

Economic Development Element Inventory

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I. Introduction

Several economic indicators identify Lincoln’s strong economic environment, such as availability of business land along a regional highway network, small village-based business centers, and a high proportion of day to night population and location of high-tech business corporations (Lincoln houses 9 of the top 100 major employers in the state). In order to maintain a healthy economic climate, land use proportions must be evaluated. With the rise in residential growth greater than business growth, Lincoln must implement policies, which reflect its goals (such as a residential to business land ratio of 3.6:1) and meets the employment and business needs of the community as it evolves. The town recognizes that the growth of residential development can cause an increase in the cost of community services beyond that which is balanced by non-residential taxed properties.

Another factor is to identify the educational level of residents in relation to the employment opportunities offered by the community. Although this issue may not be as urgent as other communities due to Lincoln’s location in the Providence metropolitan area (because of access to a variety of trades), it should still be considered.

Business comprises 23% of Lincoln's taxed land base. Within the town can be found a regional enclosed shopping mall of over half a million square feet and a regional office park with over 900 thousand square feet. There is a broad range of industrial space, including "incubator" space in a large nineteenth century mill complex, a 40 year old industrial park, a corporate headquarters, and a 1980's - 90's industrial park. Almost the entire town is served by public sewer and water service. Yet, Lincoln looks -- and thinks of itself -- as rural. How can these apparently contradictory statements be true? If the Town of Lincoln has, indeed, managed to achieve such a balance, can this balance be maintained into the future? This element of the *Comprehensive Plan* seeks to answer these questions.

There is very little available land within the Limited Business zones for uses such as retail and office. The majority of land in the town is zoned for residential use, while about 1000 acres are zoned for industrial use and approximately 300 acres are zoned for business use. The Limited

Business zone allows for professional use by residents of the premises while Customary Home Occupation uses are allowed in all residential zones. However, none of the current zones allow for a dense mix of uses.

The following goals are important in developing and maintaining a balanced level of economic activity. Currently, the town has a high day population compared to other Rhode Island suburbs indicating that there are major employment nodes, specifically the Industrial Corridor and Industrial Park which attract large numbers of daytime employees. Additional retail centers may be needed in the near future to accommodate the growing employee and resident population.

Since 1974 the Town of Lincoln has managed business growth and development according to the policies set forth in the *1974 Comprehensive Community Plan*. The intent of these policies has been carried-out throughout the past years. Policy number five, although implied in the other policies, has been added due to its increasing urgency.

1. **Take advantage of the regional highway access to be provided by improvements to Routes 295, 146, and 116.** Zone land for large developments that cater to the regional market. Set high development standards, and work with developers who are willing to meet those standards.
2. **Avoid commercial sprawl.** Zone for small-scale neighborhood services in the context of the villages. Augment these in outlying areas by designating small service areas at key intersections. Let nearby towns provide commercial strips that are easy for Lincoln residents to reach.
3. **Tuck commercial and industrial buildings out of sight.** Locate large new developments where traffic will slip on and off the major access routes with little flow along neighborhood streets. During the review and permitting process, work with landowners and developers to achieve the best site plan possible, with special attention to buffers along roadways and next to adjoining land uses.
4. **Keep Lincoln a good place to do business.** Work supportively and cooperatively with local firms. Provide good municipal services. Manage the Town well, and keep the tax rate attractive.
5. **Maintain the town's goal of 3.6 to 1 residential to business land ratio.** Determine type of business need and rezone to accommodate such development. For instance, large commercial retail centers may not be needed, whereas mixed-use districts within existing growth centers (as encouraged by the Governor's Executive Order 02-05, October 2, 2002) may help to maintain a balance between all land uses. These village centers would encourage compact, pedestrian-oriented uses, while discouraging haphazard sprawl development and maintaining village-style development.

By adhering to these policies, Lincoln will continue to achieve a strong commercial/industrial tax base and an attractive land use pattern.

Section II of this element provides an overview of Lincoln's economic base by summarizing data regarding the commercial/industrial components of the local tax base and land uses. This section also describes Lincoln's place in the regional economic base.

Section III discusses whether, in light of build-out projections, the business base should be expanded in order to maintain the desired balance of land uses.

II. The Local Economic Base: An Overview

Lincoln's Local Economic Base

Business Land

The local economic base features 919 acres of business land (commercial and industrial). These properties are currently utilized as business-type development. Current zoning for business land dictates the future land use acreage indicated in Table A as 1,727 acres. A clear imbalance is seen when comparing residential to business land, a 4.2 to 1 ratio.

Table A
Comparison of Lincoln's Current and Future Land Use
Business and Residential Land Comparison

LAND CATEGORY	CURRENT (1995) LAND USE ACREAGE *	FUTURE LAND USE ACREAGE**	DIFFERENCE	PERCENT CHANGE
Business	919	1727	808	88%
Residential	3298	7200	3902	118%
Total	4217	8927	4710	112%
Residential to Business Land Ratio	3.6	4.2		

Source: RIGIS, *1992 Comprehensive Plan, **2001 Buildout Study future land use calculations.

Enterprise Zone Program

Lincoln participates in Rhode Island's Enterprise Zone program. The Saylesville Industrial Park and the Moshassuck Valley Highway Industrial Area have been named as part of a regional Enterprise Zone and contains census tracts 150, 151, 163, 1773.02. The Moshassuck Valley Zone includes extensive manufacturing and commercial areas in the City of Pawtucket, as well as a mill district in the southern portion of the Town of Lincoln. This designation makes certain businesses and workers within the Zone eligible for state tax credits and bestows priority status for state projects within the Zone. Businesses that locate in the zone may receive credits for new jobs created of up to \$15,000 per new job against their State Income Tax bill.

Over the next decade, the Town should work in close collaboration with its abutting Northern Rhode Island communities to manage jointly all three northern Rhode Island zones, and concentrate on the following issues to fill vacant Zone properties: create signage demarcating the Zone, publicize the availability of tax credits to businesses and workers in the Zone, and develop a complementary local tax incentive policy to enhance the State's incentives. Special attention should be given to funding and implementing the regional management plan as detailed by the Northern Rhode Island Economic Development Partnership.

Table B shows that business makes up 23% of Lincoln's taxed land base.

Table B
Assessed Values of Business Real Estate
By Percent of Lincoln's Total Assessed Land Values

<u>TYPE OF USE</u>	<u>TOTAL LAND VALUATION</u>	<u>%</u>
Commercial/Residential Mix (e.g. business on first floor, apartments upstairs)	8,527,500	1
Small Commercial (\$100,000 or less)	1,645,600	<1
Large Commercial (more than \$100,000)	199,078,700	13
Industrial	106,738,400	15
Farm	1,407,900	<1
Commercial Condominiums	14,517,800	1
Vacant lots zoned commercial/industrial	7,108,000	1
Subtotal	339,023,900	23
All other categories	1,138,900,650	77
Total Assessed Valuation	\$1,477,924,550	100

[Source: Tax Roll 2002, Assessment of 12/31/02, Lincoln Assessor's Office]

Table C shows how Lincoln's business tax base consistently exceeds the average of Rhode Island municipalities.

Table C
Different Categories' Share of Total Assessed Valuation,
By Percent, Comparing Lincoln and State Average
(Combining Real and Personal Property Valuations)

USE CLASS	1998	1999	2000	2001	STATE AVER. 2001
Commercial	19.42	18.74	19.03	18.84	15.85
Industrial	7.27	7.24	6.97	6.90	2.82
Subtotal	26.69	25.98	26.00	25.74	18.67

USE CLASS	1998	1999	2000	2001	STATE AVER. 2001
Residential	62.01	62.25	62.98	64.28	70.97
Utilities & Railroad	2.01	2.06	2.75	1.75	1.77
Motor Vehicles	8.95	9.45	7.92	8.06	8.13
Other	.34	.26	.35	.17	.45
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

[Source: RI Department of Administration, *State Report of Local Government Finances and Tax Equalization, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001*]

Table D shows that large commercial developments and industry comprise the great proportion of Lincoln's business base.

Table D
Large Commercial and Industrial Real Estate Values
As Percent of Total Business Real Estate Valuation

PROPERTY USE	TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE	%
Industrial	106,738,400	31.5%
Large Commercial	199,078,700	58.7%
All other business	33,206,800	9.8%
Total Business Valuation	\$339,023,900	100

[Source: Tax Roll 2002, Assessment of 12/31/02, Lincoln Assessor's Office]

Employment

The Table E represents residential labor work force in the Town of Lincoln. The town had experienced significant unemployment in the early 1990's, varying from a high of 8.5% in 1991 to a low of 3.8% in 2000 (the same rate as recorded in 1989). The steady decline in the unemployment rate can be attributed to the overall health of the state, probably more so than the amount of new business in the community.

Table E
Residential Labor Force
1990 – 2000 Comparison

RESIDENT LABOR FORCE	1990	2000	NUMERIC CHANGE	% CHANGE
Employed	9221	9769	548	5.9%
Unemployed	701	384	-317	-45.2%
Labor Force	9922	10153	231	2.3%
Unemployment Rate	7.1	3.8		

Source: Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training has developed employment projections between 1998 and 2008 based on employment trends in industry sectors. Employment in Rhode Island is projected to grow at all education and skill levels with an expected 175,000 job openings. Projections are not predictions of the future but rather educated assumptions of the future climate. Any deviations from current trends such as financial investment in industrial property or global market changes could thwart projections.

Job gains are expected in nearly all-major industrial sectors of the economy with the largest gains occurring in *Services and Retail Trade*. Within the Services Sector, Business Services, Educational Services and Health Services are expected to create the largest number of openings due to projected increases in Elementary and Secondary Schools, Computer and Data Processing Service, Personnel Supply Services and Nursing and Personal Care Facilities. Within Retail Trade, Eating and Drinking Places and Miscellaneous Retail Stores are expected to account for more than half the sector's new jobs. Significant employment gains are also expected in Construction; Transportation, Communications and Public Utilities; Wholesale Trade; and Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.

As expected by the national pattern, employment will decline in the Manufacturing sector and Government jobs are expected to decline slightly.

As indicated in 2002 by the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training,

“Occupational decline results from declining industries and technological change. Occupations with the largest annual average declines (openings due to growth) are Word Processors and Typists; Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks; Textile Machine Operators and Tenders; Secretaries (except Legal or Medical) and Jewelry Hand Workers.”

Significant shifts in private industry employment in Lincoln occurred between 1989 and 2000. Finance, Insurance & Real Estate (697%), Services (111%), Agriculture Forestry & Fisheries (35%) and Construction (36%) trades grew significantly between 1989 and 2000 whereas Retail (-34%), Wholesale (-87%), Transportation, Communications & Utilities (-38%) and Manufacturing (-99%) declined. Lincoln appears to be consistent with state trends. The relocation of Amica Insurance headquarters to Lincoln would explain the increase in the FIRE category (over 1,500 employees).

Table F reports the kinds of employment that are offered by businesses in Lincoln, and also how that employment pattern has changed since 1980. Of the firms covered by the unemployment insurance program, industry and retail are the largest employment groups in Lincoln, and retail firms have created the largest number of new jobs over the past decade. In terms of percentage increase, the fastest growing groups are "Transportation, Communications, Utilities" and "Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE)".

Table F
Average Annual Employment by Private Industry Group
Showing Percent of Change 1980 - 2000

PRIVATE INDUSTRY GROUP	1980	1980-1989		2000	1989-2000	
	Average # Employees	80 - '89 Change	% Change '80 - '89	Average # Employees	89 - '00 Change	% Change '89 - '00
Agriculture Forestry & Fisheries	31	-9	-23%	42	11	35%
Construction	387	122	46%	527	140	36%
Manufacturing	3,989	591	17%	59	-3930	-99%
Transp., Communic., Utilities	665	359	117%	409	-256	-38%
Wholesale Trade	598	171	40%	76	-522	-87%
Retail Trade*	2,089	932	81%	1378	-711	-34%
Finance, Insur., & Real Estate	344	184	115%	2743	2399	697%
Service Industries	1,276	392	44%	2689	1413	111%
Total	9379	2742	55%	7923	-1456	78%

[Source: Research Division, RI Department of Economic Development. April 2, 2002.]

According to the Rhode Island Top 100 Employers, April 2002 published by the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, nine of the State's top 100 employers have offices located in the Town of Lincoln. These are highlighted in bold in Table G along with major employers located within the Town of Lincoln.

Table G
Major Employment Generators, 2002

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	EMPLOYER	ADDRESS	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
Finance and Insurance	Amica	100 Amica Way	1,580
Retail	Lincoln Mall	622 George Washington Hwy	1200 (1992)
Government	Town of Lincoln		700
Manufacturing	AT Cross Co.	One Albion Way	700*
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	Lincoln Park (Burrillville Racing Center)	1600 Louissquisset Pike	500
Finance and Insurance	Fleet-Lincoln Answer Center	670 George Washington Hwy	750
Manufacturing	BICC	3 Carol Drive	265
Educational Services	CCRI		250 Employees* 6,000 Students
Health Care & Social Assistance	Child Care Connection	25 Blackstone Valley Place	250
Health Care & Social Assistance	Holiday Retirement Home	30 Sayles Hill Road	200

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	EMPLOYER	ADDRESS	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
Manufacturing	Tanury Industries	6 New England Way	200
Manufacturing	Tru-Kay Manufacturing Co.	2 Carol Drive	200
Manufacturing	Technical Materials, Inc.	5 Wellington Road	200
Finance and Insurance	Quick & Reilly, Inc.	670 George Washington Hwy	196*
Retail	Stop and Shop, Inc.	620 George Washington Hwy	187*
Information	Cox Communications	1320 Eddie Dowling Hwy	175
Manufacturing	Greystone of Lincoln	7 Wellington Road	160
Health Care	Visiting Nurse Service of Greater RI	6 Blackstone Valley Place	152*
Finance and Insurance	Pharmacare	695 George Washington Hwy	150*
Administrative and Support	Today's Office Staffing	12 Breakneck Hill Road	150
Construction	Century Drywall	1992 Old Louissquisset Pike	120
Finance and Insurance	Allstate Insurance Co.	625 George Washington Hwy	100
Manufacturing	Autocrat, Inc.	10 Blackstone Valley Place	100
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	Landmark Health System Management Co.	6 Blackstone Valley Place	100
Retail	Kmart	622 George Washington Hwy	95
High Tech	Chemical Art Co.	11 New England Way	91
High Tech	Cytotherapeutics, Inc.	701 George Washington Hwy	90
Manufacturing	Vennerbeck/ Stern Leach		65
High Tech	Popper Precision Instruments	267 Jenkes Hill Road	60
High Tech	Beta Engineering, Inc.	6 Blackstone Valley Place	35
High Tech	Pare Engineering Corp.	8 Blackstone Valley Place	35
Manufacturing	Crest Manufacturing Co.	5 Hood Drive	26
High Tech	Andon Electronics	4 Court Drive	25
Utilities	National Grid	George Washington Hwy	---

Source: Major Employers in Rhode Island. March 2000. Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation.

* Confirmed by contact to company.

The Land Use Element explains the number of acres of land that have been developed for commercial or industrial use, in comparison with the amount of Lincoln's land base that is occupied by other land uses.

Lincoln's Role in the Regional Economy

Data on Lincoln's role in the regional economic base is derived from two state studies: the *Industrial Land Use Plan* (ILUP) and the Mill Building Reuse paper, conducted by the Office of Statewide Planning. Although information from the ILUP is dated, policies remain relevant.

The April 2000, *ILUP* sets forth goals and policies for the use and zoning of industrial land in Rhode Island for the next twenty years. Its policies promote efficient land use and zoning to help prevent expanding into “greenfields” (undeveloped, open space areas), which in many cases add to the quality of life in the state. However, the main goal of the *ILUP* is to keep enough land in industrial use to support the state’s economy over the long term.

Substate Employment Growth Area 1 is comprised of eight communities: Burrillville, Central Falls, Cumberland, Lincoln, North Smithfield, Pawtucket, Smithfield, and Woonsocket. It is one of the largest Substate Growth Areas, in terms of land area, at 107,608 acres.

The State of Rhode Island's *Industrial Land Use Plan*¹ (ILUP) stresses the major contribution to the state's industrial base is made by Lincoln and its region. Designated as Substate Employment Growth Area 1 and centered upon the Blackstone Valley, in the early 1990’s the region accounted for nearly a quarter of the land that is zoned for industry in the state. As of 1990, the 2,791 acres in the region that are currently used for industry represented almost 29 percent of the state's total, a high percentage for a region that includes only 16% of the state's land area.

The State's 1990 Industrial Plan summarized industrial growth in Lincoln as follows:

"The Town of Lincoln has led the region in economic growth over the last two decades. This growth is the result of the development of numerous industrial parks during the same period in the I-295/RI 146 area. Lincoln's 748 acres in industrial use represents the single largest total in any of the Blackstone Valley communities and a quarter of the region's actual industrial acreage. Manufacturing has been the primary activity in the town's industrial parks, although two of the newer parks offer a mix of light industrial and business services."

It should also be noted that even prior to the post-1970 surge of industrial development, Lincoln was home to a significant industrial base for example the Saylesville complex.

The Blackstone Valley is reported to have a total of 664 vacant acres that are considered to be prime for industrial development (zoned for industry, with utilities, and without environmental constraints). In 1990 these 664 acres represented 36% of the state's total reserve of prime industrial land. Table H shows that in 1990 Lincoln's reserve of prime industrial land was a major portion of the regions.

¹ State Guide Plan Element 212, Office of Statewide Planning. April 2000.

Table H
Vacant Industrial Land in the Blackstone Valley, by Municipality,
Showing Amount of Prime Land, by Acres and Percent

CITY OR TOWN	# VACANT ACRES	# PRIME ACRES*	% OF REGION'S PRIME ACRES
Burrillville	346	15	2.2
Central Falls	12	0	0
Cumberland	869	102	15.4
Lincoln	566	259	39.0
North Smithfield	430	209	31.4
Pawtucket	204	34	5.1
Smithfield	2281	25	3.8
Woonsocket	230	20	3.0
Total	4938	664	100

* Vacant, with utilities, no environmental constraints

Industrial Land Use Plan, State Guide Plan Element 212, Division of Planning Report Number 66, May 1990.

Much of Lincoln's available industrial land has been developed since the early 1990's. One example is the redevelopment of the Collyer Wire site in Fairlawn. The following table indicates the amount of industrial land as reported by New England Economic Development Services.

Lincoln is considered a prime area for mill reuse according to the recent *Mill Building Reuse: A Survey of Current Mill Conditions and the Market for Mill Space* conducted Technical Paper 150, prepared by the Statewide Planning Program as a follow-up to the *Industrial Land Use Plan*, State Guide Plan Element 212. The *Industrial Land Use Plan* has recently undergone an extensive revision adopted by the State Planning Council on August 10, 2000. Table J is the most recently collected inventory of industrial land in Lincoln.

Table J
Summary of Industrial-Zoned Land

	TOTAL 1	INDUSTRIAL USE	OTHER USE	VACANT	VACANT/HIGH POT.
Lincoln	1,406	748	123	535	92
State Total	32,455	11,116	6,113	15,224	1,485
% state total	4%	7%	2%	4%	6%

1. All values are in acres, with the exception of "% state total." Use totals may be greater than total acres due to rounding of fractional acreage to nearest whole number. Apart from Smithfield, Lincoln has the highest amount of industrial land in Substate Employment Growth Area #1.

Source: *Industrial Land Use Plan*, State Guide Plan Element 212. Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program. 2001.

Although there seems to be a high number of industrial land available in Lincoln, the numbers are offset by the development potential of this acreage. The Statewide Planning Program

indicates that 90 acres are available as having high potential. Furthermore, as previously stated, there are 90 acres of land currently for sale. Table I summarizes industrial land in 2002.

Table I
2002 Industrial Land Summary

PLAT/LOT	LOCATION	ACREAGE	FOR SALE?	ZONING	NOTES
Plat 41, Lots 12, 44, 73	Albion Road	32.4 ac.	Yes	BL-05	Under agreement 1-30-02 Special Use Permit to allow for assisted living development
Plat 28, Lot 23	Off of American Clad Metals	12.0 ac.	Yes	Industrial	
Plat 28, Lot 111	New England Way	2.9 ac.	Yes	Industrial	
Plat 31, Lot 164	Old Louisquisset Pike	2.2 ac.	Yes	Business Limited	
Plat 34, Lot 14	315 Old River Road	10.0 ac.	Yes	5.1 ac. zoned M5 4.0 ac. zoned RS20	Subdivision to divide residential and commercial/manufacturing possible. Mill building on site 100% destroyed by fire.
Plat 30, Lot 31	Washington Highway	30.8 ac.	Yes	ML-05	
Plat 28, Lot 152	New England Way	2.1 ac.	No	Industrial	
Plat 28, Lot 22	Quality Drive	13.5 ac.	No		Recently sold to Harvey Industries of New England Way, Lincoln
Plat 41, Lots 54 and 74	100 Washington Highway	11.0 ac.	No		Developed for assisted living use.
Plat 25, Lot 147	Wellington Road	2.1 ac.	No	MG -05	Abuts utility easement/power lines.
Total		119			
Total For Sale		90.3			

Source: New England Economic Development Services. May 24, 2002

In summary, it is clear that despite its rural appearance and sense of being a rural New England town, Lincoln enjoys a significant business component in its local tax base. Furthermore, Lincoln's industrial base is a major part of the industrial base of the Blackstone Valley, which in turn is a cornerstone of the state's present and future industrial base. Home to the Lincoln Shopping Mall and Lincoln Center Office Park, the town likewise hosts major elements of the region's commercial and office sectors.

Brownfields

Table K identifies Environmental Protection Agency Superfund sites that require cleanup for future reuse (see further information in the Natural Resources Element). Information on CERCLIS sites is provided as a means to identify parcels, which could be available for redevelopment with adequate site remediation. Reuse of these sites is in accordance with the Governor's Growth Policy Council, Grow Smart RI, and the State Guide Plan elements which aim to avoid sprawl by concentrating future development in areas previously developed.

Table K
CERCLIS (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System) Hazardous Waste Sites, 2002

SITE NAME	STREET	NATIONAL PRIORITY LIST (NPL) STATUS	NON NPL STATUS
Carol Cable Co.	3 Carol Drive	Not on the NPL	Site Reassessment Start Needed
Central Falls Dump	Adjacent Valley Falls Pond	Not on the NPL	Site Reassessment Start Needed
Crossley Machine & Tool Co./JACO	Albion Road	Not on the NPL	Site Reassessment Start Needed
Dupraw Dump	Dexter Rock Road	Not on the NPL	Site Reassessment Start Needed
Elm Tree Dump	New England Way	Not on the NPL	Site Reassessment Start Needed
H & H Screw, Former (Lot 32)	George Washington Hgwy/Route 116	Not on the NPL	Site Reassessment Start Needed
Lonsdale Narrows	Off Lonsdale Avenue	Not on the NPL	Site Reassessment Start Needed
Majestic Motors	Route 146 & Old Great Road	Not on the NPL	Other Cleanup Activity: State-Lead Cleanup
Manville Well Field	Albion Road	Not on the NPL	Site Reassessment Start Needed
Peterson/Puritan, Inc.	Martin Street	On Final NPL	N/A

Source: US Environmental Protection Agency, 2002.

Lincoln's Competitive Advantages

Why has Lincoln's economic base done so well? The following are the key components of the Town's successful economic development strategy.

1. **Location.** Lincoln is in the right spot. Lincoln is at the junction of major highways connecting points in all directions, especially within the Providence metropolitan region.
2. **Aggressive investment in infrastructure.** As the state's *Industrial Land Use Plan* shows, the presence of utilities is what distinguishes prime from non-prime land. Lincoln's ability to absorb and service industry has not been hampered by limited sewer or water capacity.
3. **Combination of high development standards with a workable review process.** Without exception the developers and managers that have been interviewed say that the Town is good to work with. The Town had a plan and stuck with it, not swinging with political winds. This has attracted developers who want to create a quality product and are willing to invest in good site planning, because they believe that the Town will not leave them hanging. This is a prime consideration for both non-profit and for-profit developers.
4. **Continued services and cooperation once a firm or development is established and operating.** Large firms and developments frequently have working contact with regulatory boards, police and fire, the highway crew, the assessor, the tax collector. Lincoln has the reputation of having a Town Hall of people who manage Town business well, and who help the private sector conduct their business smoothly.
5. **Full menu of spaces for business.** Inexpensive raw space for rent in old mills, flexible space for lease in parks, open prime land for large scale development -- whatever a business was looking for, it could find someplace in Lincoln.
6. **Ease of commuting in and out of Lincoln combined with its beautiful setting.** Lincoln's rising home prices have not stifled businesses, because workers can commute in from less expensive places. The quality of life attracts people in management who can afford to live locally. A number of the firms moving into Lincoln Center Office Park are expanding out or moving out from center city locations. In an early Amica survey, 85% of the employees who would be moved from Providence reported that commuting to Lincoln would not be more inconvenient to them than their commute into Providence. A recent Amica survey of the 900 employees on the Lincoln site reported that 90% of them were very glad to be out of Providence. They noted a \$1000 - \$1500 annual savings in parking.

7. **The Town's being able to concentrate on the objective of expanding the tax base.** For example, Lincoln has not needed to balance this objective with the need to create jobs that match the skills of residents, or with the need to site commercial services that are necessary even though they tend to be unattractive. Since ease of commute works both ways, town residents have been able to reach their own jobs in other towns and cities. Thus, Lincoln's economic development efforts have been able to concentrate upon the physical quality of new construction, rather than the type or number of jobs to be generated. Similarly, Lincoln did not need to find places for typical highway "strips", because when residents need to buy something from such areas, they can just drive to the next town.

Summary of Issues for Discussion

By following the 1974 and 1992 Plans, the Town of Lincoln has achieved a business base that provides: (1) limited amounts of small scale business, sited so as to provide services to nearby residents, and (2) areas for major regional retail, office, and industrial developments that support a large proportion of the Town's tax levy. In order to maintain this strategy over coming years, the community needs to address the following policy issues:

- a. **Build-out of remaining developable commercial and industrial land is approaching.** This is likely to constrict the Town's menu of offerings. There will not be space for new "prestige" developments, and the forces of supply and demand will begin to raise the cost of currently inexpensive space beyond the reach of the present market niche.

Does Lincoln want to maintain the diversified economic base that results from diversified space? If so, how?

As the supply of developable land runs out, how much infill does the Town want to allow? For example, should there be height restrictions? Should the Town adopt performance standards that provide needed protection while providing flexibility for creative responses to market demand?

Market forces will make the development of marginal lands more attractive. Are natural resource areas sufficiently protected?

- b. **Even Lincoln's "new" developments are aging.** The Airpark is about 40 years old. Does the Town want to shift into redevelopment and revitalization with the same aggressiveness that directed investments in infrastructure over the past 20 years? Do the older industrial parks still match a strong market, or has their potential market niche changed? For example, there are numerous sites for companies that need 50,000 - 60,000 square foot buildings, but maybe this is limiting the ability of smaller firms to develop here.

- c. **Times are tough, even for well- established firms. And tough times will come again.** How else might the Town foster the business base it now enjoys? Admittedly, certain key problems lie in arenas outside the Town: possible increases in the State sales tax, the cleanup of brownfield sites, and signs along the interstate highways. But isn't there any way that the Town might at least help mitigate these problems?
- d. **As the “industrial belt” matures, land use considerations should be readdressed.** Limited open land is left for development; this is a good time to reassess the potential problems and contributions of the entire belt. Should "mixed use" provisions allow ancillary uses in Industrial zones? How should future traffic flow be managed? Will open space and resource protection objectives be met under current regulations? Should there be new construction along the northern stretch of Route 146 and around the cloverleaf?
- e. **The Town's strategy has been to allow only limited areas of Neighborhood and Highway Business, but there is pressure to expand some of these.** For example, the Front Street and Smithfield Avenue areas have crept beyond their original boundaries. Should the Town take a firm stand against expansion, or does there need to be more space to serve residents' needs?
- f. **Future development could alter Lincoln's current healthy balance among land uses.** As the Town approaches build-out, residential development and accompanying demand for services might outstrip the business sector and its net tax revenue to the Town. There may be more demand for neighborhood services than can be met within current Neighborhood Business areas.
- g. **The Town should explore incorporating performance-based zoning standards for commercial and industrial zones.** These zoning standards are designed to accommodate technical innovations in industrial and commercial uses and enable communities to attract new and innovating companies.

Residents' Attitudes Towards Local Economic Development (1989 Survey)

Although a public survey was not conducted for the 2002 Update, the town may find it useful to study current resident’s attitudes regarding economic development. The 1989 survey of town residents asked one question about whether the resident supported attracting more industry and business such as professionals, office workers, and retail stores. The majority favored this type of commercial expansion, but only 22 percent strongly favored it. The surveyors concluded that residents favor attracting select companies under a regulated growth plan that will not spoil the country-like atmosphere that is so highly prized by the great majority of residents.

The fact that the majority of residents favor certain business expansion is remarkable when one considers that a large majority listed Lincoln's quiet, country, and non-urban atmosphere as being why it is a good town to live in. It appears that residents tend to have confidence in the Town's ability to manage growth.

III. The Economic Base in Light of Buildout Projections

Findings of the Buildout Analysis

A complete description and discussion of buildout projections prepared in 2001 by the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council are found in the Land Use Element. The purpose of this section of the Economic Development Element is to summarize the portions of the analysis that relate to Lincoln's economic base and to highlight their implications.

1. **The current residential to non-residential land use ratio is 3.6:1.** That is for every acre developed for commercial or industrial uses, there are 3.6 acres of residentially developed land.
2. **At buildout this ratio will be approximately 4.2:1.** Presently there are significantly more residentially zoned developable acres than non-residentially zoned developable acres, so when all developable lands are built out, there will be a significant increase in the proportion of land that is developed for homes. Of the town's total acreage according to the Blackstone Valley Buildout study, about 2819 acres are buildable. Of these acres, 337 acres are zoned for business and 2482 acres are zoned for residential development. As indicated in the Land Use Element, this brings the ratio to 4.2:1. The zoning ratio is 4.8:1. This ratio should not be used for comparison; however, since land uses do not always reflect the zoning category. For instance, there is no zoning designation for institutional land however there are several acres of existing land use for institutional purposes, such as schools, post office, libraries, etc.
3. **The rate of buildout should be continually monitored based on current and past trends.** The 1992 study indicated that this change would occur between 1992 and the year 2100. Lincoln has seen an average of 125 residential units built per year since the 1992 Plan was written, thus accelerating the rate of growth and reducing the projected build-out year. However, best available 2002 building permit data has indicated a slow growth period. Only 47 units have been permitted with only one month left in the permit year. The assumption is that market prices have deterred new homebuyers who have chosen to renovate or defer purchase until the market steadies.
4. **To maintain the 3.6:1 ratio, about 200 acres of buildable acreage should be transferred from a residential zoning designation to business or industrial designation (about 7000 residential acres to 1927 business acres).** This was a similar

estimate as was indicated in the 1992 Plan, however future acreage estimates will change based on open space acquisition, institutional uses or other uses not yet predicted.

The 2001 buildout analysis stresses that this approach is only general and does not take into account uneven appreciation rates, economies of scale in providing services, and the great variation that exists in commercial and industrial real estate values. Nonetheless, this approach can serve as a general guide to Lincoln as it considers its land allocation strategy.

Implications

Lincoln has achieved an enviable financial position through maintaining and expanding its economic base. If the townspeople of Lincoln decide that they wish to maintain this broad economic base relative to the residential base, the buildout projections imply that the Town should compensate for future residential growth by increasing the non-residential land base by approximately 200 - 250 developable acres.

Alternatively, the Town could choose to adjust the balance through more intense, higher tax-generating (re)development of some acres that are already zoned for business. The Town would need to be aware of commercial and industrial "gentrification" that would constrict the range of business space available. Loss of Lincoln's current full menu of spaces would diminish the breadth and viability of its economic base.

However Lincoln decides to expand its economic base, it can and should stick with the policies that have served it well: taking advantage of regional highway access, avoiding commercial sprawl, tucking commercial and industrial buildings out of sight, encouraging local business service centers within each existing village core through the allowance of mixed uses and keeping Lincoln a good place to do business.

Economic Development Element Strategy Summary

Status of Economic Development Planning in Lincoln

Lincoln has a strong economic base, but there is recognition that with additional housing development, there will be some need for a larger non-residential tax value base. Efforts for strengthening the economic base could include cleanup efforts at the Airport Industrial Park, defining development standards for the growing commercial recreation/tourism sector and encouraging mixed-use projects in areas where land is underused. A key to continued economic development success will be maintaining, with some modifications, Lincoln's strategy of a relatively simple regulatory environment coupled with strong negotiations on development projects.

Goals

To continue to diversify and broaden the tax base of the Town of Lincoln through the provision of additional areas for commercial and industrial development *or through the reuse of existing areas* in a coordinated framework of complementary land uses.

To carefully manage commercial and industrial expansion so as to protect the neighborhoods, character and natural environment of Lincoln.

To plan now for the types of industrial space that firms of the future will seek and to encourage the use and reuse of property to meet those needs.

Policies

1. Maintain the town's policy of discouraging roadside commercial strip development.
2. Continue the town's policy of working with commercial and industrial developers to site their projects in ways that will protect the character of the town and avoid undue congestion on the roadways.
3. Encourage healthy commercial sectors within the villages.
4. Support the continued health of the town's existing shopping malls.
5. Work to solve hazardous waste pollution problems on older industrial sites and to prevent new pollution.
6. Provide standards for the reuse of the town's older industrial properties.

Policy Statement on Economic Development in the Villages:

Lonsdale: The town will seek to protect all areas currently in use for commercial business and industry. The commercial and industrial areas of Lonsdale will seek to mesh with the heritage park and the tourism opportunities the corridor brings the drive-in site will be considered for tourism and recreational uses and, where appropriate, mixed housings. The Gisele's Kitchen area will be carefully planned to provide commercial services to the surrounding neighborhoods while at the same time protecting the integrity of those residential and historic areas. Key challenges include:

- The Lonsdale industrial area should be encouraged to be upgraded and to provide a variety of flexible manufacturing spaces.
- The Front Street commercial area should be improved through landscaping and modest streetscape improvements.

Saylesville: The village of Saylesville will encourage the reuse of all industrial buildings. Uses will be encouraged that will be compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods and with the natural resources of the village. An improved road system within the industrial park will be encouraged. Key challenges include:

- Reuse of mill buildings in the Saylesville industrial park should be encouraged.

Fairlawn: The current land use pattern of Smithfield Avenue is of an appropriate scale to support healthy neighborhood commercial activity. The Town will encourage the reuse of the Collyer Insulated Wire Plant. In addition, it is the policy in Fairlawn that the boundaries of the current commercial areas will be maintained. Key challenges include:

- Streetscape improvements such as landscaping and sign coordination should be pursued where appropriate.
- Performing a land use and zoning analysis of Smithfield Avenue should be considered to support economic development.

Quinnville: Quinnville should remain a residential village. No business uses should be allowed. Key challenges include:

- Small commercial operations should be prohibited in Quinnville despite pressures from tourism

Limerock: Commercial or industrial development will be discouraged with the following exceptions:

- Route 116 corridor in the areas currently zoned ML-0.5 or currently under consideration for expansion
- Parcels currently in business use today, including Lincoln Park. High quality light manufacturing or office development should be encouraged in this area.

Key challenges include:

- Performance standards should be developed to minimize negative impacts on Quinville and any other abutting residential areas.
- A clear set of development standards should be created for Lincoln Park to allow sufficient flexibility for future changes of use if that becomes necessary. Access to this site via Route 146 makes it exceptionally valuable as a commercial/ office/ recreational/ mixed-use site. It must be stated that to conform with the intent of the 1994 voter referendum in which the voters overwhelmingly approved that there should be no expansion of gambling without voter approval, see Town ordinance section 13-17.
- Further commercial development along Old Louisquisset Pike should not be permitted to avoid increased traffic and to maintain the character of this area.

Industrial Corridor and Parks: The Town's policy will be to continue to maximize the economic use and value of all parcels within these areas. Office and industrial uses will be favored over commercial uses, unless proposed commercial projects provide similar value, taxes, job generation rates and overall economic development benefits. Such commercial projects must not cause negative impacts that would be greater than those associated with office or industrial uses. Projects that coordinate multi-parcel planning for circulation, open space, building design and infrastructure will be encouraged. High job generating uses will be favored over low job generating uses. Developments that weave together business uses with other uses of benefit to the community (arts, entertainment and community gathering centers) will be encouraged. Key challenges include:

- Public investments and regulations should be put in place that will make these areas the prime investment locations in Northern Rhode Island.
- The town should lobby state and federal agencies and work with local organizations to assist with the cleanup of hazardous waste sites.

Albion: Small businesses will be encouraged to locate in Albion Village. The increasing population densities in Limerock and in Albion will generate demand for services for village-scale businesses. Albion's village character will give it a different competitive niche from the strip shopping malls in nearby Cumberland or the large Lincoln Mall. A key element of maintaining a healthy village will be maintaining on-street parking for local businesses.

Manville: The town will continue to encourage small, commercial operations that primarily serve the needs of Manville residents. Key challenges include:

- Zoning and parking requirements should provide flexibility for business use of the first floor of residential buildings. These uses should be compatible with the Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor and with adjacent and upper level residential use.
- Manville should identify a clear economic development niche to revitalize its first floor commercial spaces.
- Commercial zoning should be considered for land west of Route 99.
- Manville could be greatly affected by the type of development in the Cumberland Quarry Industrial Park across the river. Light industrial uses should be encouraged.

Economic Development Element Actions

ED1 - Guidepost Actions

- Work with regional and state organizations to encourage economic development.
- Continue to work cooperatively with the business community to encourage economic development that is appropriate for the town.
- Continue the town's policy of using moderate regulation coupled with strong negotiation to design high quality commercial and industrial projects.
- Continue the town's policy and zoning districts that restrict roadside commercial strip development. This refers to retail and service malls that are directly on the road or have less than 300 feet between the right of way property line and the first building or parking area. All commercial and industrial development in Lincoln should proceed in either existing industrial or business zones or on sites with high levels of site design that prevents the negative strip development.
- Continue the town's policy of requiring that larger projects must be accessible by regional transportation systems if they will be serving a regional market.

Action Agent: Planning Board/ Planning Department, Town Council and Town Administrator's office

Cost: Ongoing policy decisions. Cost is low.

ED2 - Townwide. Develop a local economic development promotion and marketing strategy to mesh with the Northern Rhode Island Economic Development strategy.

Action Agent: Town Administrators' office

Cost: Staff time for a basic strategy. If a professional strategy were desired, the cost would run between \$10,000 and \$30,000.

ED3 - Townwide. Brownfields Redevelopment.

- Encourage brownfield redevelopment to reduce greenfield development while promoting job generation and centrality of shopping areas.
- Coordinate with Statewide Planning, the Economic Development Corporation, the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council and regional chamber of commerce in promoting mill reuse.
- Utilize federal and state funding to encourage reinvestment of these areas.

Action Agent: Lincoln Planning Board/ Planning Department.

Cost: Staff time.

ED4 - Lonsdale. Engage a landscape architecture class from a university to prepare a set of facade and street improvement concepts for the Front Street commercial area. Additionally review the BL-0.5 zoning and sign requirements in the rezoning process. The landscape architecture students should work with local landowners and the town to come up with low, moderate and high cost options for softening the appearance of the Front Street area, tying the various uses and buildings together through a design concept, and providing better pedestrian safety and access to the area. Zoning revisions should focus on sign size, parking requirements and lot coverage.

Action Agent: Lincoln Planning Board/ Planning Department
Cost: \$1,000 to \$2,000

ED5 - Townwide. The location of municipal, state and federal facilities should be coordinated with the Town of Lincoln in order to encourage centralization of all facilities to best serve the residents. The town should anticipate the likely future need of the US Postal Service to require more space. Appropriate relocation or expansion options within the town should be considered. Communication with postal officials should be maintained.

Action Agent: Planning Board/ Planning Department
Cost: Volunteer and staff time.

ED6 - Townwide. Consider performing a land use and zoning of the Smithfield Avenue area from Parker Street to the Pawtucket line to determine whether existing zoning is adequate to protect the residential character of the area and to manage likely traffic and land use problems.

Action Agent: Planning Board/Planning Department and Town Council
Cost: Part of zoning revision project.

ED7 - Limerock. The open lands lying along Route 116 should be considered for encouraging additional economic development within the existing or slightly expanded ML0.5 district.

Action Agent: Planning Board/Planning Department
Cost: Part of zoning revision process

ED8 - Limerock. Consideration should be given to whether non-residential uses should be allowed on the south side of Route 116 from Old River Road west to Great Road. Although this area is currently residential, planned changes to Route 116 will lessen the residential suitability of this area. Care must be taken to not disturb residential neighborhoods in the Whalen Drive and Meeting House Road neighborhoods or along Great Road. With these caveats stated, the question is whether office uses could be appropriate.

(A model for this area might be the Moog-Klinehoeffer building located east of Old River Road on Route 116.) This plan recommends that once plans are finalized for the Route 116 changes, the Town evaluate whether there will be adequate depth to rezone the area for office uses. Consideration should also be given to whether this area is appropriate for a link in a bikeway between Cumberland and Smithfield.

Action Agent: Planning Board/Planning Department

Cost: Staff and Board time.

ED9 - Limerock. The zoning policies stated above regarding preventing commercial expansion along Old Louisquisset Turnpike must be followed. Continue existing zoning to prevent new commercial development.

Action Agent: Planning Board/Planning Department and Zoning Board of Review

Cost: No costs. Consistent monitoring necessary

ED10 - Limerock. The Lincoln Park site is designated as an Area of Planning Concern. The current uses of parimutuel racing, video gambling, and wagering shall not expand or enlarge in a manner that increases the impacts on surrounding neighborhoods as indicated below. The Town proposes below general development standards for any potential future use of the site. It must be stated that to conform with the intent of the 1994 voter referendum in which the voters overwhelmingly approved that there should be no expansion of gambling without voter approval, see Town ordinance section 13-17.

The standards are as follows:

1. Any future use of the site shall decrease, not maintain or increase the current impacts that the existing video gambling and wagering facility has on surrounding residential areas.
2. Residential use of the site is not a priority for the Town.
3. Given its access to Route 146, its historic non-residential character and its developability, non-residential uses will be preferred.
4. Such uses shall be compatible with surrounding residential areas in that noise, light, odor, traffic and other impacts should not deteriorate the area's quality of life.
5. Such potential uses shall be similar to office, recreational, tourism related or other similar uses.
6. Other proposals for the site must fit within these general concepts.
7. All future projects at the site shall be a product of a cooperative effort between the landowner and the Town.
8. Future redevelopment of this site shall be consistent with the CR-II zoning requirements and the additional review of the Area of Planning Concern Committee as presented in the Zoning Ordinance.

Action Agent: Planning Board/Planning Department

Cost: Part of zoning revision process

ED11 - Manville. Lincoln should consider developing a special economic development-marketing plan for Manville to provide incentives for first floor use of space for artists, crafts people and other small businesses. Cooperation with the National Park Service and Blackstone Valley Tourism Council can enhance this effort and ensure that the “Manville Revitalization Program” receives maximum exposure to tourists.

Action Agent: Planning Board/Planning Department and Town Administrator’s office.

Cost: Unknown

ED12 - Saylesville and Fairlawn. Maximize the benefits to be derived from the designation of the Saylesville Industrial Park as an Enterprise Zone.

The Saylesville Industrial Park and the Moshassuck Valley Highway Industrial Area have been named as part of a regional Enterprise Zone in conjunction with the City of Pawtucket. This designation makes certain businesses and workers within the Zone eligible for state tax credits and bestows priority status for state projects within the Zone.

Over the next decade, the Town should work in close collaboration with its abutting Northern Rhode Island communities to manage jointly all three northern Rhode Island zones, and concentrate on the following issues to fill vacant Zone properties: create signage demarcating the Zone, publicize the availability of tax credits to businesses and workers in the Zone, and develop a complementary local tax incentive policy to enhance the State’s incentives. Special attention should be given to funding and implementing the regional management plan as detailed by the Northern Rhode Island Economic Development Partnership.

Action Agent: Town Council and Town Administrator

Cost: Not estimated at this time

ED13 - Townwide. Continually monitor the effectiveness of zoning in preventing strip commercial development. Maintain and review the development standards currently within the zoning. Consider incorporating performance-based industrial zoning standards. These zoning standards are designed to accommodate technical innovations in industrial and commercial uses.

Action Agent: Planning Board/Planning Department

Cost: Staff time.

ED14 - Industrial Park. Consider revitalization of the industrial park (about 40 years old).

In 1980, all Park buildings were occupied and produced employment for 3000 workers. In the early 1990's, the Park maintained only 1500-1600 employees. Today, attraction of infill development should be a priority to utilize this property for the highest and best uses.

Action Agent: Planning Board/Planning Department

Cost: Staff time.

ED15 - Townwide. Evaluate the sustainability of existing commercial areas to serve the increasing residential population. Continually identify the needs of each village community and encourage flexible zoning.

Action Agent: Planning Board/ Planning Department

Cost: Staff time.

ED 16 - Townwide. The Town should consider revising the CR-1 and CR-II zoning district to incorporate the review process conducted by the Area of Planning Concern committee. All proposed changes or expansion of use of property designated under these zones should be reviewed by the APC. This review shall be of an advisory nature only. It must be stated that to conform with the intent of the 1994 voter referendum in which the voters overwhelmingly approved that there should be no expansion of gambling without voter approval, see Town ordinance section 13-17.

Action Agent: Planning Board/ Planning Department

Cost: Staff time.