Department of Environmental Management. There are over four miles of Bikeway either completed or under construction in the project area, which is known as the Blackstone River & Canal State Park. The Blackstone River Canoe Trail also passes through the project area.

The river segment within the project area abuts significant amounts of the Blackstone River State Park and Bikeway. The river's scenic beauty and link to the old canal system contributes to this section's active use by bikers, canoers and kayakers. Substantial additions to the bikeway are currently under construction north and south of the study area. The north extension will serve the greater Rhode Island communities by linking them to a proposed recreational facility to be

constructed at the Interstate 295 rest stop. Currently, the southern extension of the Blackstone River Bikeway is being constructed in the vicinity of, and spanning over, the Pratt Dam and will continue southerly into Cumberland through the Lonsdale Marsh. Plans also include river access points from the bikeway and a canoe portage trail location in the vicinity of Pratt Dam. The canoe portage trail will connect the main stem of the river to the Canal to create a waterway loop trail starting just north of the Kelly House to the Pratt Dam and return.

In August 2003, Federal, state and local dignitaries celebrated the first of its kind wetland restoration in Rhode Island in Lincoln, RI. More than 20 acres of the 37-acre former Lonsdale Drive-In Theater were restored with 7 acres of marsh and 13 acres of upland. Partnerships were critical in the success of this project with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the State of Rhode Island Department of Environmental Protection (RIDEM) leading the effort. Many other key contributors to the success of this project included the EPA, US Fish and Wildlife, RI Coastal Resources Management Council and the RI Corporate Wetland Partners. The next phase for Lonsdale will include the bikeway connection through the parcel adjacent to the renovated wetlands to provide both recreational access and potentially educational opportunities for the public.

Quinnville Park

A small neighborhood playground exists on the western banks of the Blackstone Canal on the Lincoln side. The playground includes a tot lot, swings, slides and a modest amount of picnic facilities, and is principally utilized by the nearby neighborhood. There are minimal parking spaces available.

Ouinnville Park

Ball field

A Little League baseball field is located adjacent to the river on the south side of Martin Street. The field is located in a flood plain, is frequently flooded during the spring season (the most active Little League season) and unavailable for use. Parking facilities are inadequate and do not support the requirements of the users of the field. The adjacent Hope Global facility has denied the public access to their parking lots. The field is not lighted, and there are no restroom facilities or other utilities available. The field is generally considered by the users to be inadequate and substandard. However, it is heavily used because of the field's proximity to a dense residential neighborhood, the fact that this neighborhood does not have many other public field options, and because of the shortage of ball fields in Cumberland and the surrounding communities.

Its proximity to the river does provide public access to the river and a modest amount of parking when the baseball field is not being utilized.

Upper Deck

Upper Deck is a private, for-profit recreational facility providing indoor baseball batting practice facilities. The operator of the venture has expressed an interest in expanding his facilities to the outdoors to the north of Dean Warehouse in a large open tract of land located in the flood plain.

Fore Court

Fore Court, a private for-profit health club also offering tennis and racquetball, is located immediately to the south of the Boys & Girls Club, and is accessible from both Mendon Road and Cray Street. The facility has recently been remodeled and expanded and is thriving.

Boys & Girls Club of Cumberland and Lincoln

The Boys & Girls Club is a private, coeducation, non-profit organization that provides various recreational and athletic activities to the youth of the area. Located on Martin Street, the facility is heavily used by both communities. Children are often seen gathering around the entrance to the facility on Martin Street. This gathering has been perceived as a somewhat dangerous situation, as there are no sidewalks and heavy traffic on Martin Street. The manager of the facility has stated that the demands on the facility require its expansion. The facility offers an outdoor baseball field, outdoor basketball courts and an outdoor playground as well as indoor recreational opportunities.

Boys & Girls Club

2.4 Topographic Features

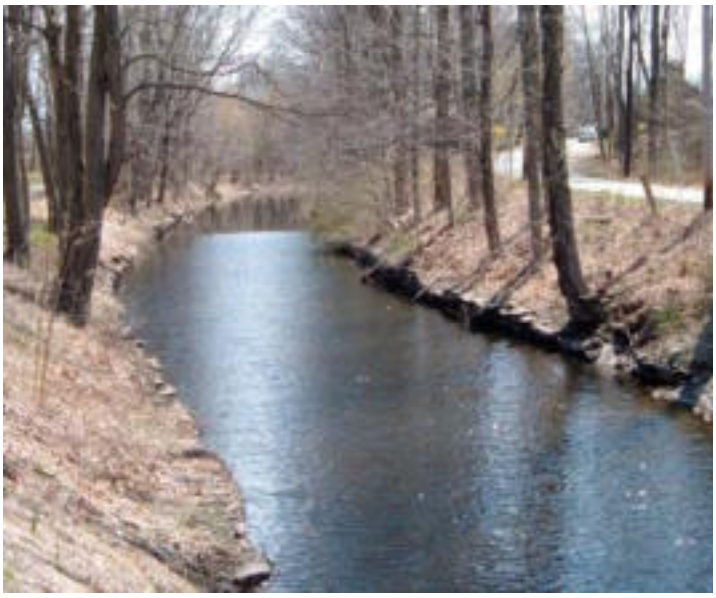
Varying topographic features that both enhance and distract are found here. Steep slopes are located on the Cumberland side from Mendon Road to the Blackstone River floodplain and on the Lincoln side from Route 126 to the Blackstone Canal as shown in Figure 4. The river corridor slopes mildly from the Ashton Dam in the north in the Pratt Dam in the south.

Floodplain

More than 50% of the project is within the 100-year floodplain as identified on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mapping and as shown on Figure 4. The floodplain elevations vary from sixty-six (66) feet near the Pratt Dam to seventy-seven (77) feet just downstream of the Ashton Dam. During storm events many of the businesses on Martin Street experience flooding of the parking areas and buildings within the floodplain.

Blackstone Canal

The Blackstone Canal begins at the Ashton Dam and parallels the Blackstone River through the entire project area to the Lonsdale Mill Complex. The canal previously served as a transportation corridor and a source of power for the mill complex, and also served as part of the canal system that connected Providence to Worcester in the late 1820's. Many organizations have identified the canal as part of a future canoe/kayak loop trail that includes the Blackstone River from the Ashton Dam to the Pratt Dam and a return journey on the canal.



J.M. Mills Landfill

The privately owned landfill between the river and railroad was in operation between 1954 and the 1980's in the southern part of the project. The topography of the eighteen (18) acre site is very steep and rises approximately eighty (80) feet above the surrounding area. Due to the steep grades and the flood flows within the river, the banks adjacent to the landfill have been eroded in the past during large storm events.

The Unnamed Island

The unnamed island in the southern portion of corridor, just north of the Pratt Dam, consists of approximately twenty-three (23) acres of woods, fields and open water. This island currently serves as a wildlife habitat and flood storage area. The land that makes up the island has several environmental issues relative to hazardous materials as a result of previous dumping operations

when the island was created. Currently there is a gravel road that connects the island with the area adjacent to the Pratt Dam. Local residents currently use the island for passive recreation and access for fishing. Since the island is within the floodplain and has potential environmental constraints, development on the island is limited. The Unnamed Island is the location of the proposed portage connection for the future canoe/kayak trail from the Ashton Dam down the Blackstone River, portage across the Island to the Blackstone Canal for the paddle up the canal to form a continuous loop.

Gravel Operations

The Fleet property between the railroad and the mill houses is an active gravel mining operation. The topography on the site varies significantly as a result of the mining operations, leaving the elevation of this site lower than the surrounding area. This property is the only large undeveloped parcel of land within the project area that is not within the floodplain. As a result this forty-plus acre parcel was identified as a potential site for future development.

2.5 Public Utilities

Sewer System

The area within the Town of Cumberland on the east side of the Blackstone River is serviced by the Narragansett Bay Commission (NBC) Sewer System. A major sewer trunk line runs from north to south following the railroad and the river. This system discharges to the Bucklin Point treatment plant in East Providence, which discharges to the Seekonk River. The majority of the properties discharge to this line of the NBC system.

The residential area west of the Blackstone River within the Town of Lincoln is not serviced by a public sewer system. These homes are currently on private individual septic systems.

Water Distribution System

Historically, well fields were located in both Cumberland (Lenox Street and Martin Street Municipal Wells) and Lincoln (Quinnville Municipal Wellfield).

The Lenox Street and Martin Street municipal wells provided water to the Town of Cumberland until 1979, when these wells were closed by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) due to a plume of contamination caused by the Peterson/Puritan Superfund Site. The Lenox Street well was located at the end of Lenox Street adjacent to the wetland in the southern end of the project area. The Martin Street well was located on Martin Street just west of Mendon Road. Alan Brodd, Cumberland Department of Public Works Director, stated that he needs to find a location for a well field to replace those that were closed in 1979.

The Quinnville Wellfield contained three (3) wells that were formerly used by the Lincoln Water Commission as a municipal water supply. In 1997, the RI DOH ordered the closure of the wells, and they have been closed since that time. The Town of Lincoln has expressed the desire to utilize this land for recreational purposes, although access is limited.

Three (3) separate water distribution systems provide water to the residents of Cumberland and Lincoln. The Lincoln Water Commission provides water to Lincoln residents within the project area. John Faile, Superintendent of the Lincoln Water Commission, stated that the water system within the project does not have any current problems with capacity or pressure. The Pawtucket Water Supply Board services the area within Cumberland that is south and east of Marshall Avenue, while the remainder of the area receives water from the Cumberland Water Department. Based on discussions with Neil Fiorio at the Cumberland Water Department, both of these systems have sufficient capacity and pressure within the distribution system at this time.

Both Towns are investigating future emergency connections with the City of Woonsocket and with each other. The possible future connection between the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln would be within the project area at the Martin Street Bridge. A summary of the discussions with both Towns relative to the water distribution system are provided in Appendix C.

2.6 Transportation Facilities

Roadway System

Mendon Road (Route 122) is a north/south urban principal arterial roadway. The project is bounded on the south by Front Street/John Street and by I-295 to the north. The majority of Mendon Road is a two-lane roadway with limited sections of four lanes adjacent to the Super Stop and Shop shopping plaza at the southern end of the study area and adjacent to the I-295 on and off ramps at the northern end. A third lane is introduced at many of the signalized intersections to facilitate movement of left-turning vehicles in traffic.

There are nine (9) signalized intersections within the study limits. All of these signalized intersections are within the Town of Cumberland and along Mendon Road. There are no signalized intersections that are within the project area within the Town of Lincoln.

1. I-295 South Off & On Ramps
2. I-295 North Off & On Ramps
3. Route 116 (George Washington Highway)
4. Angell Road
5. Martin Street
6. Marshall Avenue
7. Broad Street
8. Ann & Hope Way
9. Front Street/John Street

Traffic Volume

Traffic volume data for Mendon Road was obtained from previous and new counts. The previous counts were obtained from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation and included peak hour turning movement counts at Scott Road and forty-eight (48) hour volume counts on Mendon Road at the Lincoln town line, at Old Mendon Road, and just north of Route 116. Crossman Engineering, Inc. conducted manual turning movement counts during the morning and afternoon commuter peaks at Route 116, Martin Street and Front Street/John Street in December 2003. Review of these traffic counts indicated that the average daily traffic volume on Mendon Road varies from 13,000 vehicles at the southern end of the study area to 18,000 vehicles at the northern end. The A.M. peak hour traffic volume ranges from 800 to 1,300 vehicles and the P.M. peak hour traffic ranges from 1,200 to 1,600 vehicles along Mendon Road (south to north).

Since the remaining roadways within the project area in both Cumberland and Lincoln are local roadways traffic volumes were not available and additional traffic counts were not performed.

Accidents

Crossman Engineering, Inc. obtained and analyzed accident data for the study area obtained from the Police Departments in Cumberland and Lincoln for the years 2001, 2002 and 2003. The total number of accidents found were 136 in 2001, 167 in 2002, and 160 in 2003. Intersections with five (5) or more accidents per year are shown below:

	Number of Accidents		
Location	2001	2002	2003
Super Stop and Shop	13	14	15
I-295 (both intersections)	19	22	22
Scott Road	3	5	12
Angell Road	4	5	6
Marshall Avenue	1	6	5
Lonsdale Ave. & John Street	8	15	5

An average of 154 accidents per year over the three-year period presented above is a relatively high number of accidents. The accidents were spread out over the length of the project area and except for a couple of locations, were not concentrated at any one location. The nine (9) signalized intersections, the 15,500 average vehicles per day and the numerous driveways all contribute to the high number of accidents.

2.7 Economic Development Analysis

In simplistic terms, the economic development value of a specific geographical area is predicated on (1) its capacity to both retain and grow jobs, and (2) the degree to which it contributes to a community's fiscal resources. The process of assessing the economic development value of a geographical area or project can become very complex. Issues of secondary and tertiary spin-offs (e.g. income and employment multipliers) and the nature of the business/employment base (e.g. service sector businesses/employment versus export-based businesses/employment) are important factors in assessing economic development capacity. Evaluating these issues is however, outside the scope of this study. This study and its analysis of the economic development capacity of the Ashton-Pratt Corridor are restricted to an evaluation of its stability and strength and its importance to each community's fiscal base.

The Ashton-Pratt Corridor can be segregated into four (4) distinct geographical areas. Each area is differentiated by both (1) type of economic activity and (2) physical characteristics. These distinct geographical areas are:

- Lonsdale Mill
- Super Stop & Shop Commercial Node
- Martin Street – Ashton Parkway Industrial Node
- Route 122 (Mendon Road) Mixed-Use Corridor

Lonsdale Mill (Lincoln)

The Lonsdale Mill is situated at the southerly end of the project area. Like many of the mill complexes in the Blackstone Valley, the Lonsdale Mill has experienced significant physical decline and loss of economic activity. Table 2.1 depicts the physical and fiscal characteristics of the Lonsdale Mill.

Table 2.1 – Lonsdale Mill Summary

Total Acreage	18.25
Total Building SF	353,402
Total Assessed Value	$2,428,919
Estimate Real Property Taxes	$65,192

Lonsdale Mill Complex

The location of the Lonsdale Mill is reflective of the location requirements for the various mill complexes that were developed in the Blackstone Valley during the 19th century. Proximity to the Blackstone River and access to its water power were the key location factors. Water power is no longer an important location factor for modern industry. Furthermore, the Lonsdale Mill is not located in close proximity to major transportation arteries. Consequently, it is fair to conclude that the Lonsdale Mill will not return to its previous glory as a major node of manufacturing activity. Approximately 44% of the land area in this complex is currently covered by buildings,

indicating little or no building expansion capacity. It is estimated that 50% of the building area is currently vacant, a significant portion of which is comprised by the 150,000 square foot building that occupies Plat 5, Lot 78.

The Lonsdale Mill's current state of physical deterioration is a reflection of modern industrial location requirements and a business rental market that does not support increased investor interest in the Lonsdale Mill as an industrial center. Furthermore, investment in and redevelopment of the Lonsdale Mill are complicated by additional factors including (1) multiple property owners, (2) poor access and egress, (3) poor internal traffic circulation including no public streets, (4) physical obsolescence based on modern business needs and operations, (5) potential environmental contamination concerns, and (6) regulatory issues due to the proximity of the site to the Blackstone River.

The Lonsdale Mill has recently been the subject of a design/planning session. This session was funded by the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission and managed by Dodson Associates, Ltd. Although the final report has not yet been released, conversations with Dodson Associates, Ltd. resulted in the identification of the following problems and opportunities in respect to the redevelopment of the Lonsdale Mill.

- Multiple building ownerships complicate efforts to find solutions to the mill site's redevelopment.
- The largest building in the complex (Plat 5, Lot 78) is both vacant and partially condemned.
- The owner of Plat 5, Lot 78 is not an active participant in the process to find solutions to the mill site's issues.
- Access and parking constraints pose significant constraints to the mill site's redevelopment.
- Recent property acquisitions and investments offer opportunities for the mill site's future.

In spite of its locational issues and physical obsolescence, the Lonsdale Mill offers considerable opportunities for redevelopment as a mixed-use project. Recent investments such as the medical use at 39 Carrington Street and the Christopher Glassworks at 27 Carrington Street would appear to validate this conclusion. The Lonsdale Mill offers a unique location alternative to residential, commercial and light industrial activities. The location of this complex adjacent to the Blackstone River and the Blackstone River Bike Path further strengthens the site's unique attributes for redevelopment. The Lonsdale Mill's historical value and potential aesthetic beauty as a master planned, mixed use development offer significant investment, economic and fiscal value to the Town of Lincoln, the region and the private investment/development community. The ability to spark this transformation will require active, pre-emptive involvement by the public sector and proactive efforts to enlist the interest of the investment/development community. The scale of the Lonsdale Mill makes the redevelopment of this site manageable.

Super Stop & Shop Commercial Node (Cumberland)

The Super Stop & Shop Commercial Node represents the retailing center of the project area. This node includes several institutionalized, well-established retailers such as Super Stop & Shop and McDonalds, both of whom have modern, well-maintained facilities. With the exception of these two retailers, the area needs aesthetic enhancement because of the surrounding unattractive or poorly maintained properties and poorly maintained and landscaped parking areas. The road infrastructure could also be enhanced to include streetscape improvements and green buffers between properties. Table 2.2 depicts the physical and fiscal characteristics.

Table 2.2 – Commercial Node Summary

Total Acreage	42
Total Building SF	200,753
Total Assessed Value	$11,807,778
Estimated Real Property Taxes	$188,334

Currently, buildings cover approximately 11% of the land. Although retail land uses have greater parking requirements, this low building/land coverage factor would indicate an opportunity to expand development. Due to the poor highway access, future retail development would more than likely serve the surrounding neighborhoods. This would include convenience retailers (e.g. drug stores and convenience stores), fast food restaurants, and professional and personal services (e.g. dry cleaners, hair salons, banks). This area would have no locational value to larger retailers that sell higher priced, comparison shopping items such as automobiles, furniture and electronics. These types of retailers require excellent highway access and the agglomeration of similar retailers.

The current state of this commercial node would indicate limited population and purchasing power. This factor could change, however, due to the current residential development occurring directly to the north (Berkeley Commons and River Run Subdivision) as well as the residential conversion of the Aston Mill (former Owens Corning Fiberglass plant). The potential mixed-use

redevelopment of the Lonsdale Mill property could also have positive impacts on the development potential in this area.

Martin Street & Ashton Parkway Industrial Node (Cumberland)

The Martin Street and Ashton Parkway Industrial Node is located on the northerly end of the project area. This area represents the industrial, manufacturing hub of the project area, which includes an older, multi-tenanted mill building and several mid-twentieth century, single story industrial complexes. The adjacent Ashton Parkway appears to be of the same vintage. Table 2.3 below depicts the physical and fiscal characteristics of this area.

Martin Street – Looking North

Table 2.3 – Martin Street Summary

Total Acreage	126
Total Building SF	1,188,570
Total Assessed Value	$16,259,636
Estimated Real Property Taxes	$259,341

A visual inspection of the industrial properties located along Martin Street indicates little or no vacancy. Contact was made with all the primary businesses along Martin Street with the objective of assessing their current and future plans. In spite of the current demise facing the manufacturing sector in the United States, and in particular the Northeast, the companies contacted were doing well and were "bullish" about the future. The owner of 30 Martin Street, a mixed-use mill building, indicated less than 5,000 square feet of vacant space and a consistent 95% to 98% occupancy rate. This low vacancy factor is testament to the property's good highway access and responsive, on-site property management. This building has been well maintained including an ongoing investment in new windows and attractive landscaping.

Properties along Ashton Parkway have not fared as well as those along Martin Street. There is considerable evidence of physical decline in buildings along Ashton Parkway with unsightly site conditions including outside storage of construction equipment, vehicles and miscellaneous debris. The primary business located along the Ashton Parkway indicated that business was very good and the only concern was with the visual quality and state of disrepair of abutting properties.

Ashton Parkway

Buildings within this industrial node occupy approximately 22% of the land area. This fact would indicate that there is the capacity for future building expansion along Martin Street and Ashton Parkway. A closer investigation, however, determines that a significant amount of the vacant land is not developable due to the fact that it is located in a flood plain and other environmentally sensitive areas. Furthermore, severe topographical constraints restrict building expansion and development along the Ashton Parkway.

The Martin Street and Ashton Parkway Industrial Node satisfies many of the basic industrial location needs. The site is in close proximity to the rapidly growing Route 116 corridor and Interstate 295. The area is also fully serviced with public utilities. In addition to environmental and topographical constraints, additional problems facing this area include problems with traffic and truck access, environmental contamination, inadequate parking and a need to improve the aesthetic quality specifically in terms of public improvements in road, parking, signage and streetscape improvements. Furthermore, a clear argument can made for the complete redevelopment of the Ashton Parkway.

Conversations with property owners resulted in the identification of the following concerns.

- There is inadequate parking to accommodate the recreational use (baseball field).
- The condition of the transportation infrastructure and overall aesthetic quality of the street are poor.
- There is poor signage and truck circulation patterns.
- Traffic congestion during peak times can be problematic.
- There are concerns regarding public utilities, their escalating costs and its impact on tenants and concerns about anticipated changes in the fire code and its potential impact on historic mill buildings.

The most significant opportunity is the presence of more than forty (40) acres of undeveloped land. A significant portion of this property is being mined by a construction company that also has plans to relocate other construction company operations to the site. Based on discussions with the property owner, mining of the site could be completed in a period not to exceed two (2) years. This company has current plans to build their headquarters on the site. Although reuse of the site as an office, equipment and material storage and processing facility for a construction company would not impair the current uses along Martin Street, this proposed use may have a negative impact on any efforts to improve and enhance the aesthetic and economic development quality of the area.

There are several, significant companies along Martin Street. All of these companies have been located at their Martin Street facilities for a long period of time. It appears that these companies have no foreseeable plans to either expand or relocate. Furthermore, none of these companies are currently being negatively impacted by either Asian or Central/South American competitors. One company indicated that if confronted with a major new market opportunity, they could not meet that opportunity at their current facility. Two of the three major companies have other production facilities outside of the Martin Street area. One of the companies has a significant amount of their total sales with one industry and one specific customer. Nevertheless, this company has a very long tenure in the community and its representative is very positive about the company's future. In summary, it appears that the current business base along Martin Street is very stable.

Route 122-Mendon Road (Cumberland)

Route 122 serves as the spine that connects the various nodes that together comprise the Ashton-Pratt Corridor. Land uses along this corridor range from single family residential, multi-family residential, retail, service, manufacturing and mining. In some cases, the use and aesthetic quality of these various land uses are attractive. In other cases, however, poorly maintained properties and low quality or vacant commercial spaces severely detract from the image and economic value of the project area.


Mendon Road

Adopting well-designed economic development strategies for the various nodes along Route 122 will significantly enhance the overall appearance. Nevertheless, Route 122 appears to need upgrading. Such an upgrade could include appropriate pedestrian and traffic improvements, strategic off-street parking improvements, streetscape improvements to enhance the visual quality of the area and unified signage improvements. These types of public improvements could tie the area together and create a "sense of place."

Contacts were made with various property owners and businesses along Route 122 (Mendon Road). There was a general lack of consensus among those contacted in terms of the problems

and opportunities confronting this area. In some cases, concerns regarding traffic were raised. These businesses/property owners stated that the Berkeley Commons and Lofts at Ashton Mills projects threaten to further aggravate traffic problems; especially at the northern end of Mendon Road. In other cases, property owners referenced traffic as the reason they located on Route 122. Some businesses referenced the residential development projects along Route 122 (e.g. Berkeley Commons, The River Lofts at Ashton Mill) as new markets for their companies. Some of the contacts indicated that various properties along Mendon Road were unsightly and that the overall lack of a unified business signage program, poor transportation infrastructure and a myriad of property owners posed significant obstacles to the aesthetic and economic redevelopment and improvement of the area, while others felt there was not a significant problem with the visual quality of Mendon Road.

3.0 Public Involvement

Since public input is critical for the success of this project, a strong emphasis was placed on interviews with town officials and property owners, public workshops, stakeholder participation and public meetings. The comments and suggestions from the public identified in the various interviews, workshops and meetings provided valuable information and guidance necessary to develop a Redevelopment Plan that reflected the desires and needs of the stakeholders, users and community.

In addition to public input, the project team had continual input from the steering committee. Meetings were held on an as needed basis depending on the project deliverables and schedule. Seven meetings were held over the nine-month project duration. The steering committee served as a sounding board, provided valuable input, and provided direction to the project team. Due to the diversity of the members on the steering committee, the periodic meetings and the input received from the steering committee helped expedite the project, aided the project team with various aspects of the project and contributed to the success of the development of the Redevelopment Plan.

3.1 Interviews

Interviews and discussions took place with various public officials and interest groups including the project steering committee. The following individuals and organizations were contacted in order to obtain input relative to the Redevelopment Plan:

Daniel J. McKee – Mayor, Town of Cumberland

Sue P. Sheppard – Town Administrator, Town of Lincoln

Anthony M. Noberga – Town of Cumberland District 1 Councilman

Alan Brodd – Cumberland DPW Director

John MacQueen, Jr. – Lincoln Public Works Director

Roger Pierce – Cumberland Building Official, Boys & Girls Club Representative

Neil Fiorio – Cumberland Water Department

John Faile – Lincoln Water Commission

Craig Letourneau – Cumberland Recreation Department

Tammy Gilpatrick – Blackstone Watershed Council

Officer George W. Stansfield III – Cumberland Police Office of Traffic Safety

Pauline Metibier – Lincoln Police Records Clerk

Robert A. Smith, P.E. – Managing Engineer, Roadway Design, RIDOT

Summaries of the discussions and/or correspondence with each individual are provided in Appendix C.

3.2 Stakeholder Meetings

In support of the information collection and public input process, various meetings and phone interviews were held with property owners and businesses. The objectives of these activities were as follows:

- To assess existing, company specific business climate issues;
- To identify any high probability, significant business dislocations including down-sizing or relocation/closures.
- To identify perceived problems and opportunities associated with owning commercial/industrial property or running a business.

The following individuals were interviewed in order to obtain information relative to the business environment.

Mr. Dennis Bernardo
J.J. Duffy Funeral Home
757 Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02865
401.334.2300

Mr. Tom McNulty
E. A. McNulty
Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.333.9520

Mr. John M. Andreoni, President
Cantina di Marco Restaurant & Grill
405 Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.722.4170

Mr. Rick Alger
E.R. Alger & Company
519 Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.333.0300

Mr. Mike Doucette
Dyane's Sweet Tooth
186 Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.724.0690

Mr. Rick Quinlan, Owner
Saylesville Warehouse Company
30 Martin Street
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.334.7735

Ms. Dorothy Matiello
Director of Human Resources
Hope Global
50 Martin Street
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.333.8990 x498

Mr. Ray Castigliego
Plant Engineer
Okonite Company
111 Martin Street
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.333.3500

Mr. Roger Gieske
Vice President/General Manager
CCL Custom Manufacturing
35 Martin Street
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.333.4200

Mr. Daniel J. Coleman
Fournier & Coleman Auto Glass, Inc.
1030 Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.333.4080

Mr. Peter Calcagni, President
Fleet Construction Co., Inc.
50 Cedar Swamp Road
Smithfield, RI 02917
401.231.4300

Mr. Bradford A. Dean, President
Danis Transportation Company, Inc.
60 Industrial Road
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.725.2054

Mr. Dave Morin
Fore Court Tennis & Health
Gray Street
Cumberland, RI 02864

Mr. Tom Heffner, Esq.
1420 Mendon Road
401.475.3150

The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission has funded a planning/visioning project for the Lonsdale Mill. Dodson Associates, Ltd. was hired to conduct this planning/visioning project. Given this, it was decided that the findings of this planning/visioning project would be incorporated in this study. To conduct additional interviews would have been redundant and possibly confusing for the property owners and tenants of the Lonsdale Mill site. Appendix B presents the results of the visioning efforts by Dodson Associates, Ltd.

Summaries of the discussions and interviews with the property owners and businesses are provided in Appendix D.

3.3 Public Workshops

Two public workshops were held to introduce the project to the business and environmental communities and to gain insight and knowledge of the needs and desires of the community. The project team coordinated with a local organization as the sponsors of the workshops in order to utilize their contacts and hopefully get better attendance and input by the public. Prior to each workshop, flyers were sent out to interested parties and organizations, a press release was issued and notification was made in the local paper. The format for both workshops was the same and included a roundtable type presentation and then a break out session with smaller groups that focused on specific concerns.

The first public workshop was held on November 6, 2003 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm in the Cumberland Library. 15 to 20 people attended this workshop. This workshop was sponsored by the Cumberland Business Association and focused on the business development. Prior to this public workshop a meeting was held with the Chamber of Commerce to give a preface of the workshop and to notify as many businesses as possible. At the Business Community Workshop the following key items were discussed:

Traffic/Infrastructure	Zoning/Development
Landscape	Environment
Recreation	

The second public workshop was held at the Cumberland Library on November 13, 2003 from 5:00 to 6:30 pm. 20 to 25 people attended this workshop. This workshop was sponsored by the Blackstone Watershed Council and emphasized the recreational resources within the corridor and the main invitees included members of various environmental and recreational organizations. At the Recreational/Environmental Workshop discussions focused on the following key items:

Pedestrian/Bicycle Access	Land Use Conflicts
Aesthetics	River Access
Environmental Issues	Miscellaneous concerns

The following summarizes the comments form both public workshops. The specific list of all of the comments received at the two workshops is provided in Appendix E.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

- More parking
- Sanitary Facilities Needed
- Separate hiking trails

Land Use Conflicts

- Recreation and industry can mix well
- More parking needed

Traffic and Infrastructure

- Upgrade Mendon Road
- Improve parking
- Streetscaping is important
- Consider new road

River Access

- Launching points needed
- Incorporate ongoing plans

Environmental Issues

- Maintain / restore flood plain volume
- Avoid development in flood plain
- Super Fund stigma

Aesthetics

- Streetscaping
- Development standards

Zoning and Development

- Avoid linear zoning
- Apply design standards
- Share parking
- Obtain Fleet site

Miscellaneous

- Need for recreation center
- Obtain property
- Link properties

3.4 Public Meetings

A public meeting was held on March 29, 2004 at the Cumberland Library. About twenty-five (25) to thirty (30) people attended. This was held in a presentation format with audience feedback. The project team presented the Preliminary Redevelopment Plan for the Ashton-Pratt Corridor, which emphasized the input from the public and the needs of the community. The general response from the public was positive and supportive. A summary of the comments from the public meeting is provided in Appendix F.

4.0 Redevelopment Plan

The redevelopment plan has evolved throughout the duration of the project based on input received from the steering committee, through multiple coordination meetings and from the public during various public coordination efforts. **The primary goal of this plan is to facilitate a unified approach to redevelopment and rehabilitation of the Ashton-Pratt Corridor as a dynamic node along the Blackstone River.** The following list provides specific objectives for the project area that were identified either by the steering committee or as a result of the public coordination process:

1. Enhance recreational resources for all users
2. Protect and enhance the natural environment
3. Maximize access to the river and canal
4. Establish a sense of place by implementing a unified theme for the corridor
5. Preserve and stabilize the economic base for businesses in the project area
6. Improve transportation facilities and traffic
7. Improve aesthetics

In order to better focus on specific recommendations within the project the area was subdivided based on existing land use, topography and economic activity. It was apparent that there are five (5) different sectors or geographic regions within the project, which include:

Northern Sector

Martin Street / Ashton Parkway Sector

Southern Commercial Sector

Lonsdale Mill Area

Mendon Road

A primary focus of this plan is to recommend actions to be taken in each of these sectors, with the goal of linking them together with Mendon Road as the main spine of the area and the Blackstone River as the underlining focus and key recreational component. The results of the coordination efforts have been incorporated in the Final Redevelopment Plan presented in the sections below. Figure 5 on the following page presents a graphic overview of the redevelopment plan and emphasizes some of the key improvements being recommended within the project area. The following sections present the critical elements of the Plan in more detail, summarize the recommendations within each of the five (5) sectors, and address the project goal and objectives stated above.

4.1 Northern Sector

This sector commences at Interstate 295, continues under the Route 116 bridge (the Ashton Viaduct); includes the Kelly House Museum and a proposed state visitors center and rest stop on Interstate 295. It also includes the Ashton Mill, currently under conversion to residential use as The River Lofts at Ashton Mill and the Ashton mill houses. Just to the east of the Ashton Mill is a newly constructed public parking lot. A pedestrian bridge for access to the Blackstone River and bikeway link both Cumberland and Lincoln. There is also both a vehicular and pedestrian connection between the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln. It also serves as the transportation gateway to the project area from the north.

Public input stressed the need for improved access to the river and improvement to available services such as restrooms, parking and food services. The following represents a summary of the principal recommended actions and improvements to be undertaken.

Improved Support Services for Users of the River

Parking, restrooms, food and beverage service, river related rental equipment, boat ramps, and access and egress improvements for fishing and site seeing were all noted as desirable additions. The improvements should be focused in the vicinity of the Ashton Viaduct, where modest parking and a pedestrian bridge link to the bikeway already exists. Commercial space may be available in the remaining mill complex under the bridge for a small rental/canoe/kayak/bicycle store and modest coffee/snack shop.

Improved Vehicular Access for Users of the River

Access to this service/visitor node would primarily be via Store Hill Road on the Cumberland side, a steeply graded winding road servicing a densely developed residential area and through the Quinnville residential area on the Lincoln side. Sidewalk improvements, landscaping, fencing, barriers, expanded parking facilities and directional signs should all be provided. Connection of this node with the southerly Ashton Parkway area, perhaps with the construction of a new road along the existing railway, would ease potential traffic congestion and improved fire and rescue access to this node.

Kelly House Improvements

Kelly House is currently undergoing modest parking and service improvements by RIDEM. The Town of Lincoln should continue to support these efforts and coordinate any Town improvements with the RIDEM at this location.

Additional Access Points for Users of the River

The state is building a rest stop / visitor node facility on Interstate 295 and currently has plans for a connection to the bikeway at the Kelly House. Also, rough woodland trails exist within the state owned property between the river and the rest area and efforts

should be taken to ensure that the woodland trails are sufficiently improved to provide a safe connection to the river.

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation ("RIDOT") has a highway barn located on Route 116 in Lincoln. This highway barn is located contiguous to the site for the proposed State visitor center, which will be accessed via Interstate 295. It is the understanding of the consulting team that RIDOT is combining this operation with the highway barn located at the intersection of Route 116 and Route 7 in Smithfield. The new combined RIDOT facility will be at another site in Smithfield.

Lincoln officials have indicated that the redevelopment of the Route 116 highway barn site should be for business purposes. The redevelopment of this site, however, should allow for pedestrian and possibly vehicular access from Route 116 to the I-295 visitor center. The RIDOT site is also contiguous to a 20-acre vacant site that is available for purchase. The combined parcels offer the Town of Lincoln a significant business development opportunity. The Town of Lincoln should initiate discussions with RIDOT officials to ascertain the timing and process for property disposition. The Town of Lincoln should also indicate to RIDOT officials their desire for public access to the visitor center site from Route 116 across the RIDOT parcel.

The following summarizes the recommended actions within the Northern Sector and how each recommendation addresses the specific objectives for the project.

Northern Sector – Project Objectives

	Recreational Resources	Natural Environment	River Access	Sense of Place	Economic Base	Transportation Facilities	Aesthetics
Improved Support Services	√		√		√		
Improved Vehicular Access			√	√		√	√
Kelly House Improvements		√		√			
Additional Access Points	√		√			√	

Figure 6 on the following page provides an aerial view of the Northern Sector and presents the recommendations being proposed within this sector.

4.2 Martin Street / Ashton Parkway Sector

This sector includes industrial, commercial and recreational activities along Ashton Parkway and Martin Street and continues southward to the southerly edge of the gravel mining operations and northern edge of the River Run Subdivision currently under construction.

The following represents a summary of the principal recommended actions and improvements to be undertaken.

New Service Road

The principal public improvement recommendation includes the construction of an Industrial Service Road from Mendon Road to Martin Street. The proposed road would afford improved access for employees and commercial trucking to the industrial properties. Additionally, substantial peak hour traffic would be removed from Martin Street, specifically at the Martin Street and Mendon Road intersection. Roadway improvements may also provide an impetus to private property improvements along Ashton Parkway. The proposed roadway would utilize the existing private driveway for Dean Warehouse, have a new crossing of the P&W Railroad and connect with Ashton Parkway, possibly utilizing the existing intersection with Mendon Road. Sidewalk improvements, landscaping, fencing, barriers, expanded parking facilities and directional signage should also be provided on Martin Street and the new service road.

This new service road would also improve visibility of the businesses along Ashton Parkway and spark private investment in aesthetic improvements to the area. The Town of Cumberland should consider alternative methods for improving the aesthetics of this area if a new service road is not constructed.

Improved Support Services for Users of the River

Public input stressed the need for improved access to the river and improvement to available services. Parking, restrooms, food and beverage service, river related rental equipment, boat ramps, and access and egress improvements for fishing and site seeing were all noted as desirable additions.

The improvements should be focused in the vicinity of the intersection of Martin Street and the Blackstone River. Commercial space may be available in the mill complex just to the east of this location for a small rental/canoe/kayak/bicycle store and modest coffee/snack shop.

Improved Parking for Users of the River

Abandonment of the sub-standard baseball field is recommended as the field has inadequate parking, and is frequently flooded. The users of the field requested that the field be significantly improved or a new field be constructed elsewhere. The abandoned

ball field could then serve as a parking lot for both users of the river and related features, and to ease parking congestion for the various businesses located on Martin Street.

Streetscape Improvements

Streetscape improvements incorporating concepts demonstrated in a master plan for Martin Street, recently developed by Gates, Leighton and Associates are valid and should be implemented. The following summarizes the recommendations in that report:

- Enhance the street edge with well-defined crosswalks that "bridge" wide expenses of asphalt.
- Create a bike lane on Martin Street that leads to the bikeway along the river.
- Install a grass shoulder, street trees and other improvements that better define the street edge and help manage traffic.

The current improvements included in the RIDOT plans for the Martin Street bridge replacement include provisions for sidewalks along Martin Street. The additional recommendations in the Gates, Leighton and Associates plan should be incorporated in future improvements by the Town of Cumberland.

Redevelopment of the Existing Gravel Mining Operation

The public emphasized the need for enhanced recreational resources. The thirty five (35) acre gravel mining operation on Martin Street was identified as a potential location for a recreational complex for the Town of Cumberland. Redevelopment of this parcel, or a section of this parcel, for that purpose reflects the public's need for additional recreational resources. Fleet Construction currently owns the gravel operation and is currently evaluating the future plans for their facility.

An opportunity for the Town of Cumberland or perhaps the Boys and Girls Club to purchase the property may exist in the future. The public and Town officials in Cumberland have all stated a need for a comprehensive active sports recreation facility in, not only in Cumberland, but specifically in an area south of Interstate 295. Should the thirty five (35) acre parcel become available, the site could address many of the needs of the community for an active recreational facility. Such a facility would serve as an appropriate buffer between the residential activities to the east and south, and the commercial and industrial activities to the west. The facility could be accessed from the existing entrance on Martin Street, or through a new driveway off of Mendon Road. The proposed facility would provide parking and could provide pedestrian access to the Blackstone River, by constructing a new crossing of the P&W Railroad.

The table on the following page summarizes the recommended actions within the Martin Street/Ashton Parkway Sector and how each recommendation addresses the specific objectives for the project.

Martin Street/Ashton Parkway Sector – Project Objectives

	Recreational Resources	Natural Environment	River Access	Sense of Place	Economic Base	Transportation Facilities	Aesthetics
New Service Road				√	√	√	√
Improved Support Services	√		√		√		
Improved Parking			√			√	
Streetscape Improvements				√	√		√
Redevelopment of Gravel Operations	√		√	√			√

Figure 7 on the following page provides an aerial view of the Martin Street/Ashton Parkway Sector and presents the recommendations being proposed within this sector.

4.3 Southern Commercial Sector

This is the main commercial node within the project area. Historically, Ann & Hope was the primary economic driver for the area. More recently a Super Stop & Shop plaza, financial services, coffee shops, and neighborhood-based retail have become the primary businesses in this sector. There is also an inactive transfer station for solid waste on the parcel just northwest of the Stop & Shop plaza adjacent to the river. This historically contained Moody's Beach, which no longer exists due to manmade and natural activities and. The un-named island and the Landfill area are also within this sector. The bikeway currently terminates in this sector at the Pratt Dam in Lincoln. Construction is under way for extension of the bike trail over the Pratt Dam, behind the Super Stop & Shop plaza, and through the recently restored Lonsdale drive-in site.

The following represents a summary of the principal recommended actions and improvements to be undertaken in this node.

Improved Support Services for Users of the Bikeway and River

Public input stressed the need for additional amenities/services for users of the bikeway and river. Restrooms, food and beverage service, river related rental equipment, boat ramps, and access and egress improvements for fishing and site seeing were all noted as desirable additions. The improvements should be focused in the vicinity of the Super Stop & Shop plaza, where the bikeway is currently being extended and where parking may be available within the Super Stop & Shop parking lot. Retail units within the existing commercial space may be available for a small rental/canoe/kayak/bicycle store, a modest coffee/snack shop, and/or public restroom facilities.

Improved Parking Facilities for Users of the Bikeway and River

Public input stressed the need for improved parking facilities for access to the bikeway and river. The improvements should be focused in the vicinity of the Super Stop & Shop plaza, where the bikeway is currently being extended and where parking may be available within the Super Stop & Shop parking lot. The owners of the Super Stop & Shop plaza may be amenable to some type of parking arrangement for users of the bikeway. Many of the parking spaces behind the plaza are usually vacant and are within close proximity of the proposed bikeway extension.

Redevelopment of the Transfer Station

Potential redevelopment of the transfer station may be feasible. Based on public input, the previous use is not desirable. The public would like to see this parcel used for recreational purposes that enhance and support use of the river. The future status of transfer station is undetermined at this time, however local municipal sentiment coupled with historical use and other location amenities, such as proximity to the rail line would indicate that this use could be re-established in the future. Other public sentiment indicates environmental and aesthetic concerns for this use directly adjacent to the river.

The community and public officials have to decide the fate of this parcel and an action plan must address both sides of this issue. Minimally, any action plan must recognize that people in watercraft on the river may stop on the banks and this area must be clean and safe for human contact. Additionally, all of the banks of the river should be clean and free of debris to improve the aesthetics of the corridor.

Aesthetic Improvements

Within this node, aesthetic improvements could greatly improve the area. Landscaping, signage and storefront improvements/upgrades would improve the overall aesthetics and potentially provide revitalization and increased use.

Recreational Use of the Unnamed Island

Based on public input, the consensus was that local residents would prefer passive recreation such as bird watching, hiking and fishing. This could be accomplished by cleaning up the island and by improving access to the Island.

Clean-up of the Landfill

The landfill is an eyesore and was created over a long time period. Lincoln residents and users of the bikeway have the clearest view of the landfill and would like to see the landfill removed in its entirety. Minimally, this pyramidal hill should be cleaned up to prevent erosion of the banks adjacent to the river and to allow passive recreational use as a lookout to view the river corridor. Due to the high elevations on top of the landfill, it could be reused as a local vantage point for the river valley.

The following summarizes the recommended actions within the Southern Commercial Sector and how each recommendation addresses the specific objectives for the project.

Southern Commercial Sector – Project Objectives

	Recreational Resources	Natural Environment	River Access	Sense of Place	Economic Base	Transportation Facilities	Aesthetics
Improved Support Services	√		√		√		
Improved Parking Facilities	√		√				
Redevelopment of the Transfer Station	√	√	√		√		√
Aesthetic Improvements				√	√		√
Recreational Use of Unnamed Island	√	√	√				√
Clean-up of the Landfill	√	√	√				√

Figure 8 on the following page provides an aerial view of the Southern Commercial Sector and presents the recommendations being proposed within this sector.

4.4 Lonsdale Mill Sector

The Lonsdale Mill – "the bleachery," includes multiple buildings representing more than 350,000 square feet of structures accommodating multiple uses. It is the terminus of the Blackstone Canal and is adjacent to the recently restored Lonsdale Drive-in wetland reclamation site. The bleachery is entirely within the Town of Lincoln and has a diversity of owners, renters and users.

A public visioning process was recently completed for the bleachery site by Dodson Associates, Ltd. This visioning resulted in the identification of several properties for demolition, as well as improvements for transportation access, parking, and access to the river. The recommendations (provided in Appendix B) need to be further defined, with particular emphasis on market needs.

The following summarizes the recommended actions within the Lonsdale Mill Sector and how each recommendation addresses the specific objectives for the project.

Lonsdale Mill Sector – Project Objectives (Dodson Visioning Project)

	Recreational Resources	Natural Environment	River Access	Sense of Place	Economic Base	Transportation Facilities	Aesthetics
Access					√	√	
Parking	√		√		√		
Mill Pond Landscape		√		√	√		√
Remove Building					√	√	√
Site Clean Up		√					√
River Access		√	√				√
Courtyard Park				√	√		√
Architectural Rehabilitation				√	√		√
Pond View	√		√				√
Remove Buildings					√	√	√

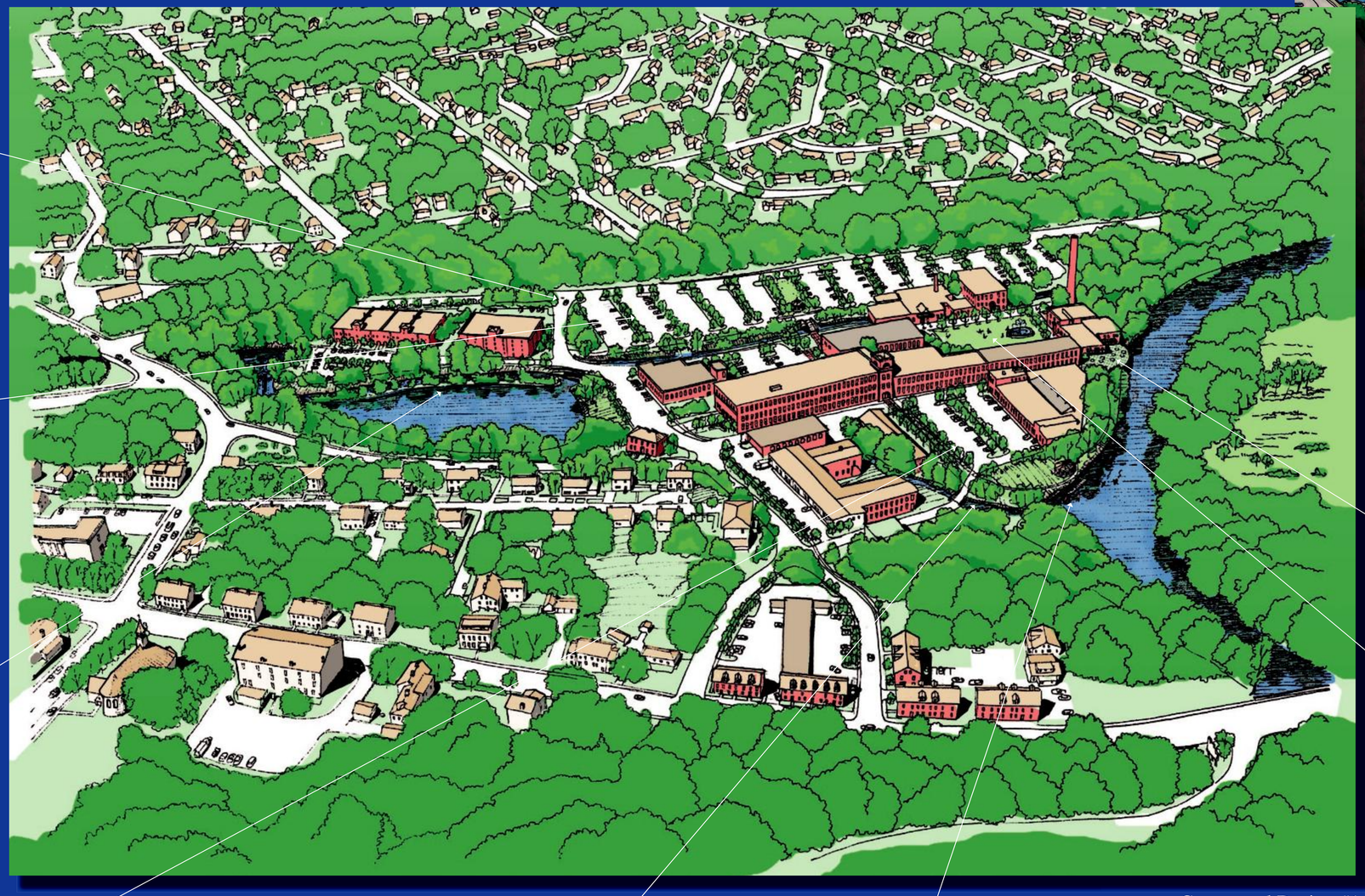
Figure 9 on the following page provides the recommendations prepared by Dodson Associates for the Lonsdale Mill site.

Blackstone River Visioning Project

Lonsdale Bleachery Design Charrette: Lincoln, Rhode Island

Conceptual Design Recommendations

A project developed and funded by a partnership of groups led by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and the Massachusetts Audubon Society.
www.massaudubon.org *www.nps.gov/blac/home.htm*



Access
Provide additional access into the mill complex from the entry road to Blackstone River Park.

Parking
Provide parking areas along the western portion of the site along the Park entry road to accommodate new uses in the mill buildings. Include a pedestrian access across the canal.

Mill Pond Landscape
Clean mill pond and adjacent canal to create a scenic landscaped area that provides an entry focal point and an enjoyable pedestrian experience within the site.

Remove Building
Non-historic structures and additions could be removed to provide parking and allow light and air to reach historic buildings.

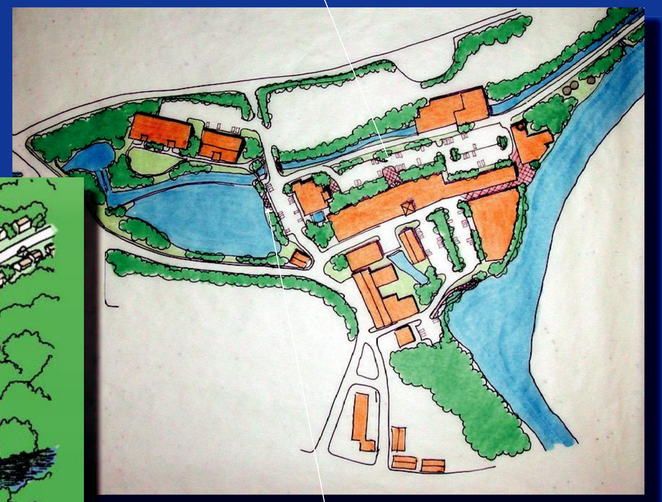
Site Clean Up
Clean up the sluice way between the buildings.

River Access
Provide canoe launch and riverside pedestrian plaza in the cove area of the river.

North

Conceptual Design #1

Remove Buildings
Remove buildings in the central portion of the mill complex to provide parking and easy access to the main mill building. This building should be considered for a mix of uses including senior and/or affordable housing.



Conceptual Design #2

Pond View
Provide parking and a viewing area for residents and visitors to the complex.

Architectural Rehabilitation
Revitalize this building or use as a restaurant and visitor center with visual access to the River. A landscaped courtyard adjacent to this building creates a resting and gathering spot.

Courtyard Park
Open up new internal courtyard by removing industrial buildings.

Mass Audubon Protecting the Nature of Massachusetts
John H. Chafee BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY National Heritage Corridor Commission

4.5 Mendon Road (Cumberland)

Route 122 (Mendon Road) traverses 2.6 miles along the eastern edge of the project and serves as the transportation backbone of the project. Land uses are varied, ranging from industrial, commercial, light office, institutional and single- and multi-family residential. The road is heavily traveled, especially on the northern end, and aesthetically lacks continuity. There is a lack of continuity with multiple signs of economic distress, including some vacancy and physical decline. Buildings directly abut the road with limited sidewalks. The narrow right-of-way minimizes the potential for roadway widening, additional on street parking, and the addition of sidewalks.

Although there are signs of economic distress there are other elements noting new economic development, including significant investment in residential properties. Some of the conversions of small office buildings and recent construction such as Berkeley Commons and the River Run Subdivision, are a sign of new investment in the area. Also, there is the presence of a modest amount of historically significant structures; including mill buildings, residences, and a church which would enhance the area if the structures are maintained and/or renovated.

Public input stressed the need for improvements to the traffic congestion, parking and aesthetics on Mendon Road. The following represents a summary of the principle recommended actions and improvements to be undertaken.

Transportation Infrastructure Improvements

Improvements to the lighting, off-street parking and sidewalks along Mendon Road could greatly improve the area. Additional parking is needed for all users (residential and commercial) along the length of Mendon Road. Off-street parking could be provided by either consolidating vacant or under utilized parcels or by demolition of some existing properties that show signs of distress. Provision of sidewalks where there are none along Mendon Road would improve pedestrian safety and access to the current businesses.

Streetscape Improvements

Streetscape improvements along Mendon Road are needed and would greatly improve the aesthetics of the corridor and could potentially have a positive impact on businesses. The improvements recommended by Gates, Leighton and Associates for Martin Street could be easily incorporated as streetscape improvements for Mendon Road. These improvements could also spark revitalization of the area and additional investment by current private property owners.

Signage Improvements

Additional signs within the project area, specifically along Mendon Road, would increase awareness of the amenities within the corridor and improve access to the various facilities. Signs indicating the recreational facilities would link users to the river and

provide a unifying element throughout the project. Signs that identify the area as the Ashton-Pratt Corridor and that are applied throughout the project would identify the area as unique and help create a sense of place. The signs could be similar to the existing purple informational signage developed by the JHCBRVNHC within the project area. The additional signs could be a powerful tool that would increase awareness, spark private investment and improve access and use of the corridor.

Private Property Enhancement

Specific properties along Mendon Road should be identified for demolition due to reasons of physical or structural obsolescence. These properties could be used by the public for off-street parking locations or used by private investors for redevelopment and enhancement of Mendon Road. Other properties should be identified for protection that enhance the vision of the area or augment the overall character of the area.

The following summarizes the recommended actions within the Mendon Road and how each recommendation addresses the specific objectives for the project.

Mendon Road – Project Objectives

	Recreational Resources	Natural Environment	River Access	Sense of Place	Economic Base	Transportation Facilities	Aesthetics
Transportation Improvements				√	√	√	
Streetscape Improvements				√	√		√
Signage Improvements	√		√	√			√
Private Property Enhancement				√	√		√

Figures 10a and 10b on the following pages provide an aerial view of Mendon Road and present the recommendations being proposed within this sector.

4.6 Redevelopment Plan Summary

The recommendations presented above will facilitate redevelopment and rehabilitation of the Ashton-Pratt Corridor as a unique destination along the Blackstone River. These recommendations focus on access to the river and bikeway, enhance recreational facilities within the corridor, will aid in strengthening the economic base, improve transportation circulation and aesthetics and will help protect the existing natural resources within the project area. By implementing these improvements, a unified sense of place will emerge within the Ashton-Pratt Corridor. This Redevelopment Plan will also help the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln with implementation of the plan and will provide the EPA with the anticipated future land use of the project area in order to aid them in the selection of appropriate remediation measures.

The following summarizes how the recommended action within each project area addresses the specific objectives for the project.

Project Objectives Summary

	Recreational Resources	Natural Environment	River Access	Sense of Place	Economic Base	Transportation Facilities	Aesthetics
Northern Sector	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Martin Street/Ashton Parkway Sector	√		√	√	√	√	√
Southern Commercial Node	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Lonsdale Mill Sector	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Mendon Road Node	√		√	√	√	√	√

5.0 Implementation

The successful redevelopment of the Ashton-Pratt Corridor will necessitate the accomplishment of numerous tasks over a 10 to 20 year period. The following table summarizes the recommendations provided in Section 4.0 and identifies each recommendation as to the responsible party (public involvement or private investment) and the anticipated time frame for implementation of the recommendations. These recommendations will help guide the EPA with the required cleanup activities that are appropriate for the proposed use of the entire site.

Recommendations	Public Involvement	Private Investment	Current	1 – 2 Years	2 - 10 Years	> 10 Years
Northern Sector						
1. Improved Support Services		√			√	
2. Improved Vehicular Access	√					√
3. Kelly House Improvements		√	√			
4. Additional Access Points	√				√	
Martin Street/Ashton Parkway Sector						
5. New Service Road	√	√				√
6. Improved Support Services		√			√	
7. Improved Parking	√				√	
8. Streetscape Improvements	√		√		√	
9. Redevelopment of Gravel Operations	√	√			√	
Southern Commercial Sector						
10. Improved Support Services		√			√	
11. Improved Parking Facilities		√		√		
12. Redevelopment of Transfer Station	√	√			√	
13. Aesthetic Improvements	√	√			√	
14. Recreational Use of Unnamed Island	√	√				√
15. Clean-up of the Landfill	√	√				√
Lonsdale Mill Sector						
16. Dodson Visioning	√	√			√	
Mendon Road						
17. Transportation Improvements	√				√	
18. Streetscape Improvements	√				√	
19. Signage Improvements	√			√		
20. Private Property Enhancement	√	√			√	

In order to ensure the success of the Ashton-Pratt Corridor Redevelopment Plan, several tasks need to be performed to help implement the recommendations and provide for the proper oversight of the plan. It is beyond the scope of this study to suggest or recommend the exact tasks, their priorities and sequencing, however, the following provides an overview of the basic tasks that will need to be accomplished and their general phasing in order to ensure that the Redevelopment Plan comes to fruition. In addition, an active role by both the JHCBRVNHCC and Federal agencies in the implementation of the redevelopment plan is critical to its success.

The implementation tasks can be organized into the following categories: (1) Organizational Capacity Building; (2) Planning and Design; and (3) Infrastructure and Public Facility Development.

5.1 Organizational Capacity Building

A key factor determining the success of any development/redevelopment project is the existence of organizational capacity to implement and manage the various aspects of the project. It is important that any organization created and/or empowered to carryout a project have the resources or access to the resources required for implementation, as well as, the powers necessary to implement and manage a project. As described in more detail under Section 5.4, this study recommends that both the Town of Cumberland and the Town of Lincoln establish Redevelopment Agencies. This study also recommends that these Redevelopment Agencies be established in the very early stages of the redevelopment initiatives. The first task facing these Redevelopment Agencies should be the preparation of redevelopment plans in accordance with state requirements. These redevelopment plans would build upon the redevelopment vision outlined in this report by refining this vision and incorporating those details as required by Rhode Island General Laws. The following tasks are being proposed in conjunction with this recommendation.

Task 1: Prepare and Approve a Municipal Ordinance establishing a Redevelopment Agency.

Task 2: Town Council Appointment of Redevelopment Agency Members.

Task 3: Town Council Appropriation of Monies to fund the First Year Operations of the Redevelopment Agency.

Task 4: Preparation and Approval of By-Laws for the Redevelopment Agency.

5.2 Planning and Design

There are multiple implementation tasks relating to the general planning for redevelopment; establishing controls, procedures and standards to guide redevelopment and designing specific proposed infrastructure improvements. It is important to emphasize that a Redevelopment Plan, once developed, will define various tasks for implementation and management of the proposed redevelopment. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that the following tasks are reflective of some of the actual tasks that will be identified.

Task 1: Redevelopment Agency prepares a Redevelopment Plan and secures approval from Town Council, thus establishing a Redevelopment District.

Task 2: Review the Towns Land Use Regulations that pertain to the Redevelopment District and make necessary changes that will enhance the capacity of the Redevelopment Agency to carryout the envisioned redevelopment (e.g. Overlay Zoning District, Mixed Use Zoning, etc.).

Task 3: Develop a strategy to fund the design and development of the new service road connecting Martin Street and Route 122. One possible strategy would entail securing a Functional Classification of the proposed service road and placement of the proposed road on the State of Rhode Island's Transportation Improvement Program list (TIP). The Town of Cumberland could facilitate this strategy by funding the road design. Design the proposed road improvements. (Recommendation No. 5 on Page 56)

Task 4: Develop a Master Plan and implementation strategy for the redevelopment of the Ashton Parkway industrial area. The development of this Master Plan should be done in tandem with Task 7 and in cooperation with existing property owners.

Task 5: Develop a streetscape improvement plan and signage program for the Route 122 Corridor. Investigate the status of Route 122 in terms of RIDOT near-term and long-term improvement plans. Assess feasibility of coordinating streetscape improvements with any planned RIDOT projects. The streetscape improvement plan should be expanded in scope to include design and infrastructure improvement strategies to strengthen the image of the Super Stop & Shop Commercial Node. (Recommendation No.'s 13 and 18 on Page 56)

Task 6: Develop and adopt a property tax incentive program to encourage the "substantial" rehabilitation of commercial and industrial properties.

Task 7: Working in cooperation with the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, develop a Blackstone River Greenway Master Plan and implementation strategy from the Lonsdale Bleachery to the proposed Interstate 295 Visitor Center.

Task 8: Establish a working partnership with the Cumberland-Lincoln Boys and Girls Club to investigate the development of the Fleet Construction site. Establish a "Letter of Understanding" with the property owner to delay development of the site until the feasibility of developing the site as an active recreation facility has been assessed.

Task 9: Develop a Master Plan and funding strategy for the development of the Fleet Construction site as a youth active recreation facility. (Recommendation No. 9 on Page 56)

5.3 Infrastructure and Public Facility Development

Following the development of the organizational capacity to manage the redevelopment and the necessary planning and design to guide the redevelopment, this stage entails the implementation of the various proposed public improvements. It is important to point out that the actual timing and duration of these proposed improvements cannot be definitively predicted at this time. Issues regarding the availability of Federal and State funding support and the willingness of the respective town councils to appropriate necessary seed and matching capital remain the primary factors affecting the timing and phasing of all proposed tasks.

Task 1 Construct Martin Street and Route 122 service road. (Recommendation No. 5 on Page 56)

Task 2 Construct the "Cumberland Youth Recreation Complex" on the former Fleet Construction site. (Recommendation No. 9 on Page 56)

Task 3 Implement phased Route 122 streetscape improvement program. (Recommendation No. 18 on Page 56)

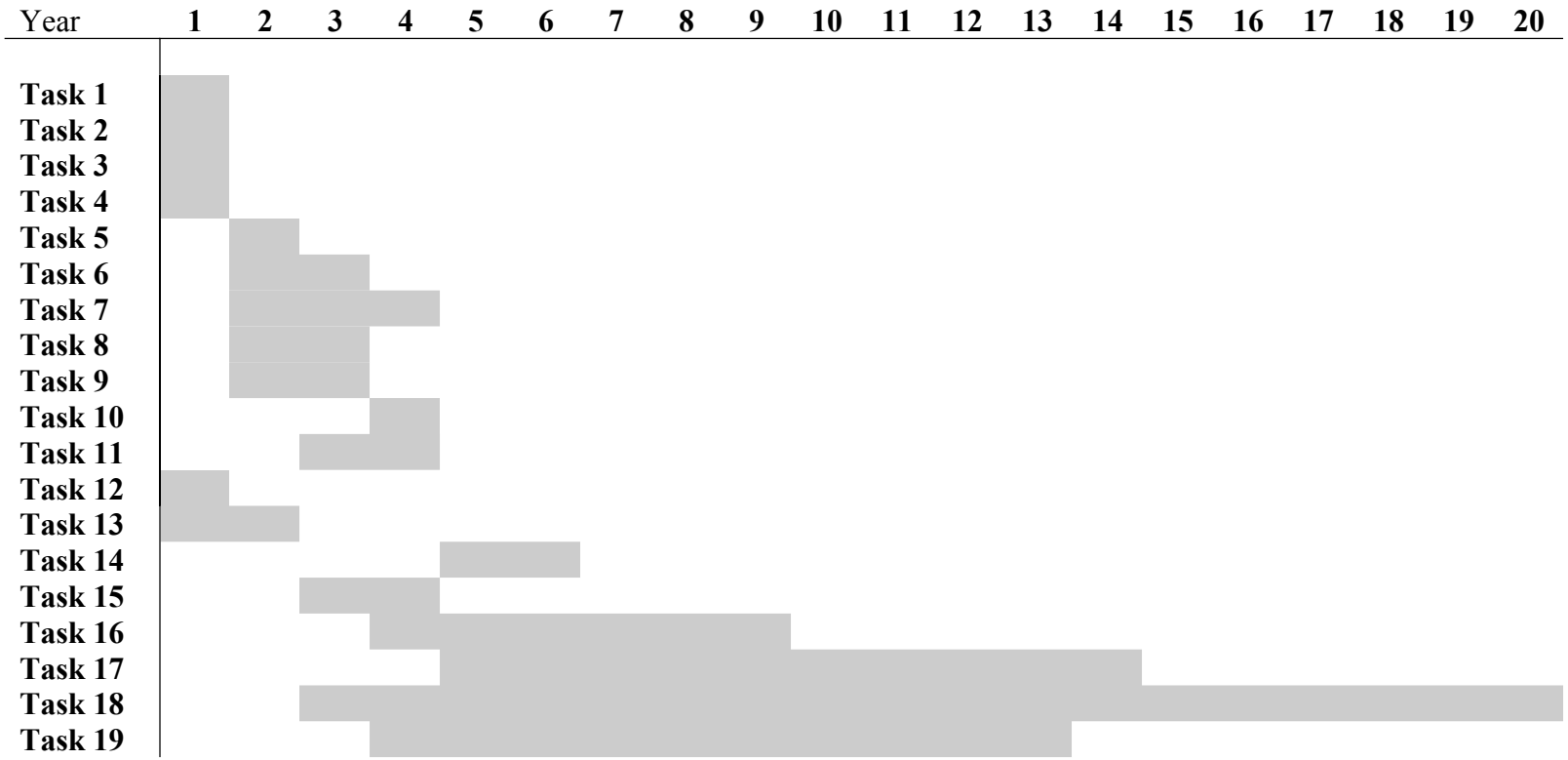
Task 4 Implement phased Blackstone River Greenway improvements including establishing a connection with the I-295 Visitors Center.

Task 5 Work with commercial and industrial property owners to upgrade their properties.

Task 6 Facilitate and coordinate the redevelopment of the Ashton Parkway industrial area in conformance with the Master Plan and implementation strategy.

ASHTON-PRATT CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

CONCEPTUAL PROJECT SCHEDULE



5.4 Redevelopment Districts

The successful implementation of a public sponsored redevelopment initiative necessitates a strategy that is responsive to both the unique characteristics of the redevelopment initiative and the strengths and weaknesses of the sponsoring governmental entity(s). Absent of a qualified and experienced local economic development organization, it is fair to conclude that existing land use regulatory and planning processes are not effectively positioned and equipped to both facilitate and manage a redevelopment initiative such as that being proposed for the Ashton-Pratt Corridor.

The primary challenges confronting the successful implementation, management and completion of the Ashton-Pratt Corridor redevelopment initiative are as follows.

- The projected time-frame for the successful completion of the redevelopment initiative is expected to take between ten (10) and fifteen (15) years. It is extremely difficult to manage a focused, long term redevelopment program given the inevitable turnover in the elected, appointed and professional leadership at the local level; all of whom are critical to the redevelopment initiative's success.

- The successful management of the redevelopment initiative will require the capacity to receive and expend municipal funds, as well as, the ability to borrow monies, purchase, sale and lease real estate.

- It may be necessary to take, by eminent domain, a property or properties that are privately owned and are critical to the successful realization of the redevelopment vision. This taking assumes that a negotiated purchase cannot be achieved.

- The time-frame and complexity of the redevelopment initiative requires a single-purpose focus by a sponsoring entity. The inability to focus on the redevelopment initiative will result in the substantial lengthening of the time-frame for completion. Furthermore, the inability to focus will increase the chances that opportunities are missed, mistakes are made and the benefits of the redevelopment initiative are not optimized. A clear argument can be made that the typical planning office has too many responsibilities and too little human resources to effectively serve as an effective entity to manage a redevelopment initiative.

- The successful management of the redevelopment initiative will require the coordination and streamlining of regulatory permitting activities. Furthermore, there may be a necessity to amend various use and dimensional requirements to allow for a regulatory and permitting process that is more accommodating of the specific vision established for the Ashton-Pratt Corridor.

Given these delineated challenges, it is recommended that the Town of Cumberland and the Town of Lincoln establish redevelopment districts for their respective areas in the Ashton-Pratt Corridor. In conjunction with this recommendation, both communities would establish

redevelopment plans and redevelopment agencies to guide and manage the proposed redevelopment. The merits of this recommendation are as follows:

- The preparation of a redevelopment plan that meets the statutory requirements of a redevelopment plan pursuant to Rhode Island General Law Title 45, Chapters 32-38 is the appropriate next step to the completion of this study. Such a redevelopment plan is more definitive in terms of existing conditions, planned public and private improvements, redevelopment costs and funding strategies and other municipal representations. The preparation of a redevelopment plan that meets the statutory requirements will serve as an appropriate road map to follow throughout the redevelopment period.

- A redevelopment agency provides each community with the organizational and institutional capacity to maintain a single-purpose focus on the proposed redevelopment initiative.

- A redevelopment agency can have the powers to acquire, redevelop, sell and lease real estate, as well as, the power to take property by condemnation.

- A redevelopment agency can be granted various land-use review and regulatory powers that can work in tandem with established land-use regulatory processes to ensure a streamlined process that is both flexible and congruent with the redevelopment vision.

The creation of a redevelopment district requires the accomplishment of several discrete tasks. First, each town would need to establish a redevelopment agency through the passage of legislation by their Town Council. This legislation would define those powers that the redevelopment agency would have such as the powers of condemnation. The legislation would also define the process by which the members of the Redevelopment Agency are appointed. By-laws would also have to be adopted by the town defining the operational procedures of the redevelopment agency.

Each municipality would need to amend their comprehensive plans to designate the proposed redevelopment areas as "areas of substandard and blighting conditions". The State statutes pertaining to what kinds of conditions warrant such a designation are broad. The mere presence of environmental contamination is grounds for such a designation. The economic development component of each community's comprehensive plan should also be amended to include the establishment of a redevelopment district as a strategy to promote economic, physical and aesthetic revitalization in areas designated as substandard and blighted.

In addition to the establishment of a redevelopment agency and the amendment of their comprehensive plan, the newly established redevelopment agency will need to prepare a redevelopment plan. The required redevelopment plan would build upon this study by providing greater definition in a variety of areas. The following identifies some general areas to include in the redevelopment plan.

1. A description of the boundaries and location of the project area;

2. A description of the existing blighted and substandard conditions in the project area;

3. A plan describing proposed land uses in the project area;

4. Proposed standards of population densities, land coverage, and building intensities;

5. A description of proposed changes in streets and utilities;

6. A description of proposed changes in zoning or exceptions, variances, or modifications;

7. A general statement showing that the proposed redevelopment plan conforms to the master or general community plan;

8. A statement showing the lands in the project area to be acquired and buildings or structures to be demolished and removed;

9. A general statement of proposed conditions, covenants, and other restrictions controlling the disposal and future use of land and buildings in the project area;

10. A general statement of the extent of relocation resulting from the proposed redevelopment of the area and the proposed method for rehousing of displaced persons;

11. A statement of the estimated cost of carrying out the redevelopment plan, and a description of the method of financing the proposed redevelopment project; and

12. A general statement showing how the purposes of chapters 31-33 of this title would be attained by redevelopment.

The following outlines a proposed methodology for developing the redevelopment plan by task and by responsible means for accomplishing each task.

Task 1: <u>Selection of Redevelopment District Boundaries</u>

A physical description of each redevelopment district needs to be prepared. The description of each redevelopment district could be accomplished using assessor plats versus a perimeter meets & bounds description. It is recommended that the boundaries of each redevelopment district be either a natural feature (e.g. river) or a street. Using assessor plats/lots as boundaries could create future problems in the event of future subdivision and/or consolidation of lots.

Task 2: Description of Existing Blighted and Substandard Conditions

Survey existing conditions in the redevelopment district including physical conditions and uses of buildings, areas of high vacancy, and conditions of existing infrastructure including streets, parking areas and other public spaces. Collect data regarding current building code and fire code violations from Town Building Official and the applicable Fire Department. Prepare a written summary of findings and map appropriate information.

In addition to surveying existing physical conditions, review existing zoning requirements and any other land use regulation that will impact the Agency's capacity to carry-out the redevelopment plan.

Task 3: Strategic Planning & Design Charette

Conduct a strategic planning/design charette with members of each respective redevelopment agency and other "stakeholders" in their community. The objective of this strategic planning/design charette would be to further build upon the vision established in this study. This future vision should include land/building uses, public improvements including road, streetscape and passive/active recreation, site and building design standards, and identification of any changes in land use regulations. The resulting vision will be encapsulated into "guiding principles" for redevelopment as well as several maps and drawings reflecting this future vision. In the event that this process results in the identification of specific properties that require condemnation and demolition, these properties should be identified in the redevelopment plan. Otherwise, we believe that the redevelopment plan should state that "public/private cooperative approaches for the rehabilitation of existing properties" is the goal.

Task 4: Preparation of Redevelopment Plan

Based on the findings and end-products developed in Task 1, Task 2 and Task 3, prepare the final redevelopment plan(s) inclusive of the required contents as outlined in RIGL Chapter 45-32-8. It will be necessary to prepare a redevelopment budget that projects total costs to undertake the public and private improvements identified in Task 3 as well as sources of funds to underwrite these costs. Furthermore, each municipality's legal counsel should review the draft redevelopment plan to insure the plan is inclusive of the content requirements.

The final redevelopment plans will need to be submitted to each community's planning board for a determination of conformance to their comprehensive plan and a recommendation to each town council for adoption.

In order for this recommended implementation strategy to be effective, it will be necessary to address the issue of staffing the redevelopment agencies. This staffing can be accomplished by one of three approaches.

- Hire an executive director to manage the activities of the agency (e.g. Providence Redevelopment Agency).
- Designate the Town Planner as the executive director (e.g. Redevelopment Agency of Woonsocket; Pawtucket Redevelopment Agency).
- Hire a part-time consultant to provide professional advisory services in conjunction with support from the Town Planner (e.g. Burrillville Redevelopment Agency).

The staffing option selected depends upon the existing human resource capacity and expertise at the municipal level and the availability of local financial resources to support the operating and staffing costs of each redevelopment agency. There also is the option of both municipalities combining resources to share in the staffing costs of each redevelopment agency.