Chapter 2: Economic Development

Introduction

Southampton's present-day economic characteristics can be traced to decisions made by town leaders some 150 years ago during the Industrial Revolution era. In the mid-to-late 1800s, mill industries sprang up all across Massachusetts. Many communities along the Connecticut River and those along its larger tributaries, such as Holyoke and Ludlow, had thriving mill industries which became the main local economic engines. Mill companies supported economic growth by contributing land and providing financing for civic buildings, additional mills and factories, nearby housing for workers, and public parks.

In the mid 1840s, Samuel Williston came to Southampton with the idea to establish a mill. However, Southampton at that time was not inclined to support these businesses and the large influx of new workers they would bring. So Williston instead established his National Felt Mill in 1847 in neighboring Easthampton, and for nearly a century Southampton continued to maintain its rural character—with agriculture as its primary economic base—until the start of World War II.

Today, Southampton is primarily a bedroom community for people who work in the Springfield and Hartford metropolitan areas. For goods and services, most Southampton residents travel to Springfield, Westfield, Holyoke, Northampton and Easthampton. Southampton's economy consists mostly of smaller stores, restaurants, and home-based businesses. There are larger scale commercial developments in two primary locations: on Route 10 at the Easthampton town line, and along Route 10 as it passes through town. Commercial establishments in these areas offer basic goods and services, such as groceries, restaurants, hardware, and other goods.

Commercial strip development on Route 10 at the Southampton-Easthampton town line.

During the community visioning process for this master plan, Southampton residents expressed a preferences for seeing the town grow the municipal tax base to support increased municipal services, but at the same time protect the rural character of the community. The greatest challenge in achieving this vision will be determining what type of economic growth should be promoted in the future and what type of public infrastructure, such as water and sewer service, will be feasible to support economic growth in areas where it is desired. In general, residents expressed a preference for encouraging types of economic growth that maintain and expand the town's existing and proposed recreational opportunities and amenities, especially those that are connected to Southampton's natural, cultural, and recreational resources. This approach would benefit residents directly and also serve as an economic marketing attraction. Further, residents said they would also like to continue to support small businesses and provide services that support home-based businesses, such as coffee shops, computer support, and meeting locations.

While the market ultimately drives the types of businesses that will choose to locate in Southampton, the town can take active steps to encourage the preferred types of businesses through its zoning bylaws and infrastructure improvements. It is possible for this bedroom community to increase its commercial base and maintain its rural character, but town officials will need to be wise on where they place their investments.

2.1 Trends & Data

2.1.1 The Regional Economy

Southampton is part of a region that is in the midst of a major transition from a goods-producing to a service-providing economy, according to the 2011 Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress. As recently as 1980, manufacturing was the mainstay of the region's economy, employing more than 29% of the workforce. However, in 2009, only 9% of the region's workforce was employed in manufacturing. Like most of the nation, the Pioneer Valley region is experiencing an increasing shift from manufacturing to service sector jobs in industries like health care and education.

Like many regions in the United States, the severe economic downturn that began in 2008 has adversely affected the Pioneer Valley's economy in many ways. Most notably, unemployment in the region rose at rates consistent with national trends—and at a faster rate than the Massachusetts statewide trends—reaching a peak of 9.7% in 2010, and easing somewhat to 8.5% in 2011. Yet both years are well above the 5.1% unemployment rate in the region during 2007.

Most of the region's employment opportunities are centered in the Pioneer Valley's urban core—Springfield, Holyoke and Chicopee—where nearly 120,000 people work. In 2009, the four largest industries in the Pioneer Valley region (by total number of persons employed) were healthcare and social assistance; educational services; retail trade; and manufacturing. These four sectors account for 54% of all jobs in the region. In addition, local government employment is significant in the region, with a combined workforce of about 20,000 people.

The regional industries with the largest employment losses between 2004 and 2009 were the information sector, and company management and enterprises section. Both are "new economy" industries that tend to pay good wages and employ sought-after knowledge workers. By comparison, several of the region's fastest growing industries—arts, entertainment, and other services—pay among the lowest average wages.

There are a large proportion of small businesses in the region. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 94% of businesses in 2003 and 2008 were firms of fewer than 50 people, and more than 70% were firms with fewer than 10 employees.

There are about 500 employers in region that employ more than 100 people, and 37 employers with more than 500 employees. Among the region's largest employers are Baystate Medical Center, Holyoke Medical Center, Mercy Medical Center, and Cooley Dickinson Hospital, and are located in three of the region's top employment centers of Springfield, Holyoke, and Northampton. In addition, six of the region's colleges and universities are also major employers and many of the largest employers in the region are firms with national name recognition, such as Mass Mutual Life Insurance, Hasbro Games, Friendly's Ice Cream Corporation, Solutia Incorporated, and Callaway Golf.

2.1.2 Southampton's Local Economy

Local Businesses and Industries

According to the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training, there were 124 businesses in Southampton in 2010, with an average monthly employment of about 1,000 employees earning an average weekly wage of $557 (Table 1). In comparison, the regional average weekly wage was $803.

Table 2-1: Business and Employment Profile

Category	2000	2010
Number of Establishments	120	124
Average Monthly Employment	1,049	1,039
Average Weekly Wage	$393	$557

Source: Massachusetts Department of Employment & Training (ES-202)

Construction was the largest business sector in Southampton in 2010, representing one quarter of all industry establishments in the community (Table 2), according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). In terms of the number of jobs, the retail sector had the greatest number of monthly workers on average, accounting for one-quarter of total annual wages received in the community—even though retail jobs are among the lowest paying of all the represented sectors. In comparison, manufacturing jobs have the highest weekly wages but there are far fewer the community.

Table 2-2: Employment Profile by Industry, 2010

Description	Number of Establishments	Total Wages	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages
Total, All Industries	***124***	***$30,095,393***	***1,039***	***$557***
Construction	30	$4,412,935	111	$765
Manufacturing	4	$3,780,879	69	$1,054
Wholesale Trade	4	$1,501,991	39	$741
Retail Trade	17	$6,685,079	304	$423
Transportation and Warehousing	5	$667,608	25	$514
Finance and Insurance	4	$688,829	17	$779
Professional and Technical Services	8	$1,685,858	35	$926
Administrative and Waste Services	7	$1,364,703	37	$709
Health Care and Social Assistance	5	$982,509	34	$556
Accommodation and Food Services	6	$1,099,559	121	$175
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	17	$814,277	40	$391

Source: Massachusetts Department of Employment & Training (ES-202)

While agriculture is an active industry in Southampton, it was not reported under the NAICS inventory, likely due to privacy requirements of economic data reporting so small businesses are not individually identifiable, or because most of Southampton's local farms are sole proprietorships that are not required to report this information.

Table 2-3: Employment profile by Industry 2006-2010

	Number of Establishments				
Industry	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Construction	33	33	30	30	30
Manufacturing	8	7	5	0	4
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	23	26	25	26	26
Financial Services	4	4	5	7	6
Professional and Business Services	22	21	19	19	16
Education and Health Services	6	6	5	6	7
Leisure and Hospitality	13	12	11	10	9
Other Services	10	14	13	15	17
Total Number of Establishments	130	131	121	125	124
Average Monthly Employment, all sectors	1,125	1,144	1,113	1,075	1,039
Average Weekly Wages, all sectors	$510	$540	$557	$557	$557
Total Wages	$29.8M	$32.1M	$32.2M	$31.1M	$30.1M

Source: Massachusetts Department of Employment & Training (ES-202)

The total number of employment establishments in Southampton has remained relatively steady, with only a slight decline in the number of businesses since 2006 (Table 3). Sectors with the biggest loses include manufacturing, professional and business services, and leisure and hospitality. There have been slight increases in the trade, transportation and utilities sector, as well as the financial services between 2006 and 2010. The average weekly wage has not increased since 2008.

The largest employer in Southampton is the Big Y supermarket, with approximately 170 employees. Other major employers are Heritage Surveys, Marmon Keystone, Connecticut Valley Biological, and Lyman Sheet Metal, all of which employ between 10 and 25 people.

Labor Force and Unemployment Trends

About 60% of Southampton's total population is part of the local labor force. ("Labor force" is defined by U.S. Census as anyone 16 years of age or older who is employed or seeking employment.) Consistent with national, statewide and region trends, the number of unemployed people in Southampton's local labor force has increased over the past decade, as well the associated unemployment rate. However, Southampton does have a lower proportion of unemployed workers as compared to Massachusetts as a whole.

Table 2-4: Southampton Labor Force and Unemployment Data, 2000-2010

Year	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Area Rate	MA Rate
2010	3,493	3,257	236	6.8%	8.5%
2009	3,495	3,269	226	6.5%	8.2%
2008	3,584	3,433	151	4.2%	5.3%
2007	3,593	3,458	135	3.8%	4.5%
2006	3,556	3,428	128	3.6%	4.8%
2005	3,488	3,352	136	3.9%	4.8%
2004	3,445	3,295	150	4.4%	5.2%
2003	3,397	3,246	151	4.4%	5.8%
2002	3,341	3,216	125	3.7%	5.3%
2001	3,280	3,185	95	2.9%	3.7%
2000	3,220	3,151	69	2.1%	2.7%

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

The 2000 U.S. Census estimated there are 80 Southampton residents who are self-employed. The 2005-2009 ACS for Southampton estimated that 85 people (2.6% of the local labor force) work from home. According to Town Clerk records, in 2011 there are 90 home-based businesses that have received a Special Permit from the Planning Board for this use.

In 2010 in Hampshire County, about 4,200 people reported working from home, which was 5.8% of the total labor force for the county. During the past 20 years, these numbers have steadily increased. As technology improves and gas prices increase, these numbers may continue to rise for the region and for the community. Locally, communities may consider encouraging retail and business that support this new economy workforce, such as copy stores, coffee shops, and other support services.

<u>Agricultural Activity</u>

Local agricultural lands contribute greatly to the rural character that Southampton residents value and wish to protect in the future. The 2007 US Census of Agriculture reports there were 43 farms in Southampton. The census definition of a “farm” is any place where $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. In the Pioneer Valley, most farms are small family owned operations less than 50 acres in size. In Southampton, there are a greater number of farms that are larger than 50 acres than under. Only 17 farms in Southampton are smaller than 50 acres in size. Only one farm has commodity sales of greater than $250,000 a year, while 35 farms have commodity sales of less than $50,000 a year.

There are 28 farms in Southampton with operators who consider farming to be their primary occupation. There are 16 farms with operators who work 200 days or more at jobs off the farm to earn additional income. Often family owned farms in the Pioneer Valley have one operator who manages the farm full-time, while the other partner works off the farm for additional income. About 30 farms in Southampton have two or more operators.

Table 2-5: Southampton Farms by Commodity, 2007

Commodity	Number of Farms
Berries	5
Cattle, incl. calves	16
Corn, Grain	3
Cut Christmas Trees & Woody Crops	1
Field Crops, Other, Incl. Hay	22
Forage, Hay & Haylage	25
Fruit and Tree Nut	8
Grains, Oilseeds, Dry Beans & Dry Peas	1
Horticulture (excl. cut trees, vegetable transplants)	3
Milk, and other dairy products	1
Maple Syrup	3
Orchards	4
Poultry, incl. eggs	8
Vegetables (with area in production)	1
Vegetables (incl. seeds and transplants)	1

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture

Commodities grown or raised in Southampton are varied, and it is evident that many farms are producing more than one commodity on site. This is especially typical of farms raising livestock, who also have pasture land to grow forage and feed for the livestock. Over half of all the farms in Southampton are using cropland or pastureland to grow field crops and hay. There are 16 farms that are raising cattle, and one dairy farm (Table 3). However, local sources state there are actually two dairy farms in operation in the community.

Corn is one of many commodities grown in Southampton
Photo courtesy Robert Floyd

There have been discussions as part of this master plan process to establish a weekly farmer's market that would be open to Southampton farms only. If this continues as a strategy, it is important to understand what agricultural products are being grown or manufactured in town that would be available for human consumption, and there would be a market for within the community.

Lastly, there are at least five farms in Southampton that provide horse boarding. These farms are significant in size and contribute greatly to the rural character to the community. It should be noted that these farms are not included in the Census of Agriculture unless they are also growing hay/forage for sale.

Place of Work and Commute to Work

Like many of the bedroom communities in the region, the majority of working Southampton residents commute to major regionalization employment centers, such as Springfield, for employment. About 14% of employed Southampton residents work within the community.

Table 2-6: Top Places of Employment for Southampton Residents

Place of Work	# of Southampton Residents
Springfield	436
Holyoke	409
Westfield	366
Southampton	348
Northampton	340
Easthampton	218
Chicopee	130
West Springfield	92
Amherst	84
South Hadley	70

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

2.1.3 Tax Base

The principal tax of Massachusetts cities and towns is the tax on real and personal property. The total assessed value of all taxable properties in Southampton was over $660 million in 2010. About 93% of the total taxable properties in Southampton are assessed as residential. Commercial, Industrial, and Personal Property (CIP) comprised only 6% of the total tax base.

Table 2-7: Total Assessed Value (by Category) for All Taxable Property

Year	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Personal Property	Total Real Estate	Residential % of total	CIP % of Total
2010	$618,144,180	$25,325,620	$6,217,700	$10,754,918	$660,442,418	93.6%	6.4%
2009	$604,816,890	$24,411,410	$5,576,600	$9,842,661	$644,647,561	93.8%	6.2%
2008	$586,609,390	$24,155,410	$5,576,600	$7,321,974	$623,663,374	94.1%	6.0%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, 2010 Property Tax Data

In 2010, more than 95% of total property values in town consisted of taxable property. The tax rate in 2010 was $12.36 per $1,000 of assessed valuation for taxable real and personal property. This rate brought in over $8 million in funds raised by the property tax in 2010. About 93% of this tax levy was from taxable residential parcels.

Table 2-8: Southampton Tax Levy, 2010

Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Personal Property	Total	Residential of total	CIP of Total
$7,640,262	$313,025	$76,851	$132,931	$8,163,069	93.6%	6.4%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, 2010 Property Tax Data

Tax exempt lands account for 20% of the total acreage in Southampton, with a majority of these lands owned by municipal and state governments and currently under permanent conservation protection (Table 6). In addition, about 24% of the total acres in Southampton is enrolled under Chapter 61, 61A or 61B. These are lands that are assessed and taxed based on the value which such land has for forestry, agricultural, or recreational uses. Taxes for those properties enrolled in Ch. 61/61A are determined based on the current use of the property (i.e., the productive potential of the land for growing trees) instead of the fair market or development value. The average land valuation rate for 61/61A properties was $98 per acre for lands west of the Connecticut River, and $67 per acre for land east of the Connecticut River. For Ch 61B lands, the assessments are a maximum value of 25% of fair market value, at the commercial rate.

Table 2-9: Parcel Inventory, 2010

Category	Parcels	% of Total	Acres	% of Total
Total Parcels & Acres	***2,847***	--	***18,074*****	--
Residential	2,049	72%	6,138	34%
Condominiums	78	3%	--	--
Commercial	33	1%	252	1%
Industrial	7	0.2%	39	0.2%
Mixed Use	37	1%	300	2%
Chapter 61/61A/61B	137	5%	4,411	24%
Ag. land not enrolled as Chapter	1	0.03%	20	0.1%
Vacant Lands	416	15%	3,147	17%
Tax Exempt	83	3%	3,615	20%

Source: Southampton Assessors Office 2010 Records

*** Does not account for acreage associated with water or condominium developments*

2.1.4 Bond Rating

In June 2010, Moody Investor's Service assigned Southampton an A1 rating to the town's $2.1 million in outstanding debt for school renovations. This rating was awarded due to the town's moderate tax base with an above average demographic profile, satisfactory financial position, and affordable debt burden. An A1 rating means that Southampton, as a debtor, has a very good credit rating and a very strong capacity to meet financial commitments, including its ability to make promised principal and interest payments.

2.1.5 Infrastructure

Southampton does not currently provide public wastewater or sewer service to any areas of town. Sewer service is available in a limited area along Route 10 near the Easthampton town line via a tie-in to the Easthampton sewer system. All of sewer tie-ins in this area are privately owned and were installed at private expense. Therefore, septic treatment in the majority of Southampton is by individual subsurface disposal systems (septic tanks and leech fields). Land currently zoned as Industrial, along the Westfield town line, has no access to public sewer unless access is requested through the City of Westfield. Lands identified as "Priority Sites for Economic Development" in Southampton's 2004 Community Development plan also have no access to sewer infrastructure. These lands will be difficult to develop for commercial / industrial uses unless the community invests in public wastewater systems to these community-identified locations. Other areas identified for mixed-use development through the Chapter 40R Smart Growth zoning planning process will also be difficult to development without this critical infrastructure in place.

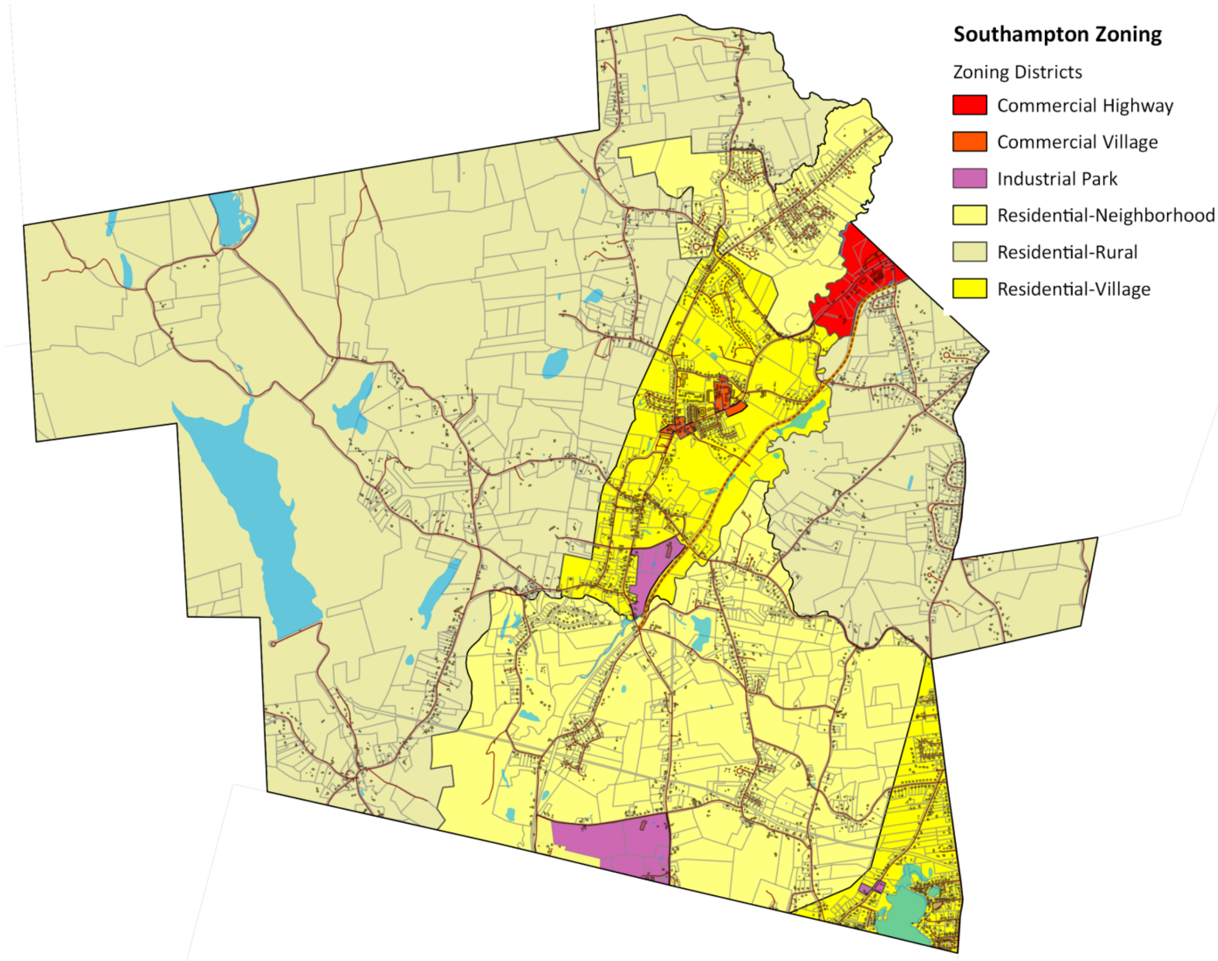
Recently, town officials have been in discussion with officials in the City of Easthampton to discuss a possible connection to the city's wastewater system. The location for the system in Southampton has preliminary been identified as one line running along Route 10 (College Highway) and a second line running on Country Road North to the Cook Road pump station in Easthampton. These proposed lines would bring sewer infrastructure to the three proposed mixed use areas identified by the community through the Chapter 40R and Master Planning process.

2.1.6 Zoning and Land Use for Economic Activity

Land zoned for commercial uses represents only 1% of land in Southampton. The Town of Southampton permits commercial uses in three areas along the northern half of College Highway. The first commercial area is located around the intersection of College Highway and Pomeroy Meadow Road and the second is slightly north of this area at the intersection of College Highway and Gunn Road. Both areas are zoned Commercial Village District, which is primarily for small retail and professional activities. This zoning district conforms to the boundaries of existing commercial uses and apartments and for this reason there is little vacant developable land left in this zoning district. Located at the border with Easthampton along College Highway, the Commercial Highway Zoning District comprises the third commercial area in Southampton. It allows more intense commercial uses and light industrial uses. Most of this area is also built-out, with one small parcel currently available for development.

Three areas in Southampton are zoned for industry, which permits intensive industrial and commercial uses. The first area is located along Clark Street between College Highway and East Street. The second area is located along Pequot Road near the town boundary with Westfield. The third area is the largest area zoned for industry and includes all lands between Brickyard Road and College Highway from Valley Road to the town border with Westfield. At the May 2010 Town Meeting, Southampton residents voted to change the zoning of three parcels located in this third industrial area from the current designation of Industrial Park (IP) to Residential Neighborhood (RN), which reduced the industrially zoned land in this area by one-third. Of the remaining land zoned for industry in this area, over half is protected open space and cannot be further developed. The area located at the Westfield town line has also been identified as a priority cultural resource in the Open Space and Natural Resources chapter due to its extensive scenic views.

Figure 2-1: Southampton Zoning Districts



The town's 2004 Community Development plan conducted an inventory of Southampton businesses by zoning district. The plan noted that there are a large number of businesses which are located in residential zoning districts which do not allow business uses, and consequently are non-conforming. The town's current zoning bylaw does not allow businesses or industrial uses in the R-R, R-N, and R-V districts (yellow shades on the map above). According to the 2004 inventory, there are 41 non-conforming businesses in Southampton's three residential zones.

In addition, there is only a small amount of industrially or commercially zoned land that is available for economic development. The town's large supply of vacant, residentially-zoned land creates desirable development opportunities, as recent residential growth attest. The problem is that, historically, residential development along does not generate adequate revenue to maintain municipal services, as discussed in the Public Services and Facilities chapter. As heard at the public visioning workshops, a growing gap exists between tax resources and residential expectations for municipal services, all while trying to maintain the rural community character.

2.1.7 Marketing

When it comes to marketing, municipalities that are aggressive and collaborate with companies and economic stakeholders and land owners that are already located within their town may have an upper hand in attracting new economic investment. Southampton has opportunities to take a more active role in marketing specific sites identified for new business or industrial development through the town website. The town could also identify a single point of contact in the community who will work with new business owners and site developers to successfully complete the local permitting process; this person could be a town planner or a local volunteer. Southampton may also wish to establish a local economic development board or committee; this body could help establish business outreach and retention programs to serve the primary function of assuring regular and ongoing contact and communication between local businesses and town government to identify and resolve problems.

Southampton is also a member of the Greater Easthampton Chamber of Commerce. The Greater Easthampton Chamber of Commerce promotes businesses within the Easthampton, Southampton and Westhampton communities. There are 37 businesses in Southampton who are currently members of the Chamber. Member benefits include listing in the local Chamber directory and website, referral services, access to the member information center, monthly networking activities, and participation in the annual Table Top Expo. The Chamber is interested in working with the Town to bring more local businesses into the Chamber.

2.1.8 Permitting

The timeliness of approvals and a transparent and efficient permitting process is very important to new and expanding businesses. The town should evaluate its permitting practices for commercial and industrial uses and ensure the community is responding to prospective business owners in a prompt and predictable manner. Before investing in a community, business owners want to understand the local process and procedure for obtaining the right permits. Designating a municipal contact, providing permitting information on the town website, and developing a permitting guidebook are excellent ways to inform applicants on the permitting procedure, saving both the municipal boards and the applicant time and money.

2.2 Goals and Strategies for Economic Development

Target Dates for Completion are organized into four categories: Short-term (1-5 years); Mid-term (6-10 years); Long-term (11-15 years); and Ongoing.

Goal 2-1: Maintain and expand recreational opportunities connected to Southampton's natural, cultural, and recreational resources and market as an economic development opportunity.

Strategy 2-1A: Support the establishment of a greenway that would connect the historic center of town to Easthampton's Manhan Trail which would provide additional recreational opportunities to residents and visitors alike.

Responsible Party: Conservation Commission, Greenway Committee, Planning Board, Select Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time, federal funding for construction
Target Date for Completion: Mid-term (6-10 yrs)

Strategy 2-2B: Establish an annual or bi-annual AgriTourism Day which would open local farms to the public for farm tours, selling of farm products, and special events.

Responsible Party: Agricultural Commission
Resources Needed: Volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Short-term (1-5 yrs)

Strategy 2-1C: Create an agricultural farm brochure that identifies all farms in Southampton, commodities sold, hours of operation, seasonal operations, and location map. Make the brochure available on the town website and at Town Hall.

Responsible Party: Agricultural Commission
Resources Needed: Volunteer time, funding for printing
Target Date for Completion: Short-Term (1-5 yrs)

Strategy 2-1D: Create a walking tour and brochure of publically accessible recreational, cultural and historical sites in Southampton. Make the brochure available on the town website and town hall.

Responsible Party: Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Select Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time, federal funding for construction
Target Date for Completion: Mid-term (6-10 yrs)

Strategy 2-1E: Work with interested landowners to make key privately owned recreational trails and land open to the public.

Responsible Party: Conservation Commission
Resources Needed: Volunteer time, federal funding for construction
Target Date for Completion: Mid-term (6-10 yrs)

Strategy 2-1F: Encourage land uses in the Zoning Bylaw that support recreational, historical and cultural activities.

Responsible Party: Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time, federal funding for construction
Target Date for Completion: Mid-term (6-10 yrs)

Goal 2-2: Adopt zoning and land use policies to encourage commercial activity in appropriate growth districts identified by the community.

Strategy 2-2A: Review and amend the existing Table of Use and permit certain types of commercial retail businesses that are desired in specific areas of the community. Use the Intent statements for each of the zoning districts as a guide.

Responsible Party: Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Short-term (6-10 yrs)

Strategy 2-2B: Development Intent or Purpose Statements for all zoning districts to integrate land policies with district delineations. Developing these statements will assist in the amendments to the Table of Uses.

Responsible Party: Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Short-term (6-10 yrs

Strategy 2-2C: Consider eliminating the existing Industrial Zoning District and relocating to area that has the potential for town sewer infrastructure.

The existing Industrial zone is currently located in an area that does not have access to sewer infrastructure and the mostly under permanent open space protection.

Responsible Party: Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Short-term (1-5 yrs)

Strategy 2-2D: Consider adopting a Mixed Use Overlay District to encourage a mix of residential and commercial uses in appropriate locations in the community.

Responsible Party: Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Mid-term (6-10 yrs)

Strategy 2-2E: Consider adopting standards for Mixed Use Developments to allow two different uses in one building, such as retail on the first floor and residential on the second.

Responsible Party: Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Mid-term (6-10 yrs)

Strategy 2-2F: Establish a Design Review Board and adopt Design Standards that will prescribe special design standards to be applied to a designated area.

Responsible Party: Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Long-term (11-15 yrs)

Goal 2-3: Establish a streamlined and transparent permitting process to improve communication with permit applicants.

Strategy 2-3A: Appoint a single point of contact to work with applicants and be responsible for coordinating the applicant's efforts to apply for necessary permits in town.

Responsible Party: Town Administrator
Resources Needed: Staff, volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Ongoing

Strategy 2-3B: Maximize the Town's website and create "one stop shop" for permitting documents and forms from many departments, which can be downloaded at no cost to the applicant.

Responsible Party: Planning Board, Town Webmaster
Resources Needed: Volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Short-term (1-5 yrs)

Strategy 2-3C: Create "permitting guidebook" for the town as a quick reference guide which applicants may refer to as they navigate through the permitting process.

The guidebook should contain information such as contact information for relevant boards, a step-by-step process for each permit, fee schedules, and anticipated timeframes for each permit.

Responsible Party: Town Administrator, Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time, staff time, funding for consultant
Target Date for Completion: Short-term (1-5 yrs)

Strategy 2-3D: Develop permitting flowcharts and checklists to guide applicants through the permitting process, and make this information available via the town website and at the building department office.

A flow chart illustrates the steps of the permit process and should begin with the submittal of a plan or applicant, proceed through review by all necessary boards and agencies, outline public participation requirements, and describe the decision process. A checklist describes the mandatory steps and can be an integral part of the permit process itself, giving clear guidance to both the applicant and the permitting agency.

Responsible Party: Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time, funding for consultant
Target Date for Completion: Short-term (1-5 yrs)

Strategy 2-3E: Ensure the zoning bylaw and subdivision regulations have clear submittal requirements for permit granting boards to help encourage uniformity in the review process.

Responsible Party: Planning Board, Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission
Resources Needed: Volunteer time, funding for consultant
Target Date for Completion: Ongoing

Goal 2-4: Invest in infrastructure and provide adequate capacity to meet the current and future needs for water, sewer, and telecommunications.

Strategy 2-4A: Encourage infrastructure development and physical improvements in identified commercial / mixed use areas.

Responsible Party: Highway Department, Select Board, Town Administrator
Resources Needed: Staff time, volunteer time, funding for improvements
Target Date for Completion: Ongoing

Strategy 2-4B: Encourage infrastructure improvements, such as sidewalk and traffic improvements, through the special permit process for commercial and industrial projects, particularly in identified commercial / mixed use areas.

Responsible Party: Planning Board
Resources Needed: Volunteer time
Target Date for Completion: Ongoing