

A photograph of a paved road winding through a forest. The road is dark asphalt and curves to the right in the distance. The trees on both sides have autumn foliage in shades of green, yellow, and orange. The ground is covered with fallen leaves. The text "MASTER PLAN" is in large white letters at the top left, and "Town of Sandisfield, Massachusetts" is in smaller white letters below it.

MASTER PLAN

Town of Sandisfield,
Massachusetts

Prepared by:
The Sandisfield Master Plan
Steering Committee &
The Berkshire Regional
Planning Commission

MASTER PLAN
2016
Town of Sandisfield,
Massachusetts



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Executive Summary

During late 2015 and early 2016, the Town of Sandisfield developed a Master Plan, a strategic document that helps direct decision-making in the town for the next 10-20 years. A Master Plan considers all aspects of a community to create a consistent strategy for how each should progress in the future – including land use, housing, economy, natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, services, infrastructure, and transportation.

The development of the Master Plan was the work of the Sandisfield Master Plan Steering Committee, formed as a subcommittee of the town’s Planning Board. This group was comprised of members of other town boards, and interested citizens of Sandisfield. The planning process also incorporated broad community input through the development of a public opinion survey, two public informational meetings or forums, and many stakeholder and personal interviews. This valuable input has helped to shape the content of the plan—thank you to all who devoted time to the creation of this plan for the town’s future.

VISION

This plan creates a strategy to help the town achieve its vision for its desired future. Components of Sandisfield’s vision include establishing the town as local and regional recreation, environmental, and heritage or historic destination. Additionally, the town will work to improve transportation and reduce its expenses.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Our vision serves as the basis for a number of more-detailed goals and policies that define how the town will achieve its vision. In some cases, the successful achievement of the goal and policies depends on the collaboration of one or more other parties. Where this is the case, the likely collaborators are identified in the implementation strategy (Chapter 13). The goals and policies are organized into chapters by topic, as described in the following sections.

Population and Demographics

The Town of Sandisfield has a population of around 900 year-round residents according to the 2010 US Census. The median age of a Sandisfield resident is 48 years old. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of residents below the age of 45 decreased, while the number over the age of 45 increased. The town is also predicted to grow by around 125 new year-round residents over the next two decades, and is one of a handful of municipalities in the Berkshires predicted to do so. This chapter also looks briefly at the Farmington River School. Enrollment data indicates that the number of students has decreased by about 25% since 2003, particularly in the number of students from Sandisfield and school choice students. In terms of race, ethnicity, and diversity, US Census data shows that the number of African American and Latino residents decreased in Sandisfield between 2000 and 2010. However, the number of multiracial residents and the number of Asian residents has increased. The population and demographics chapter is the only topic chapter that does not contain goals, objectives, and actions.

Economy

Sandisfield’s local economy is comprised of small local businesses and independent entrepreneurs. Roughly half of all year-round residents are considered in the “civilian labor force”, meaning they are either employed, or unemployed and above the age of 16. Those not in the labor force are not employed, not laid off, and not seeking employment. Early in the Master Plan process, BRPC looked at “Doing Business As” (DBA) records held by the town. These records show that around 80 businesses registered in the town between 2010 and 2015. Many of these businesses are small farms or belong to the forestry, logging, and wood products industry.

The Master Plan sets the goal that the town will work to improve the local economy and daily life in the town through a variety of means. These include working to support local business through training and business development, as well as conducting outreach to encourage local businesses to join regional business networks, such as the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce. A range of promotional activities and possible improvements such as beautifying town “gateway” areas are also suggested. The plan also sets



the goal of improving daily life in the community. This will be pursued through the development of cooperative business models in town, such as a store or grocery.

Economy Goals

- Strengthen the local economy
- Improve daily life through additional services and amenities.

Infrastructure

The Master Plan Infrastructure Chapter examines a few key aspects of infrastructure in Sandisfield, including town buildings and facilities, drinking water wells, the proposed Kinder Morgan and Tennessee Gas Pipeline “Connecticut Expansion” Project, and town technology infrastructure (computers, phones, and the town website). The town has done significant planning related to its town buildings, which has been spearheaded by the Sandisfield Strategic Planning Committee. A consultant hired by the town recommended that the town’s buildings are in need of replacement and do not currently meet the town’s needs. Additionally, the town has recently undertaken efforts to address its technology needs and improve the town website.

The Master Plan makes the recommendation that the town improve its public facilities through a continuation of its current efforts. Through this, the town will work to develop a specific plan and process for replacing its public buildings, including how this effort will be funded. The town will also work to improve its technology infrastructure and explore potential development of alternative sources of energy in Sandisfield. This will include pursuing alternative energy development on town lands, as well as promoting energy saving programs and small scale energy development with town residents through existing means like Mass. Saves or the Solarize Mass. Program.

Infrastructure Goals

- Improve town facilities to meet current and future needs.
- Improve town technology infrastructure.
- Develop alternative sources of energy in Sandisfield.

Services

Sandisfield provides many services to its residents including law enforcement and fire protection, senior programs through the Council on Aging, waste collection through the transfer station, a town library, and road maintenance, to name a few. This chapter also examines town finances and taxes. In 2015, the tax rate in Sandisfield was \$13.00 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Revenue from property taxes provides around 85% of the town’s total revenue (\$3.28 million in 2015). Road maintenance and public works, as well as school expenditures are the town’s major expenses. The town has roughly \$1.5 million between its available free cash and its stabilization funds, which gives it some flexibility to address unanticipated expenses or to invest in other projects.

The Master Plan makes suggestions for streamlining town costs while offsetting them through grant writing or the potential sale of town property (among others). The plan also sets goals to enhance services for Sandisfield’s senior citizens and families, as well as a variety of measures to better inform and engage its volunteer boards and citizens.

Services Goals

- Provide efficient and fiscally responsible services.
- Better inform and engage residents, boards, and committees.

Housing

Roughly 56% of the 671 housing units in Sandisfield are used year round, and 40% are used seasonally. The small remaining percentage (3.6%) belongs to housing units considered vacant. This category includes unoccupied homes for sale or rent, sold or rented units pending occupation, and other vacancies such as “abandoned” or unused homes. Rental units in Sandisfield accounted for 6.2% of all housing stock, and includes year-round and seasonal rentals. Most housing units in town are of the single family-type and are owner occupied. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of seasonal housing units in town decreased by around 5%, while the number of year-round housing units increased. There are no dedicated “affordable” housing units within the town. In recent years the number of new permits issued for single family homes has decreased. Single family home sales

also declined between 2008-2010. However, they have increased in recent years. The Master Plan sets goals to address housing within the town, through participation in housing rehabilitation programs and other incentives, as well as potential bylaw changes that could help to encourage the development of affordable housing units. Additionally, Sandisfield will work to develop the local capacity to address its housing needs through possible formation of a housing organization, such as a committee, and strategic partnerships with local housing organizations. Finally, the plan sets the goal that the town will create a long term strategy to supply senior housing, as well encourage the rehabilitation of existing historic homes in Sandisfield.

Housing Goals

- Sandisfield will supply housing to meet the needs of all ages in incomes.

Transportation

Sandisfield has a network of nearly 100 miles of roadway within the town. The vast majority of these miles are the responsibility of the town. Only Route 8 and some state forest land roadways are the responsibility of the state to care for. Moreover, a few miles are privately maintained. Additionally, the town has only one roadway which is eligible for federal funding (Route 57). There is no public transportation in Sandisfield beyond existing senior and paratransit services provided by grant funding to the town and two other organizations, Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) and the Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation (SBETC). Transportation is an important issue in Sandisfield, as well as a major town expense.

The Master Plan provides a number of recommendations to address transportation needs within the community. These include capital improvement planning and advocacy with surrounding towns to work towards state responsibility of Route 57. Additionally, the plan develops strategic actions that the town will implement to reduce long-term costs. Moreover, the plan addresses non-motorized transportation in town, and recommends the town adopt a “Complete Streets” approach to future roadway projects, implementing accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians where it can. Finally, the

town will work to establish a wayfinding system and improve local roadway signage.

Transportation Goals

- Provide a complete and well maintained system of roads.
- Improve public and non-motorized transportation in Sandisfield.
- Establish a town wayfinding system and improve local signage.

Land Use

Sandisfield is a rural town in the southern Berkshires. Forest covers approximately 86% of all land within Sandisfield. Residential land use is the most significant human land use in the community at around 1.6% of all land within the town. This land use far exceeds the acreage devoted to institutional, commercial or industrial uses. Historically, land use patterns and development has been dispersed within the town. At one time, there were as many as five separate villages within the community. Land use in Sandisfield is regulated through the town’s zoning and bylaws. Sandisfield currently has one zoning district, and has worked with BRPC recently to update its zoning regulations. As part of its work on the Master Plan, BRPC performed a buildout analysis based on current zoning. This analysis concluded that approximately 7,500 additional housing units could be built in Sandisfield based on its current zoning regulations and the remaining developable land within the town.

The Master Plan sets several goals for the town, including the establishment of a town center in Sandisfield. This has long been discussed in town as a way to provide a hub for social and public life within the town. The town will work to develop this town center, integrating its plans for other public facilities (see Chapter 4). Moreover, the town will continue to update and modernize its zoning bylaws, including developing bylaws to anticipate future land uses such as commercial and solar wind energy or wireless communications towers. Finally, the town will address the proposed Connecticut Expansion Pipeline Project by supporting equitable taxation for utilities.



Land Use Goals

- Establish a town center in Sandisfield.
- Update town zoning and bylaws.
- Address the proposed Connecticut Expansion Pipeline Project.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Sandisfield has an abundance of natural and cultural resources. Natural resources in the town include extensive forests and wildlife habitat, wetlands, vernal pools, several water bodies, streams, and rivers. Regionally, Sandisfield is located at the headwaters of the Farmington River, meaning that land use within the town could potentially impact the drinking water resources of nearly 600,000 downstream users who rely on the Farmington for drinking water, including the City of Hartford, CT. Several rare bird species have been sighted in Sandisfield, and the Colebrook River Lake area has been identified as a bird watching hotspot. Other locations, such as the Rowley Farm on Cold Spring Road, are also popular for bird watching.

Culturally, the town has many historic buildings and areas, including a portion of the Knox Trail, a historic and recreation trail that played a significant role during the American Revolutionary War. The Sandisfield Historical Commission has been instrumental in developing the town's cultural resources, through several initiatives. Additionally, the town is home to the Sandisfield Arts Center, a non-profit organization that hosts events, performances, and exhibits. The center provides a space for theater, film, and workshops, as well as a large gallery for visual arts display.

The Master Plan sets the goal of establishing Sandisfield as an environmental and historic destination. This entails protecting natural resources and promoting the town as a destination for birdwatching and other events. The town will also continue its efforts to develop its cultural and historic resources to draw residents and visitors to the town.

Natural and Cultural Resource Goals

- Establish Sandisfield as an environmental destination.
- Establish Sandisfield as a historic and creative arts destination.

Open Space and Recreation

The Town of Sandisfield has thousands of acres of open space. Open space is traditionally defined as land that has not been developed for residential, industrial, or commercial use. Open space is often protected from future development, as is the case with state forest lands, properties owned by land trusts, and private land with conservation restrictions. In fact, 48% of all land within Sandisfield is protected in some way. Much of this belongs to land protected by the state and is found in the Otis and Sandisfield state forests. A small percentage is protected as part of watershed preservation lands owned by the Connecticut Metropolitan District Commission, which helps to ensure clean drinking water for the City of Hartford, CT. Finally, a number of residents in Sandisfield have chosen to protect their properties through Chapter 61. Through this state program, landowners receive reduced property taxes in exchange for the protection of land from future development.

In terms of recreation, these open space lands, particularly publicly accessible state forest lands, provide ample space for multiple activities. However, while these state lands are open to the public, they lack adequate facilities and are not managed for active recreation use, which limits their overall potential. There are two locally active snowmobile organizations in Sandisfield, both of which help to maintain and develop trails for this use. Finally, the town has two major recreation areas, including the library playground, and Yanner Park. Yanner Park was donated to the town for use as a public recreation area. There was significant planning done in the past to help guide the use of this area. However, efforts to create it as such have tapered off in recent years.

The Master Plan makes recommendations to establish the town as a recreation destination through better promotion, improving access to state lands, encouraging snowmobiling, and linking recreation areas through trail networks. The plan also provides suggestions for leveraging state lands to provide additional benefits to the town, such as through Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) payments or changes to state stumpage fee regulations. Finally, the plan works to address town-owned recreation areas. Under this goal, the town will revisit its needs for and invest

in the Library Playground and Yanner Park.

Open Space and Recreation Goals

- Establish Sandisfield as a recreation destination.
- Increase recreation opportunities for Sandisfield residents.
- Leverage state lands to generate additional benefits for the town.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

The plan calls for numerous actions. To make implementation easier, the final chapter lists each action and assigns a relative time, priority, and who is responsible for initiating the implementation of the action. Ideally, the town will use this tool as it plans annual priorities from year-to-year.

APPENDICES

In addition to the plan for the town's future, there are a number of appendices that highlight current conditions at the time of the plan, legal considerations, and survey feedback received from the community

- A. Maps
- B. Key issues
- C. Existing Conditions Summary
- D. MGL 41
- E. Survey Results
- F. Forms



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This Master Plan for the Town of Sandisfield was developed in 2015 and 2016 to guide growth, policy, and investment decisions for the next 10 to 20 years. This chapter provides background to the planning process and describes the content of different chapters of the plan for easy reference and use.

WELCOME TO SANDISFIELD!

Sandisfield is a small town located in the beautiful Berkshire region of Massachusetts. Located in westernmost Massachusetts, the Berkshires are renowned for their natural beauty, rich arts and culture scene, and small New England town charm. In this setting lies the town of Sandisfield, nestled in the Berkshire Hills southeast of Great Barrington, it is the largest community in the Berkshires by geographic area. Sandisfield is bordered by the towns of Otis to the North, Monterey and New Marlborough to the West, and Tolland to the East.

Sandisfield is a town of approximately 930 year-round residents and a substantial number of seasonal residents and second homeowners. Second and seasonal homes comprise approximately 40% of all housing in town. Sandisfield was incorporated as a town in 1762 and was named after Lord Samuel Sandys, the first “Lord of Trade and the Plantations.” It is both the largest town in Berkshire County at 53 sq. mi. as well as the most sparsely populated.

WHAT DOES THIS PLAN ADDRESS?

This plan addresses a wide range of issues and priorities as expressed by the town through survey responses received at the start of the planning process. Some highlights, which illustrate recurring themes in the plan and its policies, include:

Character

Sandisfield is a hidden gem of the southern berkshire region. This rural community is known for its impressive natural and cultural resources and community of both year round residents and second homeowners who enjoy the quiet and solitude life in Sandisfield provides. Sandisfield embraces its rural

character and the charm of small town life while seeking to draw new residents and visitors to the town.

Ongoing and In-Progress Work

Rather than “reinvent the wheel,” the Master Plan strives to identify and support the numerous projects and good work already in-progress by the town.

Making Sandisfield a Destination

The Master Plan includes recommendations to better promote the town’s assets throughout the region and make Sandisfield a destination for outdoor recreation, nature and the environment, history, and the visual and performing arts.

Offsetting Town Costs

The Master Plan makes many recommendations to reduce and offset town expenses, including developing a plan to generate revenue from the sale or lease of town-owned property and equipment. Additionally, the town will look for ways to reduce its expenses and generate additional revenue by sharing services, pursuing grant funding and hosting events.

Roads

Sandisfield will comprehensively address its network of roadways to improve transportation for all users.

Support for Local Business

The plan includes elements to support its base of small local businesses and independent entrepreneurs through development workshops and training. The plan also seeks to specifically develop opportunities for Sandisfield’s tourism, agriculture and forestry based businesses.

Support for the Elderly

The plan makes many recommendations to better support the town’s senior citizens and the elderly. These include potential additional services, such as wellness check calls or better promotion of senior transportation options. Additionally, the town will develop a long term plan for senior housing in Sandisfield.

Town Center and Municipal Buildings

The plan recommends that the town continue to pursue the creation of a “Town Center,” a future social and civic hub for Sandisfield, and replace its existing town buildings. Future planning efforts will develop a process and dedicated funding plan to specifically address these issues.

State-Owned Lands

The plan recommends that the town work with the state to better integrate the town’s needs into state management plans and improve areas like Otis and Sandisfield State Forests. The plan also recommends that the town advocate for changes to state regulations to increase payments from state stumpage fees and PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) payments.

ABOUT MASTER PLANS

A Master Plan is a document that sets a blueprint for town decision-makers to use in their day-to-day actions as part of managing the town. It is an advisory document not a regulatory document. The purpose of this plan is to create an opportunity for the town to reflect and determine what it wants for its future and then chart out the preferred actions to achieve that vision. It is then the responsibility of the town’s elected and appointed officials to pursue the actions identified in the implementation chapter of this plan to gradually make the regulatory changes and priority investments needed to achieve the vision statement.

How does the Master Plan Relate to Other Town Plans and Documents?

The Master Plan takes precedence over other plans of the community such as transportation plans, open space and recreation plans, area plans, and other area - or topic-specific documents. The Master Plan is typically more general than more focused plan documents but provides overarching guidance to the content of these plans in that they should be consistent with the policies established in the Master Plan.

An important function of the Master Plan is to ensure priorities and approaches in one area such as land use relate to another, such as transportation. Because all

of the topics are addressed within a single document, the policies in these different areas are developed to be consistent and supportive, thus safeguarding the potential danger of conflicting policies that can occur in a more fragmented planning approach. Other town plans can then use this framework to reach a finer level of detail in a particular subject area. For a list of the topics required by Massachusetts law to be addressed in a Master Plan, see Appendix D.

While the Master Plan is not a regulatory document, it does set the policy for the town to develop new bylaws to regulate land use decisions. For more on how the plan impacts land use and bylaw decisions see Chapter 8: Land Use.

WHAT DOES THE PLAN CONTAIN?

Master Plan guidance is provided in a number of ways, including maps of current and desired conditions, illustrations of concepts, and policy language. At the core of the plan is a vision statement of the overarching objectives the town wants to accomplish for its future. The Vision is the foundation for a number of goals and more specific policy and action statements. Together these establish the blueprint for what the town will do to achieve its vision and will serve as a guide for town policy and decision-makers for the life of the plan.

Vision

The vision is the “big picture” statement of where the town would like to be five, ten or twenty years from now.

Goals

Goal statements go into greater detail on the different pieces that the town will need to pursue in order to make the vision a reality.

Objectives

These are the specific strategies that the town will pursue to achieve the goal.

Actions

Actions are the specific tasks that individuals or groups



will need to do in order to achieve specific policy statements.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

This plan was developed through a planning process that included a few key ways of participation and feedback from the community:

Master Plan Steering Committee

The Sandisfield Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC), a sub-committee of the Planning Board, The Strategic Planning Committee, and the Selectboard initiated the development of the Master Plan. This Committee met 14 times from June 2015 to May 2016 to review draft work products and provide direction on the vision, goals, policies, and actions identified in this plan.

Survey

A survey was developed to gain feedback from Sandisfield residents regarding aspects of the Master Plan. The survey was made open to the public on July 31, 2015 and was concluded on August 31, 2015. Over 130 year-round residents, seasonal residents, and second homeowners responded to the survey. The results of the public survey are included as appendix E of this document.

Public Forums

Master Plan activities began with a public vision meeting held in July of 2014 by the Sandisfield Strategic Planning Committee. The meeting was an open discussion about the needs of the town and its future. A second public forum and informational meeting was held in April of 2016 to review the draft Master Plan with the public.

PLAN OVERVIEW

This plan contains eleven total chapters in addition to this introduction that address the following aspects of the town:

Chapter 2: Population and Demographics

This chapter presents population and demographic trends in Sandisfield and outlines key issues.

Chapter 3: Economy

This chapter provides an overview of the key economic sectors present in the town and makes recommendations for how the town can support the retention and expansion of economic activity in the future.



Figure 1.1—Eastbound on Route 57 entering Sandisfield. Sandisfield is a rural town in the southern Berkshires of around 900 year-round residents. Photograph credit John Phelan. Image licensed under CC by 3.0.

Chapter 4: Infrastructure

Chapter 4 contains an overview of town infrastructure including drinking water wells, public buildings and facilities, and town technology infrastructure, such as the town website and computers. This chapter makes recommendations for future infrastructure improvement and development.

Chapter 5: Services

This chapter provides an overview of the fire, police, and other services provided in the town and sets goals and policies for the town to pursue to maintain and enhance services in the future.

Chapter 6: Housing

This chapter provides an overview of housing supply and needs both now and in the future and then

presents town goals and policies to address future housing in the town including options for young professionals, families, and seniors.

Chapter 7: Transportation

This chapter highlights key features and issues with the current transportation system in the town and then establishes goals and policies for the town to pursue to maintain and enhance this system in the future.

Chapter 8: Land Use

This chapter contains a description of the current land use patterns and constraints and identifies goals and policies for future land use.



Chapter 9: Natural and Cultural Resources

This chapter summarizes the natural environment, as well as cultural and historic attributes of the town and sets goals and objectives for the town to pursue.

Chapter 10: Open Space and Recreation

This chapter summarizes the open space and recreation elements of the town and sets goals and objectives for the town to pursue.

Chapter 11: Vision

This chapter contains the vision statement for the town – a concise statement of what residents want their town to be like in the future.

Chapter 12: Process

This chapter outlines the public process that was used to develop the Master Plan.

Chapter 13: Implementation Strategy

This chapter contains an overview of the different types of actions that will be needed to implement the plan and the range of entities that will be involved in that process. Additionally, it includes the Implementation Strategy, which details the actions, responsible parties, relative priority, and potential funding sources for each action called for in the plan.

Appendices

- A. Maps
- B. Key issues
- C. Existing Conditions Summary
- D. MGL 41
- E. Survey Results
- F. Forms and Resources



CHAPTER 2: POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Population

Sandisfield is a small town in the Berkshires with a relatively low year-round population - 915 residents as of the 2010 census. Census data indicates that the town population increased from 667 to 915 residents between 1990 and 2010. This amounts to a 39% increase in population over the 20 year period. Additionally, Sandisfield is one of only a handful of Berkshire county towns projected to grow in the future. The Donahue Institute at UMass Amherst projects that Sandisfield will grow by roughly 126 additional residents over the next two decades, reaching 1,041 year-round residents by 2035 (see Table 1.1 in Appendix C). Due to the high number of seasonal residents that come to Sandisfield during summer months, it is unclear whether growth over past years has been comprised of newcomers to Sandisfield, or of seasonal residents transitioning their second home into their year round residence.

Seasonal Residents/Second Homeowners

Seasonal residents and second homeowners are a significant portion of the Sandisfield population that are barely captured by census and other data. According to the 2010 census, 45% of all housing units in Sandisfield are listed as seasonal units. Along with the towns of Becket, Stockbridge, Lenox and Otis, Sandisfield has one of the highest numbers of seasonal homes in the Berkshires. This seasonal population affects town services, infrastructure and housing. Additionally, they are likely a large contributor of new year-round residents to Sandisfield.

A demographics question related to seasonal residents and second homeowners was included on the public survey that was developed as part of the Master Plan process. According to the survey results, 7 out of 44 year round residents (15.9%), indicated that they had at one time been seasonal residents or second homeowners. Additionally, 17 out of 56 seasonal residents or second homeowners (26.5%) reported that they were planning on becoming year round residents of Sandisfield. For the complete results of the public survey, refer to appendix E.



The annual Sandisfield Steak roast dinner is held in August. Photograph provided by the Sandisfield Times.

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS AT A GLANCE

Age

The median age of an Sandisfield resident increased from 44.7 to 48 between 2000 and 2010.

Seasonal Residents

Seasonal residents are a major portion of Sandisfield's population. 2010 Census records indicate 45% of all housing in the town is seasonal.

Diversity

The population of Asians and those of 2 or more races has increased in Sandisfield since 2000, all other population groups have stayed constant or decreased slightly.

Additional discussion of population and demographics may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Table 2.1 - Change in Age Distribution in Sandisfield 2000-2010

Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census

Age	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
≤19	21.17%	18.25%	-2.92%
20-44	28.64%	22.95%	-5.69%
45-64	31.67%	39.02%	+7.35%
65≤	17.96%	19.78%	+1.82%

Age

The population of Sandisfield is increasingly becoming older. Between the 2000 and 2010 census, the number of Sandisfield residents below the age of 45 decreased while the residents age 45 and older increased (See Table 2.1 above). The change was most pronounced in the 45-64 age group, which saw an increase of 7.35% during the “aughts” decade. Between these years, the median age of town residents increased by 3.3 years from 44.7 to 49.9. The aging population could have effects on town services as well as its housing, recreation, and transportation needs.

At the other end of the spectrum, the decline in younger residents could have an effect on school enrollment and funding as well as future volunteers and town workers such as police and firefighters. Enrollment at the local elementary school, the Farmington River School, has decreased by about 25% since 2003 (see Table 2.2 above). Available data indicates that the number of students from Sandisfield and school choice students decreased the most. The number of school choice students enrolled at Farmington River has decreased from 35 to 24 students since 2007. Students attending from Sandisfield decreased from 43 to 26. However, the number of students from Otis increased slightly – by 7 students – since 2007.

During meetings of the Sandisfield Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC), it was identified that student enrollment might increase in the future at the Farmington River School due to a number of school choice students who can no longer attend the nearby

TABLE 2.2 - Farmington River School District Enrollment

*Source: Otis Annual Report 2007-2014, Massachusetts Dept. of Education**

Year	Total Enrollment	From Otis	From Sandisfield	School Choice Students
2003	178*	-	-	-
2004	188*	-	-	-
2005	190*	-	-	-
2006	171*	-	-	-
2007	153	75	43	35
2008	143	68	42	33
2009	147	77	42	28
2010	149	87	41	21
2011	144	86	37	21
2012	150	88	39	23
2013	149	87	37	25
2014	132	82	26	24

Southern Berkshire Regional School District in Sheffield due to a transportation issue. A bus driver for the district formerly provided transportation for these Sandisfield students to the school in Sheffield, but is unable to continue doing so. Lacking this available transportation, these students may begin to attend the Farmington River School District out of necessity and proximity (Nina Carr Personal Communication 2015).

Regionally, declining school enrollment is an important issue that impacts most school districts in the county, and is closely linked with the county’s declining birth rate and decreases in the number of young adults residing in the county. Currently, there is a regional effort underway to examine potential shared services between school districts to reduce expenditures as well as possible school consolidation.

Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity

The population of several ethnic groups including African Americans and Latinos fell between 2000 and 2010. The number of African Americans in Sandisfield decreased from 4 persons to 0. The number of Latinos



decreased from 8 to 7. However, the population of Asian Americans residents in Sandisfield increased from 1 to 35 between 2000 and 2010 and the population of persons of 2 or more races increased from 17 to 43 in the same time period. Increasing diversity for Berkshire County as a whole is a trend that has been identified in regional planning work including the 2014 Sustainable Berkshires Plan.

KEY POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC ISSUES

An Older Populace

The increased number of older residents may affect the range of services the town wishes to provide as well as the range of housing options available. Additionally, it makes issues such as the need for universal accessibility to town buildings or amenities more important due to potential mobility impairment issues.

Seasonal Residents

Seasonal residents have a potentially large impact on town population as well as town services and local housing.



CHAPTER 3: ECONOMY

In its past, the Town of Sandisfield was known as a center for manufacturing due to its many water powered mills as well as a hub of agriculture and lumbering. While some farming and forestry remain, the town's economy has changed, based primarily around a strong base of small business entrepreneurs. This chapter reviews the composition of economic activity in the town and then details the goals, objectives and actions for the town to take to achieve its vision for the Sandisfield economy. Sandisfield's vision for the economy includes supporting its local business base and developing its agriculture and wood products industries.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Employment

As of the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, the civilian labor force of Sandisfield was 737 persons, representing approximately 59.4% of the population over the age of 16 or 51.8% of the total population (737 out of an estimated 1,421 residents).

It is important to note that employment data is not calculated based on the entire population. Only persons over the age of 16 who are not members of the military, or institutionalized (such as in in prison, in a nursing home or mental health facility) are used to calculate employment figures. Individuals who have received any payment for work are considered employed. Individuals who are laid off from work or are actively seeking employment are considered unemployed. Individuals who are not employed, laid off, or actively seeking employment are considered not in the labor force and are not used to calculate unemployment figures. Individuals in this category might include retirees, homemakers, students, the independently wealthy, or a person without a job who has stopped looking for work (perhaps temporarily). A person who is unemployed and stopped looking for work is sometimes referred to as a "discouraged worker".

The unemployment rate was measured as 5.1% during the 2009-2013 American Community Survey (see Table 3.1), and represents an estimated 39 out of 766



Riiska Brook Orchard is located along New Hartford Road. Photograph by Richard Migot.

ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

Composition

Sandisfield has a business base comprised of small local businesses and entrepreneurs. Notable segments of the local economy include several small farms as well as those in the logging and wood products industry.

Employment

59.7% of the population over the age of 16 was considered employed according to data from the U.S. Census American Community Survey. Another 5.1% was considered unemployed. 35.5% was considered "not in the labor force", meaning they are not employed or seeking work.

Survey Respondents

Roughly 70% of survey respondents were in favor of encouraging business development in Sandisfield.

Additional discussion of economy may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Table 3.1 - Sandisfield Employment Statistics 2000-2013		
<i>Source: 2000 US Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey</i>		
	2000	2013
Population 16 years and Over (Considered the population eligible to work)	687 (100%)	766 (100%)
In Civilian Labor Force (employed and unemployed individuals)	418 (60.8%)	496 (64.8%)
Employed (full and part time workers, or anyone receiving payment for work)	411 (59.8%)	457 (59.7%)
Unemployed (Individuals who are laid off from a job or are actively looking for work)	7 (1%)	39 (5.1%)
Armed Forces	0	0
Not In Labor Force (Individuals who are not employed, not laid off and not seeking employment)	269 (39.2%)	270 (35.5%)
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	37	38.8

individuals. This value is lower than the value for the county (7.1% according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics).

As of the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, the total number of residents age 16 and older in Sandisfield was 766 persons, or approximately 82% of the total estimated population of the town (930 residents as of the 2009-2013 Census ACS). Of this population, 496 are considered “in the labor force”, meaning they are either employed or unemployed. This figure represents around 53% of the town’s 930 year-round residents. The remaining 270 individuals are considered “not in the labor force”.

Income

Per capita income was \$29,539 as measured in the 2009-2013 American Community Survey. (U.S. Census ACS

2009-2013). Median household income was \$55,917. Sandisfield’s median household income was higher than the surrounding town of Monterey, but lower than that of Otis or New Marlborough.

Local Business

For mapped DBA licenses and commercial properties, please see Map A—Current Commercial Uses.

Small local businesses dominate the business activity in Sandisfield. Town Clerk records show that eighty-one businesses registered or renewed their “Doing Business As” (DBA) in Sandisfield between 2010 and 2015 (Sandisfield Town Clerk Records, 2015). These are summarized in Table 2.1 and presented individually in Table 2.6 in appendix C. Businesses in Sandisfield fall into many categories. Twenty one businesses were categorized as belonging to agriculture or forestry. Another 14 businesses fell into the category of “Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services”. There were also many businesses in the construction (11) and retail trade (13) (see Table 2.3 in Appendix C).

Occupation

Since 2000, the employment and occupation of Sandisfield workers has shifted. Between 2000 and 2013, industries that saw gains in the percentage of workers include agriculture, retail, information, finance, professional services, education, and “other services”. Gains were greatest in the “other services” (23 workers, or 4.9%) and education, health and social services categories (30 workers, or 4.3%). Industries that saw declines in the percentage of workers include construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation, arts, and public administration. Declines in the percentage of Sandisfield workers were greatest in the public administration (30 workers, or 7.3%) and construction fields (16 workers, or 5.1%) (see Table 2.4 in Appendix C).

Public Survey Results

Based on the results of the public survey, Sandisfield residents and seasonal residents / second homeowners generally supported the encouragement of business development within the town (70%). Survey respondents were in favor of encouraging most types of new business with the exception of



construction (including trucking and hauling), auto repair, and industrial development. Year-round residents supported encouraging economic development at a higher rate (81%) than seasonal residents (63%).

KEY ECONOMY ISSUES

Small Local Business

Sandisfield has a business base comprised of small local businesses and entrepreneurs. The town should work with these businesses and individuals to explore cooperative measures for business promotion and economic development efforts.

ECONOMY GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Strengthen the Local Economy.

The Town of Sandisfield will work to strengthen the local economy by engaging its local business base, coordinating promotion of the town, and developing events and programs in town. Moreover, the town will focus on promoting and developing its inherent strengths, including local hospitality, agriculture, and wood products. These efforts will draw tourists and new residents to the town, while improving the quality of life of existing residents.

General Objective: Develop the Town's Agricultural and Wood Products Industry.

There are more businesses in Sandisfield focused on agricultural and wood products than any other in town. The town will work to cultivate, develop, and promote these businesses, while creating opportunity for these industries to further expand in town.

General Objective: Promote the Town's Open Space and Recreation Opportunities.

Sandisfield has thousands of acres of publically accessible state land, scenic trails, numerous water bodies, and miles of roadway for cycling or walking. The town will identify and promote these assets to draw tourists and potential new residents to the town, thus providing critical economic stimulus.

General Objective: Expedite the Development of Broadband Internet in Sandisfield.

Sandisfield recently approved funding for the development of broadband internet in town. The town will work to hasten the implementation of high speed internet in town to help support existing local and home-based business, as well as attract future entrepreneurs to the town.

Objective: Increase the Number of Tourist Visitors and Second Homeowners in Sandisfield.

Sandisfield recognizes tourism and its strong second home market are major economic drivers both local and regionally. These factors add to the tax base in town, while also contributing to the local economy. The town will work to identify and implement programs and other initiatives that increase the number of tourists that visit the town each year, while attracting future second homeowners.

ACTION 1: EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR TOURIST LODGING

Objective: Work with Local Businesses to Coordinate and Participate in Regional Organizations.

The Town will work more actively to ensure that local business participate in regional programs and business organizations. The town will also work to cultivate and develop its base of small local businesses through training and education.

ACTION 1: ENCOURAGE LOCAL BUSINESSES TO PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS BERKSHIRE GROWN AND THE SOUTHERN BERKSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP A SANDISFIELD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION OR LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ACTION 3: ENCOURAGE OR SPONSOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING IN TOWN.

ACTION 4: CONDUCT OUTREACH TO INFORM LOCAL BUSINESSES ABOUT TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE REGION.

Objective: Actively Promote the Town and its Assets.

The Town will work to ensure that town businesses and assets are promoted across the region. Additionally, the town will work to create draws for tourists and potential future residents through coordinated

marketing and promotion of its events and programs in town.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP OR APPOINT AN EVENT COORDINATION COMMITTEE THAT WILL ACTIVELY PROMOTE TOWN ASSETS AND EVENTS REGIONALLY. THIS COMMITTEE WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING A CALENDAR OF TOWN EVENTS, COORDINATING WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS, AND ENSURING THAT TOWN EVENTS AND ASSETS ARE PUBLICIZED REGIONALLY.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP OR APPOINT AN AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE TO PROMOTE AND CULTIVATE THE TOWN'S AGRICULTURAL ASSETS.

ACTION 3: COORDINATE THE "CROSS PROMOTION" OF LOCAL BUSINESSES AND EVENTS IN TOWN.

ACTION 4: ORGANIZE AND PROMOTE FARM TOURS IN SANDISFIELD.

ACTION 5: ORGANIZE AND PROMOTE MORE EVENTS AND PROGRAMS IN SANDISFIELD, SUCH AS THE 250TH CELEBRATION.

ACTION 6: ORGANIZE AND PROMOTE A "BUY LOCAL" CAMPAIGN FOCUSING ON THE TOWN'S AGRICULTURAL, FORESTRY, AND ARTISANAL PRODUCTS.

ACTION 7: ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP A TOWN LOGO TO BE USED ON PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS AND BRANDING.

ACTION 8: PROMOTE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND THE FARMINGTON RIVER SCHOOL AS POTENTIAL DRAWS FOR NEW RESIDENTS.

ACTION 9: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A LOCAL WAYFINDING SIGNAGE SYSTEM IN SANDISFIELD THAT PROMOTES AND LOCATES LOCAL BUSINESSES AND TOWN AMENITIES AND FEATURES. SEE CHAPTER 7—TRANSPORTATION FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Objective: Develop and Regularly Update the Town Website as a Promotional Tool for the Town.

The Town will more effectively utilize its website to promote the town, its businesses, and its assets. Additionally, the town will utilize its website to ensure that potential commercial developers and homeowners can easily access applicable forms and permits, are provided with up to date contact information for boards and committees, and can

access an easily navigable and user-friendly development review process in town.

ACTION 1: DISPLAY AND PROMOTE LOCAL BUSINESSES ON THE TOWN WEBSITE.

ACTION 2: DISPLAY AND MAINTAIN AN INTERACTIVE MAP ON THE TOWN WEBSITE THAT PROVIDES INFORMATION ABOUT RECREATION AREAS IN TOWN, INCLUDING WATER ACCESS POINTS, TRAILS, AND OTHER ATTRACTIONS.

ACTION 3: DISPLAY AND MAINTAIN AN INTERACTIVE MAP ON THE TOWN WEBSITE THAT PROMOTES THE TOWN'S HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND CEMETERIES, AS WELL AS ITS CULTURAL ASSETS, SUCH AS THE ARTS CENTER.

ACTION 4: ENSURE THAT COMMERCIAL DEVELOPERS AND POTENTIAL HOMEOWNERS IN SANDISFIELD CAN EASILY ACCESS AND DOWNLOAD APPLICABLE FORMS AND PERMIT APPLICATIONS AND ARE PROVIDED WITH UP TO DATE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES.

ACTION 5: DISPLAY AND MAINTAIN UP-TO-DATE AND USER-FRIENDLY INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS IN SANDISFIELD.

Objective: Leverage and Improve the Physical Assets of the Town.

The Town will work to enhance the attractiveness and "curb appeal" of its physical assets, to promote economic development. The town will also work to leverage its assets, such as town buildings to provide economic development and stimulus in town.

ACTION 1: IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE THE TOWN'S IMAGE, SUCH AS THROUGH POTENTIAL SCREENING OF THE TRANSFER STATION WITH EVERGREEN TREES.

ACTION 2: CREATE ATTRACTIVE "GATEWAYS" TO SANDISFIELD, SUCH AS ALONG ROUTES 8 AND 57, THROUGH LANDSCAPING, SIGNAGE AND OTHER ENHANCEMENTS.

ACTION 3: IMPROVE THE TOWN GREEN NEAR THE INTERSECTION OF ROUTE 57 AND NEW HARTFORD ROAD WITH LANDSCAPING, A KIOSK AND OTHER FEATURES TO ENHANCE ITS USE AS A TOWN GATHERING SPACE.

ACTION 4: EXPLORE THE ADAPTIVE REUSE OF TOWN HALL AND OTHER TOWN BUILDINGS TO CREATE ECONOMIC STIMULUS.



Goal 2: Improve Daily Life Through Additional Services and Amenities.

Objective: Develop Cooperative Businesses in Town.

The town will explore the development of a cooperative store or grocery in town, similar to existing regional models like the Old Creamery grocery in Cummington. This potential amenity will help to meet demand for a local and close to home “country store” and could also provide a venue to market local products. The town will also develop other cooperative elements and services in Sandisfield, such as a swap shop and food pantry.

ACTION 1: RESEARCH SUCCESSFUL COOPERATIVE MODELS AND DETERMINE THE BUSINESS MODEL THAT WILL BE MOST SUCCESSFUL IN SANDISFIELD.

ACTION 2: FORM A PUBLIC COMMITTEE OR CITIZEN’S GROUP THAT WILL INVESTIGATE A COOPERATIVE BUSINESS IN TOWN.

ACTION 3: SURVEY THE PUBLIC TO DETERMINE INTEREST IN A FUTURE COOPERATIVE BUSINESS IN TOWN.

ACTION 4: DEVELOP A “SWAP SHOP” IN TOWN FOR THE EXCHANGE OF SECOND HAND ITEMS.

ACTION 5: DEVELOP A FOOD PANTRY IN TOWN.

ACTION 6: PROMOTE EXISTING COOPERATIVE BUSINESSES OR SERVICES.



CHAPTER 4: INFRASTRUCTURE

The Town of Sandisfield has recently embarked on an assessment of one of its major pieces of infrastructure— buildings. Additionally, the town recently approved funding for development of high speed internet in town. Moreover, the town faces a major infrastructure project in the form of a proposed natural gas pipeline expansion through town. This chapter reviews the composition of town infrastructure and then details the goals, objectives and actions for the town to take to achieve its vision. Sandisfield’s vision for infrastructure includes improved town facilities and technology infrastructure, as well as alternative energy development in town.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Existing Town Infrastructure

Sandisfield currently owns five major buildings and facilities including its main administrative building located at the Town Hall Annex on Route 57.

All wastewater is currently treated through existing septic systems adjacent to private homes and on municipal buildings or through shared septic systems.

All drinking water is supplied through privately and municipally owned wells. In the past there have been issues with salt contamination in private wells located near Route 8.

For discussion of the town’s roadways please refer to the transportation section of this appendix and Chapter 7—Transportation.

Broadband / High Speed Internet

One of the programs of the American Investment and Recovery act of 2009 included significant federal funding for broadband internet expansion. In 2011, a group of towns formed a cooperative called WiredWest to help advance installation of the “last mile”, in which broadband internet connections are established for individual homes and users. Sandisfield was one of the original member towns that signed the organization’s charter, and holds a seat on the organization’s executive committee and board.



The Town Hall Annex is the Sandisfield’s main administrative building. Photograph by BRPC.

INFRASTRUCTURE AT A GLANCE

Broadband / High Speed Internet

Sandisfield has been pursuing development of high speed internet with a regional cooperative known as WiredWest, and recently approved funding for the project in May 2015.

Kinder Morgan Tennessee Gas Pipeline—Connecticut Expansion Project

Sandisfield currently has two existing natural gas pipelines which pass through the town. The pipeline owner has announced plans to expand capacity of this line, which has been met with significant opposition from the town and its residents.

Town Buildings

Sandisfield owns five major buildings and facilities. The town’s strategic planning committee recently hired a consultant to assess all town buildings. The assessment noted multiple needs for town buildings.

Additional discussion of infrastructure may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary



Figure 4.1—The Sandisfield Town Hall or “Old Town Hall” is located on Silverbrook Road. The old town hall provides space for board and committee meetings.

The total cost to install broadband internet in Sandisfield has been estimated at \$3.65 million. State funding will provide \$1.25 million of this cost, bringing the town’s total costs to \$2.4 million. At town meeting on May 16th, 2015, the town voted to fund development of the broadband network for the full \$2.4 million. The vote passed with over 100 voters supporting the measure and two opposed. The town also voted to exempt this debt from Proposition 2 1/2. Proposition 2 1/2 is a state tax law that creates a tax levy ceiling and establishes limits on how much property taxes can be increased year to year.

According to the Sandisfield Technology Committee, broadband internet and other services provided by WiredWest are anticipated to reach the first member towns in 2018 (Personal Communication 2015). It is unknown precisely when service will reach Sandisfield.

Drinking Water

For mapped public drinking water supplies, please see Map J—Water Resources.

All drinking water is currently provided through public and private well systems. Public drinking water wells

are listed in Table 3.1 in Appendix C.

Public drinking water supply data shows eight public water supply wells in the Town of Sandisfield, including locations at the Town Hall Annex (listed as the Sandisfield School in the water supply data) and local inns and restaurants. These wells fall into three categories including Community Groundwater wells (GW), Transient Non-Community water systems (TNC), and Non-Transient Non-Community (NTNC) water systems. TNC systems serve fewer than 25 people daily and are generally located at sites such as restaurants and campgrounds. NTNC systems serve 25 or more people daily for 6 months or more out of the year. GW wells are typically shared by several private residences. However, the GW well in Sandisfield serves the population at the Berkshire Health and Rehabilitation facility on Route 57. The important distinction between GW wells and the NTNC and TNC systems is that GW systems serve a year-round population.

These public drinking water wells are all surrounded by interim well-head protection areas (IWPA), which provide a minimum 500’ buffer around the well-head.



Kinder Morgan Tennessee Gas Pipeline—Connecticut Expansion Project

Sandisfield currently has two existing gas pipelines which pass through town. Collectively these are known as the “200 line”. The 200 line includes a 24 and 30 inch diameter pipeline within a roughly 75 foot wide right-of-way (ROW). The existing 200 line ROW crosses into Sandisfield near the intersection of Route 23 and Town Hill Road. From here the pipeline ROW runs roughly parallel to and immediately south of Cold Spring Road moving southeast across the town. The pipeline crosses South Beech Plain Road and Route 8 and passes into the Town of Tolland.

Recently, Tennessee Gas Pipeline and its parent company, Kinder Morgan have announced plans to expand this pipeline in Sandisfield as part of its Connecticut Expansion Project. The project proposes the construction of 3.8 miles of new 36 inch outside diameter pipeline within or adjacent to the current pipeline ROW, as well as additional facilities for operations and maintenance including a relocated main line valves and pig launchers and receivers.

At its annual town meeting in May of 2014, the Town of Sandisfield approved a resolution to ban the pipeline expansion project in town. The resolution cited potential damage to natural resources and the town’s scenic beauty, as well as the project’s undermining of state climate change mitigation efforts and commitments to renewable energy among the reasons for banning its construction. Additionally, a citizen’s group known as Sandisfield Taxpayers Opposing Pipeline (STOP) was formed to oppose the gas expansion project.

Town Buildings

For mapped town buildings and town owned lands, please see Map B—Community Facilities and Town Owned Land.

For a complete list of town buildings and potential repairs identified, please refer to Table 3.3 in Appendix C.

Bryarly Consulting LLC Building Assessment

In 2013-2014, at the request of Sandisfield’s Strategic Planning Committee, Bryarly Consulting, LLC located in

Hadley, MA conducted an assessment of town owned buildings to make recommendations for future repairs. The report evaluated the Town Hall, the Town Hall Annex, the Library, and the Highway Department Garage.

The assessment concluded that the town’s current facilities are not compliant with current building code. Additionally, it noted that after the cost of code upgrades and other repairs to existing buildings, the structures would still not meet current or future needs, and that upgrading these facilities would not be an efficient use of town financial resources. The report also highlighted possible repairs to the highway department or DPW garage, saying that due to “existing structural issues, and the location, it is not feasible nor financially prudent to attempt to repair the existing town DPW garage”.

The building assessment and the Sandisfield Strategic Planning Committee ultimately recommended the construction of a new town administration building, as well as a new highway department or DPW garage. As for potential locations for these proposed structures, and one possible solution to help address town facility needs, the Strategic Planning Committee proposed that the existing Town Hall and highway department garage structures on Silverbrook Road could be removed to create room for an expanded highway department garage at the same site. A potential location for the proposed town administration building has not been determined. Additionally, as part of this planning effort, the strategic planning committee recommended that the existing Library and Town Hall Annex building be sold to help fund the construction of these new facilities.

Public Survey Results

Respondents were in favor of potential energy efficiency upgrades to town buildings (83%). A potential new town administrative building was favored by 55% of survey respondents. A potential new DPW garage was supported by 40% of survey respondents. Support for a potential new DPW garage was above 50% when the responses of only year-round residents were tallied.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES

Town Buildings and Facilities

Sandisfield's public buildings are in need of repair and replacement and do not currently meet town needs. Additionally, they are in violation of health and safety codes. The town will engage in additional planning to improve its public facilities and replace town buildings.

Town Technology Infrastructure

Sandisfield has a need to improve its technology infrastructure, including the town website, phones, and computers.

INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Improve Town Facilities to Meet Current and Future Needs.

The Town will conduct and implement additional planning to improve and replace town buildings, such as Town Hall, the Town Hall Annex, DPW Garage, and Library. This will include development of a fiscally sound funding plan and process to replace the structures. The Town will integrate this with other Capital Improvement Planning and plans for a "Town Center" (See Chapter 8—Land Use)

Objective: Develop and Implement a Comprehensive and Fiscally Sound Funding Plan and Process to Replace Town Buildings.

The Town will develop and implement a comprehensive funding plan and process to replace town buildings. This effort will include public outreach to inform residents about efforts relating to public buildings.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A FUNDING PLAN AND PROCESS TO REPLACE TOWN BUILDINGS. INTEGRATE THIS EFFORT WITH LARGER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING.

ACTION 2: CONDUCT OUTREACH TO SEEK PUBLIC COMMENT, INFORM RESIDENTS, AND DEVELOP CONSENSUS AROUND A PLAN FOR TOWN BUILDINGS.

ACTION 3: INTEGRATE AND INFORM RESIDENTS ABOUT UNIQUE FISCAL CONDITIONS IMPACTING THIS PLANNING EFFORT, SUCH AS HISTORICALLY LOW INTEREST RATES.

Goal 2: Improve Town Technology Infrastructure.

Sandisfield has recently engaged in planning to update and improve the town's technology infrastructure, including phones, computers, and the town website. These efforts will improve communications between the town and its residents. The Town will work to develop and regularly update a town technology and spending plan to meet its needs.

Objective: Plan and Implement Future Improvements to Town Technology Infrastructure.

The Town will work to develop and implement its plans to improve town technology infrastructure. The town will also explore cost saving measures, such as a shared IT professional, with surrounding municipalities.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A MULTI-YEAR SPENDING PLAN FOR TOWN TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE. INTEGRATE THIS PLAN WITH LARGER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP AND REGULARLY UPDATE A TECHNOLOGY PLAN AND PROGRAM FOR THE TOWN.

ACTION 3: COORDINATE WITH BRPC AND SURROUNDING TOWNS TO INVESTIGATE A POSSIBLE SHARED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STAFF POSITION.

ACTION 4: CREATE A STREAMLINED TELEPHONE AND EMAIL SYSTEM FOR THE TOWN.

Objective: Expedite Broadband Internet Development in Town.

The Town will hasten broadband internet development in Town through its continued work with WiredWest. Broadband will provide an important service to residents and help to support home-based and small business in town.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO COORDINATE WITH WIREDWEST ON BROADBAND INTERNET CREATION IN TOWN.

ACTION 2: ADVANCE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION PHASE.

ACTION 3: FINALIZE BROADBAND INSTALLATION.



Goal 3: Develop Alternative Sources of Energy in Sandisfield.

Sandisfield will continue the work of the town Energy Committee to investigate potential sources of alternative energy, such as solar, wind, or fuel cells in town. The Town will also connect residents to existing programs such as Mass. Saves and work to implement a Solarize Mass. program in the town.

Objective: Pursue and Promote Potential Alternative Energy Development in Sandisfield.

Sandisfield will pursue changes to its bylaws to promote alternative energy development in the town, including its potential on town-owned lands.

ACTION 1: AMEND TOWN BYLAWS TO PROMOTE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN TOWN.

ACTION 2: PURSUE DEVELOPMENT OF SOLAR OR WIND ENERGY ON TOWN OWNED LANDS AND BUILDINGS.

Objective: Connect Sandisfield Residents with Programs to Promote Small Scale Energy Production and Energy Efficiency.

Sandisfield will work to connect residents to existing energy efficiency programs and investigate the implementation of a Solarize Mass. program in town.

ACTION 1: CONNECT SANDISFIELD RESIDENTS WITH ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SAVINGS PROGRAMS, SUCH AS MASS. SAVES.

ACTION 2: ENCOURAGE OR SPONSOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS IN TOWN.

ACTION 3: INVESTIGATE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SOLARIZE MASS PROGRAM IN SANDISFIELD, POSSIBLY IN COMBINATION WITH SURROUNDING TOWNS.



CHAPTER 5: SERVICES

Sandisfield's vision for services includes reducing and offsetting town expenses, while improving services for seniors and families. The town will also improve communications to town residents to more effectively engage the public as well as its various boards and committees. This chapter provides an overview of the services offered through the town. It also establishes the town's work plan for goals, objectives, and actions to achieve its vision for the services it provides.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Police Department

Sandisfield has a small police force of three officers, and provides law enforcement services to the Town of Sandisfield.

Fire Department / Ambulance Squad

Fire protection and ambulance services are provided by the Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. This organization operates from two fire stations located on Route 8 and Route 57. In 2014, this department responded to a total of 168 calls.

Library / Community Center

Library services are provided by the town. The library has books and other media available to be checked out. The library also provides interlibrary loan services in coordination with other libraries in the region. Free wireless internet and two publicly accessible computers allow residents to access information online. The library also has publically available meeting space, allowing it to function as a valuable community center.

Highway Department

The Sandisfield Highway Department provides road maintenance and snow removal services for the town. The Highway Department has a staff of four, including the Highway Department Supervisor. One or two individuals are usually hired temporarily during the winter months to help with road plowing needs and



Educational services are provided through the shared Farmington River School District.

Photograph provided by the Sandisfield Times.

SERVICES AT A GLANCE

Select Board

The Sandisfield Select Board is comprised of three members. The Sandisfield Select Board is the special permit granting authority in the town and reviews all special permit applications.

Future Planning/Strategic planning Committee

This committee was formed to address the future needs of Sandisfield with the intent to "develop and assist with the implementation of a long range plan to improve [the town's] infrastructure, local economy and financial health."

Farmington River School

Sandisfield is part of a combined school district with the nearby Town of Otis and the towns share a single school facility in Otis known as the Farmington River School.

Additional discussion of services may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary



Figure 5.1—The Sandisfield Town Hall Annex. This building houses the town’s main administrative services. The building was formerly used as the town’s School before Sandisfield formed a combined school district with the nearby Town of Otis.

other snow removal. The town participates in the regional group purchasing program, which allows towns to pool their resources to get cheaper materials.

Transfer Station

Sandisfield provides for waste removal services through its transfer station located on Route 57. Household trash and recyclable materials can be brought here for transfer to a regional landfill.

Planning Board

The Sandisfield Planning Board provides site plan review services. The Planning Board reviews and decides on certain types of permits/approvals and administers the subdivision of land within the town.

Finance Committee

All towns with a total valuation of \$1,000,000 or more are required to have a finance or advisory committee. The Finance Committee is tasked with making sure that the town has a balanced and fiscally sound budget.

Council on Aging

The Sandisfield Council on Aging (COA) provides social and support services to elders, families and caregivers in the town. The COA organizes a weekly potluck lunch, held on Wednesdays in basement of the Town Hall Annex, in addition to other programs it offers to seniors. The COA also helps to organize and connect seniors with regional transportation services.

Conservation Commission

The Sandisfield Conservation Commission provides site plan review and administers the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act (WPA) as well as the Rivers Protection Act (RPA).

Recreation Committee

The Sandisfield Recreation Committee organizes recreation events in town, including the annual Easter egg hunt and Memorial Day Parade (Sandisfield Town Report, 2013).

Strategic Planning Committee

This committee was formed to address the future



needs of Sandisfield with the intent to “develop and assist with the implementation of a long range plan to improve [the town’s] infrastructure, local economy and financial health.”

Cemetery Committee

The Sandisfield Cemetery Committee was appointed due to concerns about the poor conditions of Sandisfield’s five cemeteries. The Cemetery Committee established a set of rules for use of town cemeteries in 2015. Additionally, the committee has been organizing volunteers to help cleanup and restoration of the town’s cemeteries.

Historical Commission

The Sandisfield Historical Commission’s purpose is to “encourage and plan for the preservation and protection of the communities historical and archaeological assets”. The Historical Commission published a history of the town in recent years and has been working to update the town’s inventory of historic buildings in addition to other projects promoting the town’s historic assets.

Select Board

The Sandisfield Select Board is comprised of three members. The Sandisfield Select Board is the special permit granting authority in the town and reviews all special permit applications.

Farmington River School

Sandisfield is part of a combined school district with the nearby Town of Otis and the towns share a single school facility in Otis known as the Farmington River School. The Farmington River School provides educational services from pre-kindergarten until sixth grade. For more information about school enrollment figures, see Chapter 2—Population and Demographics, and the accompanying section of this appendix.

Public Survey Results

Over 50% of survey respondents supported keeping the following services the same: Fire Protection, Sanitation Inspection, Building Permitting, Rescue Squad, Site plan review by the Planning Board, Police Protection, Transfer Station, and permitting by the

Conservation Commission. No services received over 50% support for expansion. However, town communications and the town website both had 48% support for expansion, while Library services received 43% support for expansion.

Fiscal Conditions

Tax Rate

For fiscal year (FY) 2015, the tax rate in Sandisfield was \$13.00 per \$1,000 of assessed value. This rate has increased by 57% since its value in 2008 (\$8.25) (see Table 4.1 in Appendix C). In 2015, the average single family tax bill was \$3,192.

Revenue by Source

Sandisfield collects revenue through four major sources—its tax levy, state aid, local receipts and “other” sources. Local receipts are derived from motor vehicle excise payments, building permits and other licenses, as well as “dump stickers” that allow access to the town transfer station. “Other” sources of revenue include free cash or stabilization funds. In FY 2015, Sandisfield’s total revenue was over \$3.28 million dollars. This figure represents a 73% increase in revenue since 2005 levels (\$1.82 million).

In FY 2015, Sandisfield’s tax levy was just over \$2.8 million dollars and constituted 85.62% of the town’s total revenue for that year. The town’s tax levy has increased over the last ten years, up nearly \$1.3 million since 2005 levels. However, as a percentage of overall revenue it has only increased by 3% since 2005 levels (82.66%). State aid has increased from just over \$56,000 in 2005 to over \$152,000 in 2015. As a percentage of total revenue, state aid has increased from 2.98% to 4.65%.

Expenditures

Based on data from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, town expenditures for fiscal year (FY) 2013 were greatest for education and public works related costs. In FY 2013, Sandisfield spent just over \$1.3 million dollars for education (see Figure 4.1 in Appendix C). In comparison, in the year 2000, funding for this line item was just over \$644,000, meaning that funding for the local school has roughly doubled (see Figure 4.2 in Appendix C).

Moreover, expenditures related to public works (road maintenance, snow and ice removal, etc.) in FY 2013 were nearly \$859,000 dollars. In comparison, in the year 2000, the expenses of the road department were around \$500,000. This amounts to an increase in spending of over 70% (see Figure 4.2 in Appendix C).

Financial Flexibility and Available Resources

Data from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue provides a measure of a municipality's "financial flexibility" through several indicators. These indicators can provide an estimate of the availability of funds that could allow a community to respond to unforeseen but necessary expenditures or to invest in other projects. The town's financial flexibility can be measured through its free cash, stabilization funds, and excess tax levy capacity. The town's excess levy capacity is low, just over \$500. However, in FY 2015, the town had over \$600,000 in free cash, and \$900,000 in stabilization funds. Together, these funds constitute the town's available resources, which total over \$1.5 million, or around 47% of the town's budget in FY 2015 (\$3.28 million).

KEY SERVICES ISSUES

Reducing Town Expenses

Sandisfield will explore a range of options to reduce its expenses, from regionalization and equipment sharing, to additional grant writing.

Services for Seniors and Families

Sandisfield will work to improve its services for its elderly population, as well as families in the town.

Town Communications to the Public

Sandisfield will develop and implement services to better inform and engage its residents.

SERVICES GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Provide Efficient and Fiscally

Responsible Services.

The Town of Sandisfield will continue to provide efficient and fiscally responsible services to all its residents. The town will seek new opportunities to streamline costs, increase sources of external funding. Moreover the town will implement new strategies to enhance services for children, families, and its senior citizens.

Objective: Streamline Costs While Maintaining or Enhancing Levels of Service.

The Town will continue efforts to regionalize and reduce costs through additional planning and management of its human resources.

ACTION 1: PURSUE OPTIONS TO REGIONALIZE AND SHARE EQUIPMENT.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP A SHARED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STAFF POSITION WITH SURROUNDING TOWNS AND BRPC.

ACTION 3: WORK WITH SURROUNDING TOWNS TO ADVOCATE FOR STATE FUNDING OR MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY OF ROUTE 57.

ACTION 4: CONTINUE TO USE THE REGIONAL GROUP PURCHASING PROGRAM OR OTHER COST SAVING PROGRAMS.

ACTION 5: CREATE FORMAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR TOWN STAFF.

ACTION 6: ESTABLISH A SYSTEM FOR EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION.

ACTION 7: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A MULTI-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) THAT INCLUDES ALL TOWN DEPARTMENTS, INTEGRATES ONGOING AND PROPOSED WORK, IS OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENT, AND IS APPROVED YEARLY AT TOWN MEETING.

Objective: Offset Town Costs through External Funding Sources.

The Town will explore options to increase external sources of funding, such as pursuit of grant opportunities and potential sale of town assets.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO RESEARCH AND APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING FROM STATE AND PRIVATE SOURCES TO ADDRESS ROAD MAINTENANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER NEEDS.



ACTION 2: CONTINUE TO REVIEW TOWN FEES AND LICENSES.

ACTION 3: DEVELOP A PLAN TO GENERATE REVENUE FROM THE SALE OF TOWN OWNED PROPERTY OR EQUIPMENT.

ACTION 4: SPONSOR OR PROMOTE REVENUE GENERATING EVENTS IN TOWN.

Objective: Pursue Opportunities to Reduce Town Education Costs, while Maintaining High Levels of Service.

Education expenses are the largest component of town spending. The town will pursue and implement strategies to reduce its education costs.

ACTION 1: PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL EFFORTS TO EXAMINE THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BERKSHIRE COUNTY.

ACTION 2: PURSUE COST REDUCTION MEASURES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM WHERE POSSIBLE, SUCH AS SHARED SERVICES, COOPERATIVE PURCHASING, AND SPECIALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

Objective: Enhance Services for Sandisfield's Senior Citizens.

Sandisfield will implement strategies to improve services for its senior citizens.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO APPLY FOR GRANTS TO FUND PROGRAMS FOR SANDISFIELD'S SENIOR CITIZENS.

ACTION 2: RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS FOR COUNCIL ON AGING PROGRAMS.

ACTION 3: EXPAND THE RANGE OF COUNCIL ON AGING PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR SENIORS.

ACTION 4: EXPLORE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL PROGRAMS OR SHARED RESOURCES FOR SENIORS WITH SURROUNDING TOWNS.

ACTION 5: INVESTIGATE DEVELOPMENT OF A "MEALS ON WHEELS" PROGRAM FOR SENIORS.

ACTION 6: ESTABLISH A WELLNESS CHECK CALL SYSTEM FOR SENIORS.

ACTION 7: DEVELOP A POOL OF VOLUNTEERS TO HELP THOSE IN NEED OF SERVICES, SUCH AS THE HOME BOUND.

ACTION 8: CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL EFFORTS, SUCH AS THE BERKSHIRES AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE.

Objective: Enhance Services for Sandisfield's Families.

Sandisfield will implement strategies to improve services for its children and families.

ACTION 1: ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, AND PROMOTE THOSE EXISTING IN TOWN.

ACTION 2: EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS OUTDOOR RECREATION.

ACTION 3: EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES TO ACCESS REGIONAL ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

Goal 2: Better Inform and Engage Residents, Boards, and Committees.

Sandisfield will better serve and inform its residents and the community through efforts to increase public participation, civic engagement, and its overall transparency.

ACTION 1: ENSURE TIMELY POSTING OF AGENDAS, MINUTES, AND PROCUREMENT ON THE TOWN WEBSITE TO AVOID MEETING CONFLICTS, AND IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH RESIDENTS.

ACTION 2: EXPLORE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ELECTRONIC DISPLAY TO POST PUBLIC MEETINGS.

ACTION 3: ENCOURAGE ELECTED OFFICIALS TO HOLD OFFICE HOURS IN SANDISFIELD TO MORE EFFECTIVELY ADVOCATE FOR THE TOWN'S NEEDS.

ACTION 4: RECRUIT ADDITIONAL MEMBERS TO SERVE ON TOWN BOARDS AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

ACTION 5: REVIEW COMPENSATION FOR VOLUNTEER BOARDS.

ACTION 6: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE NEW RESIDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN TOWN GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC LIFE, SUCH AS WELCOME BASKETS, EVENT PROMOTION, ETC.



CHAPTER 6: HOUSING

The Town of Sandisfield's vision for housing includes providing housing for all ages and income levels in the town. This chapter reviews existing conditions related to housing in the town and lists the goals, objectives and actions for the town to take to achieve its vision for housing in Sandisfield.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Existing Conditions

As of the 2010 Census, there were 671 housing units in Sandisfield. Housing units listed for “seasonal, recreational, or occasional use” accounted for 40.2% or 270 total units. Year round housing units totaled 56.1% of the town’s total housing stock, or 377 units. The remaining 3.6% of housing units, or 24 units, were listed as vacant. This category includes unoccupied homes for sale or rent, sold or rented units pending occupation, and other vacancies such as “abandoned” or unused homes. Rental units comprised 6.2% of all housing stock, or 42 total units, and contains units for year-round and seasonal rental.

Housing Ownership and Occupancy

The town has a predominantly single-family housing stock with most being owner occupied. Between 2000 and 2010, there was a 3.7% increase in the number of housing units in Sandisfield, with 24 units of housing added during the “aughts” decade. See Table 5.2 in Appendix C for Housing Occupancy in Sandisfield 2000-2010. The number of seasonal housing units decreased by 5.5%, or 26 units, over this decade. The number of year round housing units increased by 5.6%, or 50 units over this decade. The number of vacant housing units remained the same between 2000 and 2010. The number of rental units decreased from 45 to 42 units.

None of the town’s housing units are listed by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) as Chapter 40B qualifying units (DHCD, 2014). “Chapter 40B Units” are units considered affordable by low- and moderate-income households with long-term restrictions that ensure that it will continue to be affordable.



New Boston village is one of the town’s several historic population centers. Photograph by BRPC.

HOUSING AT A GLANCE

Existing Conditions

Roughly 40% of housing in Sandisfield is used seasonally, while 56% is used year-round. Another 3.6% of housing units are considered vacant.

Housing Occupancy

The number of seasonal housing units in the town decreased by 5.5% between 2000 and 2010. Conversely, the number of year-round housing units increased by 5.6% over the same decade.

Home Value Trends

The median sales price of a home in Sandisfield increased by over \$80,000 between 2000 and 2014.

Additional discussion of housing may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Home Value Trends

As of the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, 64% of homes, or 218 total homes, in Sandisfield had a value of between \$200,000 and \$499,999. An estimated 12, or 3.6% of all homes had a value of \$1,000,000 or more.

In the year 2000, the median sales price of a single family home in Sandisfield was just over \$196,000. In the year 2014, the median sales price of a single family home was over \$278,000. In comparison, the median sales price for a single family home in Berkshire County was \$184,500 in 2014, or \$94,000 less than the sales price of a home in Sandisfield, Ma.

Home Sales Vs. New Construction

The number of sales of single family homes in Sandisfield fell from a high in 2001 of 27 homes, to a low in 2010 of 7 homes. The number of sales has increased from this low point to 17 home sales per year during 2012 and 2013. Similarly, the number of building permits issued for single family homes peaked in 2005 at 16 homes. This number decreased until 2012, where no building permits for single family homes were issued during that year. In 2013, five building permits were issued for single family homes.

Public Survey Results

Over 50% of respondents were in favor of encouraging development in Sandisfield, when responses were examined in total. However, year-round residents were overall more in support of encouraging development in Sandisfield than seasonal residents. Year-round residents said “encourage development” at a rate of 68%. Seasonal residents supported that statement at a rate of 41%. Seasonal residents were more likely to choose answers of “keep the same” or “unsure” than year-round residents.

Housing options for seniors, including single story or assisted living, Adaptive re-use, and options for young families were supported by over 50% of respondents. Multi-Family/multi-unit housing such as condominiums were listed as unimportant by 62.24%, or 61, respondents. Apartments and rental units were listed as unimportant by 51.06%, or 48, respondents.

Housing types that respondents were most “neutral” about include single-family homes, high-end homes, and second homes

KEY HOUSING ISSUES

Aging

Sandisfield’s population is increasingly older. Regional studies conducted by BRPC show that the vast majority of older residents want to reside in their own homes and communities as they age. The town will work to support the aging in place of its older residents, as well as investigating long term dedicated housing for seniors.

HOUSING GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Sandisfield Will Supply Housing to Meet the Needs of All Ages and Incomes.

The Town of Sandisfield will work to provide housing in town that meets the needs of all ages and incomes.

Objective: Develop Local Capacity to Address Housing Needs.

The Town of Sandisfield will work to develop its capacity to address its housing needs by establishing a dedicated housing organization and partnering with regional housing organizations.

ACTION 1: ESTABLISH A LOCAL HOUSING ORGANIZATION SUCH AS A TOWN COMMITTEE, HOUSING PARTNERSHIP, OR HOUSING TRUST.

ACTION 2: WORK WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS DHCD, BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST, CONSTRUCT INC. AND HABITAT FOR HUMANITY TO ADDRESS LOCAL NEEDS.

ACTION 3: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN.

Objective: Participate in and Promote Housing Rehabilitation Programs and Incentives.

The Town of Sandisfield will work to improve its existing housing stock and support the needs of its residents through participation in housing



rehabilitation programs. The town will also work to connect its older residents and veterans with programs that will provide financial assistance toward increasing the accessibility of homes for older residents.

ACTION 1: WORK WITH APPROPRIATE AGENCIES AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES TO APPLY FOR HOUSING REHABILITATION FUNDING, SUCH AS THROUGH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS.

ACTION 2: PURSUE NEW REHABILITATION FUNDS, WHICH MAY BECOME AVAILABLE.

ACTION 3: PROMOTE AND EDUCATE ABOUT PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE ASSISTANCE IN IMPROVING HOME ACCESSIBILITY FOR OLDER RESIDENTS, SUCH AS THROUGH, THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OR THE USDA SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING REPAIR PROGRAM.

Objective: Investigate Funding Sources and Bylaw Changes to Address Housing Needs.

The town will work to address funding and policy barriers in town that hinder the development of affordable housing.

ACTION 1: INVESTIGATE DEDICATED FUNDING SOURCES FOR HOUSING, SUCH AS THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT IN SANDISFIELD.

ACTION 2: INVESTIGATE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACCESSORY, OR IN-LAW APARTMENT BYLAW.

ACTION 3: INVESTIGATE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPEN SPACE RESIDENTIAL DESIGN BYLAW OR NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION ZONING IN TOWN.

Objective: Create a Long-Term Plan for Senior Housing in Sandisfield.

The town will work to address senior housing through strategic long term planning. The town will develop and implement a housing needs assessment and housing production plan. Moreover, the town will work to explore and implement successful and non-traditional models to support its senior citizens and allow them to age in place.

ACTION 1: EXPLORE SUCCESSFUL REGIONAL MODELS FOR SENIOR HOUSING OR ASSISTED LIVING IN SANDISFIELD AND ENCOURAGE THEIR DEVELOPMENT IN TOWN.

ACTION 2: EXPLORE OTHER OPTIONS TO SUPPORT SENIOR HOUSING AND AGING IN PLACE IN SANDISFIELD, SUCH AS COHOUSING OR HOME-SHARING MODELS.

ACTION 3: INTEGRATE RESEARCH INTO THE FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN.

ACTION 4: WORK TO IMPLEMENT FUTURE SENIOR HOUSING OVER TIME.

Objective: Encourage the Rehabilitation of Historic Homes in Sandisfield.

The town will work to encourage and incentivize the rehabilitation of historic homes in Sandisfield by informing and assisting its residents and second homeowners in maintaining and restoring their historic properties.

ACTION 1: SPONSOR PROGRAMS AND WORKSHOPS FOCUSED ON HISTORIC HOME REHABILITATION AND MAINTENANCE IN TOWN.

ACTION 2: PROMOTE PARTICIPATION IN THE MASS. HISTORICAL COMMISSION HISTORIC REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT PROGRAM.

ACTION 3: DEVELOP LOCAL INCENTIVES AND PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE HOMEOWNERS TO RESTORE THEIR HISTORIC HOMES.



CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORTATION

Sandisfield's vision for transportation includes addressing its roadways in a comprehensive and forward looking manner, as well as improved non-motorized transportation options, and the establishment of a wayfinding system. For a rural town like Sandisfield, transportation is an important issue and a major town expense. As the largest town by area in the Berkshires, Sandisfield has nearly 100 miles of roadway, most of which is the responsibility of the town to maintain. This chapter reviews town services and lists the goals, objectives and actions for the town to take to achieve its vision for transportation in Sandisfield.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Regional Roadways

Two major regional roadways serve Sandisfield, Route 57 and Route 8. Route 8 runs north to south through Massachusetts, from the border with Clarksburg, VT to Sandisfield and the Connecticut state line. Route 57 is the major east-west route. Route 57 begins in the nearby Town of Monterey and travels east to Agawam. Route 57, while a numbered state route, is the maintenance responsibility of the town.

Local Roadways

Sandisfield is a rural community, and as such, the predominant form of transportation is by automobiles or trucks. Town Hill Road and New Hartford Road are the town's major local north south roadways. Both of these roads intersect with Route 57 and are paved. Local roadways are primarily maintained by the Town of Sandisfield. However, there are some privately owned and maintained roadways in town, particularly in the Otis Woodlands subdivision, a portion of which is located in Sandisfield.

Elderly and Disabled Transportation

Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation (SBETC) and Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) Paratransit provide transportation services for elderly and disabled residents in Sandisfield. The Council on Aging has also received state grant



Route 57 in Sandisfield is the town's major east-west roadway. Photograph by BRPC.

TRANSPORTATION AT A GLANCE

Road Jurisdiction

The Town of Sandisfield has jurisdiction over roughly 82% of the 98 miles of roadway in town. State roadways, such as Route 8, comprise another 11%, with 5% having private jurisdiction. Finally, 1.8% of roadway miles have unresolved jurisdiction.

Public Transportation

The Town of Sandisfield is not served by regional public transportation, however, elderly and disabled transportation services are provided by BRTA, SBETC, and the town.

Transportation and the Environment

Transportation and roadways are potential sources of non-point source pollution and moreover impacts wildlife movement.

Additional discussion of transportation may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary



Figure 7.1—The Clam River Bridge on Route 57. The town was awarded a MassWorks infrastructure grant to help fund the repair or replacement of this bridge in 2015. Photograph credit Wikipedia user ToddC4176. Image licensed under CC by 3.0.

funding to reimburse volunteers for their time to provide transportation services one day a week. The advantage of this transportation service is that it can cross state lines into nearby Connecticut, whereas BRTA and SBETC cannot (Sandisfield Council on Aging Personal Communication 2015).

Road Jurisdiction

For roadways by jurisdiction, please see Map C—Road Jurisdiction

For a breakdown of road miles by jurisdiction, please see Table 6.2—Road Jurisdiction in Sandisfield, MA in Appendix C.

State

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for around 10.85 miles of roadway in Sandisfield or around 11% of all roads in Town. This includes all of Route 8 and roadways found within Sandisfield State Forest.

Town

The Town of Sandisfield is responsible for 80.80 miles of road, or around 82% of all roads.

Private Roads

Privately maintained roads comprise 4.72 miles of roadway in Sandisfield, or around 4.8% of all roads in town. The majority of these roadways are found in the portion of the Otis Woodlands private community located within Sandisfield.

Unresolved Jurisdiction

Several roads have unresolved jurisdiction in town. This includes Webb Road, near Upper Spectacle Pond, Old Beech Road, near Cold Spring and South Beech Plain Road, and a portion of road east of Beech Hill Road in the south of town. These may be public or private roads, but are listed as having unresolved jurisdiction in the MassDOT's Road Inventory File (RIF). More research is required to determine the jurisdiction of these roadways. However, all appear to have low levels of maintenance, if any maintenance at all.

Bridges

For a list of bridges in Sandisfield, please refer to Table 6.2 in Appendix C.

According to available state data, there are 20 bridges within Sandisfield. Of these 20 bridges, five are maintained by the state, and the remaining 15 are maintained by the town. Sandisfield recently received



a MassWorks infrastructure grant for nearly \$1 million dollars to replace a deteriorating bridge along Route 57 that crosses over the Clam River, known locally as the “Rugg” or “Clam River” Bridge (see Figure 7.1). An article in the Berkshire Eagle noted that “the bridge currently has only a 12-ton weight limit, which forces DPW trucks, school buses, emergency vehicles and commercial vehicles to make a 15.4-mile detour to get into town” (Gentile 2015).

Transportation and Roadway Funding

Federal Funding

In Massachusetts, towns may nominate potential road repairs and improvements to their Regional Planning Agencies as part of the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This program helps to allocate federal funding towards eligible roadway projects. In Sandisfield, the only locally maintained roadway eligible for federal funding is Route 57.

State Funding

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides additional roadway funding through its Chapter 90 reimbursement program. This program provides funding for other roadway projects not eligible for the TIP program and is allocated based on population, employment level, and miles of roadway within town. However, as a reimbursement program, the town must fully fund any roadway project before it can be compensated by state funding. Yearly Chapter 90 funding for Sandisfield is around \$340,000 (BRPC Sandisfield Road Condition Report, 2013).

Town Funding

The 2013 BRPC Road Condition report notes that Sandisfield spends around \$30,000 on gravel and another \$15,000 on asphalt to repair and pave roads.

Road Maintenance and Upcoming Roadway Work

Roadway Needs

Priority Roads to be Repaired:

The following summarizes priority roadway needs for the town and was provided by Stephan Harasyko, Superintendent of the Sandisfield Highway Department (Personal Communication 2015).

Town Hill Road—reclamation of approximately 2 miles of roadway.

Hubbard Road and West Street—reclamation of approximately 6 miles of roadway in total.

Route 57—reclamation of the length of the roadway, contingent upon available funding.

Other Roadway Projects Recommended in the 2013 BRPC Road Condition Report:

Rehabilitation of Rooster Hill Bridge

Widening and drainage improvements for South Sandisfield Road

Chip seal treatment of Route 183 with some drainage repairs

Widening and improving portions of Beech Plain Road

Drainage repairs on Route 57

Replacement of approximately 10 culverts on Town Hill Road

Chip seal treatment of Cold Spring Road with drainage improvements

Widening and drainage for Abbey Road

Roadway Design, Construction, and Maintenance Standards

The town may wish to review and adopt the following publications as standards for future roadway projects:

Road Construction and Overall Design Guidance:
MassDOT Project Development and Design Guide. 2006

Traffic Engineering:
Institute of Traffic Engineers, Traffic Engineering Handbook, 7th Edition. 2016.

Asset Management:
American Association of State Highway and Transportation Organizations (AASHTO).

Transportation Asset Management Guide: A Focus on Implementation, 1st Edition. 2011.

Unpaved Roadway Construction and Maintenance: *US Department of Transportation. Federal Highway Administration. Gravel Roads Construction and Maintenance Guide. 2015.*

Best Practices to address water quality through unpaved road management: *Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Unpaved Roads BMP Manual: A Guide to Improve Water Quality While Addressing Common Problems. 2001.*

2013 BRPC Road Condition Report and Potential Road Jurisdiction Issues

The status of roads has important ramifications for towns. Once a road is duly laid out as a public way, it remains so until it is legally discontinued, even if the road has not been used or maintained for many years. Additionally, roads influence patterns of development, as Approval Not Required (ANR) subdivision is generally not allowed on private roads or Statutory Private Ways. Subdivision on these types of roadways must follow the full subdivision review process. However, on town roadways, even long unused ones, ANR subdivision is allowed. Additionally, the town is liable for harm to people using its roadways, and discontinuance and other processes can eliminate that liability.

In 2013, Sandisfield contacted BRPC to assess the condition of all town roads and provide a set of recommendations for maintenance. In addition to a number of proposed roadway projects, the report also provided several general recommendations for road management within Sandisfield, including working to clearly identify and delineate maintenance responsibilities for Sandisfield's roadways.

BRPC has been involved with several status of roads projects with communities in Berkshire County, including nearby Otis. Status of Road projects research the legal status of all town roadways to determine ownership and maintenance responsibility. Towns can then utilize this information to alter the road status if they wish. It can also assist a town in developing an official map

Options for Altering Legal Road Statuses

BRPC generally recommends that towns pursue one of three possible actions including road discontinuance, discontinuance of maintenance and the creation of statutory private ways. Many of these actions must be taken up by the Select Board and some may need to be approved by Town Meeting vote. Typically the actions requiring approval at Town Meeting can be laid out in a series of articles in the Town Warrant. Towns can also create an "official map". This map, once adopted, serves as a legal document regarding road ownership, maintenance, frontage, and public access.

Discontinuance of Maintenance

Discontinuance of maintenance is authorized under M.G.L. Chap. 82, Sec. 32A and results in the cessation of the Town's responsibility for maintenance and liability for use of the road (so long as the road is adequately posted as not maintained), but the road remains a public way with a public right of passage, and with the potential for strip and ANR development.

Statutory Private Ways

Statutory Private Ways are unique to Massachusetts. They are actually public roads, with public right of passage, but no responsibility by the Town for maintenance. Maintenance is provided by the abutters.

Discontinuance

Discontinuance of a road must be approved by Town Meeting vote under M.G.L. Chap. 82, Sec. 21 completely ends the public right of passage along a road or way: the Town ends all legal responsibility for the road's maintenance and its liability for use.

Official Map

An official map shows the accepted names, locations, distances, maintenance and liability responsibilities, and legal status or ownership of all roads within a town. This is a formal legal document, approved by majority Town Meeting vote and signed by the planning board. Generally, development of an official map is reinforced by other votes altering road status, such as those described previously in this section.

Walking Loops

Several Berkshire towns have identified "walking

loops” in town centers and on quiet rural roads. These walking loops help to encourage pedestrian use and exercise, especially for elderly residents. Walking loops should be well marked and located on relatively flat terrain to enable use by residents of any age.

Within Sandisfield, a walking loop could be located on a flatter section of a quiet roadway. A conversation with Linda Riiska of the Sandisfield Council on Aging revealed that the town organizes a walking program for seniors along River Road (Personal Communication 2015). The town might consider establishing a walking loop on this roadway, and other popular walking areas in town.

Transportation and the Environment

Unpaved Roads and Non-Point Source Pollution

Unpaved or dirt roads are a major source of non-point source pollution such as sediment, or soil particles that are suspended in water. Sediment from unpaved roads is one of the main contributors to water quality problems in the Farmington River Watershed in Massachusetts. (BRPC 1997) as well as a national water quality issue. Non-point source pollution is distinguished from point source pollution, which refers to pollution that has a particular entry site such as a factory's smokestack or pipe. With the decline of point source pollution problems due to the Clean Water Act of 1972, nonpoint source pollution has become a growing concern. Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution, unlike pollution from sewage treatment plants and industrial discharge pipes, comes from many diffuse sources.

BRPC has been involved with several studies of the Farmington River Watershed, including the development of a watershed wide action plan in 1997 to address issues of non-point source pollution, the creation of a system of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for unpaved roads in 2001, and community level assessments of possible improvements to address sediment pollution from unpaved roads in 2004. This last report included a 5-year action plan for the Town of Sandisfield with recommendations for yearly ditch inspection and preventative maintenance, dust control, and potential road rehabilitation.



Figure 7.2—Town of New Marlborough wayfinding system. A similar wayfinding system installed in Sandisfield could help to improve transportation throughout the town as well as promote local business and other town assets and destinations.

Climate Change Adaptation

In Massachusetts and New England, climate change is expected to increase the frequency of storms and the amount of precipitation. Since 1970, annual temperatures in New England have increased by 2° Fahrenheit (F) and winter temperatures have increased 4°F. Regionally, most winter precipitation now falls as rain, not snow (U.S. EPA, 2015). Existing roadway infrastructure, such as culverts and bridges, may be undersized and unable to accommodate the greater amount of water anticipated with climate

change, leading to a higher likelihood of damage to the roadway requiring costly replacement. Simple climate adaptation measures could take the form of increasing the size of culverts and bridges during replacement. Additionally, the amount of gravel or stone armoring around these pieces of infrastructure could be increased to help reduce scour and erosion caused by larger and more frequent storms. Towns should consider their road infrastructure as one of the key ways to adapt to future climate change.

Public Survey Results

Roads were listed by 27 (or 23% of) survey respondents as one of the aspects of life in Sandisfield that they liked the least.

Survey respondents listed Route 57, Town Hill Road, and New Hartford Road as roads in town that were most important to improve. Significant work on New Hartford Road was recently completed by the town in 2015. Work on Route 57 and Town Hill Road has been listed as priority roadwork for town in coming years.

Overall, 61% of survey respondents supported the possible creation of a public transportation route through Sandisfield. Shopping or errands, access to other regional transportation and attending cultural events were listed as the top reasons for possibly using this service.

Survey responses were inconclusive about possible expansion for elderly transportation services through BRTA paratransit or Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation. Responses were divided between “keep the same”, “expand” and “don’t know” with no clear support for any choice.

KEY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

General Roadway Needs

There are nearly 100 miles of roadway in Sandisfield, with most of these miles maintained by the town. The town will work to address a range of roadway needs from advocating for state maintenance and funding of Route 57, to investigating road jurisdiction, to additional future planning for extreme weather and general bridge maintenance.

Non-Motorized Transportation and Complete Streets

Sandisfield will address non-motorized transportation, such as walking and bicycling in town. This will help to provide healthy and low cost transportation options for year-round residents, while making the town a destination for cyclists and others who visit the town.

Wayfinding and Signage

Sandisfield will implement a town wayfinding system. While aiding transportation ease throughout the town, this system could also help to provide a measure of economic development by better promoting town businesses and assets. See Figure 7.2 for an example of a wayfinding system in the Town of New Marlborough.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Provide a Complete and Well Maintained System of Roads

The Town of Sandisfield will work to provide a complete system of roadways that are safe and well-maintained.

Objective: Increase the Town’s Utilization of Chapter 90 Funding.

The Town of Sandisfield will develop and implement a multi-year plan for roadway spending that enables the town to fully utilize the state funding allocated for it yearly. Moreover, the plan will account for potential preventative maintenance costs that will help to delay more costly road repair and replacements.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A MULTI-YEAR ROADWAY SPENDING PLAN. INTEGRATE THIS PLAN WITH LARGER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING.

Objective: Address Town Needs for Route 57.

Route 57 is one of the few state routes maintained by the municipalities through which it passes. Additionally, it is a major east-west roadway, meaning that ongoing maintenance of the road could be a



major expense. The town will ensure that road maintenance needs for Route 57 are included in the regional TIP so that they have the potential for federal financing. Additionally, the town will continue efforts to advocate with surrounding towns for additional state funding or maintenance responsibility of Route 57.

ACTION 1: WORK WITH SURROUNDING TOWNS TO ADVOCATE FOR STATE FUNDING OR MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY OF ROUTE 57.

ACTION 2: CONTINUE TO PLACE ROUTE 57 ROAD MAINTENANCE NEEDS ON THE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) UNTIL FUNDED.

Objective: Work to Resolve Road Jurisdiction and Maintenance Responsibility Issues.

The town will work to examine the status and maintenance responsibility of roads based on its current maintenance demands and the findings of a comprehensive status of roads report.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A STATUS OF ROADS REPORT THAT EVALUATES THE JURISDICTION OF ALL TOWN ROADWAYS.

ACTION 2: WORK WITH THE TOWN HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT, SELECT BOARD, AND PLANNING BOARD TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TOWN ROADS BASED ON REPORT FINDINGS AND CURRENT MAINTENANCE DEMANDS.

ACTION 3: IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS.

Objective: Plan for and Address Future Roadway Needs.

The town will ensure that future roadway work accounts for the impacts of extreme weather events. These efforts will help to reduce long term costs and mitigate future risks. The town will also engage in planning to determine its practices for road maintenance. Finally, the town will ensure that future road construction and other transportation projects meet the latest standards, best practices, and recommendations.

ACTION 1: AS EXISTING CULVERTS AND BRIDGES NEED REPLACEMENT, ENSURE THAT REPLACEMENT COMPONENTS ARE ADEQUATE TO ACCOMMODATE EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS.

ACTION 2: CONDUCT A COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF TOWN ROADWAYS TO DETERMINE IF THERE IS BENEFIT TO PAVING SOME UNPAVED ROADWAYS, OR WHICH MAINTENANCE PRACTICES (I.E. CRACK SEAL VS. CHIP SEAL) COULD HELP TO REDUCE LONG TERM COSTS.

ACTION 3: ANALYZE AND IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS POTENTIAL TRAFFIC SAFETY RISK AREAS IN TOWN, SUCH AS DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS, AREAS WITH FREQUENT TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS, ETC.

ACTION 4: ENSURE THAT ALL FUTURE ROADWAY PROJECTS, FROM NEW CONSTRUCTION TO ONGOING MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS, MEET APPLICABLE STANDARDS, BEST PRACTICES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

ACTION 5: REVIEW AND IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROJECTS IDENTIFIED IN THE 2013 BRPC ROAD CONDITION REPORT.

Objective: Plan for and Address Future Bridge Needs.

Sandisfield's 15 bridges are critical pieces of roadway infrastructure that can have major consequences if not addressed. The town will work to address its bridge needs and ensure preventative maintenance is performed. These efforts will reduce town costs and ensure the long term sustainability of its bridges.

ACTION 1: MONITOR ALL MASSDOT BRIDGE INSPECTIONS TO IDENTIFY PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE NEEDS FOR BRIDGES.

ACTION 2: INTEGRATE BRIDGE NEEDS INTO LARGER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING.

ACTION 3: ENSURE PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE IS PERFORMED ON TOWN BRIDGES, AND THAT LONG TERM REPAIR AND RECONSTRUCTION NEEDS ARE ADDRESSED.

Goal 2: Improve Public and Non-Motorized Transportation in Sandisfield.

Objective: Adopt a Long-Term Complete Streets Approach to Future Roadway Projects.

The Town of Sandisfield will adopt a Complete Streets approach to its roads, and will work to integrate accommodations for pedestrians, cyclists, and other users into future roadway projects. This approach will benefit residents and visitors and will allow the town to access additional transportation funding, such as the

newly developed MassDOT Complete Streets funding program.

ACTION 1: HAVE A MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVE ATTEND A COMPLETE STREETS TRAINING SESSION TO ALLOW THE TOWN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MASSDOT COMPLETE STREETS FUNDING PROGRAM

ACTION 2: ADOPT A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY, SUCH AS A BY-LAW OR ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY. VET THIS POLICY THROUGH AT LEAST ONE PUBLIC MEETING.

ACTION 3: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A COMPLETE STREETS PRIORITIZATION PLAN FOR THE TOWN.

ACTION 4: SEND PROPOSED PROJECTS TO MASSDOT FOR APPROVAL.

Objective: More Effectively Accommodate Bicyclists, Pedestrians, and Alternative Transportation on Sandisfield's Roadways in the Short Term.

The Town will work to implement projects to improve the bicycling and pedestrian environment in town, improve walkability in town, and make the town a destination for recreational cyclists and others. The town will also work to develop alternative transportation improvements through short term parking to encourage carpooling and support travel to existing recreation areas.

ACTION 1: COORDINATE WITH MASSDOT ON GUIDANCE FOR BICYCLE ACCOMMODATIONS ALONG TOWN-OWNED ROADWAYS, PARTICULARLY NEWLY PAVED ROADS SUCH AS TOWN HILL AND NEW HARTFORD ROAD.

ACTION 2: EXPLORE DEVELOPMENT OF PEDESTRIAN ACCOMMODATIONS ON ROADS FREQUENTED BY PEDESTRIANS.

ACTION 3: WHERE APPROPRIATE, INSTALL BICYCLE WARNING SIGNAGE, BICYCLE LANES, OR SHARED LANE MARKINGS ON TOWN ROADWAYS.

ACTION 4: WHERE APPROPRIATE, INSTALL PEDESTRIAN WARNING SIGNAGE ON TOWN ROADWAYS.

ACTION 5: ENSURE BICYCLE RACKS ARE INCLUDED AT MAJOR TOWN FACILITIES.

ACTION 6: COORDINATE WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE STATE TO ENSURE THAT BICYCLE

RACKS ARE INSTALLED AT MAJOR TOWN DESTINATIONS AND STATE OWNED FACILITIES.

ACTION 7: IMPLEMENT OPTIONS FOR SHORT TERM PARKING TO FACILITATE CARPOOLING AND PROVIDE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT AND RECREATION AREAS.

ACTION 8: WHEN BRIDGES ARE REPAIRED OR REPLACED, PURSUE OPTIONS FOR WATER RECREATION ACCESS, SUCH AS PARKING FOR FISHING, BOAT LAUNCHES, ETC.

Objective: Create "Walking Loops" on Town Roadways.

The Town will create "walking loops" or marked walking areas on existing roadways. These walking loops will encourage walking in the town. Moreover, the town will integrate this effort with its other wayfinding proposals.

ACTION 1: IDENTIFY LOW TRAFFIC RURAL ROADWAYS THAT ARE FREQUENTED BY WALKERS, SUCH AS RIVER ROAD.

ACTION 2: INSTALL SIGNAGE TO MARK THESE AREAS AS WALKING LOOPS, WITH INFORMATION ON POTENTIAL PARKING, AND LOOP LENGTH. INTEGRATE THIS WITH OTHER WAYFINDING EFFORTS

ACTION 3: PROMOTE THESE WALKING LOOPS THROUGH THE COUNCIL ON AGING AND THE TOWN WEBSITE.

ACTION 4: IF FEASIBLE, CONNECT WALKING LOOPS WITH EXISTING HIKING AND WALKING TRAILS.

Objective: Maintain and Enhance Transportation Services for Seniors.

The Town will continue to explore and implement options to provide transportation for its senior citizens.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO SEEK GRANT FUNDING FOR SENIOR TRANSPORTATION IN TOWN.

ACTION 2: MORE EFFECTIVELY CONNECT TOWN SENIORS WITH EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES THROUGH BRTA AND THE SBETC.

ACTION 3: INVESTIGATE A POSSIBLE APPLICATION TO THE MASSDOT AND BRTA COMMUNITY TRANSIT GRANT PROGRAM, THAT COULD HELP FUND A VEHICLE FOR USE BY THE COUNCIL ON AGING.

Goal 3: Establish a Town Wayfinding System and Improve Local Signage.



The Town will develop a local wayfinding system to improve ease of transportation and promote its assets. See Figure 7.2 for an example wayfinding system in the nearby Town of New Marlborough. Combined with this effort, the town will improve other roadway signage to inform residents and visitors about roads maintained in the winter, roads that may be impassable, dead ends, and other hazards.

ACTION 1: CONDUCT AN INVENTORY OF TOWN DESTINATIONS, ASSETS, RECREATION AMENITIES, HISTORIC BUILDINGS, ETC. FOR POSSIBLE INTEGRATION INTO A WAYFINDING SYSTEM.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING SYSTEM FOR THE TOWN.

ACTION 3: IDENTIFY AREAS IN TOWN WHERE EXISTING ROADWAY SIGNAGE NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, OR WHERE SIGNAGE NEEDS TO BE INSTALLED.

ACTION 4: IMPLEMENT IMPROVEMENTS TO TOWN ROADWAY SIGNAGE.



CHAPTER 8: LAND USE

The town of Sandisfield’s vision for land use includes the establishment of a “Town Center” to create a social hub and center for public life within the town. Additionally, the town will update and modernize its zoning regulations and bylaws to anticipate future uses. The Town of Sandisfield’s major land uses include forest, which covers the vast majority of the town as well as residential land, which far exceeds commercial or industrial land in the town. This chapter reviews the existing conditions related to land use and outlines the goals, objectives and actions the town will take to achieve its vision for land use.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Location and Context

The Town of Sandisfield is approximately 52.97 square miles, or around 33,904 acres in size. Sandisfield is the largest town in Berkshire County by land area and one of the largest towns in the Commonwealth. Sandisfield is one of the least densely populated towns in Berkshire County.

Sandisfield is bordered to the east by the Massachusetts town of Tolland, to the west by New Marlborough, to the north by Otis and Monterey, and to the south by Norfolk and Colebrook, CT.

Villages

For mapped village locations, please refer to Map D—Land Use.

Sandisfield has a dispersed pattern of settlement that historically included several village areas or local “neighborhoods”.

New Boston

The area surrounding the intersection of Route 8 and Route 57.

West New Boston

The area surrounding the intersection of Route 57, Silverbrook Road and South Beech Plain Road.



Sandisfield is a rural town in the southern Berkshires. Photograph by BRPC.

LAND USE AT A GLANCE

Forest

Forested land covers roughly 86% of the town.

Residential Land

Residential land use occupies over 560 acres in Sandisfield, far more than that used for commercial or industrial purposes in town.

Villages

Sandisfield has a dispersed pattern of settlement that historically included several village areas or local “neighborhoods”.

Additional discussion of land use may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Montville

The area surrounding the intersections of Sandisfield Road with Town Hill and Hammertown Roads.

Sandisfield Center

The area surrounding the intersections of Route 57, Silverbrook Road and New Hartford Road.

South Sandisfield

The area surrounding the intersection of South Sandisfield Road, Webster Road, and Sandy Brook Road.

Land Use

Land Use Change 1971-1999

For a table of land use changes from 1971-1999, please refer to Table 7.1 in Appendix C.

Between 1971 and 1999, residential acreage increased more than any other land use category. Residential land use increased by almost 400 acres during this time, from 1.69% to 2.81% of the total land in the town. Forest land decreased the most over the period from 1971-1999. Forest land decreased by just over 400 acres, from 90.15% of all land to 88.88% of all land in Sandisfield. Other categories that saw increases in Sandisfield during this time include commercial, recreational, vacant, and wetland land uses. Other categories that saw decreases between 1971 and 1999 include agriculture, institutional, and water types.

Land Use 2005

For mapped land uses, please see Map D—Land Use (2005).

For a table of 2005 land use data, please refer to Table 7.2 in appendix C.

While available land use data from 2005 should not be compared with earlier data to determine trends, it does provide the most recent “snapshot” of land use within Sandisfield. The 2005 data does not paint a substantially different portrait of the town than the earlier data provides. As of 2005, Sandisfield is primarily forested, with nearly 29,500 acres, or 86.88% of all land in the town covered by forest. Residential land use is also significant, far exceeding the acreage

devoted to institutional, commercial, or industrial land uses. Residential land use covers just over 565 acres, or 1.67% of all land within the town.

Also it is important to note that during the 2005 land use classification, 2.6 acres of industrial land were recorded. When BRPC checked this area against existing aerial photography, this area appears to be a large barn adjacent to a pond just east of the intersection of Sandisfield and Silverbrook Road. This area was classified as industrial and may be the result of the automated land use classification process.

Existing Zoning

For a map of current zoning districts, please see Map E—Zoning.

Sandisfield currently has one zoning district covering the entirety of the town with a Floodplain Overlay District regulating development in flood prone areas.

Existing Dimensional Requirements and Use Regulations

The following is summarized from the Sandisfield Town Bylaws, last amended May 16, 2009.

Minimum Lot Size: 1 acre

Minimum Lot Frontage: 200 Feet

Minimum Lot Depth: 150 Feet

Minimum Building Setback (from road and all lot lines): 30 Feet

Maximum Building Coverage: 4% of lot size

BRPC Zoning Audit

In 2012, BRPC conducted a review and audit of the Town of Sandisfield zoning bylaws at the request of the Planning Board. The recommendations of the audit are summarized in the land use section of Appendix C.

Development Trends and Future Development Capacity

Development Trends

For a map of buildings in Sandisfield by construction date, please see Map F—Development Trend.



For a breakdown of buildings in Sandisfield by construction date, see Table 7.3 in Appendix C.

Available data from the Town Assessor showing the construction date of buildings within the Town of Sandisfield allows for a picture of development trends to emerge. The data shows the last available construction date for a given building, so does not capture earlier structures that may have existed on a given parcel and been replaced. The data is based on assessor's information current as of 2011.

Many structures in the town built prior to 1900 are still remaining, which could account for the large amount of historic structures found in the town (see Table 8.4 in Appendix C). Additionally, prior to 1900, development is relatively dispersed throughout the town. This accounts for the town's six villages (see village descriptions earlier in this section). The majority of housing development between 1901 and 1950 is located along Route 57 and Route 8, though some is still dispersed. Between 1951 and 1975, 167 structures were built, these are dispersed throughout the town along existing road frontage. Post 1975, over 500 new structures have been built, also following a dispersed pattern. However, there is a notable cluster in the large Otis Woodlands development found in the northeast corner of Sandisfield.

Buildout and Development Capacity

For a map of remaining developable land in Sandisfield used to quantify this buildout analysis, please see Map G—Buildout.

A buildout analysis is a way for a community to assess its future by examining what developable land remains in the town, and what the development capacity of this land is based on its current zoning regulations. A buildout analysis examines the maximum extent of future development in a town. Based on this analysis, 7,519 new housing units could be built in Sandisfield under current zoning regulations and with remaining buildable acreage. For more details on the buildout methodology, please refer to the land use section of Appendix C.

The buildout only represents that maximum possible amount of future residential development based on the town's current zoning regulations. In fact, an increase of over 7,500 additional housing units would likely have a significant impact on town services, infrastructure, and rural charm and appeal. If the town wishes to encourage future development, it would be done by examining and reducing barriers to this development, such as its zoning and regulations. The town may also wish to set a target for an appropriate buildout level based on this analysis.

Public Survey Results

The public survey included one broad question regarding land use in Sandisfield, which asked about controls on residential development and environmental resources.

In regards to residential development controls, most responses were split between "controls are at the right level" and "don't know / need more information", with no clear majority supporting any answer choice. In regards to Environmental resources, there was a similar pattern of response with no clear majority supporting any answer option. Responses were split between "controls are at the right level" and "don't know / need more information" with 35% supporting the latter statement.

KEY LAND USE ISSUES

Town Center

The concept of a Town Center in Sandisfield has been explored by the town over the years. The town will continue its work to establish a town center, that could help to cluster public buildings, and potentially generate revenue to the town through the sale of land. Moreover, the Town Center will provide a hub for civic life and social activity that was identified by stakeholders, the public survey and the MPSC.

General Updates to Town Bylaws and Zoning

Sandisfield has recently audited its zoning and bylaws. The results of the audit identified several areas of the bylaw that could be updated and modernized. In

addition to these changes, the town will also investigate and implement changes to its zoning to anticipate future land uses, such as wireless communications towers and solar and wind energy infrastructure.

LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Establish a “Town Center” in Sandisfield.

Sandisfield will establish a Town Center. The Town Center will help to cluster and co-locate public facilities (see Chapter 4—Infrastructure) and other uses and create a hub for town affairs and activities. The town will also pursue potential revenue generating options in the Town Center, such as the sale of lots for adjacent commercial or retail development.

Objective: Continue to Pursue Creation of a Future Town Center In Sandisfield.

Sandisfield will continue its efforts to establish a Town Center. These efforts will include the development and implementation of a process that results in a fiscally sound plan specifies the location, timing, and funding of this center.

ACTION 1: INTEGRATE TOWN CENTER PLANNING EFFORTS WITH LARGER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING AND OTHER EFFORTS TO IMPROVE PUBLIC FACILITIES.

ACTION 2: CONDUCT OUTREACH TO SEEK PUBLIC COMMENT, INFORM RESIDENTS, AND DEVELOP CONSENSUS AROUND A PLAN FOR A TOWN CENTER.

ACTION 3: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT OPTIONS TO GENERATE REVENUE FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TOWN CENTER.

ACTION 4: IMPLEMENT THE TOWN CENTER PLAN.

Goal 2: Update Town Zoning and Bylaws

The Town of Sandisfield has recently undertaken an effort to reassess its zoning and bylaws through technical assistance from BRPC. The Town will implement the recommendations of this effort over time and also explore other bylaw and zoning changes.

Objective: Implement the Recommendations of the BRPC Zoning Audit and other General Revisions to Town Bylaws.

The Town will implement the recommendations of the BRPC Zoning Audit and explore general changes its zoning to improve the clarity of the document and update it to meet the current and future needs of town residents.

ACTION 1: IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BRPC ZONING AUDIT.

ACTION 2: REVIEW AND IMPLEMENT POSSIBLE CHANGES TO GENERAL CONDITIONS IN THE TOWN BYLAWS, SUCH AS LOT SIZE AND FRONTAGE REQUIREMENTS.

Objective: Explore the Development of Commercial Solar and Wind Energy, and Wireless Communications Bylaws and Siting requirements.

The Town will update its bylaws to address possible future and solar wind energy and wireless communications. Revised bylaws will help to minimize aesthetic and environmental impacts from these potential uses and ensure public safety.

ACTION 1: RESEARCH, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT COMMERCIAL SOLAR AND WIND ENERGY BYLAWS.

ACTION 2: RESEARCH, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT A WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS BYLAW.

Objective: Explore the Development of One or More Village Center Zoning Districts in Sandisfield.

The Town will explore the creation of possible Village Center zoning districts in town. Village center zoning can help to encourage development, generally through a reduced minimum lot size and frontage requirements in certain areas of town.

ACTION 1: RESEARCH, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT POSSIBLE VILLAGE CENTER ZONING DISTRICTS IN TOWN.

Objective: Investigate a Possible Rear Lot or Shared Driveway Bylaw in Town.

The Town will explore potential rear lot or shared driveway bylaw in town. Rear lot bylaws can help to encourage development on lots that would otherwise not meet zoning standards. These measures allow a landowner with a large lot that lacks adequate road frontage to subdivide the property and provide access



to the rear lots through a shared driveway. Often the subdivided lots have larger minimum sizes than otherwise would be required. The bylaw should also require that homeowners develop an agreement to ensure maintenance of the shared driveway.

ACTION 1: RESEARCH, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT A REAR LOT OR SHARED DRIVEWAY BYLAW.

Objective: Investigate the Creation of One or More Commercial Development Zones in Sandisfield.

The Town will explore creating Commercial Development Zones in Town. These Commercial Development Zones could help to encourage the siting of future businesses and help to improve the local economy. Additionally, these zones would help to minimize the aesthetic, environmental, and other impacts of potential future commercial development within the town.

ACTION 1: RESEARCH, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ZONES IN SANDISFIELD.

Goal 3: Address the Proposed Connecticut Expansion Pipeline Project.

The Town will address existing and proposed land uses in Sandisfield, such as the Connecticut Expansion Pipeline Project, by supporting the equitable taxation of this utility by the town. See Chapter 4-Infrastructure for more information on this topic.

ACTION 1: SUPPORT THE EQUITABLE TAXATION OF UTILITIES SUCH AS THE CONNECTICUT EXPANSION PIPELINE IN SANDISFIELD.



CHAPTER 9: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Sandisfield has an abundance of natural and cultural resources including extensive wildlife habitat, important wetland areas and water resources, as well as historic buildings and the Sandisfield Arts Center. Sandisfield's vision for these resources includes establishing the town as a recreation, historic, and creative arts destination in the region. This chapter reviews town natural and cultural resources and lists the goals, objectives and actions for the town to take to achieve its vision for these in Sandisfield.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Topography and Landscape

Sandisfield is characterized by a rugged, diverse topography with steep hills, numerous water bodies and expansive wetlands. The 1987 Sandisfield Land Use Plan prepared by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission defines Sandisfield as having two main topographic regions. The first are the sharp ridges and deeply eroded streams of the Farmington River Valley and the second is the broad plateau of the central and western portions of town.

Soils

For a map of general soil conditions in Sandisfield, please see Map H—Soils and Geologic Features.

Sandisfield's soils are contained in two main associations located around the town's river valleys and upland areas. In upland areas, soils are generally shallow and close to bedrock, and steep slopes are common. For a map of general soil conditions and prime agricultural soils, see Map H—Soils and Geologic Features.

Ecoregion and Forest Resources

Ecoregions are areas with similar climate, geology, and topography. Massachusetts is part of two large ecoregions, the Northeastern Highlands and the Northeastern Coastal Zone. These two ecoregions can be further divided into 13 sub-regions.

Sandisfield is located in the Lower Berkshire Hills



The Sandisfield Player's production of "Our Town" at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Photograph provided by the Sandisfield Times.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AT A GLANCE

Watershed and Regional Context

Sandisfield is located at the headwaters of the Farmington River, a source of drinking water for the City of Hartford, Ct and an estimated 600,000 people.

Historic Resources

The state's historic inventory lists 117 records comprising mostly historic buildings. The town is working to add to and update this inventory

Knox Trail

A portion of the Knox Trail passes through Sandisfield. This trail has a unique history that shaped events leading to the founding of our nation.

Sandisfield Arts Center (SARC)

This venue offers a range of events in the performing and visual arts.

Additional discussion of natural and cultural resources may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Ecoregion, a sub-region of the Northeastern Highlands. The Massachusetts Audubon Breeding Bird Atlas notes that this ecoregion is “similar to the Berkshire Highlands to the north, but the average elevation is lower, (1,000 to 1,700 feet) with a forest cover composed primarily of northern hardwoods” (2015).

Water Resources

For mapped watershed boundaries, water bodies, and floodplains, please refer to Map J—Water Resources.

Watersheds

The majority of Sandisfield is located within the Farmington River Watershed (FRW). A small portion of the Housatonic River Watershed is located on the westernmost edge of the town. Regionally, the FRW is an important water source for the city of Hartford, Connecticut (population 125,000). However, many other towns within the Farmington River valley rely on the river as a drinking water source. The Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA), the non-profit group that helps to address issues of water quality within the watershed, estimates that the river supplies drinking water to 600,000 people in total (FRWA 2003).

Surface Waters

Rivers and Streams

The Town of Sandisfield’s major rivers are the Buck River, Clam River, and the Farmington River. The Buck River flows roughly northwest to southeast across the northern portion of Sandisfield and roughly follows the direction of much of Route 57. The Clam River flows roughly north to south. The Buck River meets the Clam River just west of the intersection of Route 8 and Route 57 in Sandisfield, and they flow (as the Clam River) into the Farmington River. In the western portion of town, the Sandy Brook flows south from York Lake (in New Marlborough) and into Connecticut, roughly following the direction of Route 183.

The Buck River, Clam River, and Farmington River are stocked yearly with Trout by the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (Mass. DFG Trout Stocking Schedule 2015).

Lakes and Ponds

Sandisfield contains a number of lakes and ponds. The largest is Lower Spectacle Pond (69 acres), within Otis State Forest in the northeastern portion of Town (See Table 8.1—Water Resources In Sandisfield, MA). A portion of Upper Spectacle Pond is also located within the town; however, it straddles the boundary between Otis and Sandisfield.

Many of Sandisfield’s water bodies were created or have been altered by dams. Within Sandisfield, Upper Spectacle Pond, West Lake, Abbey Lake, North Silver Brook Flood Control Site, South Silver Brook Flood Control Site, and the Clam Lake Flood Control Site have all been created through damming.

Wetlands

There are over 2,200 acres of wetlands in Sandisfield, comprising 6.6% of all land within the town. These wetlands can be divided into seven main types. Over 500 acres belongs to the wooded coniferous swamp variety. This type makes up over 22% of wetlands in the town, the greatest of all the seven wetland typologies. The least are bogs, which occupy just over 6 acres, or around .3% of all wetlands within the town. See Table 8.2 –Wetland Resources in Sandisfield, MA in Appendix C.

Rare Species and Wildlife Habitat

Within Sandisfield, 20 Endangered, threatened and special concern species have been sighted in the town since the earliest records of 1912. See Table 8.3—Threatened, Endangered and Special Concern Species Sighted in Sandisfield, MA in Appendix C.

Bird Sighting Data

Within Sandisfield, Colebrook River Lake (the northern portion of Colebrook Reservoir) is listed as an E-Bird hotspot. These hotspots are public birding locations that have been identified by E-bird users, and allow for bird sighting data from multiple users to be aggregated based on a relatively small geographic area. E-bird (ebird.org) is an online resource for birdwatchers developed as a collaboration between the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the Audubon Society. Colebrook River Lake, the town’s hot spot area, is located in the southeast corner of the town, near Route 8. Based on



these data, 125 species have been sighted near Colebrook River Lake since 2011. This includes threatened, endangered and special concern species such as the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*) in addition to other more common bird species.

Additionally, there have been other rare bird sightings in Sandisfield not captured in E-Bird data. In a 2013 article in the Sandisfield Times, Margaret O’Claire detailed the sighting of rare bird species including the Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) and Sand Hill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*). The article also notes the Colebrook Reservoir and the town’s multiple lakes and ponds as prime bird watching areas. Several community members also noted the Spectacle Pond area, including the Rowley Farm on Cold Spring Road as excellent bird watching areas.

BioMap2

For locations of BioMap2 components and natural communities, please refer to Map I—Vegetation, Fisheries and Wildlife.

BioMap2 is a statewide mapping project that combines 30 years of rare species and natural community data from the NHESP with wildlife species and habitat assessments that were conducted as part of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife’s 2005 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). Additionally, BioMap2 data integrates the Nature Conservancy’s assessment of large, connected and intact ecosystems across the state. (NHESP, 2012).

BioMap2 has two primary components, Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape. According to BioMap2, Core Habitat is found on 3,281 acres in Sandisfield, or around 9.6% of the land in town. Critical natural landscape comprises 29,488 acres or 86.9% of all land within the town.

Priority and Exemplary Natural Communities

Priority Natural Communities

High-terrace Floodplain Forest
High Energy Riverbank
Rich, Mesic Forest Community

Riverine Point bar and Beach
Spruce-Tamarack Bog

Priority Natural Communities

Hemlock Ravine Community
Hemlock Hardwood Swamp

Cultural Resources

History of the Community

Sandisfield has a rich and varied history. For a detailed history of the town, please refer to Appendix C.

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) Database

For locations of historic buildings and other structures found in the MACRIS database, please refer to Map J—Historic Resources.

For a table of listings in the MACRIS database, please refer to Table 8.4.

The Massachusetts Cultural Information Resource System (MACRIS) is a database maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) that lists historic structures, areas, objects and burial grounds recognized at the local, state, and national level. Within Sandisfield, the MACRIS database lists 117 records comprising mostly historic buildings. However, the records also include the smaller villages that make up the town, several bridges, stores, inns, and cemeteries among other places.

It is important to note that the MACRIS records identified in this plan are incomplete for several reasons, the first being that listings available online are part of ongoing digitization efforts by the state. Moreover, most of the MACRIS records for the Town of Sandisfield were collected from an inventory of historic properties completed in 1979. The Sandisfield Historical Commission has been working to update this inventory as well as identify new historically significant properties. They are in the process of compiling these inventory records and submitting them to the state. For more information on the town’s historic buildings and other areas, please consult the Sandisfield Historical Commission or the Sandisfield Historical Society.

Cemeteries

There are five cemeteries located in Sandisfield.

Sandisfield Center

Established circa 1758, located on Route 57 or Sandisfield Road.

New Boston

Established circa 1831, located on Route 57 or Sandisfield Road.

Beech Plain

Established circa 1775, located on North Beech Plain Road.

South Sandisfield

Established circa 1836, located on Route 183 or Sandy Brook Road.

Roberts Road

Established circa 1790, located on Roberts Road.
(Sandisfield Town Report, 2014)

The town has been actively working to clean up its cemeteries as well as promote these areas as cultural and historical resources. The town formed a Cemetery Committee, which recently created a set of rules for town cemeteries and has helped to organize pruning and clean up events with volunteers. Moreover, the Sandisfield Historical Commission has been working to mark the gravestones of Sandisfield's veterans.

Knox Trail or Great Road

The Town of Sandisfield developed partially along the historic route known as the Knox Trail, or Great Road, that connected Boston and Albany. This roadway was a major regional trade route. However, the route is most famous for its use by General Henry Knox as he worked during the winter of 1775-1776 to move cannons from Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain to Boston, Massachusetts.

The route of the Knox Trail crosses into Sandisfield from Otis and travels west immediately south of Upper Spectacle Pond through Otis State Forest. The Trail crosses back into Otis near Cold Spring Road. Portions of the Knox Trail are currently used during



Figure 9.1—The Philomen Sage House, New Boston Inn, and Sandisfield Arts Center (former Montville Baptist Church) are three historic buildings in Sandisfield listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Photograph credit John Phelan. Image licensed under CC by 3.0.



the winter by snowmobilers.

Members of the Otis Historical Commission have been active in identifying landmarks, markers, tavern sites, and other historic resources along the trail. Additionally, they have been actively working to secure year round trail access from the various state and private landowners along its route.

The Sandisfield Historical Commission has been coordinating with members of the Otis Historical Commission to hold walks and help promote awareness of this important historic resource (Sandisfield Historical Commission Personal Communication 2015).

Sandisfield Arts Center (SARC)

The Sandisfield Arts Center (SARC) is a non-profit arts venue located in the historic Montville Baptist Church and later Sons of Abraham Synagogue (the only known rural orthodox synagogue in Massachusetts) building at 5 Hammertown Road. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2006, SARC received MHC's preservation award for the adaptive re-use of its historic building. Restoration of the structure began in 1995. SARC is a venue for music, performance, film, speakers, workshops, educational programs, and other events. Additionally, SARC has a gallery space with rotating visual arts exhibits. The building also provides rentable meeting space for large gatherings. The arts center attracts a diverse range of visitors from the town, region and beyond. SARC produced about 40 events and exhibitions in 2015.

Sandisfield Times

The Sandisfield Times is the local newspaper for Sandisfield and has been published since April 2010. The Sandisfield Times is published eleven times per year, with a joint January-February issue followed by regular monthly issues. The newspaper focuses solely on topics directly impacting Sandisfield and its immediate vicinity. The Times provides a venue for both residents and town officials to address each other about local issues.

KEY NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ISSUES

Leveraging Natural Resource and Ecological Assets

Sandisfield has many natural resource and ecological assets which could be leveraged to draw visitors and new residents to the town, as well as help to improve the daily life of year round residents. These assets include the unique natural environments found in the abundant open spaces in Sandisfield, as well as latent assets such as destinations in town for birdwatchers.

Leveraging Historic and Creative Arts Assets

Sandisfield has many historic assets, including historic buildings and the Knox Trail, a historic roadway that was crucial to the founding of our nation. The town has been working actively in recent years to develop and promote these elements, as well as encourage the restoration and recognition of its historic structures and cemeteries. Sandisfield is also home to the Sandisfield Arts Center, a local arts venue and resource whose programming attracts many to the town. Additionally, many writers, musicians, painters, potters, quilters, actors and craftsmen live and work locally. The Town will nurture and promote this community and resource through the Sandisfield Arts Center and local events promoting the arts.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Establish Sandisfield as an Environmental Destination.

The Town of Sandisfield will establish itself as an ecological and environmental destination by continued protection and promotion of its natural resources.

Objective: Protect Sandisfield's Natural Resources.

The Town will continue to protect its natural resources. The town will also explore new ways to minimize its environmental impacts.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO ENFORCE REGULATIONS THAT PROTECT THE TOWN'S WETLANDS AND WATER RESOURCES.

ACTION 2: EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE DEICING METHODS ON TOWN ROADWAYS.

Objective: Promote Sandisfield's Natural Resources.
Sandisfield will more effectively promote its natural resources for the benefit of the town.

ACTION 1: ENCOURAGE THE COMMONWEALTH, LOCAL LAND TRUSTS, AND OTHER CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS TO HOLD EVENTS, TRAIL WALKS, INFORMATIONAL TALKS, AND OTHER EVENTS ABOUT TOWN NATURAL RESOURCES.

ACTION 2: INTEGRATE NATURAL RESOURCES INTO OTHER TOWN PROMOTION AND WAYFINDING EFFORTS.

ACTION 3: CO-PROMOTE NATURAL RESOURCES WITH BUSINESSES AND EVENTS.

Objective: Promote Sandisfield as a Destination for Bird-Watching.

Several rare bird species have been sighted in Sandisfield. Colebrook River Lake has been identified as a bird-watching "hot spot". The town will promote itself as a destination for this activity and collaborate with other efforts in town, such as a possible bird sanctuary that has been proposed by Mass. Audubon.

ACTION 1: ENCOURAGE BIRD-WATCHERS TO SUBMIT BIRD SIGHTINGS TO THE E-BIRD WEBSITE.

ACTION 2: ENCOURAGE THE IDENTIFICATION OF BIRD WATCHING "HOT SPOTS" IN TOWN.

ACTION 3: COORDINATE WITH LOCAL EXPERTS AND RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE HOFFMAN BIRD CLUB AND MASS. AUDUBON TO ENCOURAGE THE HOSTING OF BIRD WATCHING EVENTS IN SANDISFIELD.

ACTION 4: COORDINATE WITH MASS. AUDUBON ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BIRD SANCTUARY IN THE TOWN.

Goal 2: Establish Sandisfield as a Historic and Creative Arts Destination.

The Town of Sandisfield will establish itself as a historic and creative arts destination through efforts to utilize its historic buildings in town and the promotion, cultivation, and support of its historic and creative arts

resources. Many writers, musicians, painters, potters, quilters, actors, and craftsmen live and work locally. The Town will nurture and promote this community through the Sandisfield Arts Center and local events promoting the arts.

Objective: Encourage the Utilization and Restoration of Historic Buildings in Town.

The town will encourage residents and newcomers to utilize and restore historic structures in town through promotion and development of technical assistance and incentive programs.

ACTION 1: IDENTIFY HISTORIC PROPERTIES THAT WOULD MOST BENEFIT FROM POTENTIAL RESTORATION AND CURATION.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP OR PARTICIPATE IN PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE OWNERS OF HISTORIC HOMES TO INCENTIVIZE THEIR RESTORATION.

ACTION 3: PROMOTE AND SUPPORT INCENTIVES FOR THE RESTORATION OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES, SUCH AS THE MHC HISTORIC REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT.

Objective: Cultivate the Town's Historic and Cultural Assets.

Sandisfield will continue efforts to achieve recognition for, promote, and develop its historic and cultural resources. The town will also continue to ensure that crucial assets such as town documents and records are adequately stored.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE ONGOING WORK TO UPDATE THE TOWN'S INVENTORY OF HISTORIC RESOURCES.

ACTION 2: CONTINUE TO NOMINATE TOWN BUILDINGS FOR STATE AND NATIONAL HISTORIC RECOGNITION.

ACTION 3: CONTINUE ONGOING WORK TO ESTABLISH SEVERAL NATIONAL HISTORIC REGISTER DISTRICTS IN TOWN.

ACTION 4: PROMOTE THE "SANDISFIELD HERITAGE HEROES" TOWN RECOGNITION AND AWARD PROGRAM FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND RESOURCES.

ACTION 5: CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AND UPGRADE METHODS TO STORE AND MAINTAIN TOWN HISTORIC DOCUMENTS.



ACTION 6: CONTINUE ONGOING EFFORTS TO INSTALL SIGNS MARKING HISTORIC BUILDINGS THROUGH OUTREACH TO LOCAL HOMEOWNERS.

ACTION 7: INTEGRATE HISTORIC AND CULTURAL ASSETS INTO THE TOWN'S PROMOTION AND WAYFINDING EFFORTS.

ACTION 8: ORGANIZE A HERITAGE TOUR OF SANDISFIELD.

ACTION 9: CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS IN SANDISFIELD THROUGH THE SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER.

Objective: Develop and Promote the Knox Trail as a Multi-Use, Multi-Season Historic Recreation Trail in Sandisfield.

Sandisfield will work collaboratively to promote and develop the historic Knox Trail as a historic and recreation asset.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO COLLABORATE WITH THE TOWN OF OTIS ON EFFORTS TO DEVELOP THE KNOX TRAIL.

ACTION 2: WORK WITH STATE AND LOCAL LANDOWNERS TO ALLOW YEAR-ROUND USE OF THE KNOX TRAIL.

ACTION 3: INTEGRATE THE KNOX TRAIL INTO OTHER PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS.

ACTION 4: CONNECT THE KNOX TRAIL TO OTHER LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORKS AND RECREATION AREAS, SUCH AS SPECTACLE POND.

ACTION 5: COORDINATE WITH THE STATE AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE KNOX TRAIL SNO-RIDERS AND SANDISFIELD SNOWMOBILE CLUB ON TRAIL DEVELOPMENT.

ACTION 6: PROMOTE THE KNOX TRAIL AS AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE.

Objective: Develop and Promote the Town's Cemeteries as Historic Destinations.

Sandisfield will continue efforts to maintain and promote its historic cemeteries.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE ONGOING WORK TO CLEAN UP AND ACTIVELY MAINTAIN TOWN CEMETERIES.

ACTION 2: CONTINUE ONGOING WORK TO MARK THE GRAVES OF VETERANS IN TOWN CEMETERIES.



CHAPTER 10: OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The Town of Sandisfield has thousands of acres of public and privately owned recreation lands, as well as opportunities for a range of activities including hiking, bicycling, boating, swimming, fishing, and hunting. The Town's vision for these components includes establishing Sandisfield as a recreation destination and increasing recreation opportunities for residents on its town managed recreation areas. This chapter reviews town open space and recreation assets and lists the goals, objectives and actions for the town to take to achieve its vision for Sandisfield.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Open Space

Open space is defined as land that has not been developed for residential, commercial, or industrial uses and includes publicly and privately owned land. Open space often has particular interest to conservation or recreation and can include:

1. Land which contributes to the public water supply
2. Forests, fields, and agricultural lands
3. Wetlands
4. Rivers, streams, and lakes
5. Parks and other recreation lands
6. Wildlife corridors or animal habitats
7. Land which preserves scenic views or town character

Land in Sandisfield is protected in a variety of ways and with varying degrees of protection. Conservation and recreation lands in the Town of Sandisfield are protected by four entities, the Town and other municipal organizations, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, local land trusts, and private landowners.

Protected Open Space

For locations of protected open space and Chapter 61 properties, please refer to Map L—Open Space.

According to the Massachusetts State Geographic Information System (GIS) "Open Space" data layer, there are 16,599 acres of protected open space lands



Spectacle Pond is a popular recreation area in Sandisfield. Photograph provided by the Sandisfield Times.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION AT A GLANCE

Protected Open Space

There are 16,599 acres of protected open space lands in the Town of Sandisfield, the equivalent of 48.9% of all land within the town. This includes state land, watershed protection land and land owned by local land trusts. Also included in this total are privately owned lands with conservation restrictions, and land in Chapter 61 programs.

Stump Fees

Revenue from state timber harvests is a potential revenue source for the town.

Recreation Areas

Sandisfield boasts several recreation areas including a town park and playground, land in three state forests and four flood control sites. Additionally, BNRC's Clam River Reserve offer hiking trails and additional recreation options.

Additional discussion of open space and recreation may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary



Figure 10.1—The Sandisfield Library Playground is one of two town owned recreation areas. The other is Yanner Park. The playground is located on Route 57 adjacent the Clam River.

in the Town of Sandisfield, the equivalent of 48.9% of all land within the town. Over 7,000 acres of this total (or around 44% of all protected land) is in parcels held by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and includes the portions of Otis and Sandisfield State Forests, as well as several flood control sites (See Table 9.1—Summary of Protected Land in Sandisfield, MA and Table 9.2—Protected Land in Sandisfield, MA). Also included are permanently protected open space lands owned by land trusts and private landowners, watershed protection land held by the Connecticut Metropolitan District Commission, as well as temporarily protected lands protected by Chapter 61 incentives. This total also includes Town of Sandisfield owned properties such as Yanner Park, which have limited protections due to municipal ownership.

Additionally, it should be noted that roughly 900 acres of privately owned lands in Sandisfield are both permanently protected and in Chapter 61 incentive programs. These 900 acres with “overlapping” conservation protection were removed from acreage totals to provide a more accurate amount of protected land within the town.

Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B Lands

Chapter 61 is a state program that allows private landowners to manage their properties for forestry (Chapter 61), agricultural (Chapter 61A), or recreational purposes (Chapter 61B) in exchange for reduced taxes. Parcels in the program for the purposes of forestry must be at least 10 acres in size and must have an approved 10-year management plan in place. Parcels enrolled in Chapter 61A or 61B must be at least five acres in size. Once enrolled in Chapter 61, the town where the property is located acquires a right of first refusal should the land be put up for sale. This right of first refusal can also be assigned by the town to a land trust or state agency. Chapter 61 lands are not considered permanently protected, as landowners can remove their property from the program at any time. However, there are monetary penalties associated with sale of properties enrolled in Chapter 61 for purposes other than forestry, agriculture or recreation, as well as any changes in land use while enrolled.

For more information on Chapter 61 programs, consult



a local forester or the town assessor. Chapter 61 properties are privately owned and should be considered off limits to public access without the landowner's permission. There are a total of 5,425 acres of land currently enrolled in Chapter 61 in Sandisfield, comprising around 16% of all land within the town. The majority of these properties are enrolled for the purposes of forestry, with some enrolled for agriculture. There are currently no parcels in Sandisfield enrolled in the Chapter 61 program for recreation (see Table 9.3—Chapter 61 Parcels in Sandisfield, MA).

State and Private Lands and Stumpage Fees

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is required to donate a portion of revenue generated from timber harvests on its lands to the municipality in which the timber harvest occurs. In state lands purchased prior to June 1st, 1987, this value is 8%. However, for state land purchased after this date, the value increases significantly to 50%.

Similarly, timber harvests on private lands enrolled in Chapter 61 used to be required to provide 8% of timber harvest revenue to the municipality where the property was located. However, in 2006, changes to Chapter 61 regulations eliminated this requirement.

Recreation

The Town of Sandisfield offers several areas for recreation, including town, state, and privately owned areas.

Town Owned Recreation Areas

Yanner Park
Sandisfield Library Playground (see Figure 10.1)

State Owned Recreation Areas

Otis State Forest and Spectacle Pond Farm
West Lake And Abbey Pond Flood Control Site
Sandisfield State Forest
Clam Lake Flood Control Site
Silver Brook North Flood Control Site
Silver Brook South Flood Control Site
Cookson State Forest



Figure 10.2—Berkshire Natural Resources Council's (BNRC) Clam River Reserve is a publicly accessible natural area with a trailhead located behind the Town Hall Annex on Route 57. BNRC recently completed work on a major 1.5 mile long section of trail in 2015. Photographs provided by BNRC.

Privately Owned Recreation Areas

Recreation areas managed by Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC):

Clam River Reserve (see Figure 10.2)

Steepletop (portion only, primary access is from New Marlborough)

Bob's Way (portion only, primary access is from Monterey)

Sandisfield / New Marlborough Wildlife Conservation Easement (WCE) Areas:

These areas are privately owned, but have easements for public access through the Mass. Department of Fish and Game (DFG).

Allen Mountain WCE

Silverbrook WCE

Thorpe Brook WCE

Sandisfield Snowmobile Club and Knox Trail Sno-Rider Trails

The Sandisfield Snowmobile Club and the Knox Trail Sno-Riders (based in nearby Otis) maintain a number of snowmobile trails on public and private land in Sandisfield. Several trails cross through a portion of the West Lake And Abbey Pond Flood Control Site, including trails that cross both these waterbodies during the winter. Another trail runs parallel to and north of Silverbrook Road. The Sandisfield Snowmobile Club also has plans to expand its trail network north into the Town of Monterey as well as south along Back, Clark, and Beech Hill Roads. See figures 9.1 and 9.2 in Appendix C for maps of trails in Sandisfield.

Other Recreation Areas

Portions of watershed protection land owned by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) around the Farmington River and Colebrook River Lake are used for recreation including boating and fishing.

KEY OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ISSUES

Access to State Lands and Leveraging Recreation Assets

State lands in Sandisfield total over 7,000 acres. However, much of this land is managed for timber harvest. The few state recreation areas in town, such as Spectacle Pond and West Lake, are not consistently managed for active recreation use, despite their potential to do so. Additionally, through PILOT payments, stumpage fees, and event hosting, these areas are potential revenue generators for the town. The town will work with the state to leverage these areas to benefit the town and its residents and draw visitors to the area. Additionally, Hosting sporting events on town and State lands can provide revenue for the town by generating fees and encouraging tourism that could help to support local merchants.

Connectivity

Sandisfield will coordinate with all applicable land owners and managers to connect recreation areas through a network of trails.

Local Recreation Areas

Sandisfield will address its town recreation areas, such as the library playground and Yanner Park.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Establish Sandisfield as a Recreation Destination.

The Town of Sandisfield will establish itself as a recreation destination that draws on its vast natural resources, open spaces and public land. The town will meet this goal through coordination and collaboration with the Commonwealth and local organizations, as well as improving access to and linking the various recreation areas in town. The town will also leverage its existing assets to encourage and develop snowmobiling in town.

Objective: Promote the Town's Recreation Areas.

The Town will more effectively promote its recreation areas to increase awareness and use of these places. The town will also integrate these resources into its wayfinding efforts.



ACTION 1: COORDINATE WITH THE STATE AND LOCAL LAND TRUSTS TO CREATE SIGNAGE MARKING LOCAL RECREATION ASSETS, SUCH AS THE CLAM RIVER RESERVE AND STATE OWNED LANDS.

ACTION 2: INTEGRATE SANDISFIELD'S RECREATION ASSETS INTO PROMOTIONAL AND WAYFINDING EFFORTS.

Objective: Improve Access to State Lands.

Sandisfield's thousands of acres of state land are a vast recreation resource; however, little of it is managed to support this use. The town will advocate for the management of state owned lands to improve access and support recreation. The town will also ensure that it fully participates in state planning efforts.

ACTION 1: ADVOCATE FOR THE CONSISTENT MANAGEMENT OF STATE PROPERTIES FOR ACTIVE RECREATION USE.

ACTION 2: WORK WITH THE STATE TO IMPROVE AMENITIES AND ACCESS POINTS ON STATE LANDS, WITH WEST LAKE AND UPPER AND LOWER SPECTACLE POND BEING PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT AREAS.

ACTION 3: WORK TO INTEGRATE ACTIVE RECREATION USE INTO THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE SPECTACLE POND FARM MANAGEMENT PLAN.

ACTION 4: ENSURE THAT TOWN INTERESTS ARE WELL REPRESENTED IN UPDATED MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR STATE OWNED PROPERTIES IN THE FUTURE.

ACTION 5: INVESTIGATE USE OF STATE LANDS TO HOST ATHLETIC AND SPORTING EVENTS.

ACTION 6: PARTNER WITH REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS LAND TRUSTS AND OTHER CONSERVATION GROUPS TO FORM A COALITION THAT WILL ADDRESS ACCESS NEEDS AND POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS TO STATE LANDS.

Objective: Link Disparate Recreation Areas.

The town will collaborate with relevant organizations to link and interconnect the public and private recreation areas in town. These efforts will create a network of recreation opportunities greater than the sum of its individual components.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A TRAIL NETWORK THAT CONNECTS YANNER PARK, THE CLAM RIVER RESERVE, ADJACENT STATE

-OWNED PROPERTIES AND THE SPECTACLE POND AREA.

ACTION 2: COORDINATE WITH BNRC ON THEIR "BERKSHIRE HIGH ROAD" CAMPAIGN, A PROGRAM ATTEMPTING TO CREATE CONTIGUOUS TRAILS THROUGHOUT BERKSHIRE COUNTY.

Objective: Investigate Improvements to Encourage Snowmobiling in Town.

Sandisfield has a wide ranging network of existing snowmobile trails and an active local organization, the Sandisfield Snowmobile Club. The town will work collaboratively to develop this recreation activity in town.

ACTION 1: COORDINATE WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL SNOWMOBILE ORGANIZATIONS TO DETERMINE POSSIBLE AREAS FOR COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP AS WELL AS FUTURE RECREATION NEEDS.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP PARKING AREAS FOR SNOWMOBILE TRAILERS IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS.

ACTION 3: EXPLORE GRANT FUNDING FOR POSSIBLE SNOWMOBILING RELATED PROJECTS THROUGH THE MASS. RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANT PROGRAM.

Goal 2: Increase Recreation Opportunities for Sandisfield Residents.

The town will work to improve its local publicly owned recreation areas such as Yanner Park and the Library Playground, as well as develop other recreation opportunities in town, such as community garden program.

Objective: Increase Capacity to Address Local Recreation Needs.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP AND ADOPT AN OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN TO BE ABLE TO ACCESS STATE RECREATION FUNDING.

ACTION 2: ONCE ADOPTED BY THE TOWN AND APPROVED BY THE STATE, APPLY FOR PARC GRANT FUNDING TO IMPROVE TOWN OWNED RECREATION AREAS.

ACTION 3: APPLY FOR OTHER STATE RECREATION GRANT FUNDS, SUCH AS THE RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANT PROGRAM OR LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND.

Objective: Improve the Library Playground.

The town will improve and expand opportunities for recreation at the Library Playground.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PLAN TO IMPROVE THE LIBRARY PLAYGROUND, ITS SAFETY AND ITS ACCESSIBILITY.

ACTION 2: SEEK GRANT AND OTHER FUNDING TO IMPLEMENT IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PLAYGROUND.

ACTION 3: INVESTIGATE POTENTIAL RECREATION USE OF THE CLAM RIVER ADJACENT TO THE LIBRARY PLAYGROUND.

Objective: Revisit Yanner Park.

The town will revisit past planning efforts for Yanner Park, implement new strategies for its use, and explore funding sources to better utilize and maintain this area. The town will work to link Yanner Park with adjacent recreation spaces through a trail network.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A MULTI-USE PLAN FOR YANNER PARK.

ACTION 2: INTEGRATE YANNER PARK WITH ADJACENT RECREATION AREAS, SUCH AS THE CLAM RIVER RESERVE AND STATE LANDS TO CREATE SEAMLESS AND CONTIGUOUS SPACES FOR OUTDOOR ENJOYMENT.

ACTION 3: DEVELOP NON-TRADITIONAL REVENUE SOURCES TO IMPROVE, BETTER UTILIZE, AND MAINTAIN YANNER PARK.

Objective: Investigate Development of a Community Garden Program.

Gardening is a favorite activity of Sandisfield residents. The town will work to identify a location for and implement a community program.

ACTION 1: IDENTIFY A LOCAL COMMUNITY GARDEN ADVOCATE OR COMMITTEE.

ACTION 2: ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY TO EXAMINE NEEDS AND DESIRES FOR A COMMUNITY GARDEN AVAILABLE FOR SANDISFIELD RESIDENTS.

ACTION 3: IDENTIFY AN APPROPRIATE LOCATION FOR A COMMUNITY GARDEN ON PRIVATE, STATE, OR TOWN OWNED LAND.

ACTION 4: IMPLEMENT A COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM.

Goal 3: Leverage State Lands to Generate Additional Benefits for the Town.

Sandisfield will leverage the vast network of state owned in town through collaboration and advocacy with the state and other municipalities. These efforts will create additional sources of revenue for the town and create additional draws and attractions for visitors to Sandisfield.

Objective: Advocate for Additional Revenue from State Lands.

The town will advocate for changes to state stumpage fees and PILOT payments.

ACTION 1: WORK WITH THE COMMONWEALTH AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES TO ADVOCATE FOR CHANGES TO STATE STUMPAGE FEE LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

ACTION 2: WORK WITH THE COMMONWEALTH AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES TO ADVOCATE FOR CONSISTENT PILOT PAYMENTS.

Objective: Investigate Participation in the Historic Curatorship Program to Utilize the Historic Structures at Spectacle Pond Farm.

The historic structures near Spectacle Pond are a potential amenity and draw to the town. The town will engage the state on the future uses of these structures.

ACTION 1: ENGAGE THE STATE TO EXAMINE THE TOWN'S ROLE IN THE FUTURE OF THE STRUCTURES AT SPECTACLE POND FARM AS POSSIBLE AMENITIES TO GENERATE REVENUE AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE.

Objective: Develop Programs to Hold Events on State Land.

Athletic events and competitions could draw hundreds of visitors to Sandisfield's open spaces and local businesses. The town will explore options to host these events in town and on state owned lands.

ACTION 1: ESTABLISH A PROGRAM TO HOST ATHLETIC AND SPORTING EVENTS SUCH AS BICYCLE AND ROAD RACES ON STATE OWNED LAND.



CHAPTER 11: VISION

INTRODUCTION

The vision statement is a concise description of the town's desired future. This may include both those qualities of the town that residents would like to keep and attributes the town would like to see added or changed in the future. The vision serves as the basis for the creation of goals and objectives in the plan for the town to pursue in the future.

VISION

Sandisfield is a hidden gem of the southern Berkshire region. The town has a broad range of assets including extensive forests, wildlife habitat, and public lands, as well as abundant recreation, cultural, and historic resources. Sandisfield's nearly 1,000 year-round residents, as well as many seasonal residents and second homeowners, have discovered and love the unique, rural community and have chosen to make it their home. Through dedication and collaboration, promotion and outreach, the town will leverage its assets to improve quality of life and establish Sandisfield a destination for all.

Moreover, the town will continue to seek out opportunities to make the following statements true:

Economy

Sandisfield will energize, strengthen and promote its economic base of independent local entrepreneurs, including working farms and the wood products industry, while working to improve daily life through economic models such as cooperative business.

Infrastructure

The town will improve its public facilities and town technology infrastructure to improve public services and facilitate public engagement. The Town will pursue alternative energy development on its lands, and encourage residents to adopt small scale solar and wind energy improvements to improve sustainability, reduce costs, and generate revenue.

Services

Sandisfield will reduce and offset its expenses through a wide variety of means, while continuing to provide

high quality services for town residents and enhancing services for families and senior citizens.

Housing

Sandisfield will provide housing for all ages and income levels within the town.

Transportation

Sandisfield will comprehensively examine and plan for transportation within the town to provide a complete and well maintained system of roads within the town. The town will pursue opportunities to enhance non-motorized transportation and establish a wayfinding system to promote town assets and improve navigation throughout the largest municipality in the Berkshires.

Land Use

The Town of Sandisfield will establish a Town Center as the future hub of social and public life within the community. The town will implement comprehensive changes to its zoning bylaws to address future land uses and improve overall usability and clarity of this important town document.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Sandisfield will establish itself as an environmental and heritage destination for all.

Open Space and Recreation

The Town will establish itself as a recreation destination for all. Sandisfield will leverage its open space assets, such as state lands, to create new recreation and economic opportunities for the town, and invest in its town owned recreation areas to improve recreation for town residents.



CHAPTER 12: PROCESS

PLANNING PROCESS

Public Vision Meeting

Prior to BRPC's involvement as a consultant in the creation of this Master Plan, members of the Sandisfield Strategic Planning Committee held a public vision meeting on July 23, 2014. The meeting was well attended and helped to kick-off the development of the Master Plan. The format of the vision meeting was an open discussion with members of the public. Notes from the vision meeting formed the basis for many of the goals, objectives, and actions of the plan.

Members of the public discussed the need to better promote the town and its assets, needs for housing for families and seniors, the possibility of the creation of a town center, and town services among other topics.

Public Forum and Informational Meeting

The Master Plan Steering Committee hosted a public forum and informational meeting on the draft Master Plan on April 13, 2016 at Old Town Hall. The forum presented some basic information about the master plan, the process leading to its creation, as well as additional details regarding the draft goals, objectives, and actions. After the presentation, forum attendees were asked to mark important items from the draft plan with a sticker dot. This allowed the Committee to get a sense of the priorities of all forum participants. Images of the boards can be seen in Figure 12.2

Master Plan Steering Committee Meetings

The Sandisfield Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) was directly responsible for the drafting and creation of the Master Plan. The committee was organized as a subcommittee of the Sandisfield Planning Board. BRPC Assistant Director Thomas Matuszko served as the facilitator for meetings of the group and no chairperson of this committee was elected. All meetings of this committee were conducted in accordance with the Mass. Open Meeting Law.

BRPC assisted the MPSC by gathering existing conditions information, conducting the public opinion survey and holding stakeholder interviews among other tasks. BRPC prepared drafts of the Master Plan



PLANNING PROCESS AT A GLANCE

Public Opinion Survey

A public opinion survey was developed early in the planning process. The survey was available online and at several locations in town from July 31 to August 31, 2015. For additional information see Appendix E.

Public Vision Meeting

Members of the Sandisfield Strategic Planning Committee held a public vision meeting on July 23, 2014. The meeting was an open discussion with members of the public about the town's needs and desires for the future.

Stakeholder Interviews

Town staff, board and committee members, and members of local organizations were interviewed to help inform the development of the Master Plan and provide an assessment of ongoing and in progress work by the town.

MPSC Meetings

Members of the Sandisfield MPSC met 14 times from June 2015 until May 2016 to review draft material and craft goals and objectives for the plan.



which were reviewed by committee members and used to develop the goals, objectives and actions of the plan.

Sandisfield MPSC Members

Gary Bottum Sr.

Gary has lived in Sandisfield for the past 13 years and has been involved in many aspects of town life. He has served on the Fire Department for 12 years and has been a member of the Planning Board for the past seven years. Gary has been the Chairman of this board for five years.

Nina Carr

Nina has been coming to Sandisfield since she was 18 months old and currently lives in the house that her father and grandfather built with her husband. Nina and her husband began living full time in Sandisfield in 1979. She spent most of her working years as a paraprofessional for the Berkshire Hills Regional Schools. In town, Nina has been chair of the School Committee and the Conservation Commission. She is also a member of the Cultural Council and on the Board of the Arts Center.

David Hubbard

David Hubbard is a retired attorney who continues to work as a consultant to a select group of hedge funds, family offices, developers and start up businesses. He serves the town as a volunteer member of Finance Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, Master Plan Sub-Committee, Energy Committee and Truck Committee.

Kathleen Jacobs

Kathleen Jacobs is a local IT professional and currently serves on the Sandisfield Finance Committee, where she has been the Chair since 2008. She is also a current member and former chair of the Sandisfield Strategic Planning Committee.

Sandy Parisky

Sandy serves on the board of the Sandisfield Arts Center and is chairman of its strategic planning committee. He and his wife Flora live in the New Boston section of Sandisfield in the Daniel Brown House (c. 1760), their year-round second home since 1988. Prior to retiring, they owned a consulting firm specializing in community revitalization, public policy,

strategic planning and fund development projects for public and private clients in Connecticut and Massachusetts. He and Flora share an art studio in Hartford featuring photography, painting and children's book illustrations. Their artwork is exhibited locally and in juried shows and private galleries.

John Skrip

John Skrip currently serves on many boards in town, including the Selectboard, Board of Education, Strategic Planning Committee, Cultural Council, and Sandisfield Arts Center Board of Directors. John was also the Town Moderator from 2010-2015. John has a background in education at both the high school and college level, including years of teaching chemistry and serving as an assistant principal at a high school in Connecticut. In his free time, he enjoys reading, community activities and traveling.

Andy Snyder

Andy Snyder and his wife Sandra moved to Sandisfield in 1993 with the desire to return the old Hube property back into the farm it once was. Andy graduated from Clark University with degrees in Biology and Business. Combined with Sandra's background with small scale farming and animal husbandry, When Pigs Fly Farm was formed and continues to expand each year. Andy serves proudly as a Firefighter and EMT in Sandisfield. Andy also serves on the Planning Board, and drives the Sandisfield school van for the Farmington River School.

Public Opinion Survey

Early in the creation of the Master Plan, the steering committee developed a public opinion survey. The survey was available online, through the website SurveyMonkey.com as well as through hardcopies available at the Town Hall, the Library, the transfer station, Post Office, Sandisfield Arts Center and When Pigs Fly Farm. The survey was available from July 31st to August 31st, 2015. Overall there were 132 responses to the survey, with most respondents being older than 45 years of age. Roughly 18% (24/132) of survey respondents did not answer demographic questions, and cannot be identified or grouped based on residency status. However, of the remaining 108 respondents that identified demographic questions, 40% identified as year-round residents and 60%

identified as seasonal or second homeowners. Based on data from the 2010 Census, 4.8% of all year-round residents in town responded to the survey. The survey asked 30 questions in total, and covered a broad range of topics including general opinion about the town (see Figure 12.1), recreation, town services, transportation, housing, and other topics to be addressed in the Master Plan. A copy of responses to the public opinion survey are included as Appendix E of this document.

Stakeholder Interviews

BRPC conducted a number of stakeholder interviews to inform the development of the Master Plan. The intent of this effort was to assess ongoing or in progress work by the town and question those with first hand knowledge about town affairs as to the direction and steps the town should take in the future. Additionally, through the interview process, the committee hoped to gain perspective from important organizations involved in the town. Interviews were conducted in August and September of 2015, and were intended to gather information early in the Master Plan process.

Interviews were conducted primarily over the telephone, with some stakeholders completing a short questionnaire in lieu of a formal interview. Potential stakeholders were identified as leaders or chairpersons of town boards and committees, other town officials and staff, as well as those involved in local and regional entities, such as the Sandisfield Times or Arts Center. Many individuals beyond the list below were contacted to participate in the stakeholder interviews; however, they were unable to be scheduled or did not return the questionnaire.

Questions asked in the questionnaire were as follows:

1. What are your responsibilities (as a town employee or board/committee member, or with other organizations)?
2. What ongoing or in progress work or initiatives are you involved with?
3. What trends or recurring issues have you noticed in your work in town? How have these trends changed from the past?
4. What are the most important issues facing the town?
5. What actions or steps should be taken to address

these issues?

Individuals Participating in Stakeholder Interviews

Dolores Harasyko, Town Clerk

Eric Munson, Building Inspector

Stephan Harasyko, Highway Superintendent

Clare English, Library Board of Trustees

Alice Boyd, Chair of Select Board

Ronald Bernard, Chair of Historical Commission, founding editor of Sandisfield Times.

Marcella Smith*, President of Sandisfield Arts Center

Susie Crofut*, Vice President of Sandisfield Arts Center

Bill Price, Editor of Sandisfield Times

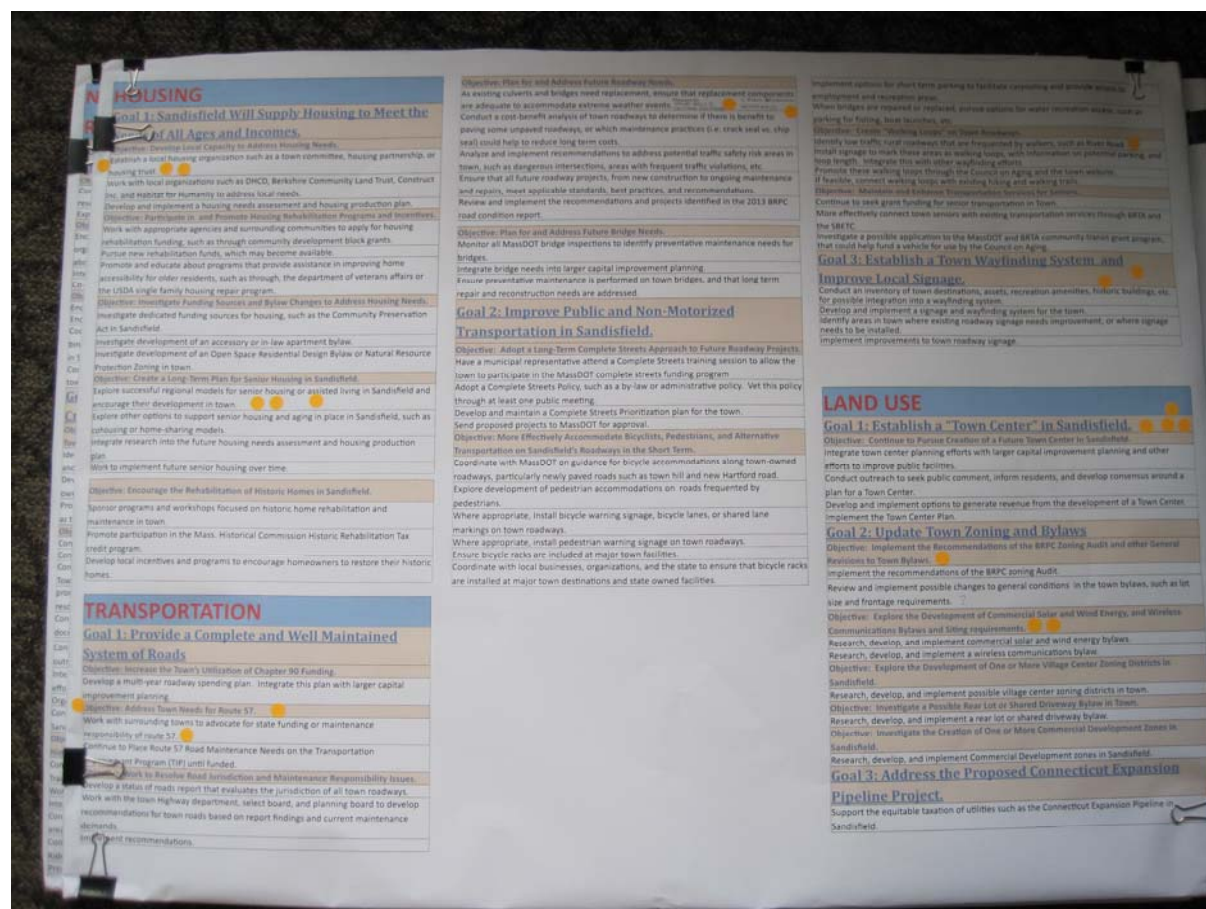
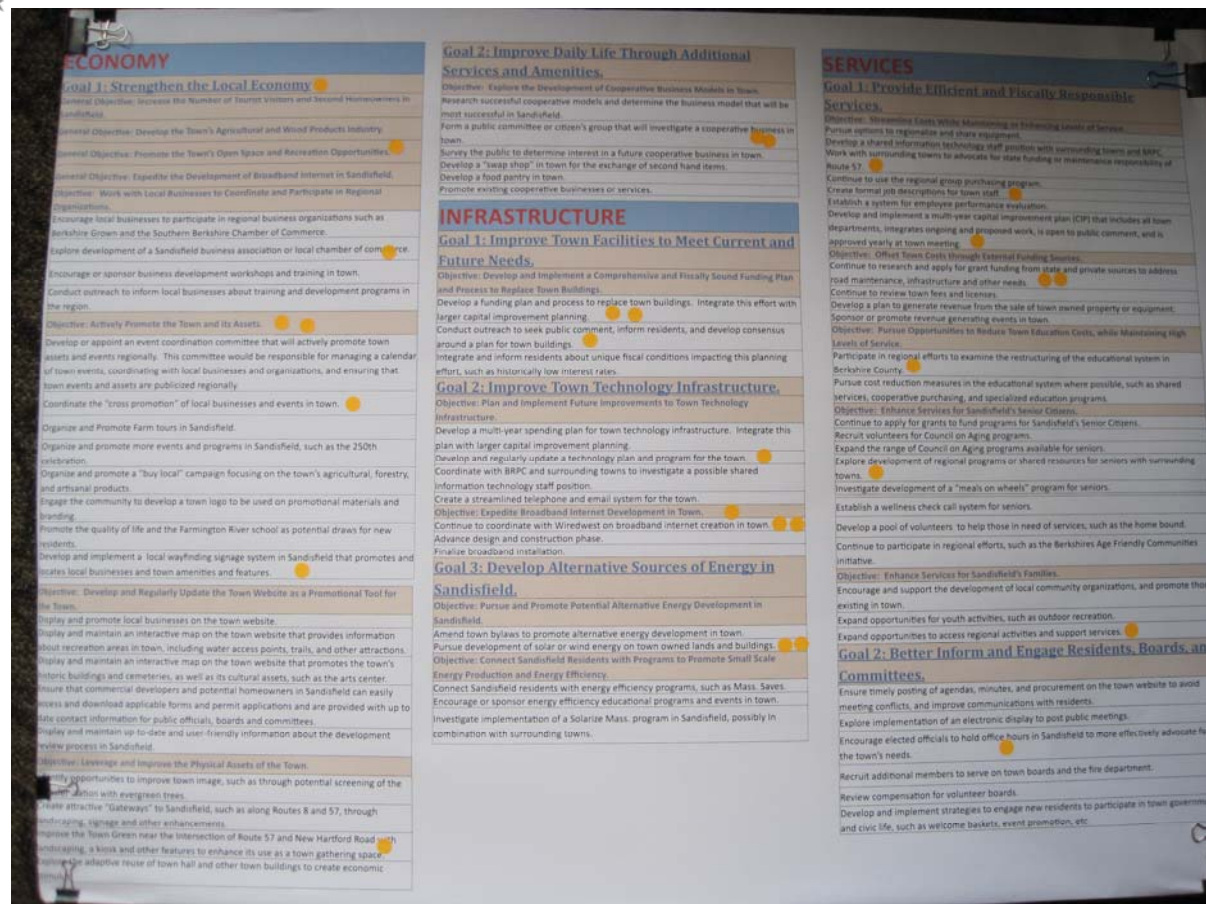
Simon Winchester, Founding editor of Sandisfield Times

Linda Riiska, Chair of Council on Aging

Jean Atwater-Williams, Chair of Technology Committee

Liana Toscanini*, Development and Marketing Director for Community Access to the Arts, Founder of Sandisfield Times, Former President of Sandisfield Arts Center

*interviewed via email questionnaire due to time and scheduling constraints, all others interviewed through telephone call.



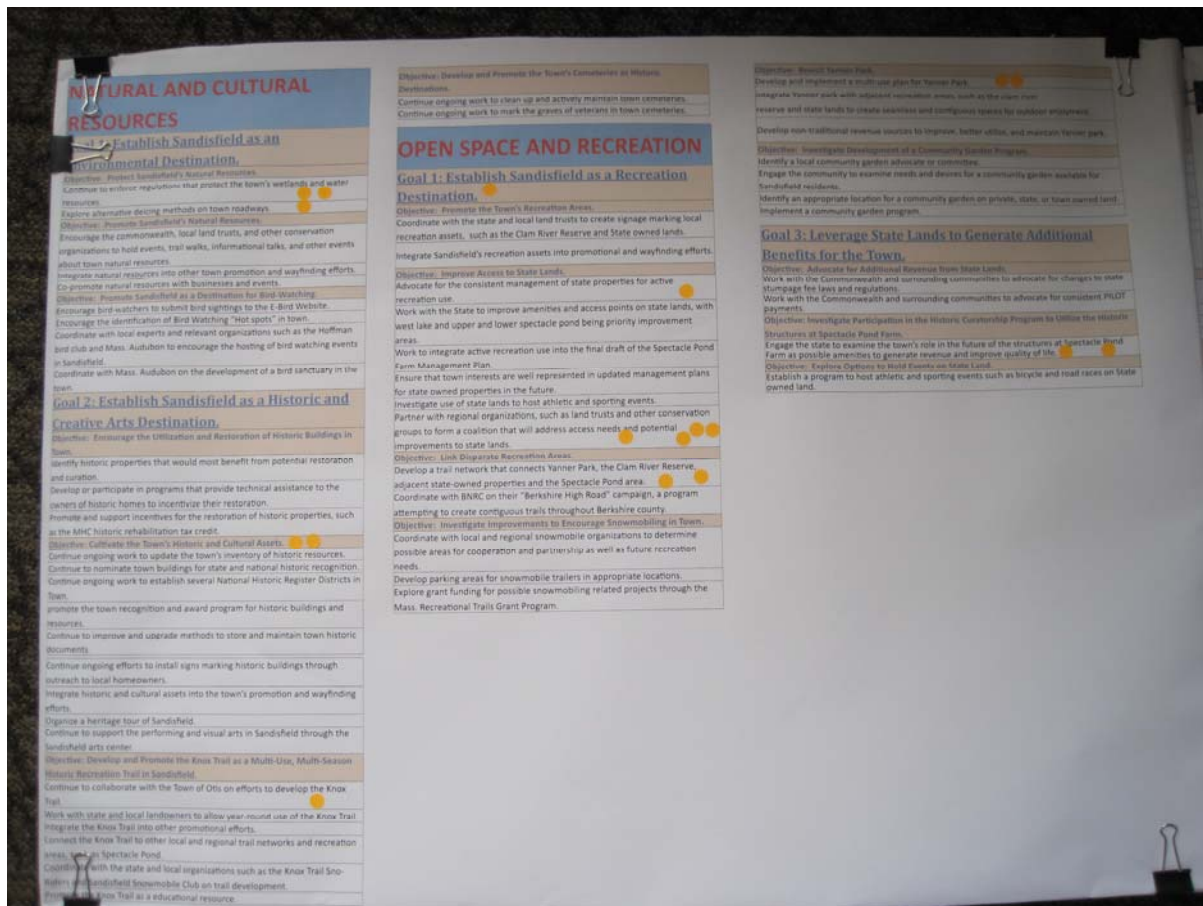


Figure 12.2—Images of prioritization boards from Public Forum held on April 13, 2016. Forum attendees were asked to identify important draft goals, objectives, and actions with an orange sticker dot.



CHAPTER 13: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This chapter describes the types of actions that will be needed to implement this plan, who will be responsible for taking action on each item, and the relative priority for timing of implementation. It also describes the procedure for amending and updating the plan over time.

Implementation Actions

This plan will be implemented primarily through five types of actions:

- 1) Day-to-Day Policy Decisions
- 2) Regulatory Changes
- 3) Plans and Programs
- 4) Regional Coordination
- 5) Collaborative Action

Each of these actions will likely involve more than one group or individual in the town and region. Specific responsibilities will be detailed for each action in the next sections of this chapter.

Day to Day Policy Decisions

The town administration, boards, commissions, and departments will be responsible for many of the day-to-day decisions that will cumulatively help implement this plan. Many of these decisions will be made by the Select Board in the form of policy creation and support and task delegation.

Regulatory Changes

A number of significant recommendations of this plan are directly or indirectly related to the development of new regulations to govern growth and land use in the town. The Planning Board will be responsible for the initiation of the efforts to draft new bylaw language but it will take a united effort on the part of the town to conduct appropriate outreach to achieve a successful and appropriate bylaw product that meets the needs of the town.

Plans and Programs

The goals, policies, and actions of this plan impact other plans and programs of the town in a few ways. Future updates to other town plans, such

as an Open Space and Recreation Plan, will need to be in compliance with the Master Plan. New programs called for in this plan will need to be systematically pursued and implemented by the responsible entity as resources allow – such as economic development activities and infrastructure planning and implementation.

Regional Governmental Coordination

In many cases, the implementation of this plan can and should involve other municipalities, the state, or the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. The town will need to take the first step of starting a dialogue on items where collaborative planning or action is needed or where technical assistance is needed or desired.

Collaborative Action

At a very basic level, successful implementation of this plan will require collaborative action outside of the realm of formal government. Residents, various pond and watershed associations, recreation groups, state agencies, local business owners, and others will need to actively engage in the implementation of this plan – through both direct action and through support and participation with town-led implementations actions. This plan is working to achieve a shared vision of the town's future – achieving that will take a whole- town effort.

Who Will Implement the Plan?

This plan will be implemented through the collaborative and individual effort of a number of organizations, agencies, and individuals. The action plan uses the abbreviations listed at the bottom of each page to identify the parties that will likely be involved in the achievement of the corresponding action. The town may wish to consider appointing an implementation committee that would help to organize efforts to implement the plan. This committee could be especially important in working to organizing and manage volunteers to help with implementation activities. The committee could also serve as an advocate for the plan and work with other town boards and committees on strategies for plan

implementation. Moreover, it could work to “roll out” Master Plan implementation activities through integration into its regular “all boards” meetings.

It should also be noted that the Master Plan calls for the creation of four new town boards or committees. It will be up to the town to best decide how to approach creating these new entities. Regardless, the plan calls for a new business association or business committee (Action E.1.2). This organization would help to coordinate activities of local businesses and entrepreneurs. Ideally, this group would act as a local “chamber of commerce” to promote and protect the interests of the business community. Moreover, the plan calls for creation an event coordination committee (Action E.3.1). This group would be responsible for maintaining a calendar of local events and for promoting the town throughout the region. Additionally, due to the fact that agriculture and forestry are two of the towns biggest industries, a new agricultural committee could help to better promote local businesses and products and overall strengthen this industry in Sandisfield (Action E.3.2). Finally, a proposed housing committee or similar organization (trust, partnership) would begin long term planning for senior and other affordable housing in Sandisfield (Action H.1.1).

The Action Plan has been developed to span a period of five years after the Master Plan’s initial adoption. Actions were categorized based on several likely periods for implementation. Items listed as “ongoing” in the schedule are actions that the town is already in the process of implementing and will likely continue to work on in the future. Actions listed as “immediate and ongoing” are items that can be implemented on an ongoing basis by the town, or integrated into other activities, but are not yet being acted on by the town. These actions may also serve as the basis for new town policies. While some may not be immediately actionable, they could be crafted into a town policy that would help to ensure they are acted upon when the opportunity arises. Finally, other actions are divided between three broad time periods; 1-3 years, 3-5 years, and 5+ years. Some actions, particularly those in the 1-3 year time period may reoccur regularly or continuously after initial implementation. It will be up to the town to evaluate its successes and determine if these actions occur once, or are

implemented regularly.

Some items on the action plan can be completed within this five year period, while many others will not. It is recommended that the town reevaluate the action plan after this five year period to reflect on its successes and review its priorities. The town will likely not choose to pursue a full update of the Master Plan at this point, but may revise the action plan to more effectively implement the plan.

Additionally, it should be noted that some items in the Action Plan are redundant. This was intentional, and attempts to make the plan actions supporting and reinforcing, and to emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of many of the items to be acted on by the town.

UPDATING THE PLAN

A Master Plan looks far into the future and establishes a roadmap of goals, policies, and actions for the town to implement over time. In order for the plan to remain a relevant document, however, periodic updates will be necessary. Updates can occur in two general ways: plan amendments and a full plan update.

Plan Amendments

The town may, from time to time, encounter changing conditions, new laws or programs, or other circumstances that it wishes to reflect or respond to through the Master Plan document. The plan amendment process is fairly simple (see below) and allows the planning board to make small but important changes to the document over time to keep pace with changing circumstances.

Plan Update

Eventually, conditions will shift to a degree that a minor amendment is insufficient to achieve a document that provides meaningful and forward-thinking guidance to the town. At this time, typically 10-15 years from initial adoption of a new or fully updated plan, municipalities can go through a plan update process. At this time, the community initiates a full new planning process to rethink or reaffirm the



vision and chart out new policy directions and carry forward any relevant directions from the prior document.

Amendment and Update Procedure

MGL 41 S81D (Appendix D) describes the practice and procedure for amending and updating an adopted Master Plan.

Vote:

An amendment of the comprehensive plan may be made through a formal majority vote of the planning board and recorded for public record.

Filing:

The planning board must supply a copy of the amended or updated plan to the Department of Housing and Community Development. In the case of an amendment, a good practice would be to include a cover memo highlighting the amendment that was made.

ACTION PLAN

The action plan details each implementation action contained in the prior chapters of the Master Plan, the proposed timing for the action to be taken, potential leadership, and other interested parties responsible for implementing the action.

ECONOMY		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 1: Strengthen the Local Economy					
General Objective: Develop the Town's Agricultural and Wood Products Industry.					
General Objective: Promote the Town's Open Space and Recreation Opportunities.					
General Objective: Expedite the Development of Broadband Internet in Sandisfield.					
Objective: Work with Local Businesses to Coordinate and Participate in Regional Organizations.					
E.1.1	Encourage local businesses to participate in regional business organizations such as Berkshire Grown and the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce.	New Bus., Vol.	—	1-3 Years	Medium
E.1.2	Explore development of a Sandisfield Business Association, Committee, or local Chamber of Commerce.	New Bus., Vol.	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
E.1.3	Encourage or sponsor business development workshops and training in town.	New Bus., Vol.	BOS	1-3 Years	High
E.1.4	Conduct outreach to inform local businesses about training and development programs in the region.	New Bus., Vol.	BOS	1-3 Years	High
Objective: Increase the Number of Tourist Visitors and Second Homeowners in Sandisfield.					
E.2.1	Expand opportunities for tourist lodging	Vol., Hist. Com.	New Bus.	Immediate & Ongoing	High
Objective: Actively Promote the Town and its Assets.					
E.3.1	Develop or appoint an Event Coordination Committee that will actively promote town assets and events regionally. This committee would be responsible for managing a calendar of town events, coordinating with local businesses and organizations, and ensuring that town events and assets are publicized regionally.	New Event, Cul. Co.	Hist. Com., BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
E.3.2	Develop or appoint an Agriculture Committee to promote and cultivate the town's agricultural assets.	New Ag.	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
E.3.3	Coordinate the "cross promotion" of local businesses and events in town.	New Event, New Ag.	Vol., Cul. Co.	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
E.3.4	Organize and promote farm tours in Sandisfield.	New Ag.	Vol.	Ongoing	Medium
E.3.5	Organize and promote more events and programs in Sandisfield, such as the 250th celebration.	New Event	Vol.	Ongoing	High
E.3.6	Organize and promote a "buy local" campaign focusing on the town's agricultural, forestry, and artisanal products.	New Ag.	Cul. Co.	1-3 Years	Low
E.3.7	Engage the community to develop a town logo to be used on promotional materials and branding.	Cul. Co.	Vol., BOS	1-3 Years	Low
E.3.8	Promote the quality of life and the Farmington River school as potential draws for new residents.	School, Cul. Co.	Vol.	Ongoing	Low
E.3.9	Develop and implement a local wayfinding signage system in Sandisfield that promotes and locates local businesses and town amenities and features.	BOS, Cul. Co.	Highway	1-3 Years	High

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation				Schedule			
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	School	Farmington River School and School Committee	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	Planning	Planning Board	Cem.	Cemetery Committee	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Sandisfield Cultural Council	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	Rec.	Recreation Committee	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	COA	Council on Aging	MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Strat. Plan.	Strategic Planning Committee
Energy	Energy Committee	New	New Business (Bus.), Event Coord., Agriculture (Ag.), or Housing (Hous.) Committee	BNRC	Berk. Nat. Res. Council		

ECONOMY—Continued		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Objective: Develop and Regularly Update the Town Website as a Promotional Tool for the Town.					
E.4.1	Display and promote local businesses on the town website.	Tech.	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing	High
E.4.2	Display and maintain an interactive map on the town website that provides information about recreation areas in town, including water access points, trails, and other attractions.	Tech.	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
E.4.3	Display and maintain an interactive map on the town website that promotes the town's historic buildings and cemeteries, as well as its cultural assets, such as the arts center.	Tech.	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
E.4.4	Ensure that commercial developers and potential homeowners in Sandisfield can easily access and download applicable forms and permit applications and are provided with up to date contact information for public officials, boards and committees.	Tech.	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
E.4.5	Display and maintain up-to-date and user-friendly information about the development review process in Sandisfield.	Tech.	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
Objective: Leverage and Improve the Physical Assets of the Town.					
E.5.1	Identify opportunities to improve town image, such as through potential screening of the transfer station with evergreen trees.	Strat. Plan.	Highway	1-3 Years	High
E.5.2	Create attractive "Gateways" to Sandisfield, such as along Routes 8 and 57, through landscaping, signage, and other enhancements.	Strat. Plan.	Highway	1-3 Years	High
E.5.3	Improve the Town Green near the Intersection of Route 57 and New Hartford Road with landscaping, a kiosk and other features to enhance its use as a town gathering space.	Strat. Plan.	Highway	1-3 Years	High
E.5.4	Explore the adaptive reuse of town hall and other town buildings to create economic stimulus.	Strat. Plan.	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium.
Goal 2: Improve Daily Life Through Additional Services and Amenities.					
Objective: Explore the Development of Cooperative Business Models in Town.					
E.6.1	Research successful cooperative models and determine the business model that will be most successful in Sandisfield.	New Bus., Vol.	BOS	3-5 Years	Low
E.6.2	Form a public committee or citizen's group that will investigate a cooperative business in town.	New Bus., Vol.	BOS	3-5 Years	Low
E.6.3	Survey the public to determine interest in a future cooperative business in town.	New Bus., Vol.	BOS	3-5 Years	Low
E.6.4	Develop a "swap shop" in town for the exchange of second hand items.	Vol., Fire	BOS	1-3 Years	High
E.6.5	Develop a food pantry in town.	Vol.	BOS	5+ Years	Low
E.6.6	Promote existing cooperative businesses or services.	New Bus.,	BOS	Ongoing	Low

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation				Schedule			
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	School	Farmington River School and School Committee	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	Planning	Planning Board	Cem.	Cemetery Committee	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Sandisfield Cultural Council	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	Rec.	Recreation Committee	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	COA	Council on Aging	MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Strat. Plan.	Strategic Planning Committee
Energy	Energy Committee	New	New Business (Bus.), Event Coord., Agriculture (Ag.), or Housing (Hous.) Committee	BNRC	Berk. Nat. Res. Council		

INFRASTRUCTURE					Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 1: Improve Town Facilities to Meet Current and Future Needs.								
Objective: Develop and Implement a Comprehensive and Fiscally Sound Funding Plan and Process to Replace Town Buildings.								
I.1.1	Develop a funding plan and process to replace town buildings. Integrate this effort with larger capital improvement planning.				Strat. Plan., Finance	BOS	1-3 Years	High
I.1.2	Conduct outreach to seek public comment, inform residents, and develop consensus around a plan for town buildings.				Strat. Plan., Finance	BOS	1-3 Years	High
I.1.3	Integrate and inform residents about unique fiscal conditions impacting this planning effort, such as historically low interest rates.				Finance	Strat. Plan., BOS	1-3 Years	High
Goal 2: Improve Town Technology Infrastructure.								
Objective: Plan and Implement Future Improvements to Town Technology Infrastructure.								
I.2.1	Develop a multi-year spending plan for town technology infrastructure. Integrate this plan with larger capital improvement planning.				Finance, Tech.	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
I.2.2	Develop and regularly update a technology plan and program for the town.				Tech.	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
I.2.3	Coordinate with BRPC and surrounding towns to investigate a possible shared Information technology staff position.				BOS, Tech.	BRPC	1-3 Years	High
I.2.4	Create a streamlined telephone and email system for the town.				BOS, Tech.		3-5 Years	Medium
Objective: Expedite Broadband Internet Development in Town.								
I.3.1	Continue to coordinate with Wiredwest on broadband internet creation in town.				Tech.	BOS	Ongoing	High
I.3.2	Advance design and construction phase.				Tech.	BOS	1-3 Years	High
I.3.3	Finalize broadband installation.				Tech.	BOS	1-3 Years	High
Goal 3: Develop Alternative Sources of Energy in Sandisfield.								
Objective: Pursue and Promote Potential Alternative Energy Development in Sandisfield.								
I.4.1	Amend town bylaws to promote alternative energy development in town.				Planning	BOS, Strat. Plan.	3-5 Years	Low
I.4.2	Pursue development of solar or wind energy on town owned lands and buildings.				Energy	BOS, Strat. Plan.	1-3 Years	High
Objective: Connect Sandisfield Residents with Programs to Promote Small Scale Energy Production and Energy Efficiency.								
I.5.1	Connect Sandisfield residents with energy efficiency and savings programs, such as Mass. Saves.				BOS	Energy	1-3 Years	High
I.5.2	Encourage or sponsor energy efficiency educational programs and events in town.				Energy	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
I.5.3	Investigate implementation of a Solarize Mass. program in Sandisfield, possibly in combination with surrounding towns.				Energy	BOS	3-5 Years	Low
Parties Involved in Plan Implementation					Schedule			
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town	
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation	
BOH	Board of Health	School	Farmington River School and School Committee	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame	
BOS	Board of Selectmen	Planning	Planning Board	Cem.	Cemetery Committee	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame	
Cul. Co.	Sandisfield Cultural Council	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	Rec.	Recreation Committee	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation	
Staff	Town Staff	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	Tech.	Technology Committee	
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	COA	Council on Aging	MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Strat. Plan.	Strategic Planning Committee	
Energy	Energy Committee	New	New Business (Bus.), Event Coord., Agriculture (Ag.), or Housing (Hous.) Committee	BNRC	Berk. Nat. Res. Council			

SERVICES				Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 1: Provide Efficient and Fiscally Responsible Services.							
Objective: Streamline Costs While Maintaining or Enhancing Levels of Service.							
S.1.1	Pursue options to regionalize and share equipment.			All		Ongoing	High
S.1.2	Develop a shared information technology staff position with surrounding towns and BRPC.			BOS, Tech.	BRPC	1-3 Years	High
S.1.3	Work with surrounding towns to advocate for state funding or maintenance responsibility of Route 57.			BOS	Highway	Ongoing	High
S.1.4	Continue to use the regional group purchasing program or other cost saving programs.			Highway	BOS	Ongoing	High
S.1.5	Create formal job descriptions for town staff.			BOS	Staff	Ongoing	High
S.1.6	Establish a system for employee performance evaluation.			BOS	Staff	Ongoing	High
S.1.7	Develop and implement a multi-year capital improvement plan (CIP) that includes all town departments, integrates ongoing and proposed work, is open to public comment, and is approved yearly at town meeting.			Finance, All	BOS	Ongoing	High
Objective: Offset Town Costs through External Funding Sources.							
S.2.1	Continue to research and apply for grant funding from state and private sources to address road maintenance, infrastructure and other needs.			BOS	—	Ongoing	High
S.2.2	Continue to review town fees and licenses.			BOS	Finance	Ongoing	High
S.2.3	Develop a plan to generate revenue from the sale of town owned property or equipment.			BOS, Finance	Strat. Plan.	1-3 Years	Medium
S.2.4	Sponsor or promote revenue generating events in town.			BOS, Strat. Plan.	Cul. Co.	1-3 Years	Medium
Objective: Pursue Opportunities to Reduce Town Education Costs, while Maintaining High Levels of Service.							
S.3.1	Participate in regional efforts to examine the restructuring of the educational system in Berkshire County.			School	BOS, Finance	Ongoing	High
S.3.2	Pursue cost reduction measures in the educational system where possible, such as shared services, cooperative purchasing, and specialized education programs.			School	BOS, Finance	Ongoing	High
Objective: Enhance Services for Sandisfield’s Senior Citizens.							
S.4.1	Continue to apply for grants to fund programs for Sandisfield’s Senior Citizens.			COA	BOS	Ongoing	High
S.4.2	Recruit volunteers for Council on Aging programs.			COA	Vol.	Ongoing	Medium
S.4.3	Expand the range of Council on Aging programs available for seniors.			COA	BOS	Ongoing	Medium
S.4.4	Explore development of regional programs or shared resources for seniors with surrounding towns.			COA	BRPC	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
S.4.5	Investigate development of a “meals on wheels” program for seniors.			COA	Vol.	1-3 Years	Low
Parties Involved in Plan Implementation				Schedule			
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	School	Farmington River School and School Committee	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	Planning	Planning Board	Cem.	Cemetery Committee	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Sandisfield Cultural Council	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	Rec.	Recreation Committee	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	COA	Council on Aging	MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Strat. Plan.	Strategic Planning Committee
Energy	Energy Committee	New	New Business (Bus.), Event Coord., Agriculture (Ag.), or Housing (Hous.) Committee	BNRC	Berk. Nat. Res. Council		

SERVICES—Continued		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
S.5.1	Establish a wellness check call system for seniors.	COA	Vol.	1-3 Years	High
S.5.2	Develop a pool of volunteers to help those in need of services, such as the home bound.	COA	Vol.	1-3 Years	High
S.5.3	Continue to participate in regional efforts, such as the Berkshires Age Friendly Communities initiative.	COA	Vol.	Ongoing	Low
Objective: Enhance Services for Sandisfield's Families.					
S.6.1	Encourage and support the development of local community organizations, and promote those existing in town.	Vol.	—	Ongoing	Medium
S.6.2	Expand opportunities for youth activities, such as outdoor recreation.	Rec.	Vol.	Ongoing	Medium
S.6.2	Expand opportunities to access regional activities and support services.	Rec.	Vol.	Ongoing	Medium
Goal 2: Better Inform and Engage Residents, Boards, and Committees.					
S.7.1	Ensure timely posting of agendas, minutes, and procurement on the town website to avoid meeting conflicts, and improve communications with residents.	BOS, Staff	All	Ongoing	High
S.7.2	Explore implementation of an electronic display to post public meetings.	BOS	—	3-5 Years	Low
S.7.3	Encourage elected officials to hold office hours in Sandisfield to more effectively advocate for the town's needs.	BOS	—	Immediate & Ongoing	High
S.7.4	Recruit additional members to serve on town boards and the fire department.	BOS	Vol.	Ongoing	High
S.7.5	Review compensation for volunteer boards.	BOS	Finance	1-3 Years	Low
S.7.6	Develop and implement strategies to engage new residents to participate in town government and civic life, such as welcome baskets, event promotion, etc.	Vol.	Cul. Col.	Immediate & Ongoing	High

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation					Schedule		
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All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
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HOUSING		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 1: Sandisfield Will Supply Housing to Meet the Needs of All Ages and Incomes.					
Objective: Develop Local Capacity to Address Housing Needs.					
H.1.1	Establish a local housing organization such as a town committee, housing partnership, or housing trust.	BOS, New Hous.	Finance, Vol.	1-3 Years	High
H.1.2	Work with local organizations such as DHCD, Berkshire Community Land Trust, Construct Inc. and Habitat for Humanity to address local needs.	New Hous.	BOS, Strat. Plan.	3-5 Years	Medium
H.1.3	Develop and implement a housing needs assessment and housing production plan.	New Hous.	BOS, BRPC	5+ Years	Medium
Objective: Participate in and Promote Housing Rehabilitation Programs and Incentives.					
H.2.1	Work with appropriate agencies and surrounding communities to apply for housing rehabilitation funding, such as through community development block grants.	New Hous., BOS	—	3-5 Years	Low
H.2.2	Pursue new rehabilitation funds, which may become available.	New Hous.	—	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
H.2.3	Promote and educate about programs that provide assistance in improving home accessibility for older residents, such as through, the department of veterans affairs or the USDA single family housing repair program.	New Hous.	—	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
Objective: Investigate Funding Sources and Bylaw Changes to Address Housing Needs.					
H.3.1	Investigate dedicated funding sources for housing, such as the Community Preservation Act In Sandisfield.	BOS	—	3-5 Years	Low
H.3.2	Investigate development of an accessory or in-law apartment bylaw.	Planning	BOS	3-5 Years	Medium
H.3.3	Investigate development of an Open Space Residential Design Bylaw or Natural Resource Protection Zoning in town.	Planning	BOS	3-5 Years	Medium
Objective: Create a Long-Term Plan for Senior Housing in Sandisfield.					
H.3.1	Explore successful regional models for senior housing or assisted living in Sandisfield and encourage their development in town.	New Hous.	Strat. Plan	5+ Years	Low
H.3.2	Explore other options to support senior housing and aging in place in Sandisfield, such as cohousing or home-sharing models.	New Hous.	Strat. Plan	5+ Years	Low
H.3.3	Integrate research into the future housing needs assessment and housing production plan.	New Hous.	Strat. Plan	5+ Years	Low
H.3.4	Work to implement future senior housing over time.	New Hous.	Strat. Plan	5+ Years	Medium

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HOUSING—Continued		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Objective: Encourage the Rehabilitation of Historic Homes in Sandisfield.					
H.4.1	Sponsor programs and workshops focused on historic home rehabilitation and maintenance in town.	Hist. Comm.	New	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
H.4.1	Promote participation in the Mass. Historical Commission Historic Rehabilitation Tax credit program.	Hist. Comm.	New	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
H.4.1	Develop local incentives and programs to encourage homeowners to restore their historic homes.	Hist. Comm.	New	Ongoing	Medium

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TRANSPORTATION		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 1: Provide a Complete and Well Maintained System of Roads					
Objective: Increase the Town's Utilization of Chapter 90 Funding.					
T.1.1	Develop a multi-year roadway spending plan. Integrate this plan with larger capital improvement planning.	Finance, Highway	BOS	1-3 Years	High
Objective: Address Town Needs for Route 57.					
T.2.1	Work with surrounding towns to advocate for state funding or maintenance responsibility of route 57.	BOS	Highway	Ongoing	High
T.2.2	Continue to place Route 57 road maintenance needs on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) until funded.	Highway	BOS	Ongoing	High
Objective: Work to Resolve Road Jurisdiction and Maintenance Responsibility Issues.					
T.3.1	Develop a status of roads report that evaluates the jurisdiction of all town roadways.	BOS	BRPC	1-3 Years	Low
T.3.2	Work with the town Highway department, select board, and planning board to develop recommendations for town roads based on report findings and current maintenance demands.	Highway	BOS, Planning	3-5 Years	Low
T.3.3	Implement recommendations.	BOS	Highway	5+ Years	Low
Objective: Plan for and Address Future Roadway Needs.					
T.4.1	As existing culverts and bridges need replacement, ensure that replacement components are adequate to accommodate extreme weather events.	Highway	—	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
T.4.1	Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of town roadways to determine if there is benefit to paving some unpaved roadways, or which maintenance practices (i.e. crack seal vs. chip seal) could help to reduce long term costs.	Finance	Highway	1-3 Years	High
T.4.2	Analyze and implement recommendations to address potential traffic safety risk areas in town, such as dangerous intersections, areas with frequent traffic violations, etc.	BOS, Police, EMD	Highway	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
T.4.3	Ensure that all future roadway projects, from new construction to ongoing maintenance and repairs, meet applicable standards, best practices, and recommendations.	Highway	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing	High
T.4.4	Review and implement the recommendations and projects identified in the 2013 BRPC road condition report.	Highway	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing	High

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TRANSPORTATION—Continued		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Objective: Plan for and Address Future Bridge Needs.					
T.5.1	Monitor all MassDOT bridge inspections to identify preventative maintenance needs for bridges.	Highway	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing	High
T.5.2	Integrate bridge needs into larger capital improvement planning.	Highway	Finance	Ongoing	High
T.5.3	Ensure preventative maintenance is performed on town bridges, and that long term repair and reconstruction needs are addressed.	Highway	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing	High
Goal 2: Improve Public and Non-Motorized Transportation in Sandisfield.					
Objective: Adopt a Long-Term Complete Streets Approach to Future Roadway Projects.					
T.6.1	Have a municipal representative attend a Complete Streets training session to allow the town to participate in the MassDOT complete streets funding program	BOS	—	Completed February 2016	High
T.6.2	Adopt a Complete Streets Policy, such as a by-law or administrative policy. Vet this policy through at least one public meeting.	BOS	—	Completed March 2016	High
T.6.3	Develop and maintain a Complete Streets Prioritization plan for the town.	Highway	BRPC, BOS	1-3 Years	High
T.6.4	Send proposed projects to MassDOT for approval.	Highway	BOS	1-3 Years	High
Objective: More Effectively Accommodate Bicyclists, Pedestrians, and Alternative Transportation on Sandisfield's Roadways in the Short Term.					
T.7.1	Coordinate with MassDOT on guidance for bicycle accommodations along town-owned roadways, particularly newly paved roads such as town hill and new Hartford road.	Highway	BOS, MassDOT	1-3 Years	Medium
T.7.2	Explore development of pedestrian accommodations on roads frequented by pedestrians.	Highway	BOS, Strat. Plan.	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
T.7.3	Where appropriate, Install bicycle warning signage, bicycle lanes, or shared lane markings on town roadways.	Highway	BOS, MassDOT	3-5 Years	Medium
T.7.4	Where appropriate, install pedestrian warning signage on town roadways.	Highway	BOS	3-5 Years	Medium
T.7.5	Ensure bicycle racks are included at major town facilities.	Highway	BOS	3-5 Years	Medium
T.7.6	Coordinate with local businesses, organizations, and the state to ensure that bicycle racks are installed at major town destinations and state owned facilities.	Highway	BOS, MassDOT	Ongoing	Low

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TRANSPORTATION—Continued		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
T.7.7	Implement options for short term parking to facilitate carpooling and provide access to employment and recreation areas.	BOS, Strat. Plan.	Highway	1-3 Years	Medium
T.7.8	When bridges are repaired or replaced, pursue options for water recreation access, such as parking for fishing, boat launches, etc.	Rec., BOS	Highway	Immediate and Ongoing	Low
Objective: Create “Walking Loops” on Town Roadways.					
T.8.1	Identify low traffic rural roadways that are frequented by walkers, such as River Road.	Rec.	Strat. Plan.	1-3 Years	Medium
T.8.2	Install signage to mark these areas as walking loops, with information on potential parking, and loop length. Integrate this with other wayfinding efforts.	Rec.	Highway	3-5 Years	Medium
T.8.3	Promote these walking loops through the Council on Aging and the town website.	COA	Staff	3-5 Years	Low
T.8.4	If feasible, connect walking loops with existing hiking and walking trails.	Rec., Strat. Plan.	Con. Com.	5+ Years	Low
Objective: Maintain and Enhance Transportation Services for Seniors.					
T.9.1	Continue to seek grant funding for senior transportation in Town.	COA	BOS	Ongoing	High
T.9.2	More effectively connect town seniors with existing transportation services through BRTA and the SBETC.	COA	BOS	1-3 Years	High
T.9.3	Investigate a possible application to the MassDOT and BRTA community transit grant program, that could help fund a vehicle for use by the Council on Aging.	COA	BOS	3-5 Years	Low
Goal 3: Establish a Town Wayfinding System and Improve Local Signage.					
T.10.1	Conduct an inventory of town destinations, assets, recreation amenities, historic buildings, etc. for possible integration into a wayfinding system.	Strat. Plan., Cul. Co., New Bus.	Highway	1-3 Years	High
T.10.2	Develop and implement a signage and wayfinding system for the town.	Strat. Plan.	Highway	1-3 Years	High
T.10.3	Identify areas in town where existing roadway signage needs improvement, or where signage needs to be installed.	BOS	Highway, Fire, Police	1-3 Years	High
T.10.4	Implement improvements to town roadway signage.	BOS	Highway, Fire, Police	1-3 Years	High

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LAND USE		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 1: Establish a “Town Center” in Sandisfield.					
Objective: Continue to Pursue Creation of a Future Town Center In Sandisfield.					
L.1.1	Integrate town center planning efforts with larger capital improvement planning and other efforts to improve public facilities.	Finance	Strat. Plan., BOS	1-3 Years	High
L.1.2	Conduct outreach to seek public comment, inform residents, and develop consensus around a plan for a Town Center.	Strat. Plan.	BOS	1-3 Years	High
L.1.3	Develop and implement options to generate revenue from the development of a Town Center.	Strat. Plan., Finance	BOS	1-3 Years	High
L.1.4	Implement the Town Center Plan.	Strat. Plan.	BOS	2-4 Years	High
Goal 2: Update Town Zoning and Bylaws					
Objective: Implement the Recommendations of the BRPC Zoning Audit and other General Revisions to Town Bylaws.					
L.2.1	Implement the recommendations of the BRPC zoning Audit.	Planning	BOS, BRPC	Ongoing	High
L.2.2	Review and implement possible changes to general conditions in the town bylaws, such as lot size and frontage requirements.	Planning	BOS	Ongoing	High
Objective: Explore the Development of Commercial Solar and Wind Energy, and Wireless Communications Bylaws and Siting requirements.					
L.3.1	Research, develop, and implement commercial solar and wind energy bylaws.	Planning, Energy	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
L.3.2	Research, develop, and implement a wireless communications bylaw.	Planning	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
Objective: Explore the Development of One or More Village Center Zoning Districts in Sandisfield.					
L.4.1	Research, develop, and implement possible village center zoning districts in town.	Planning	BOS	1-3 Years	High
Objective: Investigate a Possible Rear Lot or Shared Driveway Bylaw in Town.					
L.5.1	Research, develop, and implement a rear lot or shared driveway bylaw.	Planning	BOS	1-3 Years	High
Objective: Investigate the Creation of One or More Commercial Development Zones in Sandisfield.					
L.6.1	Research, develop, and implement Commercial Development zones in Sandisfield.	New Bus., Planning	BOS	3-5 Years	Low
Goal 3: Address the Proposed Connecticut Expansion Pipeline Project.					
L.7.1	Support the equitable taxation of utilities such as the Connecticut Expansion Pipeline in Sandisfield.	BOS, Planning	Con. Com.	1-3 Years	High

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NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 1: Establish Sandisfield as an Environmental Destination.					
Objective: Protect Sandisfield's Natural Resources.					
N.1.1	Continue to enforce regulations that protect the town's wetlands and water resources.	Con. Com.	BOH	Ongoing	Medium
N.1.2	Explore alternative deicing methods on town roadways.	BOS, Highway	Con. Com.	1-3 Years	Low
Objective: Promote Sandisfield's Natural Resources.					
N.2.1	Encourage the Commonwealth, local land trusts, and other conservation organizations to hold events, trail walks, informational talks, and other events about town natural resources.	Rec.	BOS, DCR, BNRC	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
N.2.2	Integrate natural resources into other town promotion and wayfinding efforts.	Strat. Plan., New Event	—	1-3 Years	High
N.2.3	Co-promote natural resources with businesses and events.	New Event, New Bus., Cul. Co.	Con. Com.	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
Objective: Promote Sandisfield as a Destination for Bird-Watching.					
N.3.1	Encourage bird-watchers to submit bird sightings to the E-Bird Website.	Vol., Rec.	—	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
N.3.2	Encourage the identification of Bird Watching "hot spots" in town.	Vol., Rec.	—	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
N.3.3	Coordinate with local experts and relevant organizations such as the Hoffman bird club and Mass. Audubon to encourage the hosting of bird watching events in Sandisfield.	Vol., Rec.	Audubon	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
N.3.4	Coordinate with Mass. Audubon on the development of a bird sanctuary in the town.	Vol., Rec.	Audubon	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
Goal 2: Establish Sandisfield as a Historic and Creative Arts Destination.					
Objective: Encourage the Utilization and Restoration of Historic Buildings in Town.					
N.4.1	Identify historic properties that would most benefit from potential restoration and curation.	Hist. Com.	Cul. Co.	Ongoing	Medium
N.4.2	Develop or participate in programs that provide technical assistance to the owners of historic homes to incentivize their restoration.	Hist. Com.	—	Ongoing	Low
N.4.3	Promote and support incentives for the restoration of historic properties, such as the MHC historic rehabilitation tax credit.	Hist. Com.	—	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
Objective: Cultivate the Town's Historic and Cultural Assets.					
N.5.1	Continue ongoing work to update the town's inventory of historic resources.	Hist. Com.	—	Ongoing	High
N.5.2	Continue to nominate town buildings for state and national historic recognition.	Hist. Com.	—	Ongoing	High
N.5.3	Continue ongoing work to establish several National Historic Register Districts in Town.	Hist. Com.	—	Ongoing	High
N.5.4	Promote the "Sandisfield Heritage Heroes" town recognition and award program for historic buildings and resources.	Hist. Com.	—	Ongoing	High
N.5.5	Continue to improve and upgrade methods to store and maintain town historic documents.	BOS	Staff	Ongoing	High

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NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES—Continued		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
N.5.6	Continue ongoing efforts to install signs marking historic buildings through outreach to local homeowners.	Hist. Com.	—	Ongoing	Low
N.5.7	Integrate historic and cultural assets into the town's promotion and wayfinding efforts.	Hist. Com.	Strat. Plan.	3-5 Years	Medium
N.5.8	Organize a heritage tour of Sandisfield.	Hist. Com.	—	1-3 Years	Low
N.5.9	Continue to support the performing and visual arts in Sandisfield through the Sandisfield Arts Center.	Hist. Com.	Vol. (Arts Center)	Ongoing	Medium
Objective: Develop and Promote the Knox Trail as a Multi-Use, Multi-Season Historic Recreation Trail in Sandisfield.					
N.6.1	Continue to collaborate with the Town of Otis on efforts to develop the Knox Trail.	Hist. Com.	—	Ongoing	High
N.6.2	Work with state and local landowners to allow year-round use of the Knox Trail.	Hist. Com.	—	Ongoing	High
N.6.3	Integrate the Knox Trail into other promotional efforts.	New Event, Hist. Com.	—	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
N.6.4	Connect the Knox Trail to other local and regional trail networks and recreation areas, such as Spectacle Pond.	Strat. Plan	Rec., DCR	Ongoing	Medium
N.6.5	Coordinate with the state and local organizations such as the Knox Trail Sno-Riders and Sandisfield Snowmobile Club on trail development.	Strat. Plan	Rec., DCR, Vol.	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
N.6.6	Promote the Knox Trail as a educational resource.	Hist. Comm.	School	Immediate & Ongoing	Low
Objective: Develop and Promote the Town's Cemeteries as Historic Destinations.					
N.7.1	Continue ongoing work to clean up and actively maintain town cemeteries.	Cem.	Hist. Com., Vol.	Ongoing	High
N.7.2	Continue ongoing work to mark the graves of veterans in town cemeteries.	Hist. Comm.	Cem.	Ongoing	High

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation				Schedule			
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	School	Farmington River School and School Committee	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	Planning	Planning Board	Cem.	Cemetery Committee	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Sandisfield Cultural Council	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	Rec.	Recreation Committee	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	COA	Council on Aging	MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Strat. Plan.	Strategic Planning Committee
Energy	Energy Committee	New	New Business (Bus.), Event Coord., Agriculture (Ag.), or Housing (Hous.) Committee	BNRC	Berk. Nat. Res. Council		

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 1: Establish Sandisfield as a Recreation Destination.					
Objective: Promote the Town's Recreation Areas.					
O.1.1	Coordinate with the state and local land trusts to create signage marking local recreation assets, such as the Clam River Reserve and State owned lands.	Strat. Plan.	BNRC	1-3 Years	High
O.1.2	Integrate Sandisfield's recreation assets into promotional and wayfinding efforts.	New Event.	Strat. Plan	1-3 Years	High
Objective: Improve Access to State Lands.					
O.2.1	Advocate for the consistent management of state properties for active recreation use.	Strat. Plan.	Rec., BOS, DCR	Immediate & Ongoing	High
O.2.2	Work with the State to improve amenities and access points on state lands, with West Lake and Upper and Lower Spectacle Pond being priority improvement areas.	Strat. Plan.	Rec., BOS, DCR	Immediate & Ongoing	High
O.2.3	Work to integrate active recreation use into the final draft of the Spectacle Pond Farm Management Plan.	Strat. Plan.	Rec., BOS, DCR	Immediate & Ongoing	High
O.2.4	Ensure that town interests are well represented in updated management plans for state owned properties in the future.	Strat. Plan.	Rec., BOS, DCR	Immediate & Ongoing	High
O.2.5	Investigate use of state lands to host athletic and sporting events.	New Event.	Rec., BOS, DCR	Immediate & Ongoing	High
O.2.6	Partner with regional organizations, such as land trusts and other conservation groups to form a coalition that will address access needs and potential improvements to state lands.	Strat. Plan.	Rec., BOS, BNRC	Immediate & Ongoing	High
Objective: Link Disparate Recreation Areas.					
O.3.1	Develop a trail network that connects Yanner Park, the Clam River Reserve, adjacent state-owned properties and the Spectacle Pond area.	Strat. Plan.	Rec., BNRC	3-5 Years	Medium
O.3.2	Coordinate with BNRC on their "Berkshire High Road" campaign, a program attempting to create contiguous trails throughout Berkshire county.	Strat. Plan.	Rec., BNRC	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
Objective: Investigate Improvements to Encourage Snowmobiling in Town.					
O.4.1	Coordinate with local and regional snowmobile organizations to determine possible areas for cooperation and partnership as well as future recreation needs.	Strat. Plan.	Rec.	Immediate & Ongoing	Medium
O.4.2	Develop parking areas for snowmobile trailers in appropriate locations.	Strat. Plan.	Highway	Ongoing	Medium
O.4.3	Explore grant funding for possible snowmobiling related projects through the Mass. Recreational Trails Grant Program.	Rec.	Vol.	Ongoing	Medium

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation					Schedule		
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	School	Farmington River School and School Committee	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
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Cul. Co.	Sandisfield Cultural Council	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	Rec.	Recreation Committee	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	COA	Council on Aging	MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Strat. Plan.	Strategic Planning Committee
Energy	Energy Committee	New	New Business (Bus.), Event Coord., Agriculture (Ag.), or Housing (Hous.) Committee	BNRC	Berk. Nat. Res. Council		

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION—Continued		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 2: Increase Recreation Opportunities for Sandisfield Residents.					
Objective: Increase Capacity to Address Local Recreation Needs.					
O.5.1	Develop and adopt an Open Space and Recreation Plan to be able to access state recreation funding.	Rec., Con. Com.	BRPC	1-3 Years	High
O.5.2	Once adopted by the town and approved by the state, apply for PARC grant funding to improve town owned recreation areas.	Rec., Con. Com.	BRPC	1-3 Years	Medium
O.5.3	Apply for other state recreation grant funds, such as the recreational trails grant program or Land and Water Conservation Fund.	Rec., Con. Com.	BOS	3-5 Years	Low
Objective: Improve the Library Playground.					
O.6.1	Develop and implement a plan to improve the library playground, its safety and its accessibility.	Rec., Strat. Plan.	BOS	1-3 Years	Low
O.6.2	Seek grant and other funding to implement improvements to the playground.	Rec., Strat. Plan.	BOS	3-5 Years	Low
O.6.3	Investigate potential recreation use of the Clam River adjacent to the Library playground.	Rec., Strat. Plan.	BOS	1-3 Years	Low
Objective: Revisit Yanner Park.					
O.7.1	Develop and implement a multi-use plan for Yanner Park.	Strat. Plan.	Rec., BOS	1-3 Years	Medium
O.7.2	Integrate Yanner Park with adjacent recreation areas, such as the Clam River reserve and state lands to create seamless and contiguous spaces for outdoor enjoyment.	Strat. Plan.	BNRC	3-5 Years	Medium
O.7.3	Develop non-traditional revenue sources to improve, better utilize, and maintain Yanner Park.	BOS, Finance	Strat. Plan.	3-5 Years	High
Objective: Investigate Development of a Community Garden Program.					
O.8.1	Identify a local community garden advocate or committee.	Rec., New Ag.	Vol.	1-3 Years	Low
O.8.2	Engage the community to examine needs and desires for a community garden available for Sandisfield residents.	Rec., New Ag.	Vol.	1-3 Years	Low
O.8.3	Identify an appropriate location for a community garden on private, state, or town owned land.	Rec., New Ag.	Vol.	1-3 Years	Low
O.8.4	Implement a community garden program.	Rec., New Ag.	Vol.	1-3 Years	Low

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation				Schedule			
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Cul. Co.	Sandisfield Cultural Council	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	Rec.	Recreation Committee	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
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BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	COA	Council on Aging	MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Strat. Plan.	Strategic Planning Committee
Energy	Energy Committee	New	New Business (Bus.), Event Coord., Agriculture (Ag.), or Housing (Hous.) Committee	BNRC	Berk. Nat. Res. Council		

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION—Continued		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule	Priority
Goal 3: Leverage State Lands to Generate Additional Benefits for the Town.					
Objective: Advocate for Additional Revenue from State Lands.					
O.9.1	Work with the Commonwealth and surrounding communities to advocate for changes to state stumpage fee laws and regulations.	BOS	Finance	Immediate & Ongoing	High
O.9.2	Work with the Commonwealth and surrounding communities to advocate for consistent PILOT payments.	BOS	Finance	Immediate & Ongoing	High
Objective: Investigate Participation in the Historic Curatorship Program to Utilize the Historic Structures at Spectacle Pond Farm.					
O.10.1	Engage the state to examine the town's role in the future of the structures at Spectacle Pond Farm as possible amenities to generate revenue and improve quality of life.	Strat. Plan.	BOS	Ongoing	High
Objective: Explore Options to Hold Events on State Land.					
O.11.1	Establish a program to host athletic and sporting events such as bicycle and road races on State owned land.	New Event., Strat. Plan	BOS	1-3 Years	Medium

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation				Schedule			
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Energy	Energy Committee	New	New Business (Bus.), Event Coord., Agriculture (Ag.), or Housing (Hous.) Committee	BNRC	Berk. Nat. Res. Council		

MASTER PLAN

2016

Town of Sandisfield,
Massachusetts

APPENDICES TO THE MASTER PLAN

**Town of Sandisfield,
Massachusetts**

A: MAPS

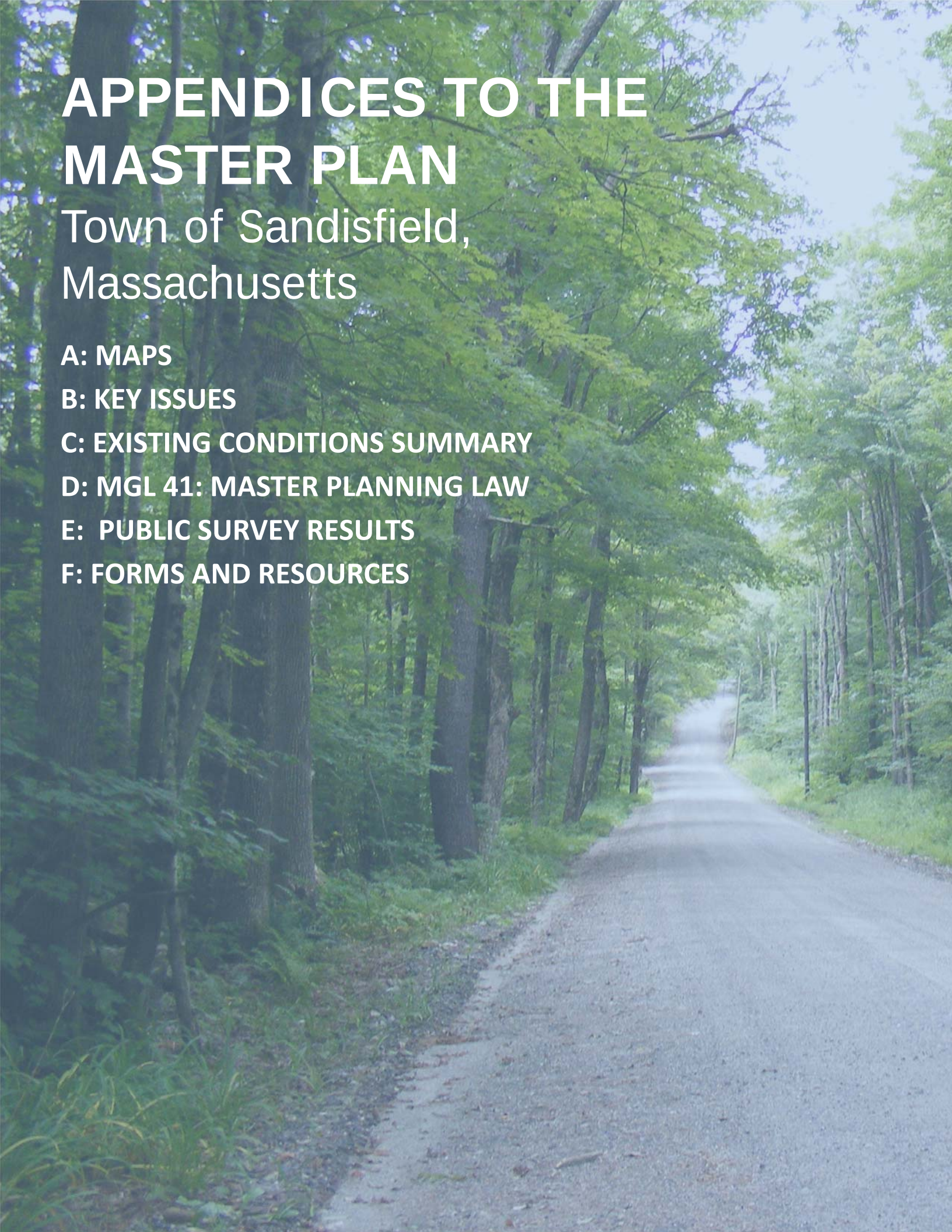
B: KEY ISSUES

C: EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

D: MGL 41: MASTER PLANNING LAW

E: PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

F: FORMS AND RESOURCES



APPENDIX A: MAPS

LIST OF MAPS:

Map A—Current Commercial Uses

Provides a visualization of businesses in town that were identified through existing town “Doing Business As” (DBA) Licenses and other means, as well as parcels listed as having a commercial use in the Sandisfield assessors database. Discussion of this map is located in Chapter 3—Economy.

Map B—Community Facilities and Town Owned Land

This map shows all town owned land and major public facilities such as town hall, the town hall annex and transfer station to name a few. Other important facilities, such as Sandisfield’s two fire stations are also mapped. However, these are privately owned.

Map C—Road Jurisdiction

This map shows the maintenance jurisdiction of all roads in Sandisfield, and visualizes which roads are maintained by the Commonwealth, Town of Sandisfield, or private entities. Discussion of data included in this map is in Chapter 7—Transportation.

Map D—Land Use

This map uses data from the Commonwealth’s 2005 land use assessment to show major land uses in Sandisfield. Sandisfield’s historic village areas are also identified on this map. Discussion of the data in this map is in Chapter 8—Land Use.

Map E—Zoning

This map outlines Sandisfield’s current zoning regulation boundaries. Discussion of the data in this map is in Chapter 8—Land Use.

Map F—Development Trend

This map utilizes data from the Sandisfield assessor and groups buildings in the town based on their age. This map provides a look at patterns and location of building development within the town. Discussion of the data in this map is in Chapter 8—Land Use.

Map G—Buildout Analysis

This map shows areas of remaining buildable land and the individual parcels where this land is located. Discussion of the data in this map is in Chapter 8—Land Use.

Map H—Soils and Geology

This map outlines broad soil characteristics within the town. Discussion of the data in this map is in Chapter 9—Natural and Cultural Resources.

Map I—Vegetation, Fisheries, and Wildlife

This map shows the location of existing and potential vernal pools within the town, as well as BioMap2 core habitat and critical natural landscape. Additionally, Sandisfield’s natural communities and priority habitat for rare species are located. Areas of forest and agricultural land from 2005 state land use data are also shown. Discussion of the data in this map can be found in Chapter 9—Natural and Cultural Resources.

Map J—Water Resources

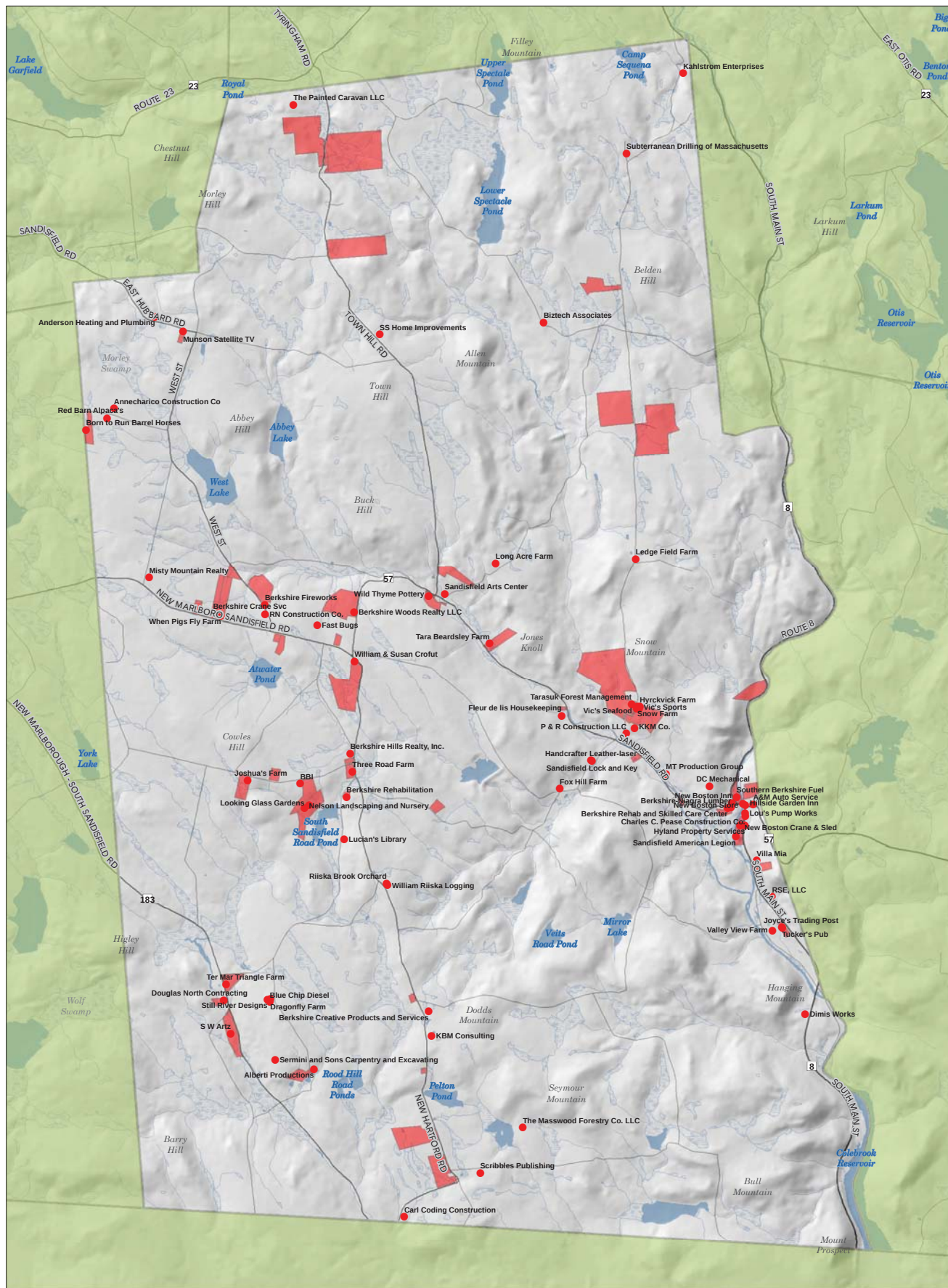
This map delineates the major watersheds and subwatersheds in town, shows public water supply wells, outstanding resource waters and areas located within the 100-year floodplain. Discussion of the data in this map can be found in Chapter 9—Natural and Cultural Resources.

Map K—Historic Resources

This map locates historic buildings and properties (with an address) within Sandisfield and is based on data found in the Mass. Historical Commission’s MACRIS database. Discussion of the data in this map can be found in Chapter 9—Natural and Cultural Resources.

Map L—Open Space

This map locates parcels of land protected from development within Sandisfield, such as those owned by the Commonwealth, land trusts, or privately owned land with conservation restrictions. Parcels enrolled in Chapter 61 current use programs are also identified. Discussion of the data in this map can be found in Chapter 10—Open Space and Recreation.



This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, BRPC or the municipality may have supplied portions of this data.

- Businesses
- Commercial Land Use / Parcels
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water

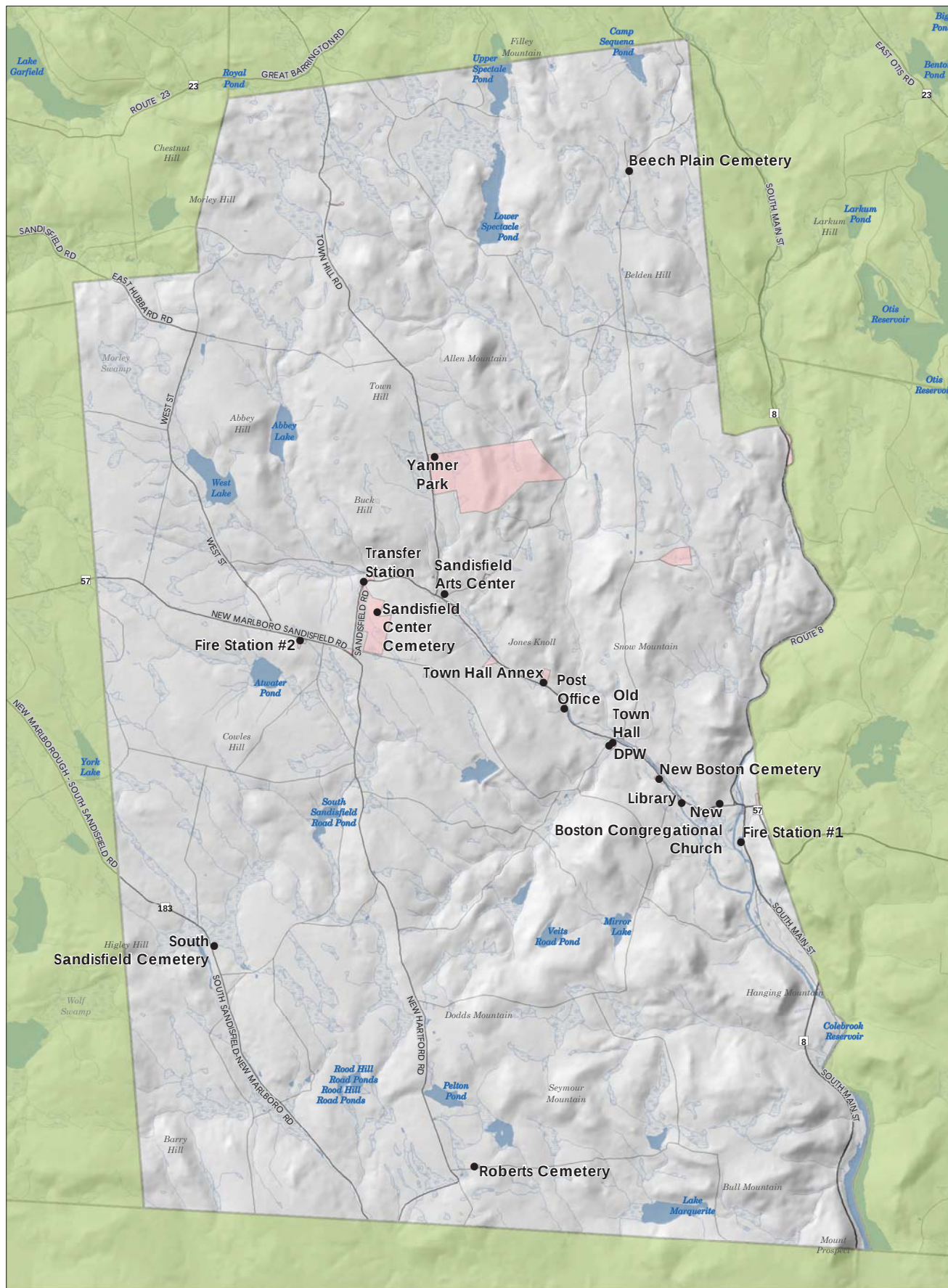
Town of Sandisfield

Master Plan Map A:

Current Commercial Uses Map

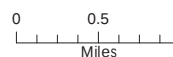


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Miles



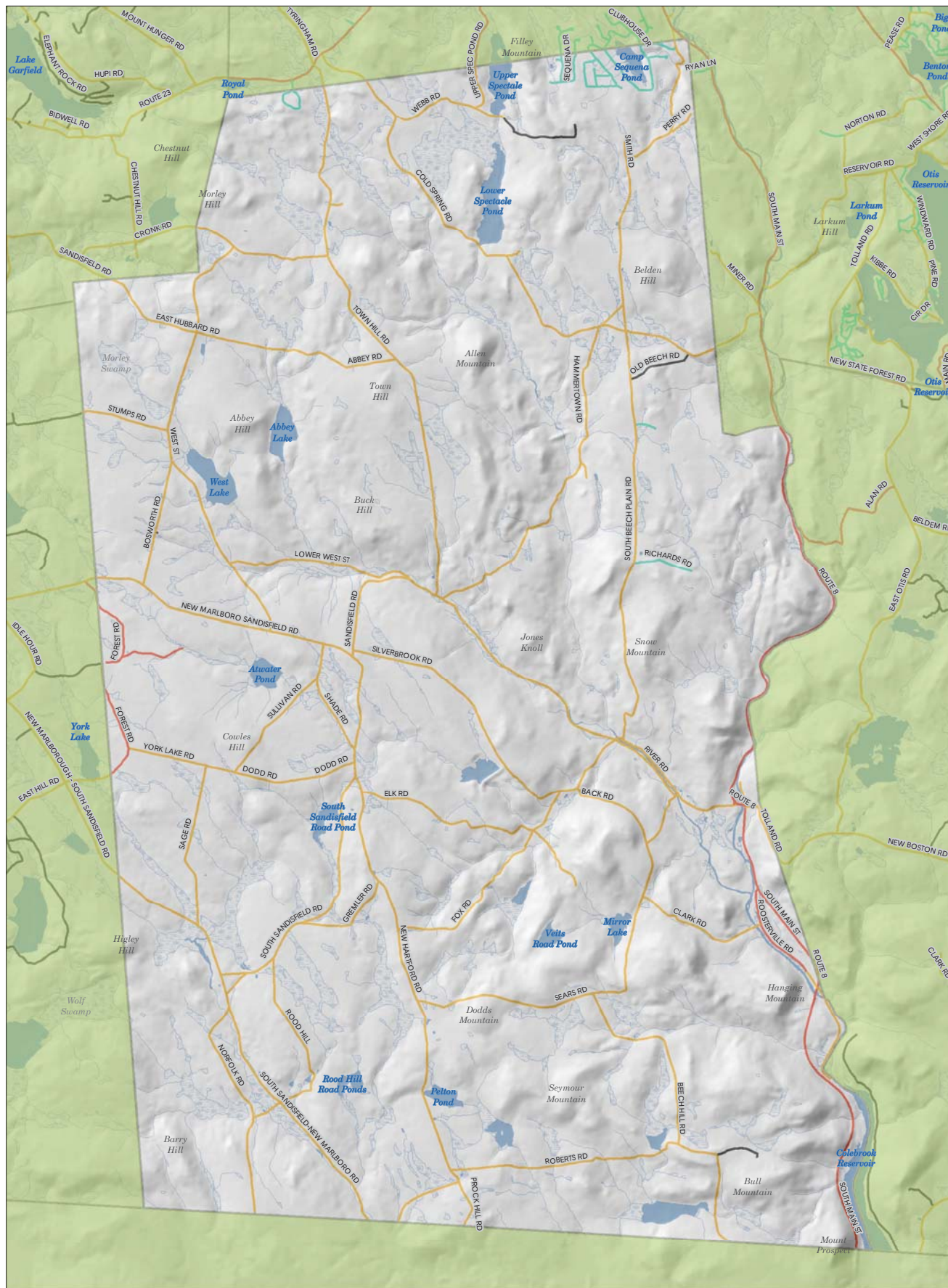
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- Community Facilities
- Town Property
- ⊞ Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



Town of Sandisfield

Master Plan Map B: Community Facilities



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Jurisdiction

- MassDOT Ownership
- Town Ownership
- Private Ownership
- Unknown Ownership



Towns



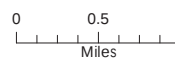
Stream



Wetland

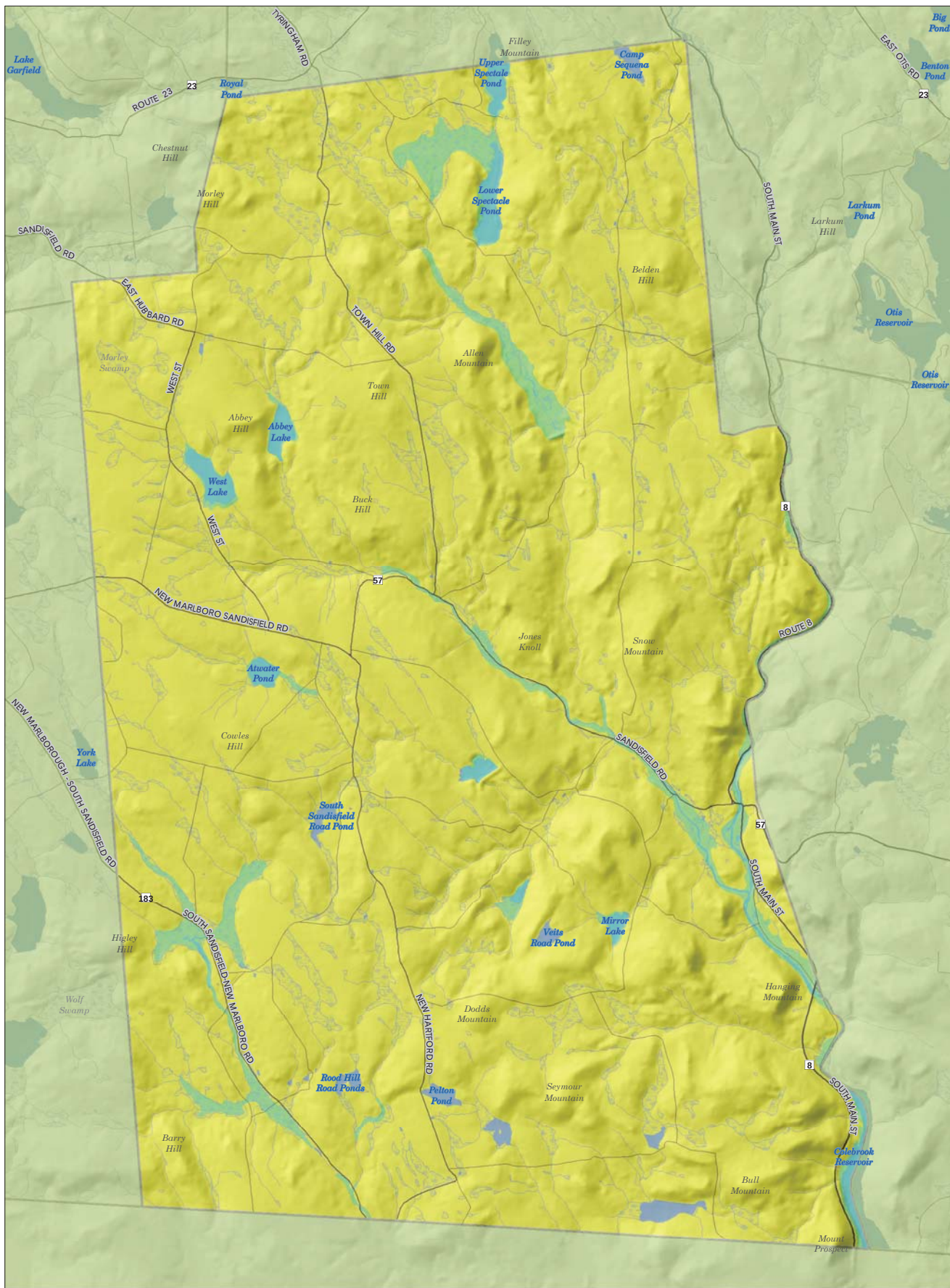


Open Water



Town of Sandisfield Master Plan MAP C Road Jurisdiction

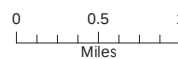




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- Zoning - All one zone
- Flood plain Overlay District

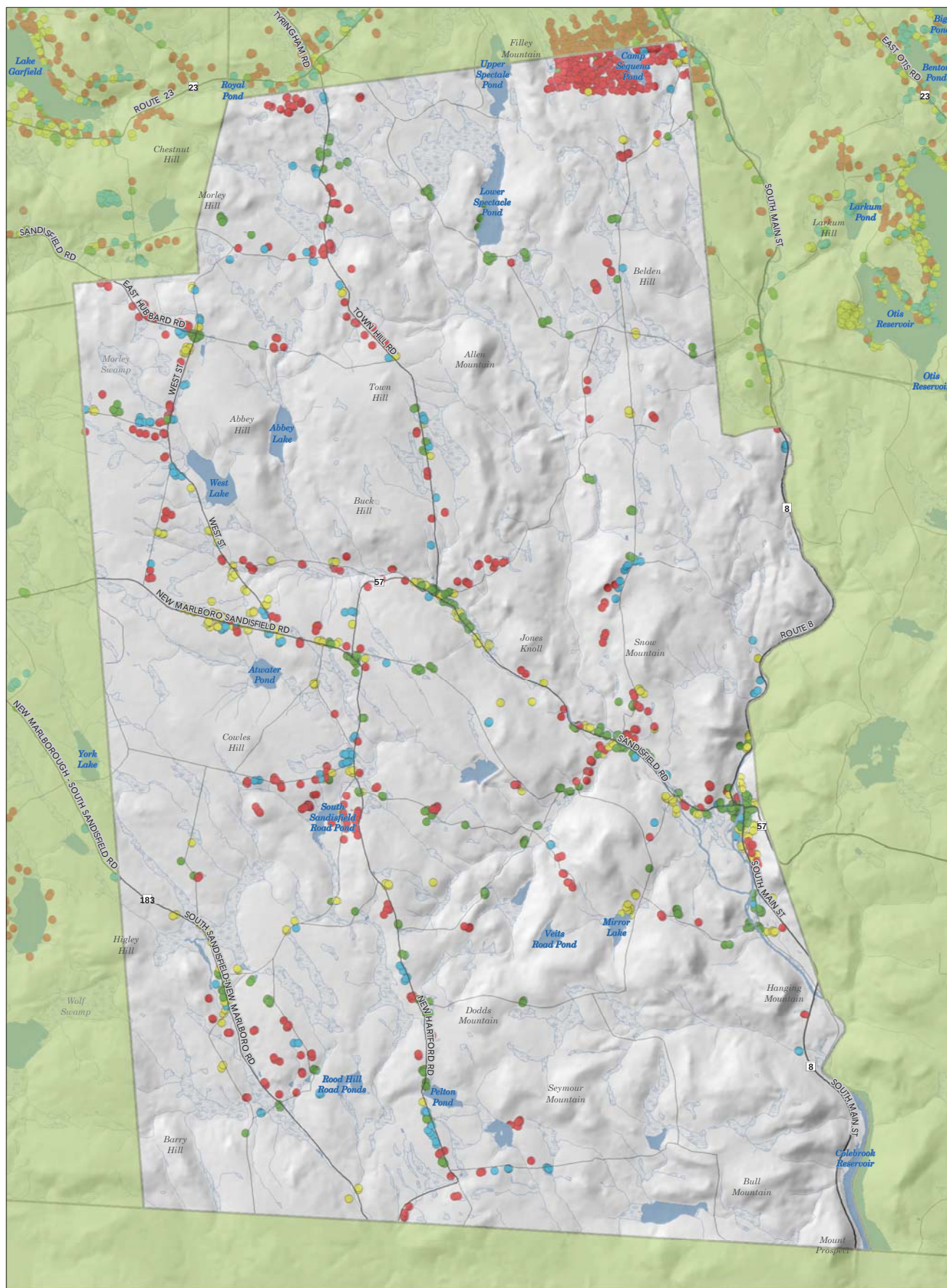
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



Town of Sandisfield

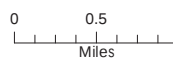
Master Plan

MAP E: Zoning Map



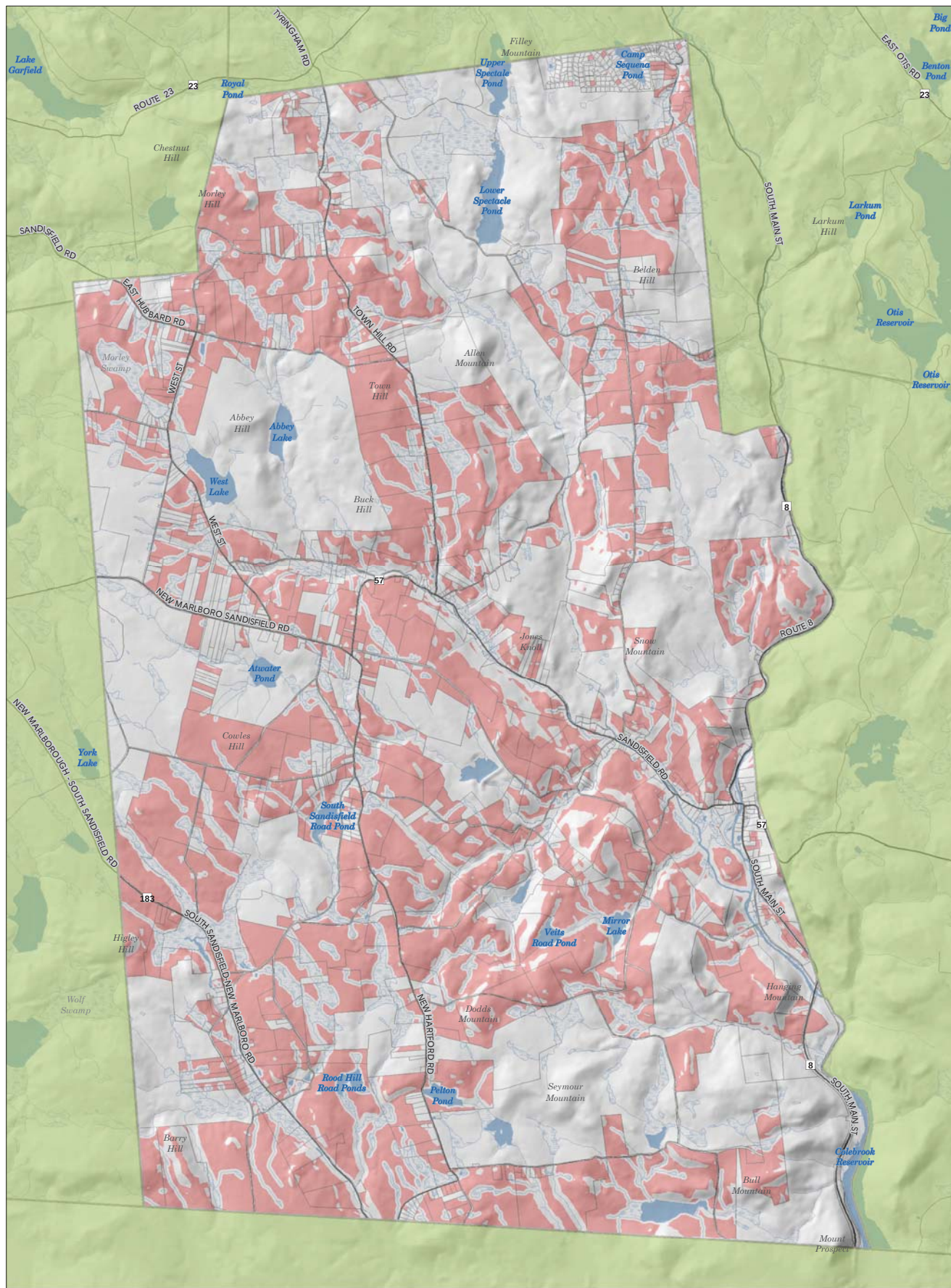
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- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Building Age | Towns |
| Pre 1900 | Interstate |
| 1901 - 1950 | Major Road |
| 1951 - 1975 | Minor Road |
| Post 1975 | Local Road |
| | Stream |
| | Wetland |
| | Open Water |



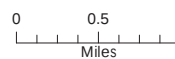
Town of Sandisfield Master Plan

Map F: Development Trend



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- | | |
|--|--|
| Buildable Land | Interstate |
| Parcels | Major Road |
| Towns | Minor Road |
| | Local Road |
| | Stream |
| | Wetland |
| | Open Water |



Town of Sandisfield

Master Plan MAP G

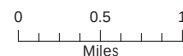
Buildout Analysis

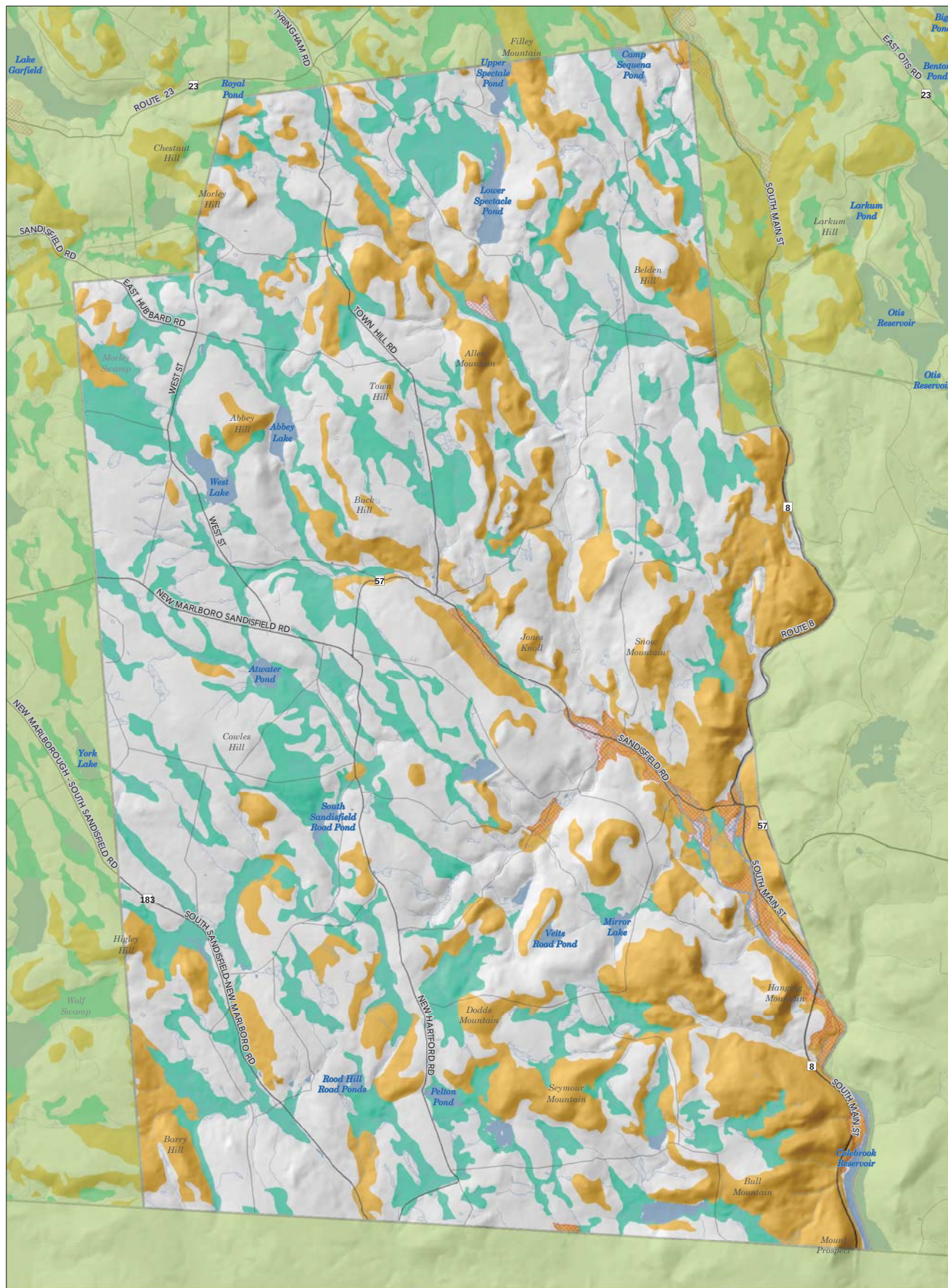


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- | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Agriculture | Low Density Residential | Towns |
| Forest | Very Low Density Residential | Interstate |
| Commercial | Recreation | Major Road |
| Industrial | Open Land | Minor Road |
| Multi-Family Residential | Urban Public/Institutional | Local Road |
| High Density Residential | Utilities / Transportation | Stream |
| Medium Density Residential | Water | Wetland |
| | | Open Water |

Town of Sandisfield Master Plan Map H: Future Land Use





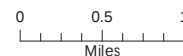
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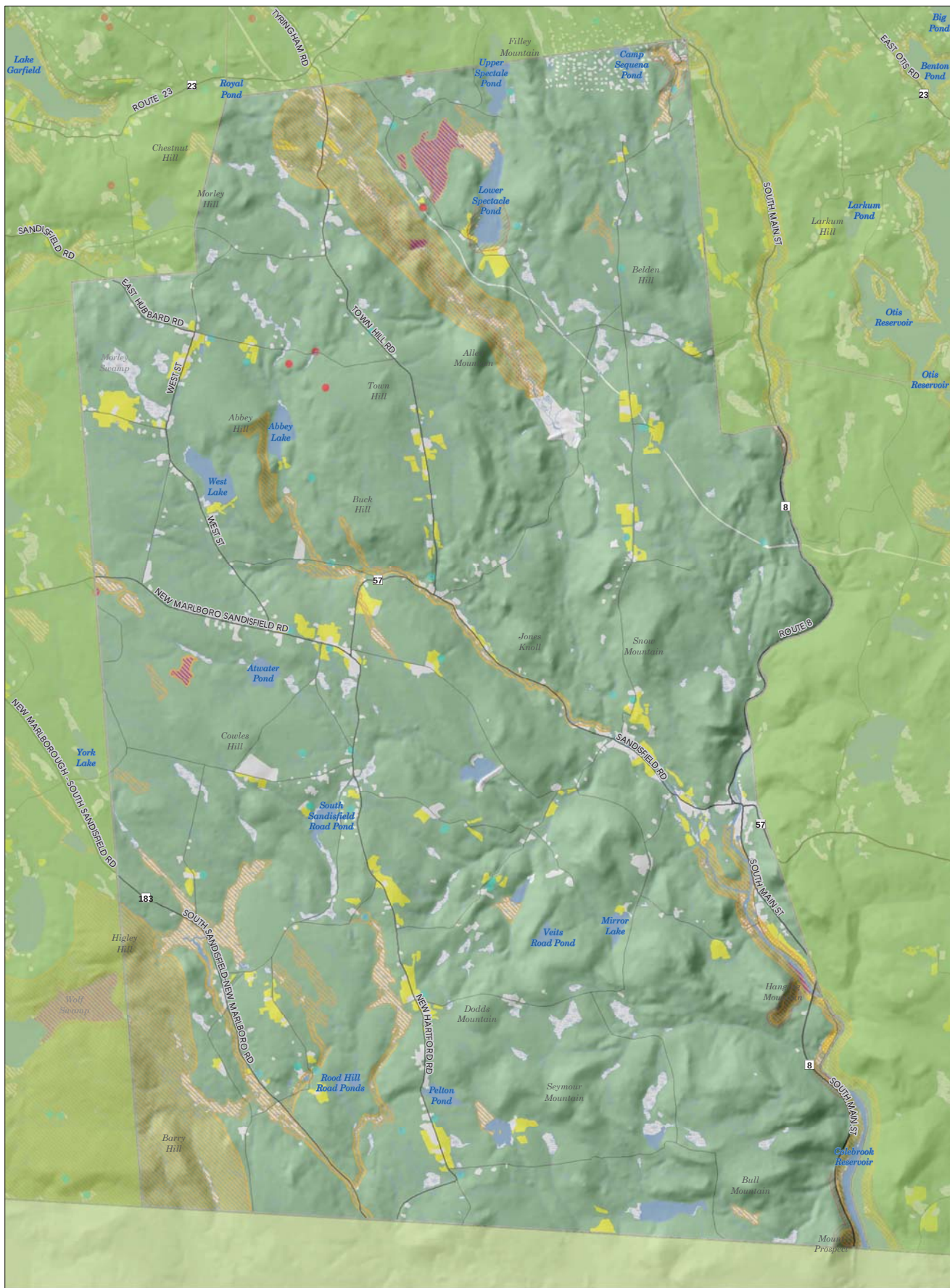
- Prime Agricultural Soils
- Poorly Drained Soils
- Excessively Drained Soils
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water

Town of Sandisfield

Master Plan

Map I: Soils and Geologic Features

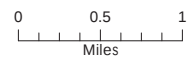


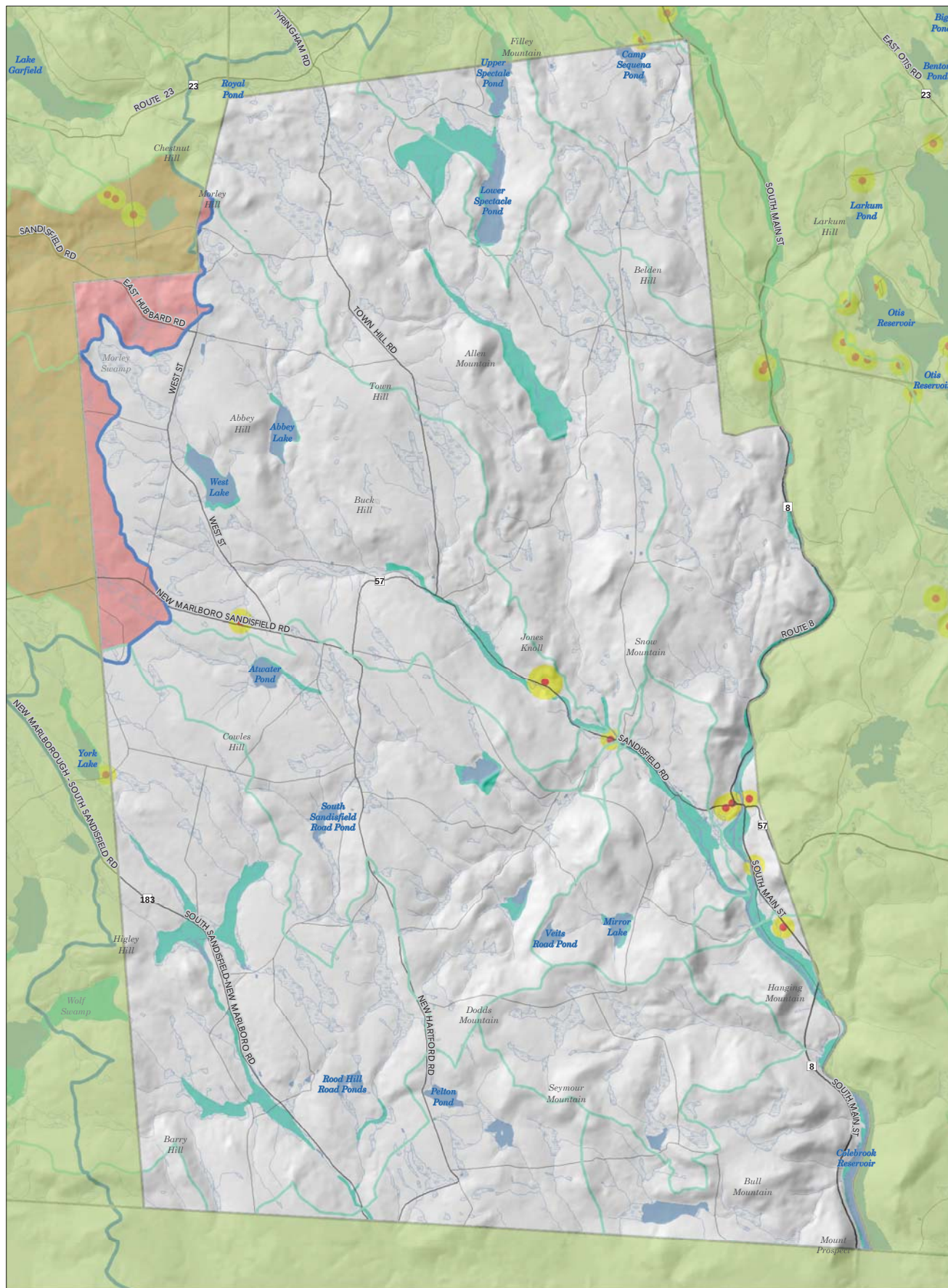


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- Certified Vernal Pool
- Potential Vernal Pool
- BioMap2 Core Habitat
- Natural Communities
- NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species
- Agriculture
- Forest
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water

Town of Sandisfield Master Plan MAP J Vegetation and Fisheries and Wildlife





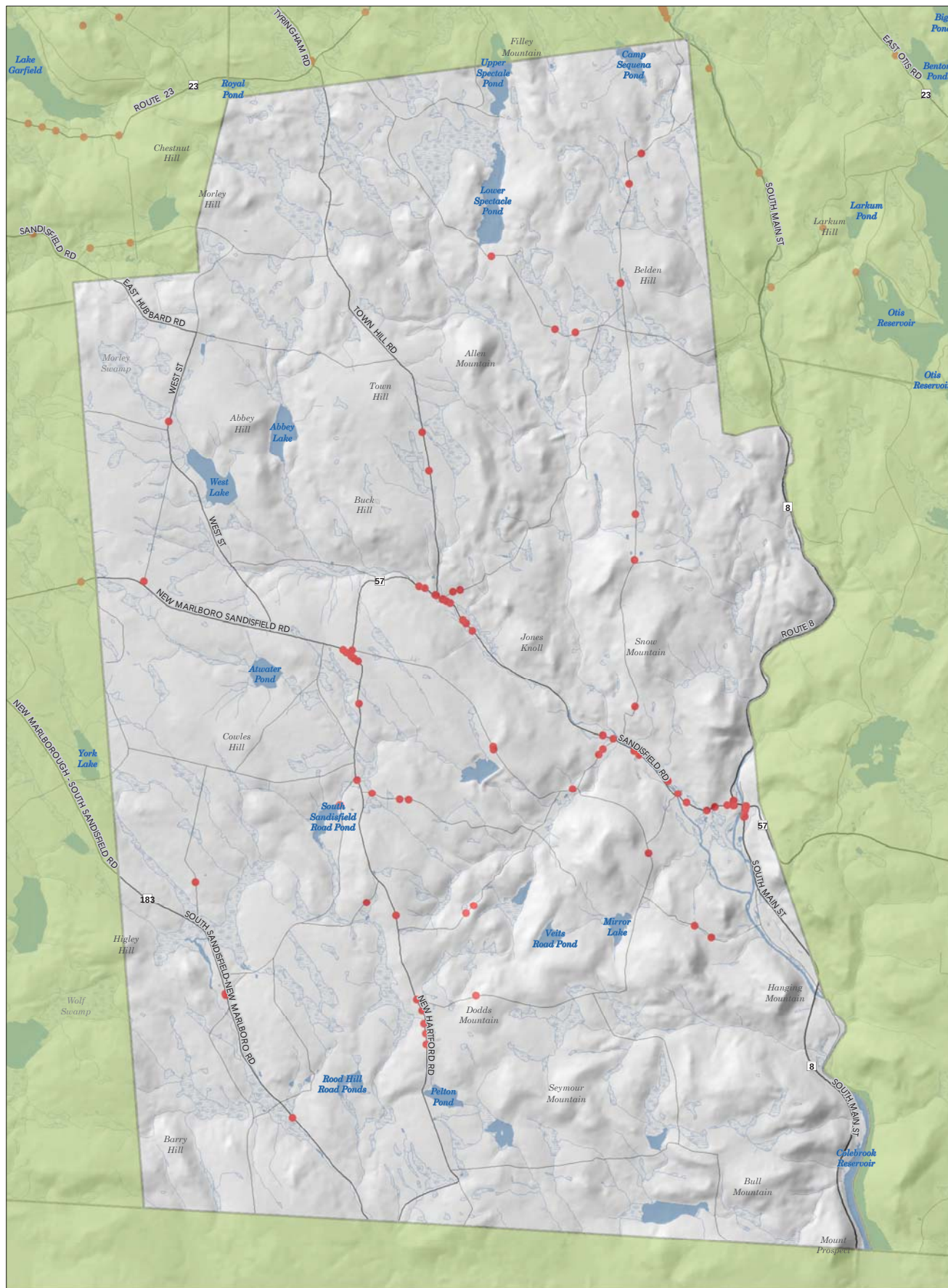
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- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Watersheds | Towns |
| Subwatersheds | Interstate |
| Public Water Supplies | Major Road |
| Interim Wellhead Protection Area | Minor Road |
| FEMA 100yr Floodplain | Local Road |
| Outstanding Resource Waters | Stream |
| | Wetland |
| | Open Water |



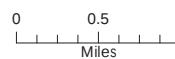
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Town of Sandisfield Master Plan Map K: Water Resources



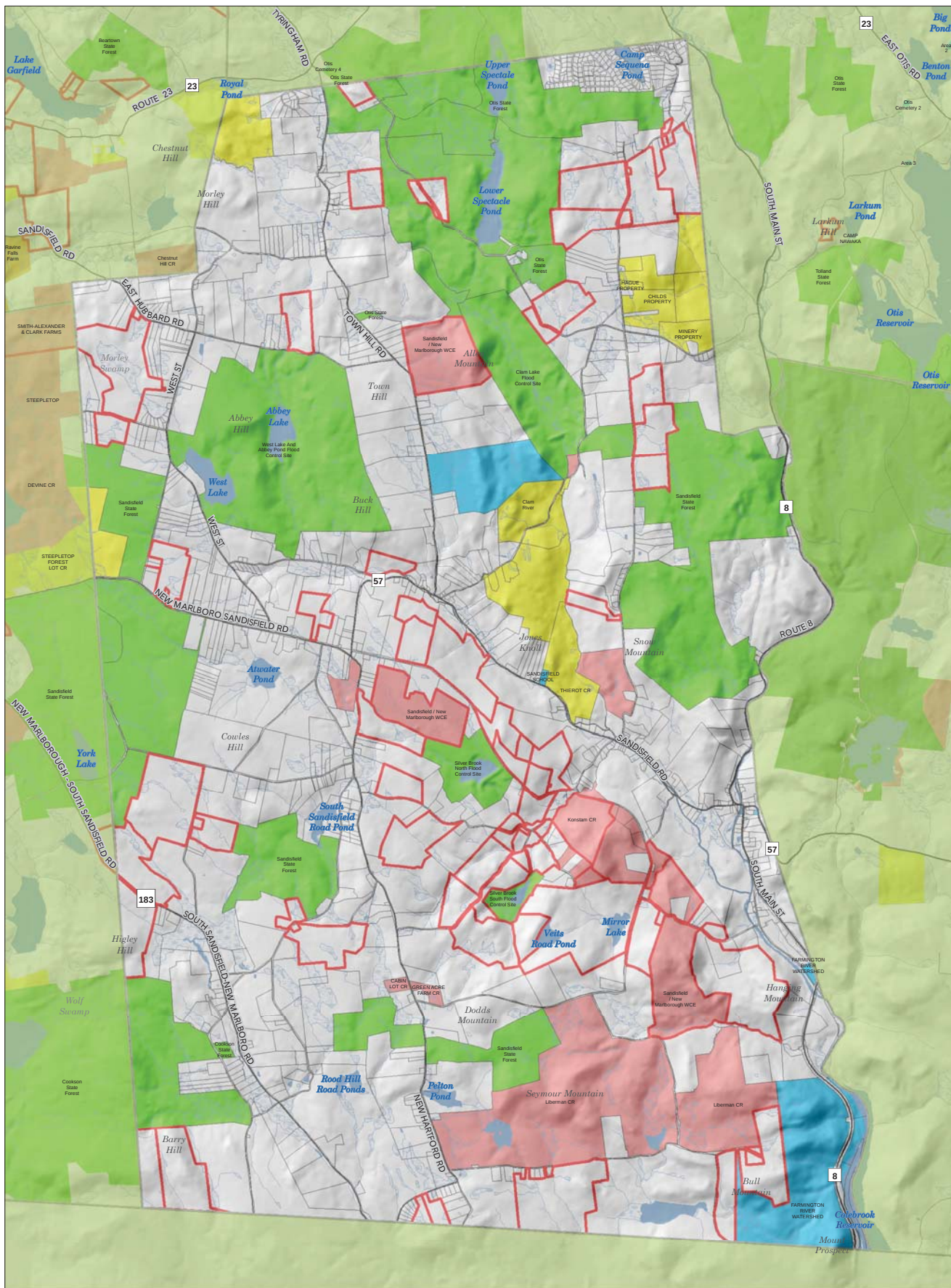
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- Historic Properties (MACRIS)
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



Town of Sandisfield Master Plan

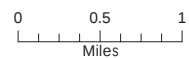
Map L: Historic Resources



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- | | |
|------------|----------------------|
| Towns | State |
| Parcels | Municipality |
| Interstate | Land Trust |
| Major Road | Non-Profit |
| Minor Road | Private |
| Local Road | Chapter 61, 61A, 61B |
| Stream | |
| Wetland | |
| Open Water | |

Town of Sandisfield Master Plan Map M: Open Space





APPENDIX B: KEY ISSUES

KEY POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC ISSUES

An Older Populace

The increased number of older residents may affect the range of services the town wishes to provide as well as the range of housing options available. Additionally, it makes issues such as the need for universal accessibility to town buildings or amenities more important due to potential mobility impairment issues.

Seasonal Residents

Seasonal residents have a potentially large impact on town population as well as town services and local housing.

KEY ECONOMY ISSUES

Small Local Business

Sandisfield has a business base comprised of small local businesses and entrepreneurs. The town should work with these businesses and individuals to explore cooperative measures for business promotion and economic development efforts.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES

Town Buildings and Facilities

Sandisfield's public buildings are in need of repair and replacement and do not currently meet town needs. Additionally, they are in violation of state and local health and safety codes. The town will engage in additional planning to improve its public facilities and replace town buildings.

Town Technology Infrastructure

Sandisfield has a need to improve its technology infrastructure, including the town website, phones, and computers.

KEY SERVICES ISSUES

Reducing Town Expenses

Sandisfield will explore a range of options to reduce its expenses, from regionalization and equipment sharing, to additional grant writing.

Services for Seniors and Families

Sandisfield will work to improve its services for its elderly population, as well as families in the town.

Town Communications to the Public

Sandisfield will develop and implement services to better inform and engage its residents.

KEY HOUSING ISSUES

Aging

Sandisfield's population is increasingly older. Regional studies conducted by BRPC show that the vast majority of older residents want to reside in their own homes and communities as they age. The town will work to support the aging in place of its older residents, as well as investigating long term dedicated housing for seniors.

KEY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

General Roadway Needs

There are nearly 100 miles of roadway in Sandisfield, with most of these miles maintained by the town. The town will work to address a range of roadway needs from advocating for state maintenance and funding of Route 57, to investigating road jurisdiction, to additional future planning for extreme weather and general bridge maintenance.

Non-Motorized Transportation and Complete Streets

Sandisfield will address non-motorized transportation, such as walking and bicycling in town. This will help to provide healthy and low cost transportation options for year-round residents, while making the town a destination for cyclists and others who visit the town.

KEY LAND USE ISSUES

Town Center

The concept of a Town Center in Sandisfield has been explored by the town over the years. The town will continue its work to establish a town center, that could help to cluster public buildings, and potentially generate revenue to the town through the sale of land.

General Updates to Town Bylaws and Zoning

Sandisfield has recently audited its zoning and bylaws. The results of the audit identified several areas of the bylaw that could be updated and modernized. In addition to these changes, the town will also investigate and implement changes to its zoning to anticipate future land uses, such as wireless communications towers and solar and wind energy infrastructure.

Wayfinding and Signage

Sandisfield will implement a town wayfinding system. While aiding transportation ease throughout the town, this system could also help to provide a measure of economic development by better promoting town businesses and assets.

KEY NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ISSUES

Leveraging Natural Resource and Ecological Assets

Sandisfield has many natural resource and ecological assets which could be leveraged to draw visitors and new residents to the town, as well as help to improve the daily life of year round residents. These assets include the unique natural environments found in the abundant open spaces in Sandisfield, as well as latent assets such as destinations in town for birdwatchers.

Leveraging Historic and Creative Arts Assets

Sandisfield has many historic assets, including historic buildings and the Knox Trail, a historic roadway that was played a significant role in the early days of the Revolutionary War. The town has been working actively in recent years to develop and promote these elements, as well as encourage the restoration and recognition of its historic structures and cemeteries. Sandisfield is also home to the Sandisfield Arts Center, a local arts venue and resource whose programming attracts many to the town. Additionally, many writers, musicians, painters, potters, quilters, actors and craftsmen live and work locally. The Town will nurture and promote this community and resource through the Sandisfield Arts Center and local events promoting the arts.

KEY OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ISSUES

Access to State Lands and Leveraging Recreation Assets

State lands in Sandisfield total over 7000 acres. However, much of this land is managed for timber harvest. The few state recreation areas in town, such as Spectacle Pond and West Lake, are not consistently managed for active recreation use, despite their potential to do so. Additionally, through PILOT payments, stumpage fees, and event hosting, these areas are potential revenue generators for the town. The town will work with the state to leverage these areas to benefit the town and its residents and draw visitors to the area. Additionally, Hosting sporting events on town and State lands can provide revenue for the town by generating fees and encouraging tourism that could help to support local merchants.

Connectivity

Sandisfield will coordinate with all applicable land owners and managers to connect recreation areas through a network of trails.



APPENDIX C: EXISTING CONDITIONS

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Historic and Projected Growth Rates

At the town's peak population in 1800, there were 1857 inhabitants. Population declined from this value to a low of 412 inhabitants in 1930. Since this low, population has increased to its current value of 915 residents based on the 2010 Census. Population gains were continuous between 1950 and 1980 when the town added 283 residents, and the population increased by 64%. Population declined slightly during the 1980 to 1990 decade but has increased by over 10% per decade since then.

Additionally, Sandisfield is one of only a handful of Berkshire county towns projected to grow in the future. The Donahue Institute at UMass Amherst projects that Sandisfield will grow by roughly 126 additional residents over the next two decades, reaching 1,041 year-round residents by 2035 (See Table 1.1).

Population Composition

The population of Sandisfield is predominantly white (96.4%), with a median age of 49.9 years (2010). The median age of a Sandisfield resident increased by over 5 years since its value in 2000 (44.7). Between 2000 and 2010, the population of residents 45 and older increased, while those younger than 44 decreased. Those in the 45-64 age bracket increased the most at 7.35% (See Table 1.2). Some of the increase and loss may be attributable to the aging of existing town residents as well as young people who move away to pursue jobs or educational opportunities. However, some is likely due to new residents moving to the area or seasonal residents who decide to make Sandisfield their year-round residence.

The decreasing number of younger residents and increasing number of older residents is a trend that

has been identified in regional county wide planning. This trend also reveals itself in enrollment data from the Farmington River School district. Sandisfield is part of the combined Farmington River School District, which also receives students from Otis as well as school choice students. This elementary school contains pre-school through 6th grades. Beyond 6th grade, students can attend regional middle and high schools in Great Barrington or Lee. Since 2003, enrollment at the school has declined by about 25%. Available data indicates that the number of school choice students and those from Sandisfield decreased the most. Students attending from Sandisfield decreased from 43 to 26. The number of school choice students enrolled at Farmington River has decreased from 35 to 24 students since 2007. However, the number of students from Otis increased slightly – by 7 students – since 2007.

Seasonal Residents/Second Homeowners

Seasonal residents and second homeowners are a tremendous portion of the Sandisfield population that are barely captured by census and other data. According to the 2010 census, 40% of all housing units in Sandisfield are listed as seasonal. According to the Sustainable Berkshires plan, Sandisfield has one of the highest rates of second homeownership in the Berkshires. This seasonal population affects town services, infrastructure and housing. Additionally, they are likely a large contributor of new year-round residents to Sandisfield.

A demographics question related to seasonal residents and second homeowners was included on the public survey that was developed as part of the Master Plan process. According to the survey results, 7 out of 44 year round residents (15.9%), indicated that they had at one time been seasonal residents or second homeowners. Additionally, 17 out of 56 seasonal

TABLE 1.1 - Projected Population Growth in Sandisfield from 2010 to 2035

Source: Donahue Institute University of Massachusetts - Amherst, 2015

Year	U.S. Census 2010	Projection 2015	Projection 2020	Projection 2025	Projection 2030	Projection 2035	Projected 2015-2035 Change
Population	915	943	971	1003	1025	1041	126

Table 1.2 - Sandisfield Population Characteristics 2000-2010				
<i>Source: 2000 and 2010 US Census, *2006-2010 American Community Survey</i>				
	2000		2010	
Total Population	824	100%	915	100%
Age (total for each age range and % of total population)				
Under 5 years	39	4.70%	39	4.30%
5 to 9 years	35	4.20%	32	3.50%
10 to 14 years	64	7.80%	53	5.80%
15 to 19 years	41	5.00%	43	4.70%
20 to 24 years	21	2.50%	25	2.70%
25 to 34 years	89	10.80%	63	6.90%
35 to 44 years	126	15.30%	122	13.40%
45 to 54 years	167	20.30%	173	18.90%
55 to 59 years	53	6.40%	93	10.20%
60 to 64 years	41	5.00%	91	9.90%
65 to 74 years	83	10.10%	115	12.60%
75 to 84 years	56	6.80%	48	5.20%
85 years and over	9	1.10%	18	2%
Median Age	44.7		49.9	
Households	327		377	
Average Household Size	2.37		2.28	
Minority Population (%)	3.2%		3.60%	
Median Household Income	\$45,972		\$62,411*	
Families below poverty level (%)	1.3%		1.2%*	
Mean travel time to work (Minutes)	37		38.5	
Population Density (Residents/square mile) Based on town area of 52.97 sq. miles)	15.5		17.2	

residents or second homeowners (26.5%) reported that they were planning on becoming year round residents of Sandisfield. For the complete results of the public survey, refer to Appendix E.

Race, Ethnicity and Diversity

The population of several ethnic groups including African Americans and Latinos fell between 2000 and 2010. The number of African Americans in Sandisfield decreased from 4 persons to 0. The number of Latinos decreased from 8 to 7.

However, the population of Asian American residents

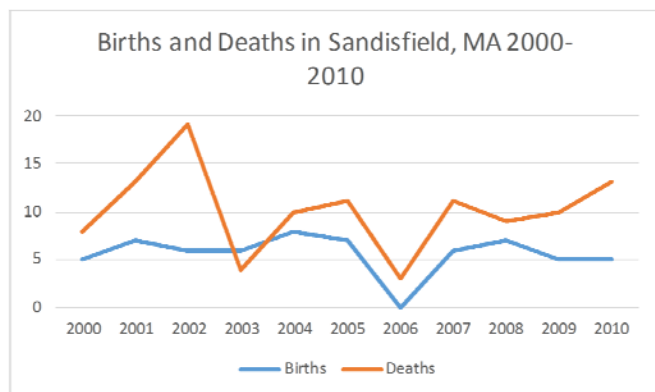
in Sandisfield increased from 1 to 35 and residents of 2 or more races increased from 17 to 43 between 2000 and 2010.

Births and Deaths

Figure 1.1 outlines births and deaths in Sandisfield between 2000 and 2010 (note: no birth data for the year 2006). Births are in the single digits over the ten year period. Deaths are slightly higher, with the year 2002 recording 19 total deaths in the town.



**Figure 1.1—Births and Deaths in Sandisfield, MA
2000—2010**



ECONOMY

Labor Force

As of the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, the total number of residents age 16 and older in Sandisfield was 766 persons, or approximately 82% of the total estimated population of the town (930 residents as of the 2009-2013 Census ACS). Of this population, 496 are considered “in the labor force”, meaning they are either employed or unemployed. This figure represents around 53% of the town’s 930 year-round residents. The remaining 270 individuals are considered “not in the labor force”.

The unemployment rate was measured as 5.1% during the 2009-2013 American Community Survey (see Table 3.1 in Chapter 3), and represents an estimated 39 out of 766 individuals. This value is lower than the value for the county (7.1% according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics).

It is important to note how employment figures are calculated. Only persons over the age of 16 who are not members of the military, or institutionalized (such as in prison, in a nursing home, or mental health facility) are used to calculate employment figures. This population of individuals over the age of 16 is considered the population that is eligible to work. Employed and unemployed individuals are combined to estimate what is considered the “civilian labor force”. Individuals who have received any payment for work are considered employed. Individuals who are laid off from work or are actively seeking employment are considered unemployed. Individuals who are not employed, laid off, or actively seeking employment are considered not in the labor force. Individuals in this category might include retirees, homemakers, students, the independently wealthy, or a person without a job who has stopped looking for work (perhaps temporarily). A person in this last category is sometimes referred to as a “discouraged worker.”

The 2009-2013 American Community Survey is able to provide a breakdown of employment status by age within the Town of Sandisfield (See Table 2.1, this appendix). Only an estimated 2 individuals (.3%) of

the 16-19 year old age group are considered employed, with 30 individuals, or 93% of this age group considered not in the labor force. This high percentage of individuals not in the labor force might represent high school or college students who are attending school and do not have a job or recent graduates that have not yet begun to look for work. The percentage of employed individuals is highest in the 25-44 age group with 84% of 191 people employed. Unemployment was also the highest for this age group. For 25-44 year olds, it was estimated that 19/191 persons in this group were unemployed (9.9%).

For individuals in the 55-64 year old age group, over 20% were considered “not in the labor force” meaning they are neither employed, laid off, or seeking employment. Beyond the age of 65, the number and percentage of individuals not in the labor force increases to over 80%. This likely includes retired individuals who are no longer working or seeking work. None of the 97 residents older than 75 were considered in the labor force.

Approximately 17% of the population in Sandisfield is over the age of 65 and considered not within the labor force. This can be estimated by comparing the total number of individuals older than 65 and not within the labor force (160), and comparing this to the total estimated population (930). This method approximates the number of retired individuals within the town. While this percentage includes individuals who are no longer in the labor force, it also might include individuals who have never worked, such as an individual who has been financially independent their entire life, or homemakers who never received pay for work.. Additionally, this number would not include individuals who are retired but are younger than the age of 65.

Income

Per capita income was \$29,539 as measured in the 2009-2013 American Community Survey. (U.S. Census ACS 2009-2013). Median household income was \$55,917. Sandisfield’s median household income was

**Table 2.1 - Employment Status by Age, Town of Sandisfield, MA***Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey*

AGE (Population 16 years and over only)	In Civilian Labor Force (employed and unemployed individuals) (64.8% of population over the age of 16)						
	Estimated Number of Individuals	Employed	% of pop. age 16 and older	Unemployed (Laid off or looking for work)	% of pop. age 16 and older	Not in labor force (Individuals Not in Labor Force (not employed, laid off or looking for work)	% of pop. age 16 and older
16 to 19 years	32	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	30	3.9%
20 to 24 years	41	33	4.3%	0	0.0%	8	1.0%
25 to 44 years	191	160	20.9%	19	2.5%	12	1.6%
45 to 54 years	177	137	17.9%	9	1.2%	31	4.0%
55 to 64 years	143	103	13.4%	11	1.4%	29	3.8%
65 to 74 years	85	22	2.9%	0	0.0%	63	8.2%
75 years and over	97	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	97	12.7%
Total	766	457	59.7%	39	5.1%	270	35.2%

higher than the surrounding town of Monterey, but lower than that of Otis or New Marlborough.

Town “Doing Business As” Licenses and Current Commercial Uses Map

For mapped DBA licenses and commercial properties, please see Map A—Current Commercial Uses.

Small local businesses dominate the business activity in Sandisfield. Town Clerk records show that eighty-one businesses registered or renewed their “Doing Business As” (DBA) in Sandisfield between 2010 and 2015 (Sandisfield Town Clerk Records, 2015). These are summarized in Table 2.2, categorized in Table 2.3 and presented individually in Table 2.5. Additionally, DBA records must be renewed every four years. Table 2.5 also identifies other businesses (including non-profit organizations) located in town that were not found in DBA records provided by the Town Clerk. These businesses represent a broad slice of the Sandisfield economy.

Individual DBA records, as well as other businesses identified in Sandisfield were categorized by U.S. Census industry types in Table 2.2. Businesses related to Agriculture or Forestry were the most numerous business type in Sandisfield, with 21 businesses

identified. This category also includes nursery businesses in town. Businesses related to “arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services” were the second most numerous, with 14 businesses identified. This category includes local restaurants and inns, as well as organizations dedicated to the arts, and individual artists. Businesses related to construction, retail, and the broad “other services” category were also numerous. This category includes repair services, and personal services, such as housekeeping or hairdressing. Nine businesses were categorized in the “professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services” category. This includes landscaping and property management businesses in Sandisfield.

Data from Table 2.5 was mapped based on the business address listed with each DBA license as well as with parcels labelled by the Town Assessor as “commercial” or parcels appearing to be for commercial uses. These mapped businesses and commercial uses are found on the “Current Commercial Uses” (Map A) located in Appendix A.

Occupation

Since 2000, the employment and occupation of

Sandisfield workers has shifted. Between 2000 and 2013, industries that saw gains in the percentage of workers include agriculture, retail, information, finance, professional services, education, and “other services”. Gains were greatest in the “other services” (23 workers, or 4.9%) and education, health and social services categories (30 workers, or 4.3%). Industries that saw declines in the percentage of workers include construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation, arts, and public administration. Declines in the percentage of Sandisfield workers were greatest in the public administration (30 workers, or 7.3%) and construction fields (16 workers, or 5.1%) (see Table 2.4).

The “other services” category is used to describe four broad occupation areas including repair and maintenance, personal and laundry services, religious, grantmaking, civic, professional and similar organizations, and private households (cooks, maids, housekeepers, gardeners, etc).

Sandisfield matches regional patterns in Berkshire County in the declines it has seen in the construction and manufacturing occupations (Sustainable Berkshires 2013). These two industries are projected to decline the most in the county in the coming years. Moreover, it matches Berkshire County in growth occupations such as educational, health and social services, the broad “other services” category described above, and in the growth of professional and scientific occupations. However, the decline in Sandisfield workers employed in the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services industry goes against the county wide trend of growth in these occupations.

Please refer to Table 2.3 for more detailed descriptions of occupation categories.

Regional Services

Sandisfield borders the Connecticut towns of Norfolk and Colebrook. As such, many Sandisfield residents use businesses and services in Connecticut rather than Massachusetts. According to Google Maps, a drive from the geographic center of Sandisfield to Great Barrington or the nearby Connecticut City of Winsted (located within the Town of Winchester) will take approximately 25 minutes.

Table 2.2 - Sandisfield “Doing Business As” Records 2011-2015							
Source: Town of Sandisfield Town Clerk, 2015							
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 (To Date)	Total
New or Renewal	4	10	9	13	37	8	81
Note: 2015 records only reflect licenses issued until September. Businesses were only tallied once to develop this table, meaning that yearly counts were adjusted to reflect the most recent DBA issued for each business. For example, a business that was issued a DBA in 2010 and renewed this DBA in 2015 was only counted for 2015.							

Table 2.3 - Businesses by Category In Sandisfield, MA.	
Source: Town of Sandisfield Town Clerk, 2015	
Industry Category	# of businesses
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	21
Construction	11
Retail trade	13
Information	3
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	4
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	9
Educational, health and social services	3
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	14
Other services (except public administration)	10
Unknown	4



Public Survey Results

Based on the results of the public survey, Sandisfield residents and seasonal residents / second homeowners generally supported the encouragement of business development within the town (70%). Survey respondents were in favor of encouraging most types of new business with the exception of construction (including trucking and hauling), auto repair, and industrial development. Year-round residents supported encouraging economic development at a higher rate (81%) than Seasonal residents (63%).

Local Business Resources

There are two very active economic resource and business marketing groups in southern Berkshire County: the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce and Berkshire Grown.

Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce

Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce is an active network of business in the southern Berkshire region, which consists of the towns of Alford, Egremont, Great Barrington, Monterey, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, Otis, Sandisfield and Sheffield.

Member Organizations Located in Sandisfield:
Sandisfield Arts Center

Berkshire Grown

Berkshire Grown is a not-for-profit organization working to promote local farms and the local businesses that support them.

Member Organizations Located in Sandisfield:
Idle Hour Farm
Joshua's Farm
Mystical Rose Herbals
Riiska Brook Orchard
When Pigs Fly Farm

Table 2.4 - Occupation by Industry of Workers in Sandisfield, MA

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, 2009-2013 American Community Survey

	2000	2000 (%)	2013	2013 (%)	% Change
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	411	100%	457	100%	—
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	13	3.20%	24	5.30%	2.10%
Construction	65	15.80%	49	10.7%	-5.10%
Manufacturing	59	14.40%	58	12.7%	-1.70%
Wholesale trade	11	2.70%	10	2.2%	-0.50%
Retail trade	35	8.50%	44	9.6%	1.10%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	16	3.90%	5	1.1%	-2.80%
Information	6	1.50%	25	5.5%	4.00%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	11	2.70%	14	3.1%	0.40%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	40	9.70%	58	12.7%	3.00%
Educational, health and social services	95	23.10%	125	27.4%	4.30%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	26	6.30%	18	3.9%	-2.40%
Other services (except public administration)	4	1.00%	27	5.9%	4.90%
Public administration	30	7.30%	0	0.0%	-7.30%

Table 2.5 - "Doing Business As" (DBA) Licenses Issued by the Town of Sandisfield, MA*Source: Town of Sandisfield Town Clerk, 2015*

Doing Business As	Name	Address	Year of Most Recent DBA	Category (See Table 2.3)
2015				
Berkshire Creative Products and Services	Steve Kopiec	153A New Hartford Rd.	2015	Professional
Berkshire Hills Realty, Inc.	Rebecca Burcher	36 New Hartford Rd.	2015	Real Estate
Berkshire-Niagra Lumber	Mark Wackerbarth	5A Sandisfield Rd.	2015	Retail
Biztech Associates	Jean Atwater-Williams	182 Cold Spring Rd.	2015	Professional
Fleur de lis Housekeeping	Suzanne Hoynoski	79 Sandisfield Rd.	2015	Other
Handcrafted Leather-laser	Constance D'Andrea	12 Silverbrook Road.	2015	Retail
Red Barn Alpaca's	Jeffrey and Sonja Gray	23 Stump Rd.	2015	Agriculture
Ter Mar Triangle Farm	Terry Ignace	106 Sandy Brook Turnpike	2015	Agriculture
		2015 Total (To Date)	8	
2014				
A&M Auto Service	Ralph Morrison	7 Tolland Rd	2014	Other
Berkshire Fireworks	David Lewis	6 West St	2014	Arts
Berkshire Mountain Gardens	Theresa Hyrckvich		2014	Professional
Berkshire Woods Realty LLC	Donald and Mary Turek	158 Sandisfield Rd	2014	Real Estate
Born to Run Barrel Horses	Robin Annecharico	33 Stump Rd	2014	Agriculture
Carl Codling Construction	Carl Codling	241 New Hartford Rd	2014	Construction
Charles C. Pease Construction Co.	Charles Pease	102 South Main St	2014	Construction
Den of Lamps	Mary Leary		2014	Retail
Fox Hill Farm	Dominic Konstam	28 Silverbrook Rd.	2014	Agriculture
Hillside Garden Inn	Steven and Rosanne Hoekstra	3 Tolland Rd.	2014	Arts
Hyrckvick Farm	Victor Hyrckvich	14 South Beech Plain Rd.	2014	Agriculture
Joyce's Trading Post	Kim Paspuletti	53 South Main St	2014	Retail
KBM Consulting	Katherine B. Millonzi	161 New Hartford Rd.	2014	Professional
Long Acre Farm	Kathy Jacobs	29 Hammertown Rd.	2014	Agriculture
Looking Glass Gardens	Charles Nelson and Zoe Marinelli	19 Dodd Rd	2014	Agriculture
Lou's Pump Works	Louis Lodovico	104 South Main St.	2014	Other
Lucian's Library	Tina Demanbey	25 South Sandisfield Rd.	2014	Retail
MT Production Group	James Badrak	12 River Rd.	2014	Information
Munson Satellite TV	George Munson	38 West Hubbard Rd.	2014	Other
Nelson Landscaping and Nursery	Charles Nelson Jr.	19 Dodd Rd	2014	Professional
New Boston Crane & Sled	Bonnie Harbour	85 South Main St.	2014	Retail
New Boston Inn	Family Ventures Unlimited, Inc.	101 North Main St.	2014	Arts
Orchid Blossom Healing Arts	Lauren Paul	219 Sandisfield Road	2014	Health
Riiska Brook Orchard	Barbara and William Riiska	101 New Hartford Rd.	2014	Agriculture
Riiska Racing	Edward Riiska		2014	Other
RSE, LLC	Bogart Muller	72 South Main St.	2014	Professional

**Table 2.5 - "Doing Business As" (DBA) Licenses Issued by the Town of Sandisfield, MA—Continued**

Doing Business As	Name	Address	Year of Most Recent DBA	Category (See Table 2.3)
Sermini and Sons Carpentry and Excavating	Matthew Sermini	86 Sandy Brook Turnpike	2014	Construction
SL Renyolds Salon	Sharon Renyolds		2014	Other
Snow Farm	Robert and Susan Tarasuk	16 South Beech Plain Rd.	2014	Agriculture
SS Home Improvements	Steven Sedon	110 Town Hill Rd.	2014	Construction
Tara Beardsley Farm	Tara Beardsley	90 Sandisfield Rd.	2014	Agriculture
Tarasuk Forest Management	Robert Tarasuk	21 Beech Plain Rd.	2014	Agriculture
The Bait Shop	Robert O'Brien		2014	Retail
Vic's Seafood	Victor Hyrckvich	14 South Beech Plain Rd.	2014	Retail
Vic's Sports	Victor Hyrckvich	14 South Beech Plain Rd.	2014	Retail
Villa Mia	Miradije Klenja	90 South Main St.	2014	Arts
When Pigs Fly Farm	Andrew and Sandra Snyder	222 Sandisfield Rd.	2014	Agriculture
		Total	37	
2013				
BBI	Stephen Rinaldi	23 Dodd Rd.	2013	Unknown
Berkshire Rehab. And Skilled Care Center	Berkshire Landlord, LLC	7 Sandisfield Rd	2013	Health
Blue Chip Diesel	Douglas Rocco	22 Rood Hill Rd.	2013	Retail
DC Mechanical	Dominic Campetti	6 Canon Mountain Lane	2013	Other
Dimis Works	Dana Ehninger	41 South Main St.	2013	Arts
Farm Stand	Francis Deming		2013	Agriculture
KKM Co.	Kim Paspuletti	10 South Beech Plain Rd.	2013	Unknown
Ledge Field Farm	Nancy Flach	60 Beech Plain Rd.	2013	Agriculture
New Boston Store	Peter and Susan Murray	110 S Main St.	2013	Retail
RN Construction Co.	Ronald Love	9 West Street	2013	Construction
Sandisfield Lock and Key	Andre D'Andrea	12 Silverbrook Rd.	2013	Other
Tucker's Pub	McStone, LLC	61 S. Main St.	2013	Arts
William Riiska Logging	William Riiska	101 New Hartford Rd.	2013	Agriculture
		2013 Total	13	
2012				
Dragonfly Farm	R. Katie and Douglas Rocco	22 Rood Hill Rd.	2012	Agriculture
Fast Bugs	Douglas Segrin	188 Sandisfield Rd.	2012	Retail
Hyland Property Services	William Hyland	96 South Main St.	2012	Professional
Kahlstrom Enterprises	Edgar Kahlstrom	252 North Beech Plain Rd.	2012	Unknown
P & R Construction LLC	Robert and Patrick O'Brien	6 South Beech Plain Rd.	2012	Construction
Southern Berkshire Fuel	Angelo Campetti	112 North Main St.	2012	Retail
Still River Designs	Douglas Rocco	22 Rood Hill Rd.	2012	Arts
The Painted Caravan LLC	Isabeth Bakke Hardy	11 Jamie Lane	2012	Arts
Valley View Farm	Eric & Dawn Pachulski	15 Roosterville Rd.	2012	Agriculture
		2012 Total	9	

Table 2.5 - "Doing Business As" (DBA) Licenses Issued by the Town of Sandisfield, MA—Continued

2011				
Doing Business As	Name	Address	Year of Most Recent DBA	Category (See Table 2.3)
Berkshire Logic	Jeff B Davis		2011	Unknown
Berkshire Real Estate Book and Berkshire Trades	Frederick and Diane Swartz		2011	Real Estate
Gene's Lawn Service	Gene Riiska		2011	Professional
Lacton Farm	Margaret O'Clair		2011	Agriculture
Misty Mountain Realty	Connie Canty-Donaldson	2 Bosworth Rd.	2011	Real Estate
Subterranean Drilling of Massachusetts	Daniel Tallarico	4 Smith Road	2011	Professional
The Berkshire Craftsman Co.	Mark Fay		2011	Construction
The Masswood Forestry Co. LLC	Robert Liberman	19 Roberts Rd.	2011	Agriculture
Wild Thyme Pottery	June Keener Wink	155 Sandisfield Rd.	2011	Arts
Wyman Construction	Al Wyman		2011	Construction
		2011 Total	10	
2010				
Alberti Productions	Herbert Burtis	53 Rood Hill Rd.	2010	Arts
CG Remodeling	Carlos Giraldo		2010	Construction
Scribbles Publishing	Kate Rocco	22 Rood Hill Rd.	2010	Information
Three Road Farm	Joseph Zeller	42 New Hartford Rd.	2010	Agriculture
		2010 Total	4	
Other Businesses and Organizations				
Joshua's Farm	Brigitte Ruthman	45 Dodd Road		Agriculture
Sandisfield Arts Center	Director: Marcella Smith	5 Hammertown Rd.		Arts
Anderson Heating and Plumbing		21 West Hubbard Rd.		Other
Sandisfield Times				Information
Sandisfield American Legion		79 South Main St.		Health
Annecharico Construction Co		24 Stump Road		Construction
Berkshire Crane Service		224 Sandisfield Road		Other
Douglas North Contracting		111 Sandy Brook Turnpike		Construction
S W Artz		3 Norfolk Road		Arts
William & Susan Crofut		New Hartford Road		Arts
		Other Businesses (no year or DBA)	10	



INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing Town Infrastructure

Sandisfield currently owns five major buildings and facilities including its main administrative building located at the Town Hall Annex on Route 57.

All wastewater is currently treated through on-site or shared septic systems adjacent to private residences and on municipal properties.

All drinking water is supplied through privately and municipally owned wells.

For discussion of the town's roadways please refer to the transportation section of this appendix and Chapter 7—Transportation.

Broadband / High Speed Internet

One of the programs of the American Investment and Recovery act of 2009 included significant federal funding for broadband internet expansion. In Massachusetts, state legislation created the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI). This organization was tasked with installation of the "middle mile" which connects the internet network's core to local distribution hubs. In February 2014, MBI announced that it had completed work on the middle mile installation. However, significant work and funding is still required before many individual users will see high speed internet in their homes or businesses.

In 2011, a group of towns formed a cooperative called WiredWest to help advance installation of the "last mile", in which broadband internet connections are established for individual homes and users. Sandisfield was one of the original member towns that signed the organization's charter, and holds a seat on the organization's executive committee and board. In addition to high speed internet, WiredWest will also provide television and phone service. Data from WiredWest provided in the April 2015 issue of the Sandisfield Times estimates that households could save up to \$500 per year on internet, television, and phone services with WiredWest versus other providers.

One of the requirements for service to be provided by

WiredWest is that 40% of more households within a member town must sign up for service and provide a \$49 deposit. This initial deposit is referred to as the "take rate". According to the WiredWest website, Sandisfield has met and exceeded the 40% take rate. With the 40% take rate, WiredWest will be able to pay its operating costs and be able to reimburse towns for the costs required to construct and install the broadband network.

The total cost to install broadband internet in Sandisfield has been estimated at \$3.65 million. State funding will provide \$1.25 million of this cost, bringing the town's total costs to \$2.4 million. At town meeting on May 16th, 2015, the town voted to fund development of the broadband network for the full \$2.4 million. The vote passed with over 100 voters supporting the measure and two opposed. The town also voted to exempt this debt from Proposition 2 1/2. Proposition 2 1/2 is a state tax law that creates a tax levy ceiling and establishes limits on how much property taxes can be increased year to year.

According to the Sandisfield Technology Committee, broadband internet and other services provided by WiredWest are anticipated to reach the first member towns in 2018 (Personal Communication 2015). It is unknown precisely when service will reach Sandisfield.

Drinking Water

For mapped public drinking water supplies, please see Map J—Water Resources.

All drinking water is currently provided through public and private well systems. Public drinking water wells are listed in Table 3.1.

Public drinking water supply data shows eight public water supply wells in the Town of Sandisfield, including locations at the Town Hall Annex (listed as the Sandisfield School in the water supply data) and local inns and restaurants. These wells fall into three categories including Community Groundwater wells (GW), Transient Non-Community water systems (TNC), and Non-Transient Non-Community (NTNC) water systems. TNC systems serve fewer than 25 people

daily and are generally located at sites such as restaurants and campgrounds. NTNC systems serve 25 or more people daily for 6 months or more out of the year. GW wells are defined as serving a population of 25 or more year-round, and are typically, but not always, shared by a number of private residences. In Sandisfield, the town's sole GW well serves the Berkshire Rehabilitation and Skilled Care Center on Route 57.

These public drinking water wells are all surrounded by interim well-head protection areas (IWPA), which provide a minimum 500' buffer (NTNC systems) and a maximum 750' (TNC systems) around the well-head.

In the past, the town has experienced challenges with contamination in wells, particularly along Route 8. This contamination is thought to have been caused by road salt use. In Sandisfield, two wells were tested in Sandisfield between 1995 and 2001. (Mattos, 2002). It is unknown if additional well testing in Sandisfield has occurred since then. For additional information, see Chapter 7—Transportation or the Transportation section of this appendix.

Kinder Morgan Tennessee Gas Pipeline—Connecticut Expansion Project

Two existing gas pipelines currently pass through Sandisfield. The pipelines are collectively referred to as the "200 line". The 200 line includes a 24 and 30 inch diameter pipeline within a roughly 75 foot wide right-of-way (ROW). The existing 200 line ROW crosses into Sandisfield near the intersection of Route 23 and Town Hill Road. From here the pipeline ROW runs roughly parallel to and immediately south of Cold Spring Road moving southeast across the town. The pipeline crosses South Beech Plain Road and Route 8 and passes into the Town of Tolland.

Recently, Tennessee Gas Pipeline and its parent company, Kinder Morgan have announced plans to expand this pipeline in Sandisfield as part its Connecticut Expansion Project (see Figure 3.1). The project proposes the construction of 3.8 miles of new 36 inch outside diameter pipeline within or adjacent to the current pipeline ROW, as well as additional facilities for operations and maintenance including a relocated main line valves and pig launchers and

Table 3.1 - Public Water Supply Wells in Sandisfield, MA

Source: Mass GIS Public Water Supplies 2014

SOURCE_ID	SITE_NAME	TYPE	PWS_ID
1260007-01G	NEW BOSTON INN	TNC	1260007
1260005-01G	SANDISFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL (Town Hall Annex)	NTNC	1260005
1260010-01G	VILLA MIA RESTAURANT	TNC	1260010
1260009-01G	M J TUCKERS LLC	TNC	1260009
1260002-01G	MS MURPHYS RESTAURANT SPIRITS (now a residence)	TNC	1260002
1260003-01G	CONNIES SILVERBROOK CAFE LLC (out of business)	TNC	1260003
1260011-01G	NEW BOSTON STORE (now a residence)	TNC	1260011
1260001-01G	WELL 1 (Berkshire Rehab and Skilled Care	GW	1260001

GW = Community Groundwater Well, serves a population of 25 or more year-round and can have multiple connections (quasi-public drinking water system).

TNC = Transient Non-Community Well—serves at least 25 people daily, 60 days or more per year, such as at a camp or restaurant.

NTNC = Non-Transient Non-community Well -regularly serves at least 25 people daily at least 6 months per year, but not year round.

Note: Public well data is from 2014. Some business names may have changed.

receivers. "Pig" is used to refer to a variety of devices which are inserted into pipelines for cleaning, inspection, and maintenance. Specialized launching and receiving areas are required to be able to insert and remove the pig from the pipeline.

Within Sandisfield, the proposed pipeline will create a "loop" along the existing Tennessee Gas 200 line, and is referred to as the "Massachusetts Loop". The purpose of the loop is to increase the volume of gas that can be transported within the pipeline. The loop is expected to increase gas flow by over 72 million

**Table 3.2 - Town of Sandisfield Computer Inventory***Source: Sandisfield Technology Committee Personal Communication 2015*

Type	Used by	Condition
Laptop	Town Administrator	OK
Desktop	Clerk	OK
Laptop	Clerk	OK (light use by Assistant Town Clerk and for ethics testing for staff and town volunteers)
Desktop	Assessor	New (replacement for PC recently destroyed by lightning)
Desktop	Assessor	Old Windows 2000 Server for Land Records System. Replacement planned within 6 months
Desktop	Library (Librarian)	Good
Desktop	Library (Patrons)	Good
Laptop	BOH	Good
Laptop	Con. Com.	Requested, has not yet been purchased
Laptop	Planning Board	OK
Desktop	Treasurer	Older, needs replacement
Laptop	Assistant Treasurer	Good
Laptop	Highway Superintendent	Good
Desktop	Tax Collector	OK
Desktop	Council on Aging	OK

cubic feet per day and serve three natural gas utilities in Connecticut.

The proposed expansion project is part of other regional natural gas infrastructure expansion projects, including the Northeast Energy Direct Project that is proposed to increase natural gas transport from a hub in Wright, NY, to Dracut, MA. Much of this expansion is due to the increase in natural gas production currently being experienced across the United States due to the use of hydraulic fracturing, also known as “fracking”.

The main staging area and “pipeyard”, or pipeline storage area for the project, is proposed to be located in an agricultural field off of Main Road in Tyringham. The Massachusetts Loop is proposed to begin near an existing valve in Sandisfield along Town Hill Road and run within or adjacent to the existing pipeline ROW located there. Over two miles of the proposed loop is planned to pass through Otis State Forest, with the

remainder on privately owned land. Additionally, the loop is proposed to cross Cold Spring Road, Hammertown Road, and South Beech Plain Road in Sandisfield. Smaller pipeyards, each several acres in size, are also proposed to be located along South Beech Plain Road, Town Hill Road, and Cold Spring Road.

Moreover, the Massachusetts loop is proposed to be hydrostatically tested using roughly one million gallons of water from Lower Spectacle Pond. Water from the pond will be pumped into the pipeline and held at pressure for a length of time to determine if the pipeline has met design standards and federal regulation. After the completion of a satisfactory test, the water will be discharged to the ground in an vegetated upland area using energy dissipation devices to prevent erosion. The location of this discharge has not been determined.

At its annual town meeting in May of 2014, the Town

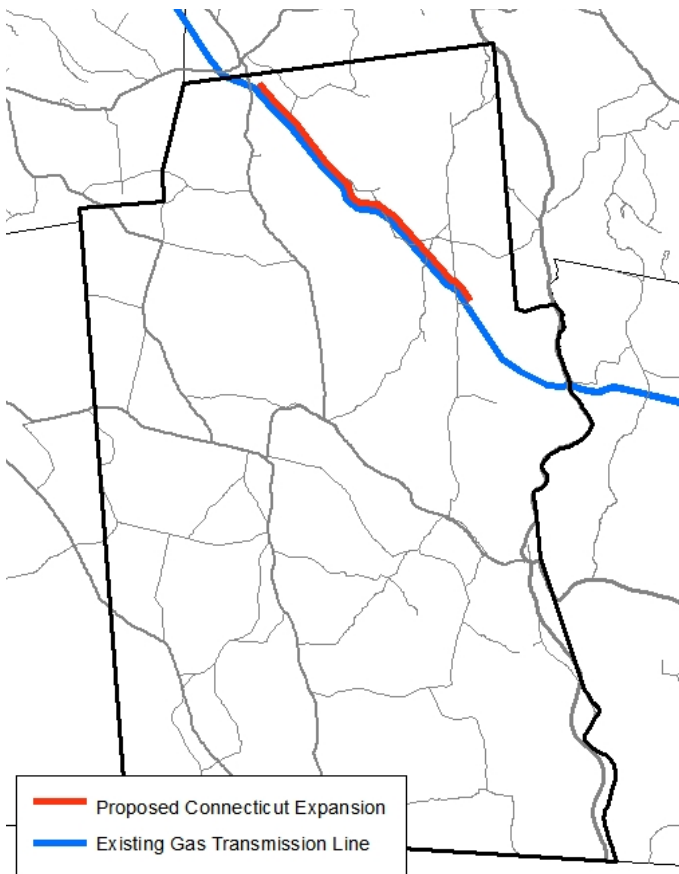


Figure 3.1—Map of existing gas pipeline and proposed Connecticut Expansion project route.

of Sandisfield approved a resolution to ban the pipeline expansion project in town. The resolution cited potential damage to natural resources and the town's scenic beauty, as well as the project's undermining of state climate change mitigation efforts and commitments to renewable energy among the reasons for banning its construction. Additionally, a citizen's group known as Sandisfield Taxpayers Opposing Pipeline (STOP) was formed to oppose the gas expansion project.

Moreover, Sandisfield's Selectboard has been actively negotiating with Kinder Morgan representatives on a community benefits agreement to compensate the town for expenses related to the pipeline expansion.

In an article by Bill Price in the September 2015 issue of the Sandisfield Times, it was noted that Kinder Morgan had begun the project approval process with the Sandisfield Conservation Commission, triggered by

the project's proximity to local wetland and water resources. Additionally, at the time of this writing, legislation has been submitted at the state level that would allow the pipeline to pass through state lands currently protected by Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution. Approval will require a 2/3 vote of the state legislature to be granted.

Town Technology Infrastructure

The Town of Sandisfield owns fourteen computers, including five laptops and nine desktops. The Sandisfield Conservation Commission has requested the purchase of an additional laptop for their use, but as of the time of this writing, this has not yet been purchased. These computers, their primary users, and their general condition are summarized in Table 3.2 - Town of Sandisfield Computer Inventory.

According to the Sandisfield Technology Committee, the town lacks networked computers, or a shared file server system. Moreover, the town does not have networked telephones, such as would allow transferring of calls between departments and various public buildings in town.

The town also maintains a website (www.sandisfield.info). The website contains a calendar of town meetings, information on town boards and committees, as well as links to the assessor's database. During meetings of the Sandisfield MPSC, it was noted that there is a need to make better use of the town website, and also to ensure that it is maintained with up-to-date information.

Town Buildings and Facilities

For mapped town buildings and town owned lands, please see Map B—Community Facilities and Town Owned Land.

For a complete list of town buildings and potential repairs identified, please refer to Table 3.3 in this appendix.

Bryarly Consulting LLC Building Assessment

In 2013-2014, at the request of Sandisfield's Strategic Planning Committee, Bryarly Consulting, LLC located in Hadley, MA conducted an assessment of town owned

**Table 3.3 - Town-Owned Buildings and Facilities in Sandisfield, MA***Source: Strategic Planning Committee 2014, Bryarly Consulting LLC, 2014*

Name	Address	Needs / Possible Work Identified
Town Hall	3 Silverbrook Road	Remove and replace septic system , new propane furnace and air conditioning , new window installation, new office construction in main meeting hall, new bathroom installation
Highway Department Garage	3 Silverbrook Road	Replacement of the structure has been proposed due to structural issues and building code compliance concerns.
Town Hall Annex	66 Sandisfield Road	Work on exterior accessibility ramp, new furnace and air conditioning system, work on second floor bathrooms, replace existing septic system, replace windows, install insulation
Transfer Station	Route 57	N/A
Library/Community Center	23 Sandisfield Road	Extend roof at rear of structure, replace existing septic system, removal of material to move water away from building, waterproof foundation, new accessible parking for upper level, new furnace and air conditioning with 2 hour fire wall, new bathrooms (upper and lower floors), add custodial closet . Building located in floodplain.

Note: Sandisfield Fire Station #1 and #2 are owned by the Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department Inc. For a discussion of town cemeteries, please refer to Chapter 9—Natural and Cultural Resources and the accompanying portion of this appendix.

buildings to make recommendations for future repairs. The report evaluated the Town Hall, the Town Hall Annex, the Library, and the Highway Department Garage.

The assessment concluded that the town's current facilities are not compliant with current building code. Additionally, it noted that after the cost of code upgrades and other repairs to existing buildings, the structures would still not meet current or future needs, and that upgrading these facilities would not be an efficient use of town financial resources. The report also highlighted possible repairs to the highway department or DPW garage, saying that due to "existing structural issues, and the location, it is not feasible nor financially prudent to attempt to repair the existing town DPW garage".

The building assessment and the Sandisfield Strategic Planning Committee ultimately recommended the construction of a new town administration building, as well as a new highway department or DPW garage. As for potential locations for these proposed structures, and one possible solution to help address town facility needs, the Strategic Planning Committee proposed

that the existing Town Hall and highway department garage structures on Silverbrook Road could be removed to create room for an expanded highway department garage at the same site. A potential location for the proposed town administration building has not been determined. Additionally, as part of this planning effort, the Strategic Planning Committee recommended that the existing Library and Town Hall Annex building be sold to help fund the construction of these new facilities.

Library/Community Center

The Sandisfield Library is located at 23 Sandisfield Road. The Sandisfield Library provides books, audiobooks, and DVD's to its patrons and has two internet accessible computers, which are used mostly for research. The Library also participates in interlibrary loan programs which allows Sandisfield residents to access books found in other regional libraries. The Library also provides free wireless internet. According to the Library Board of Trustees, the Sandisfield Library also functions as an important public meeting space and community center (Personal Communication 2015). The lower floor of the library

has a open room available for meetings and gatherings. The library grounds are also home to the town playground.

Town Hall (Old Town Hall)

The Sandisfield Town Hall, also known as Old Town Hall, is located at 3 Silverbrook Road and provides a meeting space for town boards and committees, including the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Board of Health.

Highway Department / DPW Garage

Sandisfield's highway department and DPW garage is located adjacent to Town Hall on Silverbrook Road. The structure houses the DPW department and its equipment.

Town Hall Annex

Sandisfield Town Hall Annex is located at 66 Sandisfield Road. Most administrative functions of the town are conducted from this building, and it houses the town assessor and town clerk. The Board of Selectmen also meets in this building. The Sandisfield Council on Aging meets weekly in the basement of this building to hold its pot-luck lunch. The Town Hall Annex is considered a local emergency shelter by the town with a capacity to shelter 25 people. Recently, the roof on Town Hall Annex was replaced.

Proposed Structures

Proposed Highway Department Garage

According to the Bryarly Consulting report, the estimated size of the proposed highway department garage is around 6,000 square feet. Based on the estimated price of a new standard metal building at \$250 /sq. ft., construction costs are assumed to be around \$1,500,000.

Proposed Town Administration Building

While a full assessment of the costs of a potential new Town Administration building have not been assessed, the Bryarly Consulting report identified that town administration space requirements are around 17,000 sq. ft. (not including the Library), with current available space of around 6,500 sq. ft. in the Town Hall

and Town Hall Annex. Thus the space shortage required for Town Administration is around 10,500 sq. ft.

Other Buildings and Facilities

Fire Station #1

Sandisfield Fire Station #1 is owned by the Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department Inc., and is thus a privately owned building. However, this structure is considered a local emergency shelter for the town.

Fire Station #2

Sandisfield Fire Station #2 is owned by the Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department Inc., and is thus a privately owned building. However, this structure is considered a local emergency shelter for the town, with the capacity to shelter 50-75 people.

Transfer Station

The Sandisfield Transfer Station is located along Route 57 and provides a location for waste and recyclable materials collection. Waste is then brought to regional landfills or recycling centers. Bulky waste and construction debris is not allowed at the transfer station. However, the town usually holds a bulky waste collection event in the spring, where larger waste such as furniture and appliances can be disposed of.

Town Cemeteries

There are five town-owned cemeteries in Sandisfield. For a discussion of town cemeteries, please see Chapter 9— Natural and Cultural Resources and the accompanying section of this appendix.

Public Survey Results

Respondents were in favor of potential energy efficiency upgrades to town buildings (83%). A potential new town administrative building was favored by 55% of survey respondents. A potential new DPW garage was supported by 40% of survey respondents. Support for a potential new DPW garage was above 50% when the responses of only year-round residents were tallied.



SERVICES

Existing Conditions

Sandisfield offers a range of services to its residents including police, fire, library, road maintenance and building inspection services among others.

Police Department

Sandisfield has a police force comprised of three officers, and provides law enforcement services to the Town of Sandisfield. Major equipment utilized by the department includes two police cruisers, two snowmobiles, and an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV).

Fire Department / Ambulance Squad

The Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department Inc. provides fire protection and ambulance services from two fire stations located on Route 8 and Route 57. The fire department is comprised of 15 members and the ambulance squad is made up of 11 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). Sandisfield Fire Station #1 houses a pump truck, rescue truck, and ambulance. Sandisfield Fire Station #2 houses a pump truck, two tanker trucks, a brush truck (for wild fires), three ATV's, two snowmobiles, and a rescue boat. Both fire stations are owned by the Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department Inc..

Library / Community Center

Library services are provided by the town. The library has books and other media available to be checked out. The library also provides interlibrary loan services in coordination with other libraries in the region. Free wireless internet and two publicly accessible computers allow residents to access information online. Publically available meeting space in the town library allows it to function as a community center and gathering area.

Highway Department

The Sandisfield Highway Department provides road maintenance and snow removal services for the town. The Highway Department has a staff of five, including the Highway Department Supervisor. One or two individuals are usually hired temporarily during the winter months to help with road plowing needs and

other snow removal. The town participates in the regional group purchasing program, which allows towns to pool their resources to get cheaper materials. The town uses this program to purchase diesel fuel, sand, plow blades and to get discounts on road restriping and line painting. The town currently owns several important pieces of highway equipment including a loader, backhoe, grader, sander, and two roadside mowers. The town also owns two large 10-ton trucks, and three smaller trucks it uses for plowing, a fourth small plow truck is not currently running (Sandisfield Highway Department Personal Communication 2015).

Transfer Station

Sandisfield provides for waste removal services through its transfer station located on Route 57. Household trash and recyclable materials can be brought here for transfer to a regional landfill.

Planning Board

The Sandisfield Planning Board provides site plan review services. The Planning Board reviews and decides on certain types of permits/approvals and administers the subdivision of land within the town.

Council on Aging

The Sandisfield Council on Aging (COA) provides social and support services to elders, families and caregivers in the town. The COA organizes a weekly potluck lunch, held on Wednesdays in basement of the Town Hall Annex. Additionally, it organizes a walking for exercise program held on River Road. The COA has also received grant funding to reimburse volunteer drivers for mileage to provide transportation for senior citizens to nearby services and amenities. The COA also works to connect Sandisfield residents with regional transportation services provided by the Berkshire Regional Transportation Authority or the Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation.

Conservation Commission

The Sandisfield Conservation Commission provides site plan review and administers the Massachusetts

Wetland Protection Act (WPA) as well as the Rivers Protection Act (RPA).

Recreation Committee

The Sandisfield Recreation Committee organizes recreation events in town, including the annual Easter Egg Hunt and Memorial Day Parade (Sandisfield Town Report, 2013).

Strategic Planning Committee

This committee was formed to address the future needs of Sandisfield with the intent to “develop and assist with the implementation of a long range plan to improve [the town’s] infrastructure, local economy, and financial health.”

Finance Committee

All towns with a total valuation of \$1,000,000 or more are required to have a finance or advisory committee. The Finance Committee is tasked with making sure that the town has a balanced and fiscally sound budget.

Cemetery Committee

The Sandisfield Cemetery Committee was appointed due to concerns about the poor conditions of Sandisfield’s five cemeteries. The Cemetery Committee established a set of rules for town cemeteries in 2015. Additionally, in the spring of 2015, the Committee organized a cleanup at the New Boston Cemetery that removed overgrown vegetation, leaves, and other debris. The committee will continue this work on the remaining four cemeteries in Sandisfield. For more information on the town’s cemeteries, see Chapter 9—Natural and Cultural Resources and the accompanying section of this appendix.

Historical Commission

The Sandisfield Historical Commission’s purpose is to “encourage and plan for the preservation and protection of the communities historical and archaeological assets”. The Historical Commission has been collaborating with the Sandisfield Historical Society to publish Elizer Yale Smith’s *Sandisfield: An*

Intimate History and Some Comments. This unpublished manuscript was discovered at the Otis library and was published in 2014. Additionally, the commission chair published a town history entitled *Sandisfield: Then and Now* in 2012 (Sandisfield Historical Commission Personal Communication 2015).

The Historical Commission has been active in updating the town’s Architectural and Historical Assets Survey, which was last completed in 1979. In 2014, 32 of approximately 110 updated historic inventory forms were submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). The remaining inventory updates will be submitted in 2015 (Sandisfield Town Report, 2014). An interview with the Historical Commission chair revealed that as many as 15 of the nearly 100 historic buildings in the town are possibly eligible for recognition through the National Historic Register, which is administered through the National Park Service (NPS). The rest of the historic homes in the town could be recognized through the creation of up to seven historic districts in Sandisfield, based on various groupings of historic buildings.

The Historical Commission has also been active in promoting the importance of the town’s cemeteries to its history, and has been working to place markers at town cemeteries to locate Sandisfield residents who served in the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and the Civil War. The Historical Commission anticipates that these markers will be placed in 2015. Moreover, the commission has been working with willing owners of historic homes to create signage to mark these significant buildings. Around 50 homeowners have participated in the program, which allowed the Historical Commission to develop and purchase the signage at a reduced cost.

Finally, the Commission has also created a local recognition and award program—the “Sandisfield Heritage Heroes”—that is given to residents who restore or renovate historic homes.

Select Board

The Sandisfield Select Board is comprised of three



members. The Sandisfield Select Board is the special permit granting authority in the town and reviews all special permit applications.

Farmington River School

Sandisfield is part of a combined school district with the nearby Town of Otis and the town's share a single school facility in Otis known as the Farmington River School. The Farmington River School provides educational services from pre-kindergarten until sixth grade. Beyond sixth grade, students can attend Monument Valley Regional Middle School and Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington, or Lee Middle and High School. For more information about school enrollment figures, see Chapter 2—Population and Demographics, and the accompanying section of this appendix.

Fiscal Conditions

Tax Rate

For fiscal year (FY) 2015, the tax rate in Sandisfield was \$13.00 per \$1,000 of assessed value. This rate has increased by 57% since its value in 2008 (\$8.25) (see Table 4.1). In 2015, the average single family tax bill was \$3,192.

Revenue by Source

Sandisfield collects revenue through four major sources—its tax levy, state aid, local receipts and “other” sources. Local receipts are derived from motor vehicle excise payments, building permits and other licenses, as well as “dump stickers” that allow access to the town transfer station. “Other” sources of revenue include free cash or stabilization funds. In FY 2015, Sandisfield's total revenue was over \$3.28 million dollars. This figure represents a 73% increase in revenue since 2005 levels (\$1.82 million).

In FY 2015, Sandisfield's tax levy was just over \$2.8 million dollars and constituted 85.62% of the town's total revenue for that year. The town's tax levy has increased over the last ten years, up nearly \$1.3 million since 2005 levels. However, as a percentage of overall revenue it has only increased by 3% since 2005 levels (82.66%). State aid has increased from

Table 4.1 - Town of Sandisfield Tax Rate 2008-2015

Source: Town of Sandisfield Assessor

Tax Rate (per \$1,000 of assessment)	
Fiscal Year 2015	\$13.00
Fiscal Year 2014	\$12.70
Fiscal Year 2013	\$12.60
Fiscal Year 2012	\$10.10
Fiscal Year 2011	\$9.41
Fiscal Year 2010	\$8.63
Fiscal Year 2009	\$8.96
Fiscal Year 2008	\$8.25
Percent Increase 2008-2015	57%

Figure 4.1—FY 2013 Expenditures for the Town of Sandisfield.

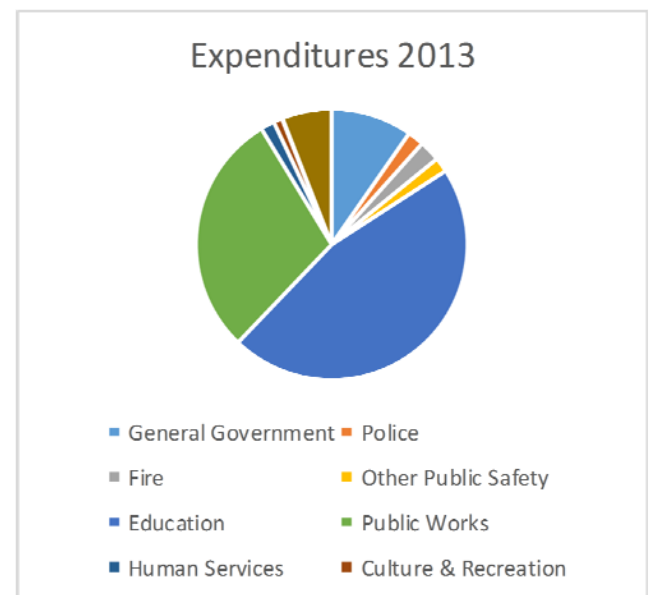
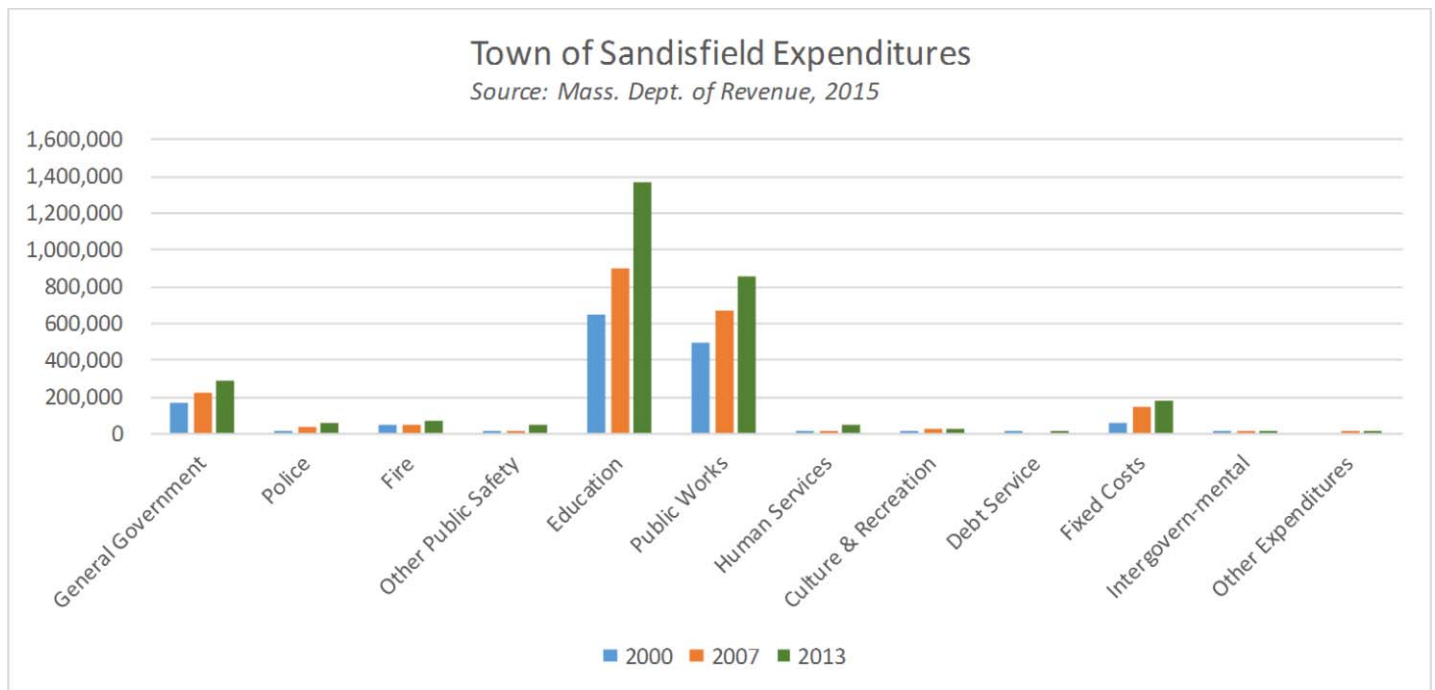


Figure 4.2 –Town of Sandisfield Expenditures 2000, 2007 and 2013.



just over \$56,000 in 2005 to over \$152,000 in 2015. As a percentage of total revenue, state aid has increased from 2.98% to 4.65%.

Expenditures

Based on data from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, town expenditures for fiscal year (FY) 2013 were greatest for education and public works related costs. In FY 2013, Sandisfield spent just over \$1.3 million dollars for education (see Figure 4.1). In comparison, in the year 2000, funding for this line item was just over \$644,000, meaning that funding for the local school has roughly doubled (see Figure 4.2).

Moreover, expenditures related to public works (road maintenance, snow and ice removal, etc) in FY 2013 were nearly \$859,000 dollars. In comparison, in the year 2000, the expenses of the road department were around \$500,000. This amounts to an increase in spending of over 70% (see Figure 4.2).

Financial Flexibility and Available Resources

Data from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue provides a measure of a municipality's "financial

flexibility" through several indicators. These indicators can provide an estimate of the availability of funds that could allow a community to respond to unforeseen but necessary expenditures or to invest in other projects. The town's financial flexibility can be measured through its free cash, stabilization funds, and excess tax levy capacity. The town's excess levy capacity is low, just over \$500. However, in FY 2015, the town had over \$600,000 in free cash, and \$900,000 in stabilization funds. Together, these funds constitute the town's available resources, which total over \$1.5 million, or around 47% of the town's budget in FY 2015 (\$3.28 million).



HOUSING

Existing Conditions

As of the 2010 Census, there were 671 housing units in Sandisfield. Housing units listed for “seasonal, recreational, or occasional use” accounted for 40.2% or 270 total units. Year round housing units totaled 56.1% of the town’s total housing stock, or 377 units. The remaining 3.6% of housing units, or 24 units, were listed as vacant. This category includes unoccupied homes for sale or rent, sold or rented units pending occupation, and other vacancies such as “abandoned” or unused homes. Rental units comprised 6.2% of all housing stock, or 42 total units, and contains units for year-round and seasonal rental.

Housing Ownership and Occupancy

The town has a predominantly single-family housing stock with most being owner occupied. Between 2000 and 2010, there was a 3.7% increase in the number of housing units in Sandisfield, with 24 units of housing added during the “aughts” decade. See Table 5.2 for Housing Occupancy in Sandisfield 2000-2010. The number of seasonal housing units decreased by 5.5%, or 26 units, over this decade. The number of year round housing units increased by 5.6%, or 50 units over this decade. The number of vacant housing units remained the same between 2000 and 2010. The number of rental units decreased from 45 to 42 units.

None of the town’s housing units are listed by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) as Chapter 40B qualifying units (DHCD, 2014). “Chapter 40B Units” are units considered affordable by low- and moderate-income households with long-term restrictions that ensure that it will continue to be affordable. Low income is defined as income equal to or less than 80% of the median income for the area. Moderate income is defined as income between 80 and 95% of the median income for the area. Chapter 40B authorizes a housing agency or developer to obtain a single comprehensive permit for the construction of subsidized low- or moderate-income housing. If a community, in which less than 10% of its total year-round housing stock is subsidized low- or moderate-income housing, denies a comprehensive permit, or imposes conditions that make the project economical-

Table 5.1- Home Value and Housing Costs in Sandisfield, MA

Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey

Value of Homes	Number	%
Less than \$50,000	8	2.4%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	9	2.7%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	9	2.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	59	17.6%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	126	37.6%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	92	27.5%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	20	6.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	12	3.6%
Total (owner occupied units)	335	100.0%
Median value: \$248,000		
Median Monthly Housing Cost (with mortgage): \$1,324		
Median Monthly Housing Cost (with no mortgage): \$457		
Median Rent: \$958		

Figure 5.1 -Building Permits and Single Family Home Sales 2000-2013

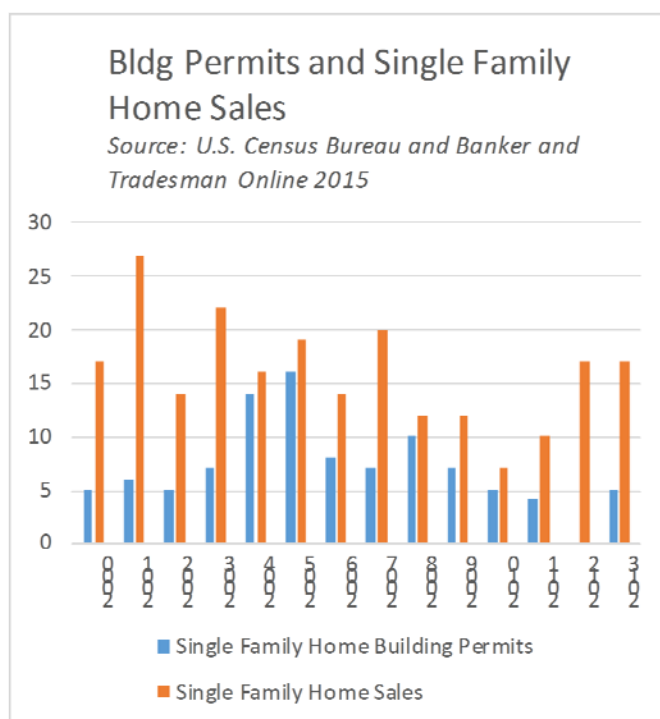


Table 5.2 - Housing Occupancy in Sandisfield 2000-2010*Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census*

	Number in 2000	% of total, 2000	Number in 2010	% of Total, 2010	% Change 2000-2010
Seasonal	296	45.7%	270	40.2%	-5.5%
Year Round	327	50.5%	377	56.1%	+5.6%
Vacant Units (includes unoccupied homes for sale or rent and other vacancies)	24	3.7%	24	3.6%	-.2%
Rental (seasonal or	45	6.9%	42	6.2%	-.7%
Total Housing Stock:	647	100%	671	100%	+3.7%

ly unviable, the developer may appeal to the state Housing Appeals Committee for review of the local action.

Based on the Sustainable Berkshires plan, Sandisfield is recommended for the scaled production of affordable housing. This means that affordable housing opportunities should be developed through the creation of duplexes or accessory dwelling units, but are not a priority for new affordable housing production. This recommendation is based on the town's rural location and distance from existing employment centers and other services.

Home Value Trends

As of the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, 64% of homes, or 218 total homes, in Sandisfield had a value of between \$200,000 and \$499,999. An estimated 12, or 3.6% of all homes had a value of \$1,000,000 or more.

In the year 2000, the median sales price of a single family home in Sandisfield was just over \$196,000. In the year 2014, the median sales price of a single family home was over \$278,000. In comparison, the median sales price for a single family home in Berkshire County was \$184,500 in 2014, or \$94,000 less than the sales price of a home in Sandisfield, Ma.

The median sales price of a home in Sandisfield in 2014 was higher than the surrounding towns of Otis

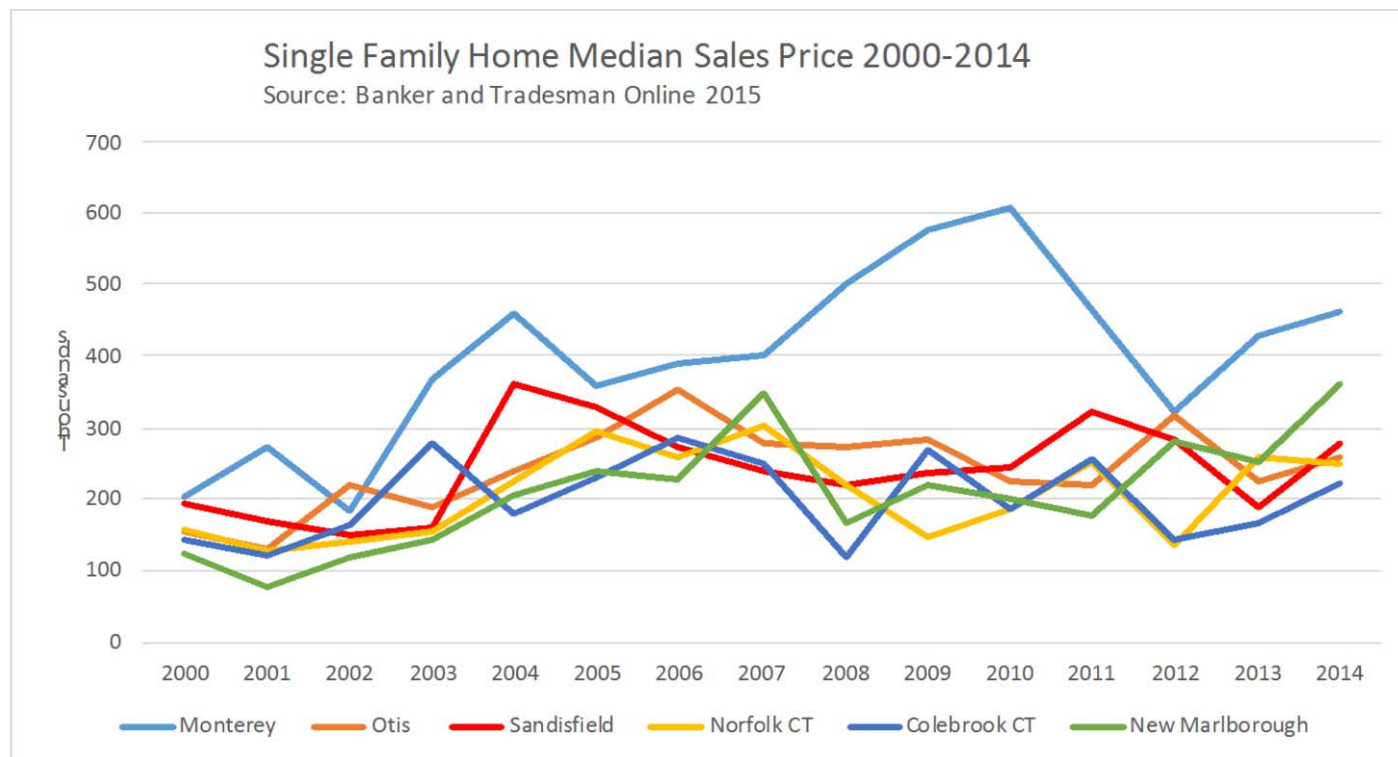
(\$260,000), as well as Norfolk (\$250,000) or Colebrook, CT (\$222,013). However, the median sales price of a home was higher in Monterey (\$462,400) and in New Marlborough (\$360,00). See Figure 5.2 for a comparison of regional single family home sales data for 2000-2014.

Home Sales Vs. New Construction

The number of sales of single family homes in Sandisfield fell from a high in 2001 of 27 homes, to a low in 2010 of 7 homes. The number of sales has increased from this low point to 17 home sales per year during 2012 and 2013. Similarly, the number of building permits issued for single family homes peaked in 2005 at 16 homes. This number decreased until 2012, where no building permits for single family homes were issued during that year. In 2013, five building permits were issued for single family homes (see Figure 5.1).

Housing Affordability

Data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicates that based on income levels determined from the 2008-2012 American Community Survey, approximately 42% of Sandisfield households, or 149 total households, earn less than 80% of the HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) (See Table 5.3). This means that approximately 42% of households would be eligible for affordable housing based on their status as low income wage earners. HAMFI for Sandisfield in 2012 was \$74,400. This value

**Figure 5.2 - Single Family Median Sales Price 2000-2014**

is derived from the Census American Community Survey median income value for the town and is adjusted for inflation and the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Moreover, 29.8% of households, or 106 households in total, are currently considered “housing burdened.” Cost burden is defined as the ratio of housing costs to household income. When housing costs are equal to or greater than 30% of income, a household is considered housing burdened. Half, or 53 total households, have a cost burden of over 50%.

Public Survey Results

Over 50% of respondents were in favor of encouraging development in Sandisfield, when responses were examined in total. However, year-round residents were overall more in support of encouraging development in Sandisfield than Seasonal residents. Year-round residents said “encourage development” at a rate of 68%. Seasonal residents supported that statement at a rate of 41%. Seasonal residents were more likely to choose answers of “keep the same” or “unsure” than year-round residents.

Housing options for seniors, including single story or

assisted living, Adaptive re-use, and options for young families were supported by over 50% of respondents. Multi-family/Multi-unit housing such as condominiums were listed as unimportant by 62.24%, or 61, respondents. Apartments and rental units were listed as unimportant by 51.06%, or 48, respondents. Housing types that respondents were most “neutral” about include single-family homes, high-end homes, and second homes

Table 5.3 - Housing Issues in Sandisfield, MA*Source: HUD, 2015 based on the 2008-2012 Census American Survey*

Income Distribution Overview	Owner	Renter	Total	% of Total
Household Income <= 30% HAMFI	25	4	29	8.2%
Household Income >30% to <=50% HAMFI	50	15	65	18.3%
Household Income >50% to <=80% HAMFI	45	10	55	15.5%
Household Income >80% to <=100% HAMFI	40	0	40	11.3%
Household Income >100% HAMFI	165	0	165	46.5%
Total	330	25	355	100.0%
Housing Problems Overview	Owner	Renter	Total	
Household has 1 of 4 Housing Problems	90	15	105	29.6%
Household has none of 4 Housing Problems	240	15	255	71.8%
Cost Burden not available	0	0	0	0.0%
Total	330	25	355	100.0%
Housing Cost Burden Overview	Owner	Renter	Total	
Cost Burden <=30%	239	14	253	71.3%
Cost Burden >30% to <=50%	43	10	53	14.9%
Cost Burden >50%	49	4	53	14.9%
Cost Burden not available	0	0	0	0.0%
Total	330	25	355	100.0%

**HAMFI stands for "HUD Area Median Family Income". For the year 2011, HAMFI in the town of Sandisfield was equal to \$74,400. HUD calculates its own income values differently from those reported in Census information. Census data for income is adjusted based on the consumer price index (CPI) and inflation trends. Finally the value is rounded to the nearest \$100.

*The four housing problems are: incomplete kitchen facilities, incomplete plumbing facilities, more than 1 person per room, and cost burden greater than 30%.

***Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs", which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes.

Note: All data is by household. HUD household totals have been rounded.



TRANSPORTATION

Regional Roadways

Two major regional roadways serve Sandisfield, Routes 57 and Route 8. Route 8 runs north to south through Massachusetts, from the border with Clarksburg, VT to Sandisfield and the Connecticut state line. Route 57 is the major east-west route. Route 57 begins in the nearby Town of Monterey and travels east to Agawam. In Massachusetts, most regional roadways and numbered routes are the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), meaning that this entity is responsible for maintenance. This is the case with the section of Route 8 that runs through Sandisfield. However, Route 57, while a numbered route, is maintained by the towns it passes through, including Sandisfield.

Local Roadways

For a list of local roadways, please refer to Table 6.3 in this appendix.

Sandisfield is a rural community, and as such, the predominant form of transportation is by automobiles or trucks. Town Hill Road and New Hartford Road are the town's major local north south roadways. Both of these roads intersect with Route 57 and are paved. Local roadways are primarily maintained by the Town of Sandisfield. However, there are some privately owned and maintained roadways in town, particularly in the Otis Woodlands subdivision, a portion of which is located in Sandisfield.

Bridges

For a list of bridges in Sandisfield, please refer to Table 6.2 in this appendix.

According to available state data, there are 20 bridges within Sandisfield. Of these 20 bridges, five are maintained by the state, and the remaining 15 are maintained by the town. Sandisfield recently received a MassWorks infrastructure grant for nearly \$1 million dollars to replace a deteriorating bridge along Route 57 that crosses over the Clam River, known locally as the "Rugg" or "Clam River" Bridge. An article in the Berkshire Eagle noted that "the bridge currently has only a 12-ton weight limit, which forces DPW trucks,

Table 6.1—Road Jurisdiction in Sandisfield, MA

Source: MassDot Road Inventory File 2015

Jurisdiction	Miles	% of All Roads
State	10.85	11.1%
Town	80.80	82.3%
Private	4.72	4.8%
Unresolved Jurisdiction	1.75	1.8%
Total	98.12	100.0%

school buses, emergency vehicles and commercial vehicles to make a 15.4-mile detour to get into town" (Gentile 2015). See Figure 7.1 in Chapter 7—Transportation for a photograph of the Clam River Bridge.

Rail

Passenger rail service is available from stations located in the Cities of Pittsfield or Springfield, MA, and in the City of Windsor Locks, CT. These station locations are all about a one hour drive from Sandisfield.

Airports

Airports are located in Albany, NY at Albany International Airport and in Windsor Locks, CT at Bradley International Airport. Albany International is approximately a one and a half hour drive from Sandisfield, and Bradley International is roughly a one hour drive away.

Bus Transit

Within Berkshire County, bus transit service is provided throughout the county by Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA). No bus line currently serves the town. The closest BRTA stop is in Great Barrington, about a half-hour drive from the Town of Sandisfield.

Elderly and Disabled Transportation

Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation (SBETC) and Berkshire Regional Transportation Agency (BRTA) Paratransit provide transportation services for

Table 6.2 - Bridges in Sandisfield, MA*Source: MassDOT 2013*

Over	Under	Owner	Functional Class
ST 57 SANDISFLD RD	BUCK RIVER	Town	Major Collector
ST 57 SANDISFLD RD	CLAM RIVER	Town	Major Collector
ST 8 /ST57/SNDSFD	W BR FARMINGTON R	State	Rural Minor Arterial
HWY CLARK RD EXT	W BR FARMINGTON R	Town	Rural Local
HWY HMRTWN MNTVL	CLAM RIVER	Town	Rural Local
ST 57 SANDISFLD RD	BUCK RIVER	Town	Major Collector
HWY FOX RD	N BR SILVER BROOK	Town	Rural Local
HWY BACK RD	SILVER BROOK	Town	Rural Local
HWY BEECH PLAIN	CLAM RIVER	Town	Rural Local
HWY SANDY BRK T	RIISKA BROOK	Town	Major Collector
HWY LOWR WEST ST	BUCK RIVER	Town	Rural Local
ST 57 SANDISFLD RD	FRUITCAKE BROOK	Town	Major Collector
HWY FOX RD	S BR SILVER BROOK	Town	Rural Local
HWY ELK RD	S BR SILVER BROOK	Town	Rural Local
HWY NORFOLK RD	SANDY BROOK	Town	Rural Local
HWY SANDY BRK T	SANDY BROOK	Town	Major Collector
ST 8 S MAIN ST	SILVERNAIL BROOK	State	Rural Minor Arterial
ST 8 S MAIN ST	W BR FARMINGTON R	State	Rural Minor Arterial
HWY ALAN RD	FARMINGTON RIVER	State	Rural Local
HWY WEBB RD	UPR SPEC POND OTLT	State	Rural Local

elderly and disabled residents in Sandisfield.

SBETC is based out of Great Barrington and serves the towns of Great Barrington, Egremont, Alford, Sheffield, Sandisfield, Otis, Monterey and New Marlborough. Service from SBETC is on-demand passengers are picked up at their homes for a small fee. Passengers must place a reservation in advance of travel, requesting a pick up and listing the local destination they wish to travel.

BRTA paratransit is a county wide on-demand ride service. A small fee for rides is charged, and a reservation must be made in advance. Unlike SBETC, BRTA paratransit passengers must fill out an application before being approved to use the service.

The Council on Aging has also received state grant

funding to reimburse volunteers for their time to provide transportation services one day a week. The advantage of this transportation service is that it can cross state lines into nearby Connecticut, whereas BRTA and SBETC cannot (Sandisfield Council on Aging Personal Communication 2015).

Road Jurisdiction

For roadways by jurisdiction, please see Map C—Road Jurisdiction

For a breakdown of road miles by jurisdiction, please see Table 6.1—Road Jurisdiction in Sandisfield, Ma.

State

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for around 10.85 miles of roadway in Sandisfield or



around 11% of all roads in Town. This includes all of Route 8 and roadways found within Sandisfield State Forest.

Town

The Town of Sandisfield is responsible for 80.80 miles of road, or around 82% of all roads.

Private Roads

Privately maintained roads comprise 4.72 miles of roadway in Sandisfield, or around 4.8% of all roads in town. The majority of these roadways are found in the portion of the Otis Woodlands private community located within Sandisfield.

Unresolved Jurisdiction

Several roads have unresolved jurisdiction in town. This includes Webb Road, near Upper Spectacle Pond, Old Beech Road, near Cold Spring and South Beech Plain Road, and a portion of road east of Beech Hill Road in the south of town. These may be public or private roads, but are listed as having unresolved jurisdiction in the MassDOT's Road Inventory File (RIF). More research is required to determine the jurisdiction of these roadways. However, all appear to have low levels of maintenance, if any maintenance at all.

Transportation and Roadway Funding

Federal Funding

In Massachusetts, towns may nominate potential road repairs and improvements to their Regional Planning Agencies as part of the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This program helps to designate federal funding towards eligible road projects. Sandisfield may nominate projects to the TIP program administered through the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Only roadways designated as "arterial" or "collector" are eligible for funding through the TIP. This means that the only locally maintained roadway eligible for federal funding is Route 57. Additionally, the town has a representative that serves on the regional Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC helps to prioritize projects nominated by the TIP program.

State Funding

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides additional roadway funding through its Chapter 90 reimbursement program. This program provides funding for other roadway projects not eligible for the TIP program and is allocated based on population, employment level, and miles of roadway within town. However, as a reimbursement program, the town must fully fund any roadway project before it can be compensated by state funding. Yearly Chapter 90 funding for Sandisfield is around \$340,000 (BRPC Sandisfield Road Condition Report, 2013).

The state also provides funding for certain transportation projects through its MassWorks infrastructure grant program. In 2015, Sandisfield was awarded nearly \$1 million dollars for the replacement of the Clam River Bridge on Route 57 (See figure 7.1 in chapter 7).

Town Funding

The 2013 Road condition report notes that Sandisfield spends around \$30,000 on gravel and another \$15,000 on asphalt to repair and pave roads.

Road Maintenance and Upcoming Roadway Work

Roadway Needs

Priority Roads to be Repaired:

The following summarizes priority roadway needs for the town and was provided by the Sandisfield Highway Department (Personal Communication 2015).

Town Hill Road—reclamation of approximately 2 miles of roadway.

Hubbard Road and West St.—reclamation of approximately 6 miles of roadway in total.

Route 57—reclamation of the length of the roadway, contingent upon available funding.

Other Roadway Projects Recommended in the 2013 BRPC Road Condition Report:

Widening and drainage improvements for South Sandisfield Road

Chip seal treatment of Route 183 with some drainage repairs

Widening and improving portions of Beech Plain Road

Drainage repairs on Route 57

Replacement of approximately 10 culverts on Town Hill Road

Chip seal treatment of Cold Spring Road with drainage improvements

Widening and drainage for Abbey Road

2013 BRPC Road Condition Report and Potential Road Jurisdiction Issues

The status of roads has important ramifications for towns. Once a road is duly laid out as a public way, it remains so until it is legally discontinued, even if the road has not been used or maintained for many years. Additionally, roads influence patterns of development, as Approval Not Required (ANR) subdivision is generally not allowed on private roads or Statutory Private Ways. Subdivision on these types of roadways must follow the full subdivision review process. However, on town roadways, even long unused ones, ANR subdivision is allowed. Additionally, the town is liable for harm to people using its roadways, and discontinuance and other processes can eliminate that liability.

In 2013, Sandisfield contacted BRPC to assess the condition of all town roads and provide a set of recommendations for maintenance. In addition to a number of proposed roadway projects, the report also provided several general recommendations for road management within Sandisfield, including working to clearly identify and delineate maintenance responsibilities for Sandisfield's roadways. This could involve confirming the road's status by researching existing right-of-way ownership, who acknowledges legal responsibility, the road's status on an atlas, the

road's status on the Berkshire County Engineer's Map, the status in the Road Inventory File and the status on the Town Assessor's Map.

The report also recommended that the town verify that all the roads it maintains are included in the Chapter 90 local assistance program through MassDOT. Additionally, the town should work to update basic roadway data in the RIF, including pavement surface type. Accurate information is important for meaningful analysis at the state, regional, and local community levels. The 2013 report also noted that many private roads within the town are under-maintained, which can hinder first responder access.

A simple check of many town roadways found on Map C – Road Jurisdiction with Google Earth aerial photography revealed that many roadways listed on maps and in the RIF appear to be unmaintained or are non-existent. One such road is Sullivan Road. The northern portion is maintained by the town; however, the road is unmaintained south of a driveway leading to the road's single home. This road is listed on the Town's list of Chapter 90 funded roads. Additionally, the entirety of Sage Road is listed as town owned; however, the northern portion of this road is unmaintained beyond the last home on the road. This road is also listed on the town's list of Chapter 90 funded roadways.

Some of the roads identified in the MassDOT Road Inventory File (RIF) are of unknown jurisdiction, and the town should work to update data for these roadways with the state to ensure that potential jurisdictional issues are cleared up. This is the case with Webb Road, previously mentioned in this chapter.

BRPC has been involved with several status of roads projects with communities in Berkshire County, including nearby Otis. Status of Road projects research the legal status of all town roadways to determine ownership and maintenance responsibility. Towns can then utilize this information to alter the road status if they wish. It can also assist a town in developing an official map, as described below.



Options for Altering Legal Road Statuses

BRPC generally recommends that towns pursue one of three possible actions including road discontinuance, discontinuance of maintenance and the creation of statutory private ways. Many of these actions must be taken up by the Select Board and some may need to be approved by Town Meeting vote. Typically the actions requiring approval at Town Meeting can be laid out in a series of articles in the Town Warrant. Towns can also create an “official map”. This map, once adopted, serves as a legal document regarding road ownership, maintenance, frontage, and public access.

Discontinuance of Maintenance

Discontinuance of maintenance is authorized under M.G.L. Chap. 82, Sec. 32A and results in the cessation of the Town’s responsibility for maintenance and liability for use of the road (so long as the road is adequately posted as not maintained), but the road remains a public way with a public right of passage, and with the potential for strip and ANR development. Discontinuance of maintenance in Section 32A is a Select Board action intended for roads that have become “abandoned and unused for ordinary travel and that the common convenience and necessity no longer requires said town way...to be maintained in a condition reasonably safe and convenient for travel....”

Statutory Private Ways

Statutory Private Ways are unique to Massachusetts. They are actually public roads, with public right of passage, but no responsibility by the Town for maintenance. Maintenance is provided by the abutters. This is a good option for the Select Board if it is unclear that the road in question meets the “unused for ordinary travel” requirements of M.G.L. Chap. 82, Sec. 32A but the Town wants to end maintenance and legal liability obligations for the road. In practice, the Select Board can recommend discontinuing the road in question by Town Meeting vote, and then lay it out as a Statutory Private Way and recommend the Town vote to accept it as such at the same Town Meeting. According to a Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling (*Casagrande v. Town of Harvard*, 1979),

Statutory Private Ways are not considered sufficient for public access under the Subdivision Control Act, and therefore cannot be used as frontage for ANR lots or strip development. It is up to local interpretation of Town zoning and subdivision regulations to determine whether Statutory Private Ways meet the public access requirements for the full subdivision approval process. In some cases, Statutory Private Ways may have to be laid out again and accepted at Town Meeting as full-fledged Town roads, with public right of passage and maintenance. Statutory Private Ways differ from private roads in that public access is allowed on a Statutory Private Way, where it can be restricted on a private road.

Discontinuance

Discontinuance of a road must be approved by Town Meeting vote under M.G.L. Chap. 82, Sec. 21 completely ends the public right of passage along a road or way: the Town ends all legal responsibility for the road’s maintenance and its liability for use. In most cases, the discontinued road can no longer serve as frontage or access for development of land abutting the discontinued road, including strip or frontage development and Approval Not Required (ANR) development under the Subdivision Control Law (Chap. 41, Sec 81K- 81GG). Depending on the Town’s zoning by-laws

Official Map

An official map shows the accepted names, locations, distances, maintenance and liability responsibilities, and legal status or ownership of all roads within a town. This is a formal legal document, approved by majority Town Meeting vote and signed by the planning board. Generally, development of an official map is reinforced by other votes altering road status, such as those described previously in this section. An official map provides a powerful tool for municipalities to use to manage development, and resolve disputes regarding liability. However, it requires significant upkeep, and must be amended and updated, with required public hearings each time a new way is added, discontinued or modified. Any changes must also be reported to the Registry of Deeds and to MassDOT.

Complete Streets

“Complete Streets” is a transportation concept that examines the design of roadways to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation (automobile, bicycle, or on foot). Complete Streets is not a “one size fits all” solution, but rather a kit of parts and possible solutions that can be applied to any street or roadway. Complete streets also connects with issues of public health, by improving safety for all roadway users and encouraging exercise through walking and cycling. Within Sandisfield, small changes to the roadway, such as increased marking and signage, as well as restriping and recoloring crosswalks, could do much to enhance safety and increase travel by pedestrian and cyclists. These measures could also help to calm or slow traffic in desired areas.

Additionally, measures such as shoulder widening or roadside pathways (in addition to increased signage) could improve safety for walkers and cyclists. These changes to the roadway could be as simple as narrowing lanes for vehicle traffic during routine restriping work to increase the shoulder width available for pedestrians and cyclists. Moreover, MassDOT has recently worked to integrate Complete Streets concepts into its design guidelines for roadway projects. MassDOT has also been developing a funding program that could provide additional funding for Complete Streets related projects in addition to town Chapter 90 funding. However, municipalities must meet certain requirements for funding, such as developing a local Complete Streets policy and conducting a baseline inventory of pedestrian and cycling accommodations.

Walking Loops

Several Berkshire towns have identified “walking loops” in town centers and on quiet rural roads. These walking loops help to encourage pedestrian use and exercise, especially for elderly residents. Walking loops should be well marked and located on relatively flat terrain to enable use by residents of any age.

Within Sandisfield, a walking loop could be located on a flatter section of a quiet roadway. A conversation

with the Sandisfield Council on Aging revealed that the town organizes a walking program for seniors along River Road. The town might consider establishing a walking loop on this roadway, and other popular walking areas in town.

Transportation and the Environment

Road Salt and Well Contamination

Road Salt (Sodium Chloride or NaCl) can be a major contaminant of groundwater due its use as a de-icer for roadways. Drinking water contaminated by Sodium Chloride can exacerbate high blood pressure (hypertension) and damage organs. Additionally, high levels can harm fish, amphibians, and other aquatic species. However, road salt is not the only potential contributor of Sodium Chloride to drinking water. Septic systems, as well as water softening systems can both lead to elevated Sodium Chloride concentrations in drinking water.

Prior to 1993, Sodium Chloride was a regulated contaminant with a maximum level of 20 milligrams/ Liter (mg/L) established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). After 1993, the EPA stopped regulating Sodium Chloride as a contaminant. Today the EPA lists Sodium Chloride on its “contaminant candidate list”, which includes chemicals that are not subject to any current drinking water regulations.

Beginning in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s, residents in the communities of Sandisfield, Otis, Becket and Tolland began to notice problems with elevated sodium concentrations in public and private wells along Route 8. Most initial well testing was conducted in Otis, but also occurred at two wells in Sandisfield in 1995 and again in 2001. The contamination was thought to have originated from winter de-icing activities conducted by the Mass. Highway Department (MHD) , now the Mass. Department of Transportation (MassDOT).

Two wells in Sandisfield were ultimately replaced as the result of salt contamination.

For additional information on well contamination in Sandisfield, please refer to the Farmington River



Watershed Road Salt Review, prepared by Michael Mattos for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

For additional information on potential contaminated well replacement, please refer to the MassDOT Salt Remediation program, available at <https://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/Departments/EnvironmentalServices/SaltRemediationProgram/PrivateWells.aspx>.

Unpaved Roads and Non-Point Source Pollution

Unpaved or dirt roads are a major source of non-point source pollution such as sediment, or soil particles that are suspended in water. Sediment from unpaved roads is one of the main contributors to water quality problems in the Farmington River Watershed in Massachusetts. (BRPC 1997) as well as a national water quality issue. Non-point source pollution is distinguished from point source pollution, which refers to pollution that has a particular entry site such as a factory's smokestack or pipe. With the decline of point source pollution problems due to the Clean Water Act of 1972, nonpoint source pollution has become a growing concern. Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution, unlike pollution from sewage treatment plants and industrial discharge pipes, comes from many diffuse sources.

Sediment can cause water quality issues for both humans and wildlife. Sediment can affect the aesthetic quality of recreation areas, as well as accumulate in drainage structures, causing them to fail. Moreover, sediment pollution and the related process of erosion can destroy critical infrastructure such as roads and culverts. Additionally, sedimentation can cause dams and reservoirs to fill in at an accelerated rate. In aquatic habitats, sediment can cause harm to fish gills and cause spawning areas to fill in. Small organisms that live in stream and lake beds may be suffocated as sediment accumulates over them. This can lead to a breakdown in the aquatic food chain (BRPC 2004).

Proper maintenance of unpaved roads can help to address issues of NPS pollution by sediment. Many of

the possible maintenance actions include those that are already performed by the town as part of routine road maintenance to prevent road failure or to address issues such as dust.

In general, communities wishing to address sediment pollution should work to fix existing drainage and erosion problems on their unpaved roads, such as managing ditches to ensure they have adequate gravel or vegetative cover or installing check dams to reduce water velocity. Road grading and shaping, which are usually performed yearly by towns, can also help to maintain the road crown which can reduce erosion and therefore sediment pollution. While these routine maintenance activities can help to address sediment pollution, implementation of BMP's specific to sediment reduction can provide extra water quality protections particularly in ecologically sensitive areas or where sediment issues could degrade recreational water resources.

BRPC has been involved with several studies of the Farmington River Watershed, including the development of a watershed wide action plan in 1997 to address issues of non-point source pollution, the creation of a system of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for unpaved roads in 2001, and community level assessments of possible improvements to address sediment pollution from unpaved roads in 2004. This last report included a 5-year action plan for the Town of Sandisfield with recommendations for yearly ditch inspection and preventative maintenance, dust control, and potential road rehabilitation.

Climate Change Adaptation

In Massachusetts and New England, climate change is expected to increase the frequency of storms and the amount of precipitation. Since 1970, annual temperatures in New England have increased by 2° Fahrenheit (F) and winter temperatures have increased 4°F. Regionally, most winter precipitation now falls as rain, not snow (U.S. EPA 2015). Existing roadway infrastructure, such as culverts and bridges, may be undersized and unable to accommodate the greater amount of water anticipated with climate change, leading to a higher likelihood of damage to the roadway requiring costly replacement. Simple climate

adaptation measures could take the form of increasing the size of culverts and bridges during replacement. Additionally, the amount of gravel or stone armoring around these pieces of infrastructure could be increased to help reduce scour and erosion caused by larger and more frequent storms. Towns should consider their road infrastructure as one of the key ways to adapt to future climate change.

Wildlife Crossing Areas

The 2016 Regional Transportation Plan, prepared by BRPC provides an analysis of wildlife crossing areas in Berkshire County and Sandisfield.

The Berkshires' rural and undeveloped environment is ideal for a diverse ecosystem where some species of animals move significant distances. Unfortunately, our road system fragments these habitats and creates physical barriers to animal movement. There are two significant resources that are poised to help us better understand opportunities to minimize those barriers. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT) each have undertaken valuable studies that can help with prioritizing projects and policies that enhance the safe passage of wildlife across the regions roads. TNC analyzed land cover and a TNC/UMass-Amherst model called Critical Linkages to prioritize locations for ensuring connectivity. These priority locations will provide the greatest benefit to wildlife when barriers are removed or mitigated and are also critical for maintaining a permeable landscape of habitat protection and management.

The Nature Conservancy "Critical Linkages"

The TNC analysis developed a system of nodes, linkages, and links to analyze wildlife crossing areas in Berkshire County. Nodes are defined as areas with a high conservation value for animal habitat. Examples of nodes include core forests and vernal pools. Links are paths or connections between habitat nodes. Linkages are portions of roadways that separate habitat nodes where links cross. Ideally wildlife passage structures would be constructed at priority linkages. Essentially, the researchers created a gravity model that ranked nodes, links, and linkages on their relative importance. The resulting outputs divided

links and linkages into priority tiers with 1 being the highest. TNC also analyzed specific linkages along Route 23 and US 7 to collect species specific data and incorporate information on animal-vehicle collisions into a more site specific project development process.

Berkshire Environmental Action Team Stream Crossing Survey

The Berkshire Environmental Action Team's (BEAT) volunteers, interns, and partners are surveying Berkshire County stream crossings as part of a project organized by the University of Massachusetts, The Nature Conservancy, and the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration (formerly Riverways). BEAT is a partner with The Housatonic Valley Association and the Hoosic River Watershed Association to survey stream crossings in Berkshire County. The information is entered into a UMass database that includes culvert details and photos of the inlet and outfall. The culvert evaluation specifically indicates whether the culvert is an impairment to aquatic or terrestrial animal movements. This detailed culvert information can help BRPC and local communities estimate financial needs and prioritize culvert replacements.

New standards ensure that culverts will not create artificial waterfalls that hinder aquatic migration. Also, they should be open-bottomed wherever possible so the substrate within the culvert matches the substrate of the streambed. Culverts must be wider than the actual streambed. Specifically, culverts must be 1.2 times the width of the streambed. This extra width, which will be dry except in times of very high water, provides a path for non-aquatic wildlife such as raccoons, mink, porcupines, and in some of the larger waterways, deer and bear. There are also other guidelines within the new regulations. The idea is that a fish swimming upstream should not notice any difference in the stream when it swims under the road, other than a passing shadow. The additional culvert capacity also helps prevent washouts and associated disruption and expense.

Based on data gathered as part of the critical linkages and stream crossing survey, there are three segments of roadway in Sandisfield that have been identified as



priority areas for wildlife crossing improvements. The first two are part of Route 8, and comprise sections of the roadway immediately north and south of the intersection of Route 57. North of the intersection, the roadway has been classified as tier 1, meaning it is the highest priority for future crossing improvements. However, south of the intersection, this portion of Route 8 is listed as tier 2. Finally, a portion of Town Hill Road, immediately north of its intersection with Route 57 has been listed as a tier 2 priority road segment.

Public Survey Results

Roads were listed by 27 (or 23% of) survey respondents as one of the aspects of life in Sandisfield that they liked the least.

Survey respondents listed Route 57, Town Hill Road, and New Hartford Road as roads in town that were most important to improve. Significant work on New Hartford Road was recently completed by the town in 2015. Work on Route 57 and Town Hill Road has been listed as priority roadwork for town in coming years.

Overall, 61% of survey respondents supported the possible creation of a public transportation route through Sandisfield. Shopping or errands, access to other regional transportation and attending cultural events were listed as the top reasons for possibly using this service.

Survey responses were inconclusive about possible expansion for elderly transportation services through BRTA paratransit or Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation. Responses were divided between “keep the same”, “expand” and “don’t know” with no clear support for any choice.

Table 6.3—Road Jurisdiction in Sandisfield, Ma*Source: MassDOT Road Inventory File, 2015*

Street Name	Jurisdiction	Miles	Street Name	Jurisdiction	Miles
	Private	0.48	HAMMERTOWN ROAD	Town	2.99
ALBERTS ROAD	Private	0.18	HAWLEY ROAD	Town	0.14
AUTUMN COURT	Private	0.02	LOWER WEST STREET	Town	1.59
CHIPMUNK LANE	Private	0.05	MONTVILLE - BEECH PLAIN ROAD EXTENSION	Town	0.16
DEER RUN	Private	0.44	MONTVILLE BEECH PLAIN ROAD	Town	0.26
HIDDEN LAKE	Private	0.20	MOUNTAIN HOME LANE	Town	0.11
HIGHLAND WAY	Private	0.44	NEW MARLBORO SANDISFIELD ROAD	Town	2.27
LAKE SHORE DRIVE	Private	0.96	NORFOLK ROAD	Town	1.93
RICHARDS ROAD	Private	0.51	PERRY ROAD	Town	0.24
SEQUENA DRIVE	Private	0.23	PROCK HILL ROAD	Town	0.42
SHADOW COURT	Private	0.10	RIVER ROAD	Town	0.74
SHADOW LANE	Private	0.22	ROBERTS ROAD	Town	1.99
TAMARACK TRAIL	Private	0.56	ROOD HILL	Town	1.77
WOODLANDS WAY	Private	0.32	ROOSTERVILLE ROAD	Town	1.05
	State	0.55	SAGE ROAD	Town	1.41
FOREST RD	State	1.52	NEW HARTFORD ROAD	Town	5.33
ROOSTERVILLE ROAD	State	0.87	SANDISFIELD ROAD	Town	4.61
ROUTE 8	State	3.94	SEARS ROAD	Town	3.58
SOUTH MAIN ROAD	State	0.04	SHADE ROAD	Town	0.98
SOUTH MAIN STREET	State	3.93	SILVERBROOK ROAD	Town	3.00
ABBEY ROAD	Town	1.01	SMITH ROAD	Town	0.18
ALAN ROAD	Town	0.02	SOUTH BEECH PLAIN ROAD	Town	6.39
BACK ROAD	Town	0.83	SOUTH SANDISFIELD ROAD	Town	2.32
BEECH HILL ROAD	Town	2.85	SOUTH SANDISFIELD ROAD EXTENSION	Town	0.25
BOSWORTH ROAD	Town	1.06	SOUTH SANDISFIELD-NEW MARLBORO ROAD	Town	3.73
CLARK ROAD	Town	1.03	STUMPS ROAD	Town	0.73
CLARK ROAD EXTENSION	Town	0.12	SULLIVAN ROAD	Town	1.06
COLD SPRING ROAD	Town	4.33	TANNERY ROAD	Town	0.20
CRONK ROAD	Town	1.19	TOLLAND ROAD	Town	0.53
DODD ROAD	Town	1.27	TOWN HILL ROAD	Town	4.63
EAST HUBBARD ROAD	Town	1.62	UPPER SPEC POND ROAD	Town	0.41
ELK ROAD	Town	2.20	WEBB ROAD	Town	1.01
FOX ROAD	Town	1.99	WEST STREET	Town	3.69
GREMLER ROAD	Town	0.87	YORK LAKE ROAD	Town	0.68
				Unresolved	0.41
			OLD BEECH ROAD	Unresolved	0.56
			WEBB ROAD	Unresolved	0.78



LAND USE

Location and Context

The Town of Sandisfield is approximately 52.97 square miles, or around 33,904 acres in size. Sandisfield is the largest town in Berkshire County by land area and one of the largest towns in the Commonwealth. Sandisfield is one of the least densely populated towns in Berkshire County.

Sandisfield is bordered to the east by the Massachusetts town of Tolland, to the west by New Marlborough, to the north by Otis and Monterey, and to the south by Norfolk and Colebrook, CT.

Villages

For approximate village locations, please refer to Map D—Land Use.

Sandisfield has a dispersed pattern of settlement that historically included several village areas or local “neighborhoods”. For additional information regarding these villages, including detailed histories and significant architectural and historical resources, please refer to *Sandisfield Then and Now 1762-2012*, by Ronald Bernard.

New Boston

The area surrounding the intersection of Route 8 and Route 57. This village was largely shaped by four families (Brown, Twining, Clark, and Northway) between 1750 and 1900.

West New Boston

The area surrounding the intersection of Route 57, Silverbrook Road and South Beech Plain Road. This area was the site of sawmills, tanneries, and blacksmiths.

Montville

The area surrounding the intersections of Sandisfield Road with Town Hill and Hammertown Roads. Due to its location on the Buck River, this area was once the center of industry in Sandisfield, including tanneries, and a rake factory.

Sandisfield Center

The area surrounding the intersections of Route 57, Silverbrook Road and New Hartford Road.

South Sandisfield

The area surrounding the intersection of South Sandisfield Road, Webster Road, and Sandy Brook Road. This area was the site of the town’s first meetinghouse.

Proposed Town Center

For some time, Sandisfield residents and officials have sought to make a “town center” that would create a central gathering space and focal point for the community. Current planning efforts, spearheaded by the town’s Strategic Planning Committee have focused on using a relatively large parcel of land to site a proposed new town administration building, which would act as an “anchor”, and then develop other uses (country store, restaurants, shops, etc.) around it. Several locations have been proposed for the town center; however, none have been finalized. In this scenario, portions of the larger parcel used for development of the new town administration building could be sold to generate revenue for the town, and potential new development could create additional tax income.

The lack of a “town center” was mentioned by some survey respondents as an aspect of Sandisfield that they disliked. Additionally, the idea of establishing a “town center” was supported by 66% of all survey respondents. However, this broad question included in the public opinion survey used to develop the master plan did not include any specific details as to how this would be accomplished.

Land Use

State Aerial Photography Analysis

The state, via the University of Massachusetts - Amherst’s Resource Mapping - Land Information Systems Lab in the Department of Natural Resources Conservation, conducted an aerial photography analysis of land use in 1971, 1985, and 1999. While 1999 data is

Table 7.1 - Land Use in Sandisfield 1971-1999*Source: Mass. GIS Land Use 1951-1999, 2015*

	1971		1985		1999		% Change 1971-1985
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	
Agriculture	1,055.54	3.11%	1,074.36	3.17%	1,026.78	3.03%	-0.08%
Commercial	13.45	0.04%	18.51	0.05%	18.51	0.05%	0.01%
Forest	30,565.25	90.15%	30,202.81	89.08%	30,133.86	88.88%	-1.27%
Industrial	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
Institutional	120.47	0.36%	131.33	0.39%	61.14	0.18%	-0.17%
Mining / Waste Disposal	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
Recreation	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	1.92	0.01%	0.01%
Residential	573.99	1.69%	822.09	2.42%	952.57	2.81%	1.12%
Transportation	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
Vacant	179.44	0.53%	233.81	0.69%	310.16	0.91%	0.39%
Water	429.96	1.27%	452.81	1.34%	419.33	1.24%	-0.03%
Wetland	966.25	2.85%	968.62	2.86%	980.05	2.89%	0.04%
Total	33,904.35	100.00%	33,904.35	100.00%	33,904.33	100.00%	0.00%

*Transportation category includes large divided highways or areas like airports and docks. Smaller roadways have not been calculated.

**Vacant land category includes abandoned agriculture, areas like power lines, or areas of no vegetation, as well as brushland and successional environments not dense enough to be classified as forest.

fairly dated at this point, this analysis still presents the best picture of the development footprint of Sandisfield and how it has changed over that 28 year period.

Additionally, it is important to note that a similar land use inventory was conducted by the state in 2005. However, a change in methodology makes comparison of the 2005 data with the 1971-1999 data statistically impossible. Prior to 2005, land use data was derived manually, from analysis of aerial photography. After 2005, these processes became automated. Additionally, the state began to integrate existing data sets into its analysis. Land use from 1971-1999 as well as the 2005 analysis have been included in this report.

However, these data sets should not be compared in such a way to determine land use trends between 1999-2005. For example, 1999 land use data indicates 980 acres of wetland, while 2005 data indicates 2,262 acres of wetland. In reality, those additional wetland acres always existed within Sandisfield, but were previously classified as forest. In 2005, wetland extents determined from on the ground field work

were integrated into land use data. Previously, wetland extents were mapped from aerial photography, which made the determination of forested wetland areas difficult.

Land Use Change 1971-1999

For a table of land use changes from 1971-1999, please refer to Table 7.1 in this appendix.

Between 1971 and 1999, residential acreage increased more than any other land use category. Residential land use increased by almost 400 acres during this time, from 1.69% to 2.81% of the total land in the town. Forest land decreased the most over the period from 1971-1999. Forest land decreased by just over 400 acres, from 90.15% of all land to 88.88% of all land in Sandisfield. Other categories that saw increases in Sandisfield during this time include commercial, recreational, vacant, and wetland land uses. Other categories that saw decreases between 1971 and 1999 include agriculture, institutional, and water types.



Land Use 2005

For mapped land uses, please see Map D—Land Use (2005).

For a table of 2005 land use data, please refer to Table 7.2 in this appendix.

While available land use data from 2005 should not be compared with earlier data to determine trends, it does provide the most recent “snapshot” of land use within Sandisfield. The 2005 data does not paint a substantially different portrait of the town than the earlier data provides. As of 2005, Sandisfield is primarily forested, with nearly 29,500 acres, or 86.88% of all land in the town covered by forest. Residential land use is also significant, far exceeding the acreage devoted to institutional, commercial, or industrial land uses. Residential land use covers just over 565 acres, or 1.67% of all land within the town.

Also it is important to note that during the 2005 land use classification, 2.6 acres of industrial land were recorded. When BRPC checked this area against existing aerial photography, this area appears to be a large barn adjacent to a pond just east of the intersection of Sandisfield and Silverbrook Road. This area was classified as industrial and may be the result of the automated land use classification process.

Existing Zoning

For a map of current zoning districts, please see Map E—Zoning.

Sandisfield currently has one zoning district covering the entirety of the town with a Floodplain Overlay District regulating development in flood prone areas.

Existing Dimensional Requirements and Use Regulations

The following is summarized from the Sandisfield Town Bylaws, last amended May 16, 2009.

Minimum Lot Size: 1 acre

Minimum Lot Frontage: 200 Feet

Minimum Lot Depth: 150 Feet

Minimum Building Setback (from road and all lot

Table 7.2 - 2005 Land Use in Sandisfield, MA

Source: Mass. GIS Land Use 2005

	Acres	%
Agriculture	698.4	2.06%
Commercial	12.5	0.04%
Forest	29,429.4	86.88%
Industrial	2.6	0.01%
Institutional	52.2	0.15%
Mining / Waste Disposal	0.8	0.00%
Recreation	2.0	0.01%
Residential	565.8	1.67%
Transportation	0.0	0.00%
Vacant	262.0	0.77%
Water	586.8	1.73%
Wetland	2,262.1	6.68%
Total	33874.5	100.00%

*Institutional category Includes town owned facilities as well as cemeteries.

**Vacant category includes abandoned agriculture, areas like power lines and areas of no vegetation, as well as brushland and successional environments not dense enough to be classified as forest.

***Wetland category includes both forested and non-forested wetlands.

Table 7.3 - Development Trend

Source: Sandisfield Town Assessor, 2011.

Year Built	# of buildings
Pre 1900	337
1901-1950	262
1951-1975	167
Post 1975	518

lines): 30 Feet

Maximum Building Coverage: 4% of lot size

Uses Allowed By Right

1. One-family dwelling unit
2. Use of land and structure for agriculture, horticulture or floriculture.
3. Municipal or governmental use including parks, playgrounds, or other town owned or operated recreational facilities.
4. Religious or educational uses
5. Accessory uses and structures that are normally associated with principally permitted uses on the same premises, such as use of rooms for practice of a profession, rental of not more than four rooms in a dwelling, roadside stands, and display of signs (regulated in Section 8 of the by-law).

Uses Permitted by Special Permit

Most commercial uses, with the exception of home-based businesses, agriculture, and road-side stands, are regulated by special permit in Sandisfield. The list of permitted uses can be found below. The town's Select Board acts as the special permit granting authority for the town. The following uses are permitted if approved, following a public hearing. The by-law also allows the town to review site plans and make on-site inspections related to a special permit application.

1. Commercial greenhouse, ice house, sawmill, motel.
2. Antique, craft or gift shop, summer camp, recreational camp, movie theater.
3. Aviation field, golf course, boat livery, riding stable or ski tow, recreational camps for children.
4. Commercial dog kennel or veterinary hospital.
5. Earth removal for commercial purposes.
6. Logging
7. Any other use determined by the Board of Selectmen to be similar in character to other uses specifically authorized in the town by-law.
8. An accessory use to a by-right use.

Prohibited Uses

1. Junk yard
2. Fur farm

3. Slaughter house
4. Travel trailer park
5. Mobile home park
6. Any use which may create undue traffic or is commonly regarded as hazardous, injurious, or noxious.
7. No land may be used for the collection, treatment, burial, storage, etc., of radioactive waste.

Floodplain Overlay District

The Sandisfield Floodplain Overlay District's purpose is to "to ensure that the development of land is done with the awareness and understanding of the potential flood hazards in these areas". Construction and other development within the Floodplain Overlay District requires issuance of a special permit from the Select Board. The area determining the extent of the Floodplain Overlay District is derived from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) (FEMA 1983). The district extends through low lying areas along Route 183, along Sandisfield Road / Route 57 and Route 8 and around large wetland areas west of Lower Spectacle Pond and in the Clam Lake Flood Control Site north of Hammer Town Road and West of Cold Spring Road. Please refer to Map E for the extents of the Sandisfield Floodplain Overlay District.

BRPC Zoning Audit

In 2012, BRPC conducted a review and audit of the Town of Sandisfield zoning bylaws at the request of the Planning Board. The recommendations of the audit are summarized below.

Section 1: Purpose

The audit noted that the purpose is outdated and does not reflect changes to a municipality's land use authority made by the Home Rule Amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth and other state laws enacted since the adoption of the zoning bylaw.

Section 2: Definitions

The audit recommended that the definitions sections be revised with additional definitions added.



Section 3: Zoning District

The audit recommended that the town consider creating additional zoning districts to more particularly specify the type of development and protections appropriate and desired for each unique area within the town. For example, regulations for a village area in the town might be different from the rural agricultural areas within the town.

Section 4: Floodway/Floodplain Districts

The audit recommended that this section be updated.

Section 5: Use Regulations

The audit recommended that the list of uses be updated more comprehensively, and that language authorizing the Board of Selectmen to allow other uses based on its discretion be removed.

Section 6: Nonconforming Structures, Uses and Lots

A recommendation was made to update this section with language that regulates the reconstruction of nonconforming structures destroyed and damaged by catastrophe.

Driveways

The audit recommended that the permitting process for new driveways be streamlined.

Section 7: Special Permit

The BRPC audit recommended that the town consider adding a site plan review section and other standards that lists the criteria and submittal requirements for a by-right use, subject to review by the Planning Board. The audit noted that the lack of standards “leaves every special permit decision issued by the special permit granting authority vulnerable to a legal challenge.”

Section 8: Sign Regulations

The audit recommended that the town consider updating this section to include LED light signage.

Section 9: Off-Street Parking

The audit recommended development of objective

parking standards to help the special permit granting authority determine the appropriate number of parking spaces for the proposed use.

Section 10: Earth Removal

No recommendations were provided for this section.

Section 11: Travel Trailer, Mobile Home

No recommendations were provided for this section.

Section 12: Enforcement

The audit recommended that the town consider reviewing its current zoning penalties of \$100 for violations. MGL c. 40A s. 7 allows penalties up to \$300 for violations of a local zoning bylaw.

Audit General Comments

General Comment # 1

The audit recommended that the town consider reassigning the special permit responsibility to the Planning Board freeing up more time for the Board of Selectmen to spend on administration.

General Comment # 2

If additional uses are added to town bylaws make sure to add any regulations necessary for the additional uses.

General Comment # 3

The audit recommended that the town determine how it would like to manage growth in the town. The audit requested that the town consider tools to help manage growth, such as Natural Resource Protection Zoning, Village Center Zoning, Open Space Residential Design, or Cluster Development.

General Comment # 4

The audit recommended that the town consider planning ahead for renewable energy uses (solar photovoltaic, wind turbines) by adopting zoning sections to regulate these types of uses.

General Comment # 5

As discussed in recommended changes to Section 7, the town should consider adopting standards for the issuance of special permits, as well as, a list of

submittal requirements including a site plan for the permitting board to review. Also consider, adding a site plan review section and allow certain uses through a site plan review process.

General Comment # 6

It was recommended that the town add a section to its bylaw that regulates wireless communication towers.

Development Trends and Future Development Capacity

Development Trends

For a map of buildings in Sandisfield by construction date, please see Map F—Development Trend.

For a breakdown of buildings in Sandisfield by construction date, see Table 7.3.

Available data from the Town Assessor showing the construction date of buildings within the Town of Sandisfield allows for a picture of development trends to emerge. The data shows the last available construction date for a given building, so does not capture earlier structures that may have existed on a given parcel and been replaced. The data is based on assessor's information current as of 2011.

Many structures in the town built prior to 1900 are still remaining, which could account for the large amount of historic structures found in the town (see Table 8.4). Additionally, prior to 1900, development is relatively dispersed throughout the town. This accounts for the town's six villages (see village descriptions earlier in this section). The majority of housing development between 1901 and 1950 is located along Route 57 and Route 8, though some is still dispersed. Between 1951 and 1975, 167 structures were built, these are dispersed throughout the town along existing road frontage. Post 1975, over 500 new structures have been built, also following a dispersed pattern. However, there is a notable cluster in the large Otis Woodlands development found in the northeast corner of Sandisfield.

Buildout and Development Capacity

For a map of remaining developable land in Sandisfield used to quantify this buildout analysis, please see Map G—Buildout.

A buildout analysis is a way for a community to assess its future by examining what developable land remains in the town, and what the development capacity of this land is based on its current zoning regulations. A buildout analysis examines the maximum extent of future development in a town.

This total remaining buildable acreage is determined by first assessing all land within the town (33,904 acres). From this total acreage, land meeting certain criteria is removed.

- All protected lands are removed (state forest and WMA areas, land owned by land trusts, drinking water protection land, and privately owned land protected by conservation restrictions).
- Area in floodplain is removed.
- Environmental constraints are removed (slope > 25%, area within 100 ft. of any water (streams, lakes, wetlands), area within 200 ft. of perennial streams).

After removing these acres, there are 11,335 acres of remaining buildable land within Sandisfield, or around 33% of all acreage within the town. To this remaining buildable acreage, existing zoning regulations (minimum lot size and frontage requirements) are applied.

- All land less than 1 acre is removed (does not meet zoning requirements).
- All land less than 2 acres that is already developed is removed (not enough to subdivide).
- Any already developed land is removed.
- All parcels where frontage is less than 200 ft. is removed (does not meet zoning requirements).
- All parcels that are developed and have less than 400 ft. of frontage are removed (not enough to subdivide).

Each buildable parcel is then manually reviewed to determine if it could realistically be subdivided into multiple buildable lots. This includes reviewing the



location of roads, constraints such as wetlands, and geometry of the parcel. The existing development within the parcel is also reviewed to determine if subdividing the lot would bisect the existing development. This analysis assumed that no existing development would be demolished to make room for new development. If an already developed parcel could not be subdivided without interfering with what already existed, it was considered unbuildable.

Finally, the remaining acreage for each parcel is assessed. It is assumed that for subdivisions, 30% of land is taken up by common areas (roads) while the remaining 70% is available for buildings. The acreage available for buildings is divided at 1 unit/acre.

Based on this analysis, 7,519 new housing units could be built in Sandisfield under current zoning regulations and with remaining buildable acreage.

Public Survey Results

The public survey included one broad question regarding land use in Sandisfield, which asked about controls on residential development and environmental resources.

In regards to residential development controls, most responses were split between “controls are at the right level” and “don’t know / need more information”, with no clear majority supporting any answer choice. In regards to Environmental resources, there was a similar pattern of response with no clear majority supporting any answer option. Responses were split between “controls are at the right level” and “don’t know / need more information” with 35% supporting the latter statement.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Topography and Landscape

Sandisfield is characterized by a rugged, diverse topography with steep hills, numerous water bodies and expansive wetlands. The 1987 Sandisfield Land Use Plan prepared by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission defines Sandisfield as having two main topographic regions. The first are the sharp ridges and deeply eroded streams of the Farmington River Valley and the second is the broad plateau of the central and western portions of town.

Soils

For a map of general soil conditions in Sandisfield, please see Map H—Soils and Geologic Features.

Sandisfield's soils are contained in two main associations located around the town's river valleys and upland areas. In upland areas, soils are generally shallow and close to bedrock, and steep slopes are common. For a map of general soil conditions and prime agricultural soils, see Map H—Soils and Geologic Features.

Common Soil types in the upland area include:

Berkshire-Marlow

This soil unit consists of very deep, well-drained, and acidic Berkshire and Marlow soils. These soils are often sandy loams on the sides of hills and mountains. Berkshire soils are typically located on high, steep slopes, and Marlow soils are on the less steep and the lower slopes or in valley areas (USDA Berkshire and Marlow Soil Series, 2015)

Lyman-Tunbridge

Lyman soils are "shallow, acidic, somewhat excessively drained loams occurring on the upper steep slopes. Tunbridge soils are moderately deep, acidic, well drained loams on less sloping areas or in pockets between Lyman soils and rock outcrops. Rock outcrops and many stones and boulders cover the surface" (USDA Lyman and Tunbridge Soil Series, 2015).

Pillsbury

The Pillsbury series "consists of poorly drained soils that formed in loamy lodgment till in glaciated uplands and lowlands". Most Pillsbury soils are stony and are not well suited to development. Common agricultural uses include hayfields (USDA Pillsbury Soil Series, 2015).

Soils found in the Farmington River Valley are either glacial in origin or formed by the river itself. The two most common soil associations include:

Merrimac

The Merrimac series "consists of very deep, somewhat excessively drained soils formed in outwash". This soil is suited to agriculture, residential development and growth of forest trees (USDA Merrimac Soil Series, 2015).

Hinckley

The Hinckley series "consists of very deep, excessively drained soils formed in glaciofluvial materials". This soil series is suited to agriculture and supports forest trees. Development is also well supported on Hinckley soils; however, septic system design must take into account the well drained nature of this soil to prevent groundwater pollution (USDA Hinckley Soil Series, 2015).

Ecoregion and Forest Resources

Ecoregions are areas with similar climate, geology, and topography. Massachusetts is part of two large ecoregions, the Northeastern Highlands and the Northeastern Coastal Zone. These two ecoregions can be further divided into 13 sub-regions.

Sandisfield is located in the Lower Berkshire Hills Ecoregion, a sub-region of the Northeastern Highlands. The Massachusetts Audubon Breeding Bird Atlas notes that this ecoregion is "similar to the Berkshire Highlands to the north, but the average elevation is lower, (1,000 to 1,700 feet) with a forest cover composed primarily of northern hardwoods" (2015). The northern hardwoods are a forest type comprised primarily of Maple (*Acer sp.*), Birch (*Betula sp.*), and

**Table 8.1- Water Resources in Sandisfield, MA***Source: Mass. GIS MassDEP List of Integrated Waters, 2012*

Water Body	Acres	Impairment Status
Camp Sequena Pond	23.87	
Upper Spectacle Pond (Partially in Sandisfield)	37.73	Dissolved Oxygen
Lower Spectacle Pond	69.93	
Abbey Lake	38.81	
West Lake	58.4	
Atwater Pond	29.92	
South Sandisfield Road Pond	18.5	
Unknown Pond	24.21	
Robin Hill Road Ponds	14.33	
Pelton Pond	20.81	
Unknown Pond	21.13	
Lake Marquerite	41.65	
Unknown Pond	9.69	
Viets Road Pond	15.19	
Mirror Lake	18.34	
Unknown Pond	8.91	
Colebrook Reservoir (Partially in Sandisfield)	57.7	
Streams and tributaries	Miles	
Clam River (to junction with Buck River)	31.98	
Clam River (Buck River to Farmington)	2.24	
Miner River	2.39	
Buck River	30.29	
Silver Brook	12.51	
Cherry Brook	4.37	
Sandy Brook	14.58	
Riiska Brook	5.02	
		Lack of a Coldwater Assemblage
West Branch Farmington River	7.43	

Table 8.2 - Wetland Resources in Sandisfield, MA*Source: Mass. GIS MassDEP Wetlands, 2012*

Wetland Type	Acres	% of wetland acreage
Bog	6.75	0.3%
Deep marsh	287.87	12.8%
Shallow marsh meadow or fen	345.69	15.3%
Shrub swamp	494.03	21.9%
Wooded swamp coniferous	503.12	22.3%
Wooded swamp deciduous	303.25	13.4%
Wooded swamp mixed trees	316.86	14.0%
Total	2,257.56	100% (6.6% of all land within Sandisfield)

Beech (*Fagus sp.*) tree species, with some Ash (*Fraxinus sp.*), Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), and Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*). The Lower Berkshire Hills ecoregion lacks the high-elevation spruce-fir forest types commonly found in the Berkshire Highlands. Additionally the area contains some elements of the southern transition hardwood (oak-hickory) forest.

Water Resources

For mapped watershed boundaries, water bodies, and floodplains, please refer to Map J—Water Resources.

Watersheds

The majority of Sandisfield is located within the Farmington River Watershed (FRW). A small portion of the Housatonic River Watershed is located on the westernmost edge of the town. Regionally, the FRW is an important water source for the city of Hartford, Connecticut (population 125,000). However, many other towns within the Farmington River valley rely on the river as a drinking water source. The Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA), the non-profit group that helps to address issues of water quality within the watershed, estimates that the river supplies drinking water to 600,000 people in total (FRWA 2003).

Surface Waters

Rivers and Streams

The Town of Sandisfield's major rivers are the Buck River, Clam River and the Farmington River. The Buck River flows roughly northwest to southeast across the northern portion of Sandisfield and roughly follows the direction of much of Route 57. The Clam River flows roughly north to south. The Buck River meets the Clam River just west of the intersection of Route 8 and Route 57 in Sandisfield, and they flow (as the Clam River) into the Farmington River. In the western portion of town, the Sandy Brook flows south from York Lake (in New Marlborough) and into Connecticut, roughly following the direction of Route 183.

The Buck River, Clam River, and Farmington River are stocked yearly with Trout by the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (Mass. DFG Trout Stocking Schedule 2015).

Lakes and Ponds

Sandisfield contains a number of lakes and ponds. The largest is Lower Spectacle Pond (69 acres), within Otis State Forest in the northeastern portion of Town (See Table 8.1—Water Resources In Sandisfield, MA). A portion of Upper Spectacle Pond is also located within the town; however, it straddles the boundary between Otis and Sandisfield.

Many of Sandisfield's water bodies were created or have been altered by dams. Within Sandisfield, Upper Spectacle Pond, West Lake, Abbey Lake, North Silver Brook Flood Control Site, South Silver Brook Flood Control Site, and the Clam Lake Flood Control Site have all been created through damming.

Sandisfield has two water bodies listed on the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 303(d) list of impaired waters. Under the Clean Water Act, states are required to develop a list of waters impaired by pollution or otherwise degraded for the purposes of prioritization and to help develop future Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL). A TMDL is a calculation of the maximum amount of pollutant that a water body can receive daily and still meet water quality

standards. TMDL calculations are incorporated into implementation plans for water bodies or watersheds for the purposes of restoring impaired water bodies and improving water quality.

Within Sandisfield, Upper Spectacle Pond and the Farmington River are listed as impaired. Upper Spectacle Pond is listed as impaired due to low dissolved oxygen levels. Dissolved oxygen is a crucial measure of water quality as dissolved oxygen is required by fish and other aquatic species. Low dissolved oxygen levels are typically caused by excess nutrients such as Phosphorus and Nitrogen in waterways. These nutrients spur the growth of algae, which consume dissolved oxygen as they decompose. This process lowers dissolved oxygen levels in the water column and can lead to a condition known as hypoxia, where conditions are unfit to support aquatic life. However, a number of other factors can affect dissolved oxygen levels in water bodies, including temperature, topography, and inputs from groundwater.

Currently, the Farmington River in Sandisfield listed on the EPA's 303(d) list of impaired waterways due to the "lack of a coldwater assemblage". This means that certain fish and macroinvertebrate (mollusks, worm, insect species, etc) are impaired or were not found within the waterway. There are many potential causes of this impairment including high water temperatures due to a lack of tree cover or other issues. Additionally pollution due to stormwater runoff, nutrients, or acid deposition can impair coldwater species assemblages.

Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW)

A small portion of land in the northeast corner of the state is located within a state designated "outstanding resource water" or ORW. This land is afforded additional protections under state law and is used for lands designate for drinking water supply protection. This ORW area protects land served by the Monterey Water Company, a private water utility that serves approximately 58 homes and small businesses in Monterey.

**Table 8.3 - Threatened, Endangered and Special Concern Species Sighted in Sandisfield, MA***Source: Source: Mass DFG -Town Species Viewer, 2015*

Type	Species Name	Common Name	Status	Year Sighted
Vascular Plant	<i>Agrimonia pubescens</i>	Hairy Agrimony	T	2006
Mussel	<i>Alasmidonta varicosa</i>	Brook Floater (Swollen Wedgemussel)	E	2007
Vascular Plant	<i>Arabidopsis lyrata</i>	Lyre-leaved Rock-cress	E	2010
Vascular Plant	<i>Blephilia hirsuta</i>	Hairy Wood-mint	E	1913
Bird	<i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i>	American Bittern	E	2012
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Boyeria grafiana</i>	Ocellated Darner	SC	2007
Fish	<i>Catostomus catostomus</i>	Longnose Sucker	SC	1998
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Enallagma carunculatum</i>	Tule Bluet	SC	2006
Bird	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrine Falcon	E	1936
Vascular Plant	<i>Galium boreale</i>	Northern Bedstraw	E	1912
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Gomphus abbreviatus</i>	Spine-crowned Clubtail	SC	2006
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Gomphus descriptus</i>	Harpoon Clubtail	E	2006
Bird	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	T	2007
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Neurocordulia obsoleta</i>	Umber Shadowdragon	SC	2007
Fish	<i>Notropis bifrenatus</i>	Bridle Shiner	SC	1990
Vascular Plant	<i>Nuphar microphylla</i>	Tiny Cow-lily	E	1912
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Ophiogomphus aspersus</i>	Brook Snaketail	SC	2006
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Ophiogomphus carolus</i>	Riffle Snaketail	T	2006
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Rhionaeschna mutata</i>	Spatterdock Darner	SC	2001
Vascular Plant	<i>Rotala ramosior</i>	Toothcup	E	2006

E=Endangered, T=Threatened, SC=Special Concern Species

Floodplain and other Flood Hazard Areas

Flooding occurs when the volume of water within a given stream or river exceeds the channel's capacity. The floodplain is considered the land area adjacent to a water body that is subject to recurring inundation. Flooding often occurs in the spring, due to snow melt and during large storm events. Floods often occur at predictable intervals.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified several floodplain areas that extend throughout Sandisfield, through their Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) program. An analysis of the FIRM flood hazard area maps indicates that there is a total of 1,562.8 acres of 100-year floodplain within the town. This amounts to 4.6% of the total town. Currently there are 4 commercial buildings and 88 residential buildings within the floodplain.

In 2012, BRPC created a regional hazard mitigation plan, of which Sandisfield was a participating community. The 2012 plan notes several natural hazards within the town, including ice jams along the Farmington River which can create flooding. The plan notes that “there have been a reported 41 ice jams that have occurred in Berkshire County between 1915 and 2010. The West Branch of the Farmington River in Sandisfield account for 18 of these jams”.

Vernal Pools

Vernal pools are a unique type of wetland and wildlife habitat, and are sometimes known as autumnal or ephemeral pools or temporary woodland ponds. Vernal pools are shallow depressions that are seasonally flooded with water. They can vary greatly in size. During summer months, vernal pools are usually dry. However, spring snow melt and rain transform these areas into rich wildlife habitat. Vernal pools are protected by the Wetlands Protection Act. State law requires that vernal pools must be certified prior to gaining protected status and must be located within the resource (buffer) area of a documented wetland, meaning that isolated vernal pools, regardless of certification, have few protections. Town’s wishing to extend WPA protections to vernal pools should consider implementing a local wetland by-law.

Vernal pools are certified by the state Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP). Certification involves the documentation of the potential vernal pool’s physical characteristics, including the lack of a permanently flowing outlet for water and evidence that the pool dries out during the year. Additionally, certification involves the documentation of wildlife species that commonly use vernal pools. While the NHESP uses aerial photography to help identify vernal pools, they also rely extensively on reporting of potential vernal pools from citizens and landowners.

Due to the fact that vernal pools dry partially or completely during the summer months, fish are prevented from permanently establishing themselves. This makes vernal pools important breeding habitat for amphibian and invertebrate species that would otherwise face extensive predation from fish species.

Species that rely on vernal pools for breeding habitat include amphibians (frogs, salamanders and toads), reptiles (turtles and snakes), as well as some invertebrate species like dragonflies or fairy shrimp (NHESP, 2015).

Within Sandisfield, there are five certified vernal pools, and another 38 areas that have been identified as potential vernal pools, but have not been certified as such (see Map I -Vegetation, Fisheries and Wildlife).

Wetlands

There are over 2,200 acres of wetlands in Sandisfield, comprising 6.6% of all land within the town. These wetlands can be divided into seven main types. Over 500 acres belongs to the wooded coniferous swamp variety. This type makes up over 22% of wetlands in the town, the greatest of all the seven wetland typologies. The least are bogs, which occupy just over 6 acres, or around .3% of all wetlands within the town. See Table 8.2 –Wetland Resources in Sandisfield, MA.

Wetlands perform important functions for both humans and wildlife. Wetlands are the most productive ecosystems on the planet, measured by the amount of biomass or living biological tissue they help to produce. Wetlands serve as habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species and often function as critical nursery and breeding areas. Wetlands also provide functions for humans. The benefits to humans provided by wetlands and other natural environments are sometimes referred to as “ecosystem services”. Valuable ecosystem services provided by wetlands include water purification, flood storage and control, and shoreline stabilization. Water speed and flow is greatly reduced in a wetland compared to the open water of a stream or river. This causes suspended sediments to fall out of the water column, thus enhancing downstream water quality. Wetlands also help to remove harmful pollutants as well as nutrient pollution from water resources. During flooding, wetlands act as a “sponge” that helps to absorb excess water. Wetlands also help to reduce erosion by acting as a buffer that helps to protect the shorelines of rivers, lakes and other bodies of water.

Wetlands are located throughout the town of



Sandisfield. There are large blocks located in Otis State Forest, west of Upper and Lower Spectacle Pond and around Town Hill Road. Other large blocks occur in the south of town, near the intersection of Route 183 and Sage Road and between Rood Hill Road and New Hartford Road.

Rare Species and Wildlife Habitat

Endangered, threatened and special concern species are protected by the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA). Endangered species are defined as “any species of plant or animal in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range”. Threatened species are defined as “species of plant or animal likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future”. Special concern species are defined as any species that “have suffered a decline that could threaten the species if allowed to continue unchecked or that occurs in such small numbers or with such a restricted distribution or specialized habitat requirements that it could easily become threatened”. Under the MESA legislation, listed species are protected from any “taking”, a broad term which seeks to prevent the killing, collecting, harassment of, or the destruction of the habitat of listed species, among other things.

Within Sandisfield, 20 Endangered, threatened and special concern species have been sighted in the town since the earliest records of 1912. See Table 8.3—Threatened, Endangered and Special Concern Species Sighted in Sandisfield, MA.

Bird Sighting Data

For a table of bird species sighted at Colebrook River Lake, please refer to Table 8.5 in this appendix.

E-Bird is a database for bird sightings that was created as a joint project between the Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. Users can submit bird sighting data from around the world. Common areas for bird watching are listed as sighting “hot spots”, and allow multiple users to organize their sightings geographically and to create multi-year records of bird sightings for a given area. Within Sandisfield, Colebrook River Lake (the northern portion of Colebrook Reservoir) is listed as an

E-Bird hotspot. This area is located in the southeast corner of the town, near Route 8. Based on these data, 125 species have been sighted near Colebrook River Lake since 2011 (see Table 8.5). This includes threatened, endangered and special concern species such as the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*) in addition to other more common bird species.

Additionally, there have been other rare bird sightings in Sandisfield not captured in E-Bird data. In a 2013 article in the Sandisfield Times, Margaret O’Claire detailed the sighting of rare bird species including the Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) and Sand Hill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*). The article also notes the Colebrook Reservoir and the town’s multiple lakes and ponds as prime bird watching areas.

The Massachusetts Audubon Society currently owns several parcels in Sandisfield, as well as in neighboring Otis. The organization has preliminary plans to open a publically accessible wildlife sanctuary on these parcels, which will be known as the Cold Brook Wildlife Sanctuary (Massachusetts Audubon Personal Communication 2015).

BioMap2

For locations of BioMap2 components and natural communities, please refer to Map I—Vegetation, Fisheries and Wildlife.

Sandisfield’s forests, brooks, wetlands, and other natural environments provide habitat for both common and rare wildlife species, including some endangered, threatened and special concern species. The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game Natural Heritage program lists 20 endangered, threatened, or special concern species sighted within Sandisfield since 1912.

BioMap2 is a statewide mapping project that combines 30 years of rare species and natural community data from the NHESP with wildlife species and habitat assessments that were conducted as part of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife’s 2005 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). Additionally, BioMap2 data integrates the Nature Conservancy’s assessment

of large, connected and intact ecosystems across the state. (NHESP, 2012).

BioMap2 has two primary components, Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape. Core Habitat includes “areas that are critical for the long term persistence of rare species and other species of conservation concern” (NHESP, 2012). According to BioMap2, Core Habitat is found on 3,281 acres in Sandisfield, or around 9.6% of the land in town. Large portions of core habitat are located along the Farmington River and Buck River corridors. Additionally, a large block of core habitat begins in the northwest corner of town, near where Town Hill Road crosses into Otis. This block contains a wide swath of land surrounding the Clam River and moves southeasterly toward the Clam River Flood Control Site. Additionally, there are large portions with the area of Cookson State Forest in Sandisfield and extending east around large wetland areas in the southwest corner of town.

Critical Natural Landscape identifies large contiguous landscape blocks that have been minimally impacted by development. The BioMap2 report for the Town of Sandisfield notes that “if protected, these areas will provide habitat for wide-ranging native species, support intact ecological processes, maintain connectivity among habitats, and enhance ecological resilience to natural and anthropogenic disturbances in a rapidly changing world” (NHESP, 2012). Critical natural landscape often includes crucial upland habitat that supports the long term integrity of core habitat areas. Critical natural landscape comprises 29,488 acres or 86.9% of all land within the town.

As described above, critical natural landscape extends across most of the town. The largest portions of town not belonging to this critical natural landscape area include the area around New Boston, near the intersection of Route 8 and Route 57 and extending northwest along Route 57. Additionally, the area around the intersection of Route 57 and New Hartford Road and extending south along New Hartford Road and west along Route 57 are not included in these areas.

New England Cottontail Rabbit

Sandisfield, and much of the southern Berkshires, has

been identified as habitat for the New England Cottontail Rabbit (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*). This rabbit species is the only native to the Commonwealth, and has been declining throughout much of its former range. The New England Cottontail is being considered for listing as a federal endangered species. Several landowners in the southern Berkshires have received funding from state and federal sources to create habitat for the rabbit species. The Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC) received funds to create habitat at their publically accessible Clam River Reserve property in Sandisfield (see the open space and recreation section of this appendix and the accompanying chapter). BNRC created roughly 25 acres of habitat for the rabbit, with associated benefits for other species such as gamebirds. This habitat creation consists of managing the forest to produce new growth as well as shrub land that supports the rabbit species (Piche and Ryan 2014).

Priority and Exemplary Natural Communities

Seven priority and exemplary natural communities exist in the Town of Sandisfield. Natural communities are “assemblages of species that occur together in space and time. These groups of plants and animals are found in recurring patterns that can be classified and described by their dominant physical and biological features” (NHESP Natural Communities, 2015). Globally rare natural communities, or those with limited local distribution, are considered priority natural communities. Of the seven priority and exemplary natural communities found in Sandisfield, two are classified by NHESP as “S2” meaning they are imperiled communities with typically 6-20 sites or few remaining acres in the state. Three of the natural communities are rated as “S3”, meaning they typically have 21-100 sites, or limited acreage across the state. Exemplary natural communities are considered to be the best examples of the more commonly occurring natural communities in the state are generally not considered threatened.

Priority Natural Communities

High-terrace Floodplain Forest

These areas are characterized by tall diverse canopies of deciduous trees and a diverse herbaceous layer. As



its name implies, these areas occur in existing floodplain areas; however, they usually occur in areas that are flooded only occasionally, or for shorter periods of time. The canopy usually consists of Sugar Maple (*Acer Saccharum*), Elm (*Ulmus sp.*), Ash (*Fraxinus sp.*) or other species. The herbaceous layer is highly variable, and can include Dogwood (*Cornus sp.*) and Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*). Most of these natural communities were lost in Massachusetts due to conversion to agricultural land or development.

High Energy Riverbank

These natural communities are located near fast moving water, where the land is constantly disturbed by erosion and sedimentation. They are usually sandy or rocky and have sparse vegetation that can include prairie grasses, low shrubs or small perennials. These environments may provide habitat for migrating shorebirds such as Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*) or Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), and also provide breeding habitat for some rare insect species (NHESP, 2006). This natural community occurs in the northeastern portion of the town along the banks of the Farmington River.

Rich, Mesic Forest Community

Rich Mesic Forests are moderately moist, nutrient-rich hardwood forests restricted to areas of calcium-rich bed rock and alkaline groundwater. Common overstory species are Sugar Maple (*Acer Saccharum*) or White Ash (*Fraxinus Americana*). The herbaceous layer is generally comprised of ferns, sedges, lilies and buttercups. Due to the fact that these communities occur on calcareous bedrock, they often support rare plant species. This natural community occurs in one location in town south of Route 57 and west of Sullivan Road.

Riverine Point bar and Beach

These natural communities occur on sandy bars and beaches along rivers and are usually sparsely vegetated with grass and other herbaceous species. These areas are associated with some rare invertebrate species.

Spruce-Tamarack Bog

These areas are forested peat lands dominated by

Black Spruce (*Picea mariana*) and Tamarack (*Larix laricina*). Other Spruce tree species may also be present, and Sphagnum moss usually covers the ground. Bogs are characterized as high acid, low nutrient environments. Peat develops in cool acidic areas where decomposition is low, which allows organic matter to accumulate and form thick mats and sediments. In Sandisfield, this natural community is located in Cookson State Forest in the southwest corner of town.

Exemplary Natural Communities

Hemlock Ravine Community

Eastern Hemlock, or *Tsuga canadensis*, often forms dense stands around ravines or north facing slopes with little or no understory vegetation. Unlike the priority natural communities listed above, these environments are not threatened or imperiled, but are some of the best examples of this community in the state. This community is located between Upper and Lower Spectacle Pond and Town Hill Road.

Hemlock Hardwood Swamp

These wetland areas are comprised of dense stands of Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*). These areas are relatively common and widespread throughout the state. These areas often contain acid loving shrub species such as blueberry (*Vaccinium sp.*) and Holly (*Ilex sp.*). This natural community is located east of Upper and Lower Spectacle Pond.

Cultural Resources

History of the Community

The following condensed history of the community of Sandisfield was written by Sandisfield Historical Commission Chair Ronald Bernard to celebrate the 250th year of the town and was included as a special insert in the Sandisfield Times Volume III as *Sandisfield: Celebrating our Sestercentennial 1762-2012*.

Settlement to 1800

Sandisfield traces its beginning to 1735-36 when the Colonial administration granted land for four townships in an area they called Housatonic Township. Number 3 became Sandisfield. In order to appease

Indians who had long hunted on it, the land was bought from Chief Konkapot for three barrels of cider and 30 quarts of rum and probably a sum of English money. A proper deed was drawn up and signed by the chief. In the era preceding European arrival, there is no evidence that Native Americans had a permanent presence in Sandisfield.

The original land grant owners, or proprietors, came primarily from Worcester and Middlesex counties. Some had received land from the Crown as a reward for meritorious service in the Colonial militia. It is unlikely that proprietors ever visited their wilderness properties. Their mission was to design the settlements. They arranged for surveys for roads and bridges and so-called house and farm lots (typically 60 acres per lot), as well as special areas for a church and minister, schools, and common areas or “greens.” Most importantly, they needed to attract settlers who would buy their land and fulfill the Commonwealth’s expansion goals. The original No. 3 grant was later augmented on three sides with additional acreage as a way to attract more settlers and to balance the populations between the townships.

The name Sandisfield was assigned to No. 3 at incorporation in honor of Lord Samuel Sandys (pronounced as sands), a British nobleman and politician who in 1761 was appointed First Lord of Trade and the Plantations, responsible for commerce with the colonies. By so naming this backwoods settlement, perhaps the proprietors made a politically smart gesture of appreciation to their overseers.

Almost 15 years passed before a capable pioneer leader was found to open the wilderness and to manage the settlement process – Daniel Brown (1698/99-c.1783), a native of Haverhill near Boston. His oldest son, Thomas (1726- 1811), arrived in Sandisfield first in the spring of 1750 and built his cabin probably where the New Boston Store stands today. The next year the elder Brown arrived with four other adult sons and several daughters to take charge. The Browns acquired much of the land which they sold to other settlers. The Browns also established a tavern or inn and a store and they built their main dwelling house and at least one mill at the place they called New Boston, all before March 6, 1762 when No. 3 was

officially incorporated as the town of Sandisfield. In 1765, with a population of 409, Sandisfield was the tenth largest town in the county.

Besides Brown, the major original families (by 1765), mostly from Connecticut, included Adams, Ayrault, Bosworth, Cone, Deming, Hawley, Kilborne, Manley, Parsons, Pease, Sears (Mass.), Smith (Mass.), Spring (Mass.), Webster, and Wolcott. Two more waves of settler-families arrived before and after the Revolutionary War until about 1800 when the pace of arrivals slowed. Virtually all came from Connecticut as had a majority of the first families and many were already known to one another. They were lured by fertile albeit rocky land relatively close to their ancestral roots. By this time their smaller Connecticut farms, already a century old, were less productive. Their sons and daughters often married into their neighbors’ families within the Congregational church, creating an unusually close-knit and supportive society that endured for the next century and-a-half.

During the Revolution, Sandisfield was staunchly patriotic. According to military historian Elizur Yale Smith, some 240 Sandisfield men and boys, fathers and sons and brothers, served the cause. Most families sent men off to the war. For example, at least five Sages heeded the call. Meanwhile courageous wives and daughters and sisters remained to somehow manage large farms in desperate uncertainty while enduring great hardship. Innkeepers and residents in the Beech Plain gladly offered hospitality to Col. Knox’s company of teamsters during their dramatic passage through in January 1776. Later, in 1786/7 during Shay’s Rebellion, town sentiment supported the farmer-insurrectionists. To the consternation of many, the respected second Congregational minister, the Rev. Eleazer Storrs, openly sided with the Commonwealth. Many abandoned his ministry and joined an ascendant Baptist movement which remained strong for almost a century.

After the war, in 1780, Sandisfield’s rapid growth resumed. By 1800 there were 1,857 residents, the fourth most populous Berkshires town, surpassed only by Pittsfield, Williamstown, and Sheffield. Judging from the numerous splendid surviving Federal-style houses built during this period, the people were both

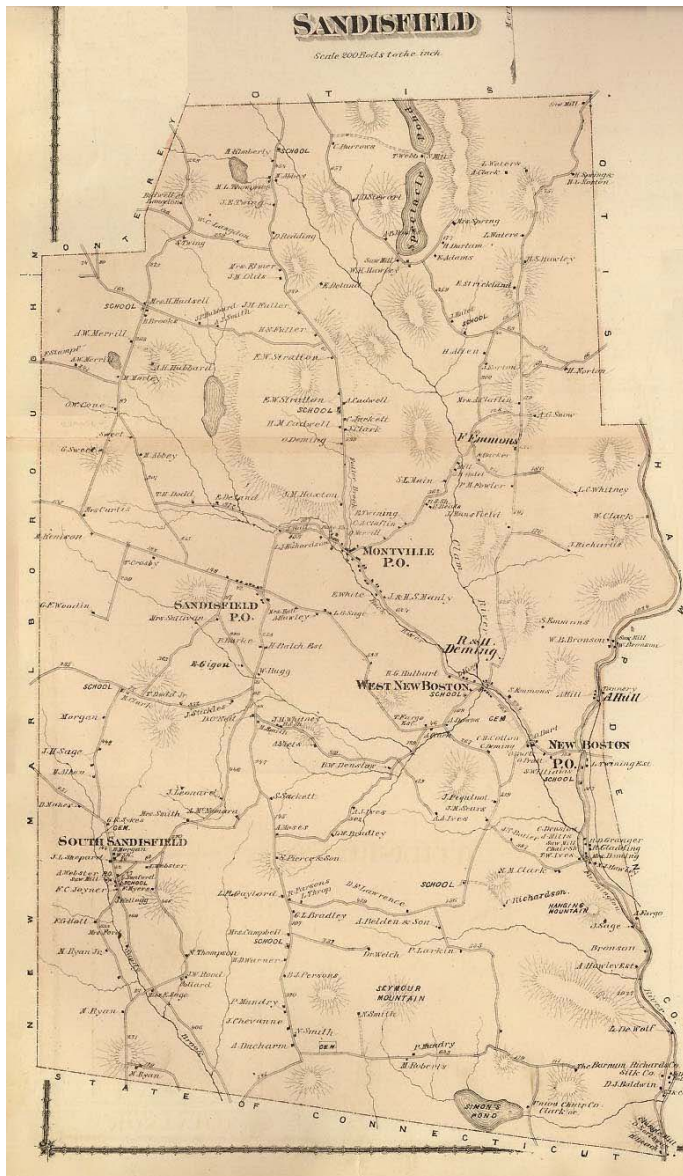


Figure 8.1—Historic map of Sandisfield, date unknown.

prosperous and optimistic.

The Nineteenth Century

Sandisfield entered the new century on a roll. Most of the good land was cleared for agriculture and was very productive. Historian George Shepard in 1885 wrote, “The early settlers turned their attention to raising cattle and some sheep, and a little later, butter and cheese became the staple articles.” Abundant raw material (animal hides) and water power made for a flourishing tanning industry. The Kilborne mill, one of

the first, stood near Montville (then called Slab City and later Mechanicsville). In 1797, 12 school districts were established to serve large families in every part of town. The schools had to be located within walking distance for local children.

In 1800, Eliakim Hull of Farmington, Conn., saw the potential and opened a big general store at Sandisfield Center where farm families could find practically anything that could be had at the time for sale or barter. The enterprising Hull made his store an attraction by installing the town’s first post office (1807) and public library (1808).

Sandisfield farmers were gaining a reputation for cheese-making and Hull encouraged them to increase production which he sold at his store. But Hull’s leading product line was spirits, including locally distilled cider and rum and liquors. These were very popular and earned Sandisfield another not-so-wholesome reputation for expertise. It was said that by this time there were at least a dozen distilleries with a concentration near Spectacle Pond. Farmers took their crops for sale by wagon, for example to Hartford, returning with rum base for the distilleries.

The War of 1812 was not a popular cause in New England because these states enjoyed very good trade with England. Relatively few men joined the Massachusetts militia; however Josiah Wolcott, a prominent farmer from the Free Quarter section, served with distinction and later rose to the rank of Brigadier General.

The Rev. Levi White, writing the first history of Sandisfield in 1829, reported 230 homes, five stores, five churches, two post offices, three taverns, 18 various mills, “some of them extensive,” and 13 schools in town. White also listed, amazingly, nine practicing physicians. Sandisfield at this time, with its complementary mix of agriculture, mills, and craftsmen, was well positioned to benefit from the inventions and productivity of the impending industrial revolution.

By the 1830s Sandisfield was experiencing its first outflow. Young families, members of the founding clans, were recruited by promoters to head west and establish their own farms. The lure of abundant,

cheap, and very fertile farm land in New York state and Ohio, including the Connecticut Western Reserve section, was powerful. Ironically, they were heeding the same call their grandparents heard when they'd left their ancestral farmsteads for the Berkshires 70 years before. It was part of the great American expansion movement. Owing to a good economy back home their places were quickly filled by newcomers. However, Sandisfield would not be so fortunate after the next wave of emigrants 50 years later.

The 1840s was Sandisfield's golden period. The original settlements of New Boston and Sandisfield Center offered farm families social and economic amenities. Two new villages, Montville and West New Boston, emerged. Public buildings, handsome Greek Revival-style houses, and a grand new Baptist church and parsonage for two merged congregations sprouted seemingly overnight. This served the growing community of mill hands and foremen, blacksmiths and metal workers. Montville's "manufactorys" made furniture, rakes, plane and scythe handles, and hoops for ladies' skirts as well as for toys, wheel spokes, barrel staves, wooden utensils, cheese boxes, and shingles.

New Boston village boasted its famous inn, three general stores, and several important mills, especially Albert Hull's tannery, said to be the most extensive in western Massachusetts. Several miles south of the village the hamlet of Colebrook River on the Farmington River was vibrant. The elegant Hawley Tavern (1798) there was renowned. "The River," as the village which straddled the state line was called, had a silk mill and a woolen mill, a fine wood products shop and even a post office for a few years in the 1870s. South Sandisfield and the Free Quarter sections remained primarily traditional farming and lumbering areas through the 19th century.

Butter and cheese, maple sugar, and lumber became big businesses. At one time Sandisfield produced 300,000 pounds of cheese and almost 100,000 pounds of butter per year. In addition to home consumption, large quantities of meats, hay, apples, cider, flax, potatoes, and other commodities were shipped by wagon to outside markets, especially Hartford. For a considerable time Sandisfield was the largest producer

in the state of maple sugar. In 1885, an assessor's survey tallied at least 25,000 productive maple sugar trees. Virtually every farm had a sap house. The town was also widely known for lumber and later, in the 1890s, for charcoal (two kilns).

At Sandisfield Center Jabez Bosworth operated an important inn (1798-1835) while his neighbor, the prominent former Massachusetts Lt. Governor George Hull, continued his father's store and post office until 1862. Religion was a very important aspect of life. The meeting houses were also used for social and political events. Three Congregational meeting houses were built at the Center "on the rocks" (1757, c.1796, and 1852). Several stage lines converged at New Boston and at the Center, carrying daily mail and passengers, connecting Sandisfield to Connecticut and points north and west as far as Albany.

But the good times would not last. The Civil War (1861 - 65), which exacted a horrible toll on this small town, was the turning point. At least 21 Sandisfield men were killed in that conflict, many of those as members of the all-Berkshire regiment, the Massachusetts 49th Volunteers. The unit was distinguished for its role in the dreadful battle of Port Hudson, Louisiana in 1863 where 76 members died.

Survivors returned home to a weakening farming economy and poor prospects. In the aftermath of the war a deep depression settled over the country further exacerbating local economic woes. In Sandisfield the selectmen and residents invested heavily in a promised railroad, the Lee & New Haven, intended to connect farmers with new markets. The scheme proved unfeasible and investors lost everything. Sandisfield lost about \$24,000 (equivalent to about \$500,000 today). Some farmers went bankrupt and had to sell their crops and livestock and ancestral farmsteads to pay off debt. Taxes increased while land values plummeted. By the late 1870s a full-scale exodus occurred from which Sandisfield has never recovered.

Sandisfield Center, once a beehive of economic and social activity, became a ghost, save for its beautiful meeting house. The Beech Plain, arguably the most productive farming section whose population



supported four schools at one point, emptied; many roads were discontinued or abandoned. The situation wasn't much better along Town Hill Road, another locus of farming. In 1875-79, 36 Sandisfield farms were lost to delinquent taxes or unpaid mortgages. In 1876, Sandisfield set off its northwest corner to the new town of Monterey and with it lost part of its heritage and population.

It wasn't all gloom however. The villages of New Boston and Montville, which did not depend entirely on farming, fared better. New Boston real estate mogul Orlow Northway and Montville's Whitney brothers and their rake factory and other entrepreneurs kept things going and morale up. The Northways led an effort to build a beautiful new Congregational chapel, "The Little Brown Church," in New Boston which was dedicated in 1879. In the 1880s the highly respected town clerk, teacher, correspondent and former state representative, George Shepard, persuaded the legislature to cover the town's outstanding (railroad) debt. Another prominent citizen, also a former state representative, Henry Wilcox, established a very successful dairy co-op in the old shingle mill in West New Boston in 1886 which operated until 1919. (The building (2012) is the home of the Silverbrook Café.) In 1892, Wilcox and Hen Manley and others organized an exciting agricultural fair in New Boston, drawing hundreds and commencing a tradition which continued for some time.

Nevertheless, the main story from the late 19th century was the steady population decline. From a still respectable level of about 1,500 in 1870 Sandisfield counted only 800 souls in 1890. Shrinkage continued, many people leaving the land to find factory work in the cities. In an 1893 historical essay, the Rev. Aaron Field lamented that the town's former glory and its residents' spirit was lost, its best talent dead or departed, and no one moving in. At the turn of the century virtually all of the riverside factories and tanneries and mills had closed. Only five schools opened for the 1903/04 school year. The 19th century, which opened with so much promise and energy, closed decidedly on the downswing.

The Twentieth Century to World War II

The mood of the public at the dawn of the new century was somber but realistic. Sandisfield's three economic pillars - agriculture, the mills, and small-scale manufacturing, were but memory. Gone too were the large Yankee farm families and the vibrant (Christian) social life.

Nevertheless, New Boston and Montville each could support two general stores. Four post offices and good stage lines served the town. Active churches survived in New Boston, Montville, and at the Center. The New Boston Inn still did a good business. Together with improved roads, dependable stage service, and telegraph and then telephone service (1911), Sandisfield was better connected to the larger regional towns, especially Winsted, than ever before.

At least one significant new factory opened in the late 19th century. The nationally known O. D. Case Co., of Hartford leased Northway's saw mill ("The Old Red Shop") and onetime Hotchkiss & Gladding cane chair factory in Roosterville to make school desks and furniture from native maple and beech wood. The operation closed and moved in 1904 after a run of 17 years.

On a stormy afternoon in May 1908, the venerable 3rd Congregational church at Sandisfield Center was struck by lightning and burned. Valiant residents managed to save some pews and artifacts but the loss of this edifice marked the absolute end of what had been a very robust economic and social center. From this point and for many decades the Center was essentially a summer residential compound for the affluent Swift-Atwater-Doty families of Poughkeepsie, N.Y. The Congregational Society rebuilt a chapel in 1909 in South Sandisfield on land donated by Sarah Webster Smith, surviving matriarch of two major early families there. But the destruction of the Center church was a terrible loss and a metaphor for the town's decline and misfortunes to that point.

The 1900 federal census listed 20 percent of the population (666) as immigrants. The trend accelerated in the early 1900s as new European immigrants including Finns, Russians, and Germans joined the previous wave of Irish to repopulate farms, especially in South Sandisfield. They were excited at the chance

because their new situation was relatively much better than what they had left behind. They brought energy and a can-do attitude. A few of the established Yankee farms survived and continued to grow cash crops including even tobacco. But the principal agricultural activity was dairy. More than 50 farmers daily brought their milk to the Berkshire Creamery Association's facility in West New Boston for processing into cheese and butter.

Lumbering was also prominent. Starting in the 1870s companies such as Barnum & Richardson and Tiffany & Pickett contracted with Sandisfield land owners or frequently bought old farms to harvest timber to fuel booming Connecticut factories. The business however, had a darker side. Hard-living lumberjacks from "the south" (Connecticut) earned Sandisfield the label of unruly.

Meanwhile, New Boston was "discovered" by weary residents of industrial Springfield, Hartford, Waterbury, and even New York City as a quaint, clean and relaxed place to spend a week or weekend. The New Boston Inn was usually fully booked and most nearby home owners eagerly accommodated the overflow by renting rooms in their named "cottages." With the advent of the automobile and better roads in the late 1910s, demand increased and remained strong for another 20 years. No longer was Sandisfield a well-kept secret.

In the early 1930s a remarkable ski jump called Suicide Hill opened in New Boston. Billed as "the largest ski hill in the United States," professional events drew huge crowds and gave a boost to the New Boston Inn and the general store as skiers and fans filled the rooming houses. The hill closed in 1938, reportedly the result of storm damage that summer. In the 1940s private summer camps were popular. The best known was Camp Woodcrest on Sears Road. The Lost Wilderness dude ranch on the Tolland town line had a loyal following. Sandisfield resorts/camps had faded by the early 1970s.

The village of Montville also experienced a rebirth. A "colony" of recently arrived Jews from eastern Europe, then living in squalid conditions in New York, was given an opportunity to resettle on old farms,

particularly in northwest Sandisfield. The lack of outside support and meager resources and their limited know-how produced mixed results for this experiment. Families drifted into Montville, mostly, where they bought vacant houses and small farms. Some tried chicken farming with considerable success, and this became a solid local industry which lasted into the 1950s. Otherwise, typically, the men remained in the cities to work, for instance in the fur and fashion business, while families summered in Sandisfield. Soon friends and extended family members came up seasonally in considerable numbers and many homes let out rooms to earn cash. There were several sophisticated resort/boarding houses. The custom continued until the 1950s when leisure patterns changed.

The Baptist Society sold its old church to the Jewish congregation in 1921, and the building was converted into a synagogue. The town opened a public library in 1907, and the Montville school enjoyed a modest resurgence. The Montville general store/post office was busy once again. In the late 1920s the Montville dance hall opened and later became very popular as Baranoff's with square-dance callers like Sammy Spring. The former creamery building in West New Boston reopened after Prohibition in 1933 as an informal restaurant and dance hall. The colorful town correspondent and long-time constable, Henry "Hen" Manley was the town's cheerleader between 1893 and 1920. He wrote a widely read, entertaining and mostly positive news-of-the-town column for the Berkshire Eagle which kept people connected.

Starting in the late 1880s and continuing for at least 50 years, the unfortunate practice of "flipping" or the rapid turnover of dormant real estate was common. Cheap Sandisfield property was discovered by investors, mainly from New York, as a tradable commodity. Some long-time residents also engaged in the activity because they had few other opportunities to make money. But the practice also resulted in neglect of many proud Georgian, Federal, and Greek Revival-style houses. It was also an economic bubble. Fortunately, somehow, many fine houses survived to again become warm homes with secure futures.

In the first three decades of the 20th century



Sandisfield's social composition changed profoundly. In 1930, foreign-born and their children comprised an astonishing 58% of all inhabitants. While the few remaining descendants of the old families understandably lamented the inevitable loss of their heritage, the record shows that these new groups not only repopulated what would otherwise have become a ghost town, but they also rejuvenated community life and became engaged and committed to their adoptive community just as the previous generations had done.

World War II To Present

Sixty-seven Sandisfield men and women served in the World War; three of them were killed in action. The survivors returned in 1945 to a depressed community that numbered a mere 370 residents, an all-time low and only one-quarter of the population a century before. The future looked bleak.

Then a group of citizens, an energetic blend of old family names and committed part-time residents, sensing the needs and a new era, formed a civic organization called the Sandisfield Taxpayers' Association (STA). Over the next 50 years this non-partisan group was an effective advisory resource for town government and an extra voice for residents, including the many disconnected part-time residents who had no vote and little say in town affairs. Initially the STA tackled critical infrastructure problems such as the roads and waste disposal. The STA also evolved into the town social organization and then led the way for the town to better organize services and for new civic and social organizations, e.g., the Sandisfield Historical Society (1970), to establish.

The Association played a major role in the town's Bicentennial celebrations in 1962. Festivities included a horse show, historic home tours, block dances and an old-fashioned parade complete with fire engines and floats filled with pretty girls, and a Queen's Court. Governor John Volpe and Congressman Silvio O. Conte were on hand for the occasion and both men spoke with admiration of Sandisfield's traditional values and virtues. Gov. Volpe's speech was interrupted by a performance of parachute jumping. A female jumper surprised the crowd but gave all the girls a thrill by proving that whatever a man could do a woman could

do equally well. George Sokolsky, a nationally syndicated newspaper columnist and broadcaster and proud Sandisfield resident, wrote a column about these events and his town as he often did. In August, U. S. Rep. Conte inserted a speech about Sandisfield's accomplishments and heritage into the Congressional Record.

The 200th anniversary events raised public awareness about the town's heritage and fostered pride among the townspeople. It also marked a turning point that had been long in coming.

After the War, American agri-business began to concentrate. The Sandisfield Grange was formed in 1947 in response to a resurgence of the town's poultry and dairy industries (it disbanded in 1985), but advances in farming technology, such as gas tractors and automated milking systems, spelled the demise of smaller family farms whose owners lacked capital to invest. Just as had happened 50 years earlier, many of Sandisfield's remaining farmers departed for jobs in factories or turned to logging. Hurricane Diane in 1955 accelerated the trend as floodwaters destroyed crops and washed away topsoil. Dormant farmsteads became seasonal homes for city-dwellers and today account for a large proportion of total residential units.

Several old family farms including Riiska Orchards in South Sandisfield (1913), Snow Farm at West New Boston, and the Kimberley family's (1870) on upper Town Hill Road have adapted to market needs. A renewed interest in locally grown produce gained popularity in the 1990s and spawned a movement known as sustainable agriculture. With the support of the town, the movement is attracting a new class of farmers such as the Snyder's When Pigs Fly Farm at Sandisfield Center who are promoting the benefits of locally grown food.

The land continues to be the principal economic base for Sandisfield. A significant number of residents are engaged in logging and forest management, reflecting a long standing tradition. Likewise, Sandisfield is home to small landscaping businesses and nurseries. The C.W. Nelson nursery (est. 1984) in South Sandisfield has a substantial customer base in the area.

The aftermath of “Diane,” the great 1955 storm that dumped a foot of water and caused much property destruction, especially in Montville and Roosterville south of New Boston village, was that federal officials moved to protect downstream communities in Connecticut. A major new reservoir and the Colebrook River Dam were constructed on the state line in 1967. Private land was taken under eminent domain around town for flood control. State Route 8 was realigned south of New Boston, including a new bridge over the West Branch of the Farmington River. Unfortunately, the project came at a dear cost to Sandisfield's heritage as the hamlet of Colebrook River, including the venerable former Hawley Tavern, were dismantled and moved or lost to the wrecking ball.

The Jewish community of Montville, long sustained by the poultry business, eventually succumbed to the same problem that had plagued other farmers: their children sought better prospects elsewhere. Membership in the synagogue by the late 1970s had declined to a point that after some 60 years regular services ended. This historic edifice, originally the home of Sandisfield's Baptists followed by the Sons of Abraham, was rescued in the 1990s by a group of concerned residents. Reborn in 1995 and earning a place on the National Register of Historic Places as “The Montville Baptist Church,” the building is now home to the Sandisfield Arts Center for the performing arts.

Following the War, many changes and improvements took place in municipal services. The most dramatic was the closure of the archaic one-room neighborhood grammar schools and their consolidation into a new building, the “New School,” on Route 57 in 1950. That school closed in 1999 when Sandisfield merged operations with Otis, thus ending 237 years of town-administered public education. The building now houses municipal offices as the Town Hall Annex.

Public safety was also addressed. In 1947 the first organized (volunteer) fire department was started by members of the American Legion in New Boston under Steve Campetti. In 1992 a major new facility near Sandisfield Center was commissioned under current

chief Ralph Morrison. A police department was established in 1962, Selectman Charles Allan, chief. Michael Morrison has been Chief of Police since 1983.

In 1956 the post offices in South Sandisfield and Montville were closed. Service continued at the New Boston Store until 1980 when a new United States Postal Service building on Route 57 opened.

Everybody looks forward to a time when all residents have access to high speed Internet service, something taken for granted in larger towns and cities. Improved service represents the best opportunity for economic growth for Sandisfield.

Sandisfield evolved as a collection of hamlets and villages and distinct farming sections. But no public parks were made. The closest thing to a park may have been the large “green” or common area at Sandisfield Center. It was essentially forgotten after the Center faded in the late 19th century. Chances for a municipal park improved in 1995 when the Yanner family donated 257 acres of woodland on lower Town Hill Road for that purpose. In 2004 a group called The Friends of Yanner Park formed to raise funds to create the park and recreation areas but after initial enthusiasm progress has been slow.

Today rural Sandisfield, although not wealthy, is a stable and well-run town. The full-time population is about 900 and slowly growing and the seasonal resident population is significant. The land is again heavily forested, beautiful and wild, due in large part to many tracts placed in permanent protective status by various conservation groups. A large proportion is under the aegis of the Commonwealth, particularly Sandisfield State Forest and Otis State Forest. However, the town's tax base has suffered as a result and our infrastructure is at risk. Outdoor recreation may ultimately provide economic benefits.

Sandisfield boasts a large inventory of beautiful antique and historic houses and public buildings including three listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The New Boston Inn and the New Boston Store, which trace their beginnings to the mid-18th century, are among the longest continuously operating businesses of their kind in the United States.



Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) Database

For locations of historic buildings and other structures found in the MACRIS database, please refer to Map K—Historic Resources.

For a table of listings in the MACRIS database, please refer to Table 8.4.

The Massachusetts Cultural Information Resource System (MACRIS) is a database maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) that lists historic structures, areas, objects and burial grounds recognized at the local, state, and national level. Within Sandisfield, the MACRIS database lists 117 records comprising mostly historic buildings. However, the records also include the smaller villages that make up the town, several bridges, stores, inns, and cemeteries among other places.

It is important to note that the MACRIS records identified in this plan are incomplete for several reasons, the first being that listings available online are part of ongoing digitization efforts by the state. Moreover, most of the MACRIS records for the Town of Sandisfield were collected from an inventory of historic properties completed in 1979. The Sandisfield Historical Commission has been working to update this inventory as well as identify new historically significant properties. They are in the process of compiling these inventory records and submitting them to the state. For more information on the town's historic buildings and other areas, please consult the Sandisfield Historical Commission or the Sandisfield Historical Society.

MACRIS records available online for the Town of Sandisfield currently list three historic structures with state and national historic significance. These include the Montville Baptist Church, currently the Sandisfield Arts Center, which is listed as a building of statewide historic significance to Massachusetts and a building listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, the New Boston Inn and the Philomen Sage House are listed as properties of statewide significance and both listed on the National Register of

Historic Places.

Cemeteries

There are five cemeteries located in Sandisfield.

Sandisfield Center

Established circa 1758, located on Route 57 or Sandisfield Road.

New Boston

Established circa 1831, located on Route 57 or Sandisfield Road.

Beech Plain

Established circa 1775, located on North Beech Plain Road.

South Sandisfield

Established circa 1836, located on Route 183 or Sandy Brook Road.

Roberts Road

Established circa 1790, located on Roberts Road. (Sandisfield Town Report, 2014)

A sixth cemetery, known as the Dubois or Rose Road Cemetery was incorporated into the Sandisfield Center Cemetery in 1967 by the Army Corps of Engineers as part of the Colebrook River Reservoir project (Sandisfield Town Report, 2014).

The town has been actively working to clean up its cemeteries as well as promote these areas as cultural and historical resources. The town formed a Cemetery Committee, which recently created a set of rules for town cemeteries and has helped to organize pruning and clean up events with volunteers. Moreover, the Sandisfield Historical Commission has been working to mark the gravestones of Sandisfield's veterans.

Knox Trail or Great Road

The Town of Sandisfield developed partially along the historic route known as the Knox Trail, or Great Road, that connected Boston and Albany. This roadway was a major regional trade route. However, the route is most famous for its use by General Henry Knox as he

worked during the winter of 1775-1776 to move cannons from Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain to Boston, Massachusetts. These cannons were used to support General George Washington during the siege of Boston by the British army. The relocation of the cannons from Ticonderoga was critical to the American victory. Once deployed on the Dorchester heights, with a commanding view of Boston harbor, the cannons prompted the British fleet to relocate from Boston to Halifax, Nova Scotia. The abandonment of Boston harbor by the British fleet was a major turning point in the American Revolutionary War.

The route of the Knox Trail crosses into Sandisfield from Otis and travels west immediately south of Upper Spectacle Pond through Otis State Forest. The Trail crosses back into Otis near Cold Spring Road. Portions of the Knox Trail are currently used during the winter by snowmobilers.

Members of the Otis Historical Commission have been active in identifying landmarks, markers, tavern sites, and other historic resources along the trail. The Otis Historical Commission has also secured permission to develop the trail through portions of state owned land like Otis State Forest.

The Otis Historical Commission has also been working with state and local landowners to help secure year round access to portions of the trail with the end goal of developing the trail as a multi-use path that can be used in both summer and winter.

The Sandisfield Historical Commission has been coordinating with members of the Otis Historical Commission to hold walks and help promote awareness of this important historic resource (Sandisfield Historical Commission Personal Communication 2015).

Sandisfield Arts Center (SARC)

The Sandisfield Arts Center (SARC) is a non-profit arts venue located in the historic Montville Baptist Church building at 5 Hammertown Road. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2006, SARC received MHC's preservation award for the adaptive re-use of its historic building. SARC is a

venue for music, performance, film, speakers, workshops, and other events. Additionally, SARC has a gallery space with rotating exhibits. The building also provides rentable meeting space for large gatherings.

Sandisfield Times

The Sandisfield Times is the local newspaper for the Town of Sandisfield and has been published since April 2010. The Sandisfield Times is published eleven times per year, with a joint January-February issue followed by regular monthly issues.

The newspaper was founded by a small group of former seasonal residents and second-homeowners who now live year-round in Sandisfield. The idea for the creation of the publication originated during a 2009 dinner party (Selvin 2015). The newspaper is organized as a non-profit and has one employee, a graphic designer.

Early in its creation, the editors and founders of the Sandisfield Times made the conscious decision to only focus on topics in Sandisfield and its immediate vicinity, rather than commenting on other regional issues (Sandisfield Times Personal Communication 2015). The publication features regular updates on proceedings at public meetings and other events, regular columns and profiles of local residents, and updates on local projects like roadwork. The Sandisfield Times has also created a venue and forum in which town officials can respond directly to the public's concerns and grievances to "set the record straight" (Selvin 2015). Conversely, the publication has created a place in which residents can publicly address town officials.

The Sandisfield Times is distributed at a number of locations in Sandisfield, as well as in the surrounding towns of Otis and New Marlborough.

**Table 8.4 - MACRIS Database Records for the Town of Sandisfield, MA***Source: Mass. Historical Commission 2015, Sandisfield Historical Commission 2016*

Inv. No.	Property Name	Street	Year
SAN.A	Sandisfield Center		c 1754
SAN.B	New Boston Village		c 1751
SAN.C	Montville Village (formerly aka Mechanicsville)		c 1800
SAN.D	West New Boston		c 1830
SAN.E	South Sandisfield		c 1760
SAN.F	Sandisfield State Forest - CCC Camp Site		1933
SAN.G	Otis State Forest - Upper Spectacle Pond		1934
SAN.800	Beech Plain Cemetery	Beech Plain Rd	c 1775
SAN.918	Birch Mill Bridge	Beech Plain Rd	1936
SAN.65	Deubarties Denslow House	19 Clark Rd	1798-1804
SAN.66	Amos Belden Farm	40 Clark Rd	c 1807
SAN. 94,95	Levi & Harriet Lloyd House	4 Clark Rd	c 1830
SAN.44	Beech Plain School House	172 Cold Spring Rd	c 1840
SAN.86,96,97	Josiah & Elizabeth Hulet House	182 Cold Spring Rd	c 1785
SAN.45,99,103	The Adams-Hawley Farm; Spectacle Pond	215 Cold Spring Rd	1760-90
SAN. 104,106	John & Sarah Stewart House	250 Cold Spring Rd.	c 1849
SAN. 98	Erastus & Harriet Adams House	212 Cold Spring Rd.	c 1850
SAN.805	Joshua Smith Plot	Dodd Rd	c 1793
SAN.62,107	Horace & Sarah White House	66 Fox Rd	c 1839
SAN.63.108-110	Benjamin & Ruth Smith House	61 Fox Rd	c 1780
SAN.75	Constance Bosworth House	24 Gremler Rd	c 1764
SAN.31	Montville Baptist Church	5 Hammertown Rd	c 1839
SAN.30	Baptist Parsonage	9 Hammertown Rd	c 1842
SAN.901	Clam River Bridge	Hammertown Rd	2008
SAN. 111,112	Sylvester & Tabitha Barker House	62 Hammertown Rd.	c 1845
SAN.56,113,114	Dr. Erastus & Sarah Beech House	2 New Hartford Rd	1809
SAN.55	Nathaniel Bosworth House	3 New Hartford Rd	c 1754-
SAN.68,115,116	Henry & Martha Balch House	21 New Hartford Rd	c 1859
SAN.69	Lemuel & Marcy Smith House	117 New Hartford Rd	c 1765
SAN.70,118-121	Capt. Samuel & Prudence Wolcott House	147 New Hartford Rd	c 1765-
SAN.71,122	Nathaniel & Beulah Dowd House	153 New Hartford Rd	c 1769
SAN.88	Nathaniel Dowd Hay and Livestock Barn	153 New Hartford Rd	c 1770
SAN.72,123	Joseph Sears House	158 New Hartford Rd	c 1790
SAN.73	Silas Holcomb House & Benjamin Pierce	175 New Hartford Rd	c 1785-93
SAN.74	Dr. Amos Smith House	178 New Hartford Rd	c 1773
SAN.117,118	Samuel & Mary Sage House	125 New Hartford Rd.	c 1784, c
SAN.41	James & Hannah Adams House	191 North Beech Plain Rd	c 1785
SAN.42,124	Lt. Ichabod & Sarah Crittenden House	215 North Beech Plain Rd	c 1768,
SAN.43	Peter & Sarah Strickland House	228 North Beech Plain Rd	c 1767
SAN.198,199; 923	Porter & Carter Furniture Co.Shop	285 No. Beech Plain Rd.	c 1815
SAN.9, 125	Loyal & Abigail Humphrey House	97 North Main St	1843
SAN.8	Daniel & Elizabeth Brown House	99 North Main St	c 1760-

Table 8.4- MACRIS Database Records for the Town of Sandisfield, MA—Continued

SAN.87	New Boston Inn	101 North Main St	c 1775; c 1790
SAN.921	Otis State Forest - Upper Spectacle Pond Privys	Otis State Forest	c 1933
SAN.36	Orlow & Harriet Burt House	2 River Rd	c.1840
SAN.37,126,130	Ozias Deming House	22 River Rd	1800
SAN.802	Roberts Road Cemetery	Roberts Rd	c 1790
SAN.922	Old Route 8 Bridge	Roosterville Rd	1927
SAN.803	Sandisfield Center Cemetery	Route 57	c 1758
SAN.804	West New Boston Cemetery	Route 57	c 1831
SAN.905	Clark Rd. Bridge (Roosterville)	Route 57	2015
SAN.915	Route 57 Bridge Over Buck River	Route 57	1956
SAN.916	Route 57 Bridge Over Buck River	Route 57	1956
SAN.917	Route 57 Bridge	Route 57	1956
SAN.919	West New Boston Bridge	Route 57	1955
SAN.900	Sandisfield Civil War Monument	Rt 8	1861-1865
SAN.906	New Boston Bridge	Rt 8 & 57	2014
SAN.196,197	James Westover-Michael Ryan House	51 Norfolk Rd.	c.1841
SAN.196,197	James Westover-Michael Ryan House	51 Norfolk Rd.	c 1841
SAN.7, SAN.135	Sanford Brown House	3 Sandisfield Rd	pre-1844
SAN.4,136	New Boston Congregational Church	4 Sandisfield Rd	1878-79
SAN.6; 137	Brown-Parsons House	5 Sandisfield Rd	c.1780 & c.1847
SAN.5, 202	Ransom & Jane Gladding House	11 Sandisfield Rd	1877
SAN.3, 138	Joseph & Mary Denslow House	15 Sandisfield Rd	c 1770-1801
SAN.21	George Marvin House	30 Sandisfield Rd	c 1837
SAN.22,139-140	Charles & Jane Tracy House	34 Sandisfield Rd	c 1846
SAN.19, 141	Luke Deming House & Barn	47 Sandisfield Rd	c 1806
SAN.20	Philetus & Lydia Osborne House	49 Sandisfield Rd	c 1857
SAN.23, 145	Oliver & Emily Bosworth House	102 Sandisfield Rd	1844
SAN.24	Joseph & Livonia Calkins House	108 Sandisfield Rd	c 1842
SAN.26	Joseph H. & Sarah Fuller House	118 Sandisfield Rd	c 1837
SAN.27	Abiel & Jane Fuller House	120 Sandisfield Rd	c 1810-20
SAN.29	Montville Store & Post Office	122 Sandisfield Rd	c 1853
SAN.34, 146	L. Pease Stovepipe & Blacksmith Shop	132 Sandisfield Rd	c 1844
SAN.35, 147	Levi & Caroline Pease House	130 Sandisfield Rd	c 1843
SAN.28	James Merrill House & Store	147 Sandisfield Rd	c 1846
SAN.53	The Center Parsonage	176 Sandisfield Rd	1852
SAN.51	Sandisfield Center Congregational Church Parsonage	180 Sandisfield Rd	1852
SAN.54	Burt Tannery Mill	189 Sandisfield Rd	c 1820
SAN.52, 151	Jabez & Rebessa Bosworth House & Inn	191 Sandisfield Rd	c 1798
SAN.203,204	Calvert Cotton House	25 Sandisfield Rd.	c 1855
SAN.205	Albert Newell House	51 Sandisfield Rd.	c.1840
SAN. 207; 208	Corel Deming Rental House	55 Sandisfield Rd.	c 1839
SAN.206	Henry T. Deming House	53 Sandisfield Rd.	c 1855
SAN 143,144	Hosea & Ann Hurlburt House	73 Sandisfield Rd.	c 1845
SAN 148	Bosworth-Jones House	133 Sandisfield Rd.	c 1850
SAN.210	Edward & Harriet Whitney House	159 Sandisfield Rd.	c 1850
SAN.51,149,150	Eliakim & Sarah Hull House & Farmstand	182 Sandisfield Rd.	c 1775 & 1920
	Cina House & Restaurant	212 Sandisfield Rd.	c 1934
SAN.209	New Consolidated School (Town Hall Annex)	66 Sandisfield Rd.	1949
	Shingle Mill / Berkshire Creamery	57 Sandisfield Rd	c 1852
SAN.801	South Sandisfield Cemetery	Sandy Brook Tpke.	c 1836

**Table 8.4- MACRIS Database Records for the Town of Sandisfield, MA—Continued**

SAN.81	Philemon Sage House	69 Sandy Brook Tpke.	c 1799
SAN.79;159-160	Lyman & Clarissa Sanford House	106 Sandy Brook Tpke.	c 1837
SAN.158	So.Sandisfield Congregational Chapel	105 Sandy Brook Tpke.	1909
SAN.64; 211	Elijah & Martha Crane House	32 Sears Rd	c 1782
SAN.67; 168	Harry & Lovina Cowles House	130 Sears Rd	c 1824
SAN.60	West New Boston Schoolhouse	8 Silverbrook Rd	c 1841
SAN.59; 166-167	Joseph & Mary Cone House	28 Silverbrook Rd	c 1835
SAN.57; 168,169	James & Abigail Ayrault House	87 Silverbrook Rd	c 1760s-c 1840
SAN.58; 170-173	Joseph & Elizabeth Wolcott House	100 Silverbrook Rd	c 1765
SAN.38; 174-175	Capt. Russell Deming House	21 South Beech Plain Rd	1797
SAN.39; 176	Israel & Elizabeth Jones House	86 South Beech Plain Rd	c 1780
SAN.40; 177-178	Avery & Lucy Hurlburt House	113 South Beech Plain Rd	c 1780-1790
SAN.17; 179	Frank & Louise Bartholomew House	106 South Main St	c 1847
SAN.16	S.C. Parsons & Son Store and Post Office	108 South Main St	c 1820s-1830s
SAN.920	Sandy Brook Bridge	South Sandisfield Rd	1939
SAN.80	Jacob & Lois Webster House	10 South Sandisfield Rd	c 1784 c 1804
	Olcott Cone House	32 South Sandisfield Rd.	c 1853
SAN.12; 183	Joseph & Maria Norton House	2 Tolland Rd	c 1850
SAN.11; 184,185	Elijah & Almira Twining House	3 Tolland Rd	c 1784 c1847
SAN.32; 186	George Manley House	2 Town Hill Rd	c 1785
SAN.153-157	Newton & Lucy Phelps House	Town Hill Rd./3 Sandler Ln.	c 1847
SAN.47; 219	Elijah & Lucy Deming House	61 Town Hill Rd	c 1785
SAN.46; 187	Samuel & Eleanor Merrill House	75 Town Hill Rd	c 1775-1805; c.1830
SAN.83; 222	John & Olive Whitney House	7 Viets Rd	c 1850's
SAN.84; 223,224	Ansel Viets House	32 Viets Rd	c 1840
SAN.85; 225	Benoni & Phoebe Couch House	40 Viets Rd	c 1774; c 1840
SAN.48	Henry & Julia Abbey House	95 West St	c 1840
SAN.226,227,228	Joel & Isanna Hubbard House	104 West St.	c 1834
SAN.150; 151	Abner & Sarah Webster House	113 Sandy Brook Tpke	c 1800
SAN.180	Dr. Samuel Parsons House	200 South Main St	c 1820
SAN.200;	River Rd. Cottage 11	11 River Rd	c 1936
SAN.212; 213	James & Samantha Clark House	2 South Beech Plain Rd	c 1848, c 1927
	Elizur Perry House	5 South Beech Plain Rd	c 1830's
SAN.195	Edson & Dolly Thompson House	198 New Hartford Rd.	c 1840
SAN.163;164	Abel Wilcox-Jonathan Shepard House	121 Sandy Brook Tpke	c 1764-1819
SAN.126	Abel & Triphena Sage House	53 Rood Hill Rd.	c 1790
SAN. 131-133	Jonathan & Elizabeth Webster House	22 Rood Hill Rd.	c 1770
SAN. 76	Solomon & Susannah Smith House	50 Sage Rd.	c 1764
	Hezekiah Kilborn House	29 Silverbrook Rd.	c 1775
SAN.220; 221	Abisha & Rebecca Rice House	70 Town Hill Rd.	c 1778
SAN.192,193,194	Theophilus & Persis Hubbard House	57 East Hubbard Rd.	c 1817
SAN.215,216,217	John Jones House	24 Stump Rd.	c 1786; c1850
SAN.188, 89	Ebenezer & Christina Holt House	158 Town Hill Rd.	c.1793
	Thomas & Lydia Waters House	12 Perry Rd.	c 1792
	Knox Trail	Otis and Sandisfield	Late 17th Century
SAN.229,230	Northwest District Schoolhouse	40 West Hubbard Rd.	c 1780
SAN.190-191	Judimer & Jerusha Hubbard House	40 Cronk Rd.	c 1790-1800
SAN.201; 924	River Rd. Cottage 13	13 River Rd	c 1936
SAN.214	East New Boston Schoolhouse	South Main St.	c 1840

Table 8.5 - E-Bird Bird Sightings at Colebrook River Lake in Sandisfield, MA*Source: E-Bird 2015*

	Common Name	Count	Date	By
1	Bald Eagle	1	17-Sep-15	Denise Jernigan
2	Red-tailed Hawk	1	17-Sep-15	Denise Jernigan
3	Spotted Sandpiper	2	17-Sep-15	Denise Jernigan
4	American Crow	2	17-Sep-15	Denise Jernigan
5	Osprey	1	15-Sep-15	Dorrie Holmes
6	Cedar Waxwing	10	15-Sep-15	Dorrie Holmes
7	Blackpoll Warbler	1	15-Sep-15	Dorrie Holmes
8	Yellow-rumped Warbler	6	15-Sep-15	Dorrie Holmes
9	Black-throated Green Warbler	3	15-Sep-15	Dorrie Holmes
10	Great Blue Heron	1	14-Sep-15	Buzz Devine
11	Solitary Sandpiper	1	14-Sep-15	Buzz Devine
12	Least Sandpiper	3	14-Sep-15	Buzz Devine
13	Peregrine Falcon	1	14-Sep-15	Buzz Devine
14	Blue Jay	1	14-Sep-15	Buzz Devine
15	Canada Goose	15	12-Sep-15	John Marshall
16	Common Raven	1	12-Sep-15	John Marshall
17	Mallard	23	11-Sep-15	Greg Ward
18	Blue-headed Vireo	2	11-Sep-15	Greg Ward
19	Black-capped Chickadee	2	11-Sep-15	Greg Ward
20	Common Yellowthroat	2	11-Sep-15	Greg Ward
21	Yellow Warbler	1	11-Sep-15	Greg Ward
22	Common Merganser	5	7-Sep-15	Rene Wendell
23	Greater Yellowlegs	2	7-Sep-15	Rene Wendell
24	Lesser Yellowlegs	2	7-Sep-15	Rene Wendell
25	American Black Duck	2	5-Sep-15	Greg Ward

**Table 8.5 - E-Bird Bird Sightings at Colebrook River Lake in Sandisfield, MA—Continued**

26	Semipalmated Plover	1	5-Sep-15	Greg Ward
27	Killdeer	2	5-Sep-15	Greg Ward
28	Semipalmated Sandpiper	2	5-Sep-15	Greg Ward
29	Pileated Woodpecker	1	5-Sep-15	Greg Ward
30	Eastern Phoebe	2	5-Sep-15	Greg Ward
31	Song Sparrow	1	5-Sep-15	Greg Ward
32	American Goldfinch	3	5-Sep-15	Greg Ward
33	Turkey Vulture	2	4-Sep-15	Raymond Belding
34	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1	4-Sep-15	Raymond Belding
35	Gray Catbird	1	4-Sep-15	Raymond Belding
36	Scarlet Tanager	2	4-Sep-15	Raymond Belding
37	Belted Kingfisher	1	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
38	Downy Woodpecker	1	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
39	Eastern Wood-Pewee	1	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
40	Red-eyed Vireo	1	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
41	Tufted Titmouse	3	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
42	House Wren	2	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
43	American Redstart	1	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
44	Cape May Warbler	1	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
45	Chestnut-sided Warbler	1	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
46	Chipping Sparrow	1	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
47	Northern Cardinal	2	1-Sep-15	Dave Rosgen
48	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	30-Aug-15	John Marshall
49	Veery	1	29-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
50	Mourning Dove	1	29-Aug-15	Denise Jernigan
51	Merlin	1	29-Aug-15	Denise Jernigan
52	Chimney Swift	4	27-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
53	Tree Swallow	39	27-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
54	Barn Swallow	1	27-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen

Table 8.5 - E-Bird Bird Sightings at Colebrook River Lake in Sandisfield, MA

55	White-breasted Nuthatch	2	27-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
56	Wood Thrush	2	27-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
57	Cooper's Hawk	1	24-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
58	American Robin	1	24-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
59	Red-shouldered Hawk	1	23-Aug-15	Raymond Belding
	Empidonax sp.	1	23-Aug-15	Raymond Belding
60	Warbling Vireo	1	23-Aug-15	Raymond Belding
61	Black Vulture	2	21-Aug-15	Raymond Belding
	Buteo sp.	1	21-Aug-15	Raymond Belding
62	Yellow-throated Vireo	1	21-Aug-15	Raymond Belding
63	American Woodcock	1	13-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
64	Black-and-white Warbler	1	13-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
65	Eastern Kingbird	1	8-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
66	Pine Warbler	2	8-Aug-15	Dave Rosgen
67	Least Flycatcher	8	29-Jul-15	Dave Rosgen
68	Hermit Thrush	1	29-Jul-15	Dave Rosgen
69	Louisiana Waterthrush	5	29-Jul-15	Dave Rosgen
70	Eastern Towhee	1	29-Jul-15	Dave Rosgen
71	Red-winged Blackbird	8	29-Jul-15	Dave Rosgen
72	Common Grackle	1	29-Jul-15	Dave Rosgen
73	Hairy Woodpecker	1	10-Nov-14	Raymond Belding
74	Dark-eyed Junco	4	10-Nov-14	Raymond Belding
75	White-throated Sparrow	1	10-Nov-14	Raymond Belding
76	Red-bellied Woodpecker	4	9-Nov-14	Dave Rosgen
77	Carolina Wren	1	9-Nov-14	Dave Rosgen
78	American Pipit	20	9-Nov-14	Dave Rosgen
79	American Tree Sparrow	18	9-Nov-14	Dave Rosgen
80	Swamp Sparrow	2	9-Nov-14	Dave Rosgen
81	Barred Owl	1	31-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
82	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2	31-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen

**Table 8.5 - E-Bird Bird Sightings at Colebrook River Lake in Sandisfield, MA**

83	Palm Warbler	1	31-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
84	Savannah Sparrow	1	31-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
85	Purple Finch	4	31-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
86	Ring-billed Gull	2	28-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
87	Northern Flicker	2	28-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
88	Fox Sparrow	5	28-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
89	Pine Siskin	3	28-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
90	Wild Turkey	2	22-Oct-14	Raymond Belding
91	Golden-crowned Kinglet	3	20-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
92	White-crowned Sparrow	1	20-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
93	Lincoln's Sparrow	1	16-Oct-14	Raymond Belding
94	House Finch	2	10-Oct-14	Dave Rosgen
95	Northern Parula	6	27-Sep-14	Dave Rosgen
96	Brown Creeper	1	20-Sep-14	Dave Rosgen
97	Magnolia Warbler	5	20-Sep-14	Dave Rosgen
98	Tennessee Warbler	2	14-Sep-14	Dave Rosgen
99	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	2	12-Sep-14	Dave Rosgen
100	Green-winged Teal	2	8-Sep-14	Dave Rosgen
	warbler sp. (Parulidae sp.)	25	8-Sep-14	Dave Rosgen
101	Great Crested Flycatcher	1	3-Sep-14	Raymond Belding
102	Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	1-Sep-14	Raymond Belding
103	Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	29-Aug-14	Dave Rosgen
104	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1	25-Aug-14	Dave Rosgen
	American Black Duck x Mallard (hybrid)	5	3-Aug-14	Raymond Belding
105	Common Loon	1	3-Aug-14	Raymond Belding
106	American Kestrel	2	3-Aug-14	Raymond Belding
107	Ovenbird	1	3-Aug-14	Raymond Belding
108	Blackburnian Warbler	1	3-Aug-14	Raymond Belding

Table 8.5 - E-Bird Bird Sightings at Colebrook River Lake in Sandisfield, MA

109	Wood Duck	12	9-Jul-14	Raymond Belding
110	Broad-winged Hawk	1	9-Jul-14	Raymond Belding
111	Black-throated Blue Warbler	2	2-May-14	Raymond Belding
112	Field Sparrow	1	19-Oct-13	Dave Rosgen
113	Northern Mockingbird	1	30-Sep-13	Dave Rosgen
114	Indigo Bunting	1	30-Sep-13	Dave Rosgen
115	Nashville Warbler	1	26-Sep-13	Dave Rosgen
116	Rusty Blackbird	1	26-Sep-13	Dave Rosgen
117	Wilson's Snipe	1	23-Sep-13	Dave Rosgen
118	Rock Pigeon	1	20-Aug-13	Raymond Belding
119	Baltimore Oriole	1	20-Aug-13	Raymond Belding
120	Eastern Bluebird	2	6-Nov-12	Raymond Belding
121	Common Nighthawk	73	31-Aug-12	Dave Rosgen
122	Canada Warbler	1	23-Aug-12	Raymond Belding
123	Brown-headed Cowbird	1	2-Aug-12	Dave Rosgen
124	European Starling	1	14-Dec-11	Raymond Belding
125	Black-billed Cuckoo	1	2-Sep-11	Raymond Belding



OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Open Space

Open space is defined as land that has not been developed for residential, commercial, or industrial uses and includes publicly and privately owned land. Open space often has particular interest to conservation or recreation and can include:

1. Land which contributes to the public water supply
2. Forests, fields, and agricultural lands
3. Wetlands
4. Rivers, streams, and lakes
5. Parks and other recreation lands
6. Wildlife corridors or animal habitats
7. Land which preserves scenic views or town character

Land in Sandisfield is protected in a variety of ways and with varying degrees of protection. Conservation and recreation lands in the Town of Sandisfield are protected by four entities, the Town and other municipal organizations, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, local land trusts, and private landowners.

Land is considered under permanent protection if it is owned by the state or a local land trust. It may also be permanently protected if the land is subject to a conservation restriction, such as those held by land trusts. Within the Town of Sandisfield, many privately owned properties are considered to be under permanent protection due to conservation restrictions held by local land trusts. The Connecticut Metropolitan District Commission also owns several hundred acres in Sandisfield and protects its holdings in perpetuity.

Areas under limited protection include other town-owned parcels such as Yanner Park. These areas have been used for recreation, but are not permanently protected.

Areas under Chapter 61 (A, or B) tax reduction programs are considered to have temporary protections, as they are privately owned.

All privately owned lands without conservation

Table 9.1 - Summary of Protected Land in Sandisfield, MA

Source: Mass. GIS Open Space 2015, BNRC 2015

Organization	Acreage	% of protected land (16599 acres)	% of all land (33,904 acres)
State	7,392.67	44.54%	21.80%
Land Trust	1,149.95	6.93%	3.39%
Municipal			
<i>Town of Sandisfield</i>	279.80	1.69%	0.83%
<i>Connecticut Metropolitan District Commission</i>	626.87	3.78%	1.85%
Private	2,624.80	15.81%	7.74%
Subtotal	12,074.09	72.74%	35.61%
Chapter 61 Properties	5,425.41	32.68%	16.00%
Sub Total	17,499.50	105.42%	
Overlapping Properties (privately owned lands that are permanently protected and in Chapter 61)	900.06	5.42%	2.65%
Total	16,599.44	100.00%	48.96%

restrictions or not enrolled in Chapter 61 are considered to be unprotected.

Protected Open Space

For locations of protected open space and Chapter 61 properties, please refer to Map L—Open Space.

According to the Massachusetts State Geographic Information System (GIS) "Open Space" data layer, there are 16,599 acres of protected open space lands in the Town of Sandisfield, the equivalent of 48.9% of all land within the town. Over 7,000 acres of this total (or around 44% of all protected land) is in parcels held

by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and includes the portions of Otis and Sandisfield State Forest, as well as several flood control sites (See Table 9.1—Summary of Protected Land in Sandisfield, MA and Table 9.2—Protected Land in Sandisfield, MA). Also included are permanently protected open space lands owned by land trusts and private landowners, watershed protection land held by the Connecticut Metropolitan District Commission, as well as temporarily protected lands protected by Chapter 61 incentives. This total also includes Town of Sandisfield owned properties such as Yanner Park, which have limited protections due to municipal ownership.

Additionally, it should be noted that roughly 900 acres of privately owned lands in Sandisfield are both permanently protected and in Chapter 61 incentive programs. These 900 acres with “overlapping” conservation protection were removed from acreage totals to provide a more accurate amount of protected land within the town.

Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B Lands

Chapter 61 is a state program that allows private landowners to manage their properties for forestry (Chapter 61), agricultural (Chapter 61A), or recreational purposes (Chapter 61B) in exchange for reduced taxes. Parcels in the program for the purposes of forestry must be at least 10 acres in size and must have an approved 10-year management plan in place. Parcels enrolled in Chapter 61A or 61B must be at least five acres in size. Once enrolled in Chapter 61, the town where the property is located acquires a right of first refusal should the land be put up for sale. This right of first refusal can also be assigned by the town to a land trust or state agency. Chapter 61 lands are not considered permanently protected, as landowners can remove their property from the program at any time. However, there are monetary penalties associated with sale of properties enrolled in Chapter 61 for purposes other than forestry, agriculture or recreation, as well as any changes in land use while enrolled.

For more information on Chapter 61 programs, consult a local forester or the town assessor. Chapter

61 properties are privately owned and should be considered off limits to public access without the landowner’s permission. There are a total of 5425 acres of land currently enrolled in Chapter 61 in Sandisfield, totaling around 16% of all land within the town. The majority of these properties are enrolled for the purposes of forestry, with some enrolled for agriculture. There are currently no parcels in Sandisfield enrolled in the Chapter 61 program for recreation (see Table 9.3—Chapter 61 Parcels in Sandisfield, MA).

State and Private Lands and Stumpage Fees

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is required to deposit a portion of revenue generated from removal of forest products (such as timber harvest) on its lands into the Forest Products Trust Fund. This trust fund is then used to disperse revenue to the municipalities in which the forest products were removed. In state lands purchased prior to June 1, 1987, 8% of all revenue derived from the forest products on state lands is distributed to municipalities. However, for state land purchased after this date, the requirement increases to 50%.

Similarly, private lands enrolled in Chapter 61 used to be required to provide 8% of forest product revenue to the municipality where the property was located. However, in 2006, changes to Chapter 61 regulations eliminated this requirement.

Given the town’s extensive state and Chapter 61 properties, and Sandisfield’s timber resources, these harvests represent potential sources of revenue for the town. During meetings of the Sandisfield MPSC, the committee expressed interest in pushing for changes to state law that would allow for a greater percentage from timber harvests to be donated to the town.

Most state-owned land in Sandisfield was purchased prior to June 1st, 1987, with the exception of the Spectacle Pond Farm property which was acquired in 2007 and a relatively small (20 acre) property adjacent to the West Lake and Abbey Pond Flood Control Site that was purchased in 2010. Therefore, the



requirement that 50% of all revenue generated from forest products on this parcel be provided to the town would only apply to these areas.

Recreation

The Town of Sandisfield offers several areas for recreation, including town, state, and privately owned areas.

Town Owned Recreation Areas

The Town of Sandisfield owns two areas available for public recreation.

Yanner Park

Yanner Park is a 273 acre parcel of land that was donated to the town in 1995 by Merwin “Jack” Yanner “for the purpose of establishing a public park or public recreation area in memory of John, Marie and Jack Yanner” (Dyja 2011). In 2004, a non-profit group had been formed, known as the Friends of Yanner Park, to help reach those goals. The group was able to raise over \$18,000 and used some funds to have a Master Plan for the park created by the Conway School of Landscape Design. The town began work on an Open Space and Recreation Plan, which is required by the state Division of Conservation Services (DCS) to access competitive grant funds related to conservation and recreation projects. However, the plan was never completed. Major work to develop recreation areas at Yanner Park was completed by volunteers several years ago and included tree cutting and brush removal. Additionally, a stone wall and park entrance were created. However, no recent work has been completed. Park access is from Town Hill Road.

Sandisfield Library Playground

The Sandisfield Library Playground is located at 23 Sandisfield Road. The library playground contains play structures, a swing set, and a basketball court.

State Owned Recreation Areas

Sandisfield has several thousand acres of state owned forest and flood control land. These areas and their uses are outlined below. According to DCR (Department of Conservation and Recreation) forest

management plans, most of the land in Sandisfield is to be managed for timber harvest. The only nearby “intensive use”, or designated recreation areas on state land, are the day use area around York Lake in New Marlborough, and the campground area at Tolland State Forest in Otis. Intensive use areas are considered by DCR to be “administrative and developed recreation sites such as campgrounds and trailhead parking areas.” (DCR Southern Berkshire Forest Management Plan 2008). However, a full management plan has not yet been drafted for Spectacle Pond Farm, which may or may not include potential “intensive use”.

While most land is not managed primarily for recreation, this use is an important component of these state owned properties in Sandisfield. Public access is allowed at the several flood control sites in town, for the purposes of passive recreation. However, motorized vehicles are prohibited in these areas. Additionally, there are boat launches on Upper and Lower Spectacle Pond and West Lake.

Currently, the State of Massachusetts has no plans for expanding recreation opportunities on any of its land in Sandisfield (DCR Personal Communication 2015).

Otis State Forest and Spectacle Pond Farm

Otis State Forest is located in the northern portion of town and extends north into the Town of Otis. This area contains Upper and Lower Spectacle Pond. Access to Upper Spectacle Pond is located off Webb Road in Sandisfield. Access to Lower Spectacle Pond Road is off Cold Spring Road.

Spectacle Pond Farm

Spectacle Pond Farm is a 907 acre area acquired by the state in 2007 and made a part of Otis State Forest. The area contains a “15-or-so acre stand of old-growth Eastern Hemlock and boasts remnants of a late 18th century mill complex” (Drew, 2007).

Spectacle pond farm contains multiple agricultural buildings and smaller cabin structures along the shoreline of the pond. The state has sought several options to reuse these structures, including potential

use as a field headquarters for state environmental police. Additionally, the Commonwealth has examined the potential reuse of the buildings through its historical curatorship program, in which historic buildings are leased to private entities with agreements to restore and maintain them. However, there has been little interest from private organizations to reuse the structures.

While the Commonwealth has not formally made a decision regarding these properties, it will either demolish the structures or offer them for free to anyone interested in moving them off site, after potential reuse options are exhausted. Domenick Sacco, interim west regional director of Massachusetts Parks reported that “moving or demolishing the structures is not DCR’s preferred plan but may be the only option.”

As previously mentioned, no formal management plan yet exists for the area. However, DCR has recently been working to update its management for lands across the state.

During meetings of the Sandisfield MPSC, the group expressed interest in possibly participating in the historic curatorship program. Additionally, the group expressed a need for greater involvement and town input during the creation of management plans for Spectacle Pond Farm as well as other state owned lands in the town.

Members of the MPSC began meeting with DCR officials to discuss option for the reuse of the buildings around Spectacle Pond during the Spring of 2015.

West Lake And Abbey Pond Flood Control Site

This area can be accessed from West Street in Sandisfield. As its name implies, this area contains two water bodies, West Lake and Abbey Pond. West Lake contains a public boat launch and nearby parking lot for approximately 10 cars (DCR Southern Berkshire Forest Management Plan 2008). Abbey Pond is located approximately 3/4 of a mile from the public parking lot via a walking trail. Both Abbey Pond and West Lake have been modified with dams to enhance

their capacity for flood control.

Sandisfield State Forest

Sandisfield State Forest is scattered in large parcels throughout the Towns of Sandisfield and New Marlborough. Most of the parcels that comprise Sandisfield State Forest have not been developed for recreation. However, York Lake is a popular recreation destination found within Sandisfield State Forest, although located just over the town line in New Marlborough. Access to York Lake is found along Forest Road in Sandisfield. The lake has a day use area with a beach, restroom/changing facilities, and a public boat launch. Additionally, there are hiking and walking trails in this area.

Clam Lake Flood Control Site

Clam Lake is a site managed primarily for flood control in Sandisfield and at its southern end contains a large dam. Access is from Hammertown Road; however, there is no formal parking.

Silver Brook North Flood Control Site

Silverbrook is another flood control site in Sandisfield. Access is from Silverbrook Road; however, there is no formal parking.

Silver Brook South Flood Control Site

Silver Brook South is a flood control site in Sandisfield. Access is from Fox Road; however, there is no formal parking.

Cookson State Forest

A portion of Cookson State Forest is located in Sandisfield. Primary access to this large block of forest land is located in New Marlborough.

Privately Owned Recreation Areas

Sandisfield has a large publically accessible recreation area known as the Clam River Reserve owned by the Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC), a regional land trust, and portions of two others within its boundaries. Additionally, Sandisfield has three Wildlife Conservation Easement (WCE) areas, which



are owned by private landowners, but open to the public for recreation.

Clam River Reserve

This BNRC owned property runs along the bank of the Clam River and can be accessed by parking at the Sandisfield Town Hall Annex on Route 57 / Sandisfield Road. BNRC has been actively developing trails on the Clam River Reserve including the 1.4 mile Clam River Loop Trail and a 1.5 mile long trail extending north to Hammertown Road. The latter trail is expected to be completed in the fall of 2015. The northern boundary of the reserve abuts the town owned Yanner Park property. In the past there has been some talk of connecting these recreation areas via trails.

Steepletop

A small portion of the Steepletop, BNRC's largest reserve area is located in Sandisfield. Access is from New Marlborough-Monterey Road in New Marlboro.

Bob's Way

A portion of the BNRC property known as Bob's Way is located in Sandisfield. This property contains hiking trails and wetland areas. Access is from Route 23 in Monterey.

Sandisfield / New Marlborough Wildlife Conservation Easement (WCE) Areas

The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has three conservation easements on privately owned parcels in Sandisfield. These areas are open to the public for recreation, particularly fishing and hunting, but generally have no formal access, such as trails, parking, or other recreation facilities. All WCE areas are also considered to be Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), and are subject to all WMA rules (DFG 2015).

Allen Mountain WCE

Access to Allen Mountain WCE is from Town Hill Road, just south of Abbey Road. This area abuts the Clam Lake Flood Control Site and Otis State Forest.

Silverbrook WCE

Silverbrook WCE is a landlocked parcel with no road access. However, this parcel abuts the Silverbrook North Flood Control Site found along Silverbrook Road.

Thorpe Brook WCE

This WCE area can be accessed from Clark Road in Sandisfield.

Sandisfield Snowmobile Club and Knox Trail Sno-Rider Trails

The Sandisfield Snowmobile Club and the Knox Trail Sno-Riders (based in nearby Otis) maintain a number of snowmobile trails on public and private land in Sandisfield. Several trails cross through a portion of the West Lake And Abbey Pond Flood Control Site, including trails that cross both these waterbodies during the winter. Another trail runs parallel to and north of Silverbrook Road. The Sandisfield Snowmobile Club also has plans to expand its trail network north into the Town of Monterey as well as south along Back, Clark, and Beech Hill Roads. See figures 9.1 and 9.2 in this appendix for more detailed maps of trails in Sandisfield.

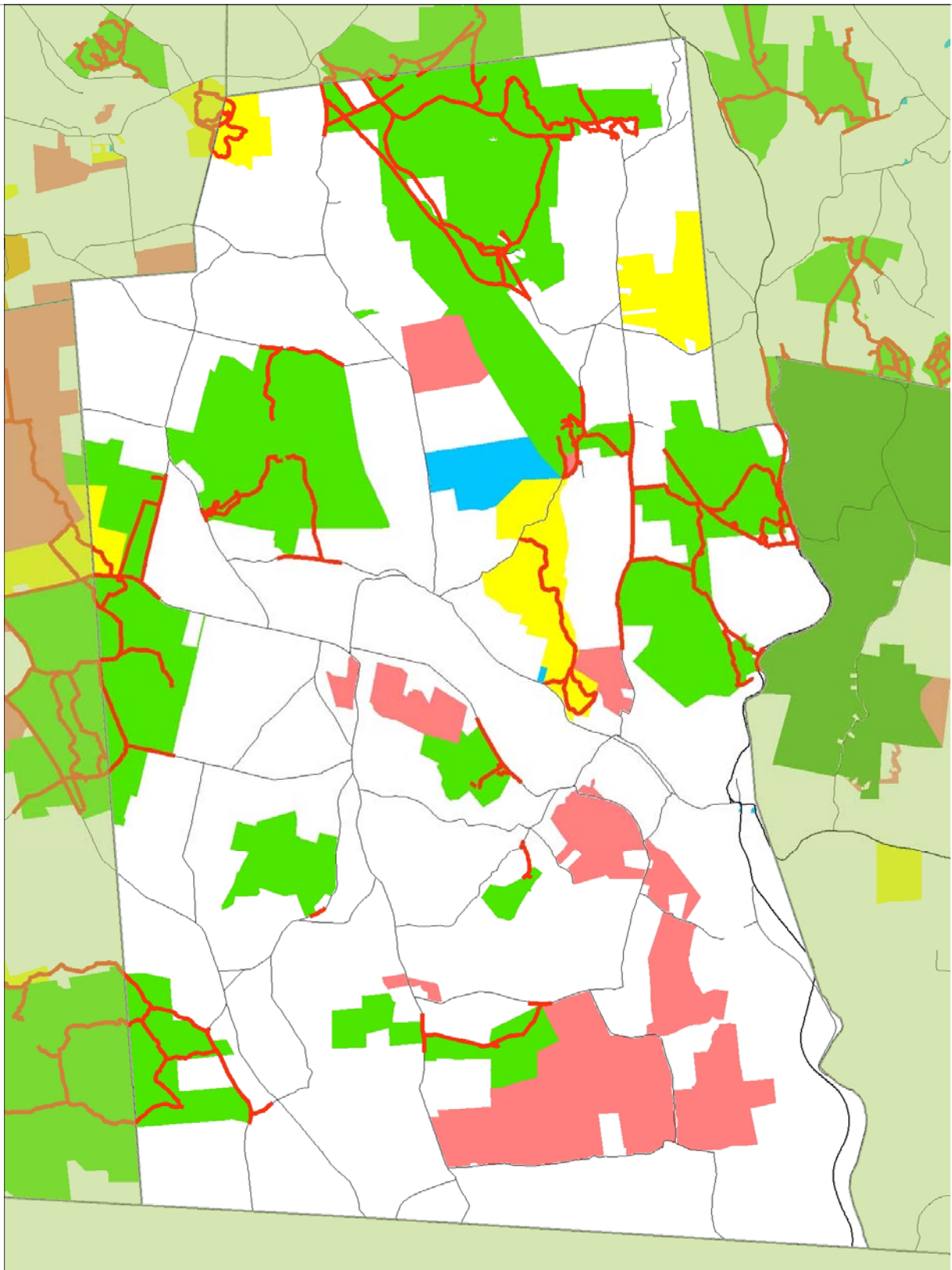


Figure 9.1—Sandisfield Trails. Trails that have been identified on protected lands are shown in red on the map above. Trails on private and unprotected lands have not been identified.



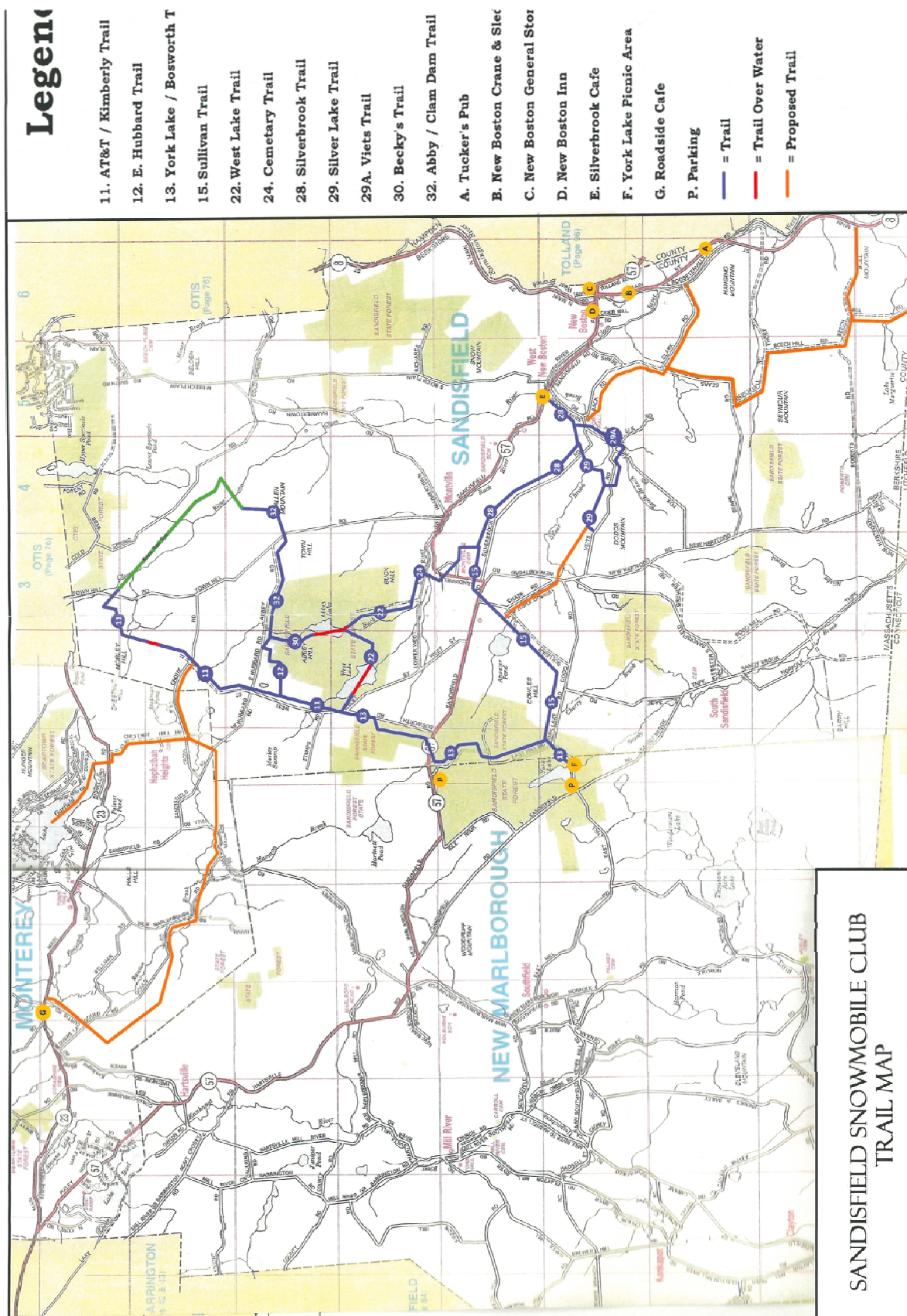


Figure 9.1—Sandisfield Snowmobile Club Trail Map. Map provided courtesy of the Sandisfield Snowmobile Club.

Table 9.2 - Protected Land in Sandisfield, MA*Source: Mass. GIS Open Space, 2015, BNRC 2015*

Site Name	Owner	Owner Type	Primary Purpose	Public Access	Level of Protection	Organization	Interest	Acres	Date Protected
	Town of Sandisfield	Municipality	Recreation	Yes	Limited			273.81	
SANDISFIELD SCHOOL (Town Hall Annex)	Town of Sandisfield	Municipality	Recreation	Yes	Limited			4.80	
	Town of Sandisfield	Municipality	Unknown	Yes	Limited			0.80	
	Town of Sandisfield	Municipality	Unknown	Yes	Limited			0.22	
	Town of Sandisfield	Municipality	Unknown	Yes	Limited			0.17	
	CROFUT	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	42.57	
	BROCK MARY	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	106.10	
Liberman CR	LIBERMAN ROBERT	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	NEFF	CR	1069.53	
CABIN LOT CR	MILLONZI JOEL C AND KATHLEEN C	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	13.25	
GREEN ACRE FARM CR	MILLONZI JOEL C AND KATHLEEN C	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	16.96	
Liberman CR	LIBERMAN ROBERT	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	NEFF	CR	342.94	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	113.92	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	8.43	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	8.37	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	9.72	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	15.01	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	3.59	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	9.05	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	6.68	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	7.01	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	21.28	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	73.10	
Konstam CR	Konstam	Private	Conservation	No	Perpetuity	BNRC	CR	88.71	
Clam Lake Flood Control Site	Liberman, Robert	Private	Flood Control	No	Perpetuity	DCR	EASE	8.65	
MINERY PROPERTY	Audubon	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			57.85	
CHILDS PROPERTY	Audubon	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			12.51	
HAGUE PROPERTY	Audubon	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			7.97	

**Table 9.2 - Protected Land in Sandisfield, MA—Continued**

Site Name	Owner	Owner Type	Primary Purpose	Public Access	Level of Protection	Organization	Interest	Acres	
FARMINGTON RIVER WATERSHED	CMDC	Other	Watersupply	Unknown	Perpetuity			7.60	
FARMINGTON RIVER WATERSHED	CMDC	Other	Watersupply	Unknown	Perpetuity			20.48	
FARMINGTON RIVER WATERSHED	CMDC	Other	Watersupply	Unknown	Perpetuity			28.89	
FARMINGTON RIVER WATERSHED	CMDC	Other	Watersupply	Unknown	Perpetuity			9.61	
FARMINGTON RIVER WATERSHED	CMDC	Other	Watersupply	Unknown	Perpetuity			560.28	
Otis State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			317.51	6/29/2007
Otis State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			26.62	
Otis State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			705.91	
Otis State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			94.54	
Otis State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			63.17	
Sandisfield State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			265.28	
Sandisfield State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			66.11	
Sandisfield State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			1227.39	
Sandisfield State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			586.43	
Sandisfield State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			80.79	
Sandisfield State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			38.01	
Sandisfield State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			332.10	
Sandisfield State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			222.00	
Sandisfield State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			139.48	
Cookson State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			10.01	
Cookson State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			464.68	
Otis State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			600.76	6/29/2007
	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			228.38	

Table 9.2 - Protected Land in Sandisfield, MA—Continued

Site Name	Owner	Owner Type	Primary Purpose	Public Access	Level of Protection	Organization	Interest	Acres	Date Protected
	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			147.55	
	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			3.49	
STEEPLETOP FOREST LOT CR	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity	NMLPT, TTOR	CR	89.41	
CHILDS PROPERTY	Audubon	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			76.62	
CHILDS PROPERTY	Audubon	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			74.47	
CHILDS PROPERTY	Audubon	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			43.04	
CHILDS PROPERTY	Audubon	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			75.64	
	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			0.78	
	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			6.12	
	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			11.36	
Clam River	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			110.06	
THIEROT CR	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			150.85	
Clam River	BNRC	Land Trust	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity			53.84	
Sandisfield / New Marlborough WCE	B AND N LANDS LLC	Private	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity	DFG	CR	216.26	
Sandisfield / New Marlborough WCE	B AND N LANDS LLC	Private	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity	DFG	CR	186.24	
Sandisfield / New Marlborough WCE	B AND N LANDS LLC	Private	Conservation	Yes	Perpetuity	DFG	CR	257.45	
West Lake And Abbey Pond Flood Control Site	DCR	State	Flood Control	Yes	Perpetuity			1308.34	
Clam Lake Flood Control Site	DCR	State	Flood Control	Yes	Perpetuity			503.32	1/1/1973

**Table 9,2 - Protected Land in Sandisfield, MA—Continued**

Site Name	Owner	Owner Type	Primary Purpose	Public Access	Level of Protection	Organization	Interest	Acres
Silver Brook North Flood Control Site	DCR	State	Flood Control	Yes	Perpetuity			187.69
Silver Brook South Flood Control Site	DCR	State	Flood Control	Yes	Perpetuity			65.42
Otis State Forest	DCR	State	Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Perpetuity			87.12

DCR - Division of Conservation and Recreation
BNRC - Berkshire Natural Resources Council
DFG - Department of Fish and Game
Audubon - Massachusetts Audubon Society
CMDCC - Connecticut Metropolitan District Commission
NEFF - New England Forestry Foundation
NMLPT - New Marlborough Land Preservation Trust
TTOR - The Trustees of Reservations

Table 9.3- Chapter 61 Parcels in Sandisfield, MA*Source: Mass GIS Open Space 2015*

PROP_ID	Chapter 61	Address	Owner	Lot Size
201 0 7	Chapter 61A	188 SANDISFIELD RD	FARICELLI KATHLEEN	38.71102
202 0 44	Chapter 61	0 SANDISFIELD RD	DENHAM EDWARD A	34.89215
202 0 49	Chapter 61	10 LOWER WEST ST	SCHULTZ PETER JILL FRANCES	36.57256
204 0 73	Chapter 61	0 SEARS RD	KONSTAM DOMINIC	22.34678
402 0 1.03	Chapter 61	295 COLD SPRING RD	LORING MICHAEL	25.29463
403 0 86.1	Chapter 61	0 PERRY RD	ROSENBERG MICHAEL E	111.9612
403 0 86.4	Chapter 61	0 NORTH BEECH PLAIN RD	ROSENBERG MICHAEL E	2.328191
403 0 89	Chapter 61	0 NORTH BEECH PLAIN RD	GOLDSMITH JUDITH E TRUSTEE	114.7385
403 0 91	Chapter 61	0 NORTH BEECH PLAIN RD	GOLDSMITH JUDITH E TRUSTEE	127.9645
403 0 93.6	Chapter 61	0 NORTH BEECH PLAIN RD	ROSENBERG MICHAEL E	3.994589
404 0 1	Chapter 61	0 NORTH BEECH PLAIN RD	GOLDSMITH JUDITH E TRUSTEE	7.487781
404 0 32	Chapter 61	215 NORTH BEECH PLAIN RD	GOLDSMITH JUDITH E TRUSTEE	83.75534
405 0 1	Chapter 61	250 COLD SPRING RD	MYERS RONALD E	31.00908
405 0 11	Chapter 61	0 TOWN HILL RD	HAWLEY MARGARET	54.46476
405 0 5.1	Chapter 61	182 COLD SPRING RD	BERNARD RONALD M	82.67294
405 0 7.01	Chapter 61	0 COLD SPRING RD	BERNARD RONALD M	20.01158
405 0 9	Chapter 61	0 COLD SPRING RD	MYERS RONALD E	13.25275
406 0 47.5	Chapter 61	0 ABBY ROAD	HRBEK JEAN M	69.43855
407 0 3.1	Chapter 61A	24 STUMP RD	GRAY SONJA M	216.301
407 0 51.1	Chapter 61A	0 STUMP RD	GRAY SONJA M	39.35175
408 0 3	Chapter 61	0 TOWN HILL RD	HULL FORESTLANDS, LP	216.2644
409 0 1	Chapter 61A	116 SOUTH BEECH PLAIN RD	HRYCKVICH NICHOLAS	60.43738
409 0 2	Chapter 61A	114 SOUTH BEECH PLAIN RD	HRYCKVICH NICHOLAS	75.60722
409 0 3	Chapter 61A	0 SOUTH BEECH PLAIN RD	HRYCKVICH NICHOLAS	52.87473
410 0 3.5	Chapter 61	61 SOUTH BEECH PLAIN RD	BERG JAMES E	28.25917

**Table 9.3 - Chapter 61 Parcels in Sandisfield, MA—Continued**

411 0 10	Chapter 61	100 SILVERBROOK RD	MANACHER ADAM & ARIEL	154.0251
411 0 13	Chapter 61	0 SILVERBROOK RD	HULL FORESTLANDS LP	186.2403
411 0 6	Chapter 61	21 NEW HARTFORD RD	ESTATE OF MEIER JR ROBERT A	75.92673
411 0 9	Chapter 61	0 SILVERBROOK RD	MANACHER ADAM & ARIEL	56.78924
412 0 5	Chapter 61	0 SANDISFIELD RD	CANTY CONSTANCE G	74.20798
413 0 24	Chapter 61	0 SAGE RD	GRUMBACH JR GEORGE J	52.31286
413 0 29	Chapter 61	0 SANDY BROOK TPKE	BOBRYK PAUL	107.4921
413 0 30	Chapter 61	0 SANDY BROOK TPKE	BOBRYK PAUL	114.364
413 0 35	Chapter 61	0 SAGE RD	GRUMBACH JR GEORGE J	224.3911
414 0 10.01	Chapter 61	0 VIETS RD	ROOSEVELT WILLARD J	11.32559
414 0 12	Chapter 61	0 SILVERBROOK RD	KONSTAM DOMINIC	36.53541
414 0 16	Chapter 61	64 SILVERBROOK RD	OBRIEN BONNIE	51.59475
414 0 17	Chapter 61	0 SILVERBROOK RD	C.CARLSON&S EMMONSR THOMPSON	14.58823
414 0 18	Chapter 61	0 SILVERBROOK RD	CARLSON C&EMMONS S&THOMPSON R	30.42278
414 0 19	Chapter 61	0 SILVERBROOK RD	KONSTAM DOMINIC	29.46729
414 0 20	Chapter 61	28 SILVERBROOK RD	KONSTAM DOMINIC	59.29528
414 0 24	Chapter 61	0 BACK RD	KONSTAM DOMINIC	113.9185
414 0 28	Chapter 61	0 FOX RD	ROOSEVELT WILLARD J	7.582876
414 0 35	Chapter 61	0 ELK RD	KONSTAM DOMINIC	15.00782
414 0 39.1	Chapter 61	0 ELK RD	ROOSEVELT WILLARD J	28.72059
414 0 41	Chapter 61	0 FOX RD	ROOSEVELT WILLARD J	10.09946
414 0 42	Chapter 61	61 FOX RD	GARFIELD LESLIE&JOHANNA- TRUSTE	51.84336
414 0 43	Chapter 61	0 FOX RD	GARFIELD LESLIE&JOHANNA- TRUSTE	69.62211
414 0 44.1	Chapter 61	0 VIETS RD	ROOSEVELT WILLARD J	13.25361

Table 9.3 - Chapter 61 Parcels in Sandisfield, MA—Continued

414 0 44.3	Chapter 61	0 VIETS RD	ROOSEVELT WILLARD J	2.06736
414 0 46	Chapter 61	32 VIETS RD	FISH LAWRENCE C	110.8081
414 0 8	Chapter 61	7 VIETS RD	HEIN KATHERINE D	54.98713
415 0 2	Chapter 61	44 SEARS RD	GREEN ROBERT K REVOCABLE TRUST	354.9892
416 0 1	Chapter 61	40 CLARK RD	KONSTAM DOMINIC	88.83708
416 0 25.2	Chapter 61	0 CLARK RD	KONSTAM DOMINIC	264.3592
416 0 26	Chapter 61	0 CLARK RD	HULL FORESTLANDS, LP	257.4496
416 0 27.1	Chapter 61	0 CLARK RD	GREEN ROBERT K REVOCABLE TRUST	74.26113
416 0 5	Chapter 61	0 CLARK RD	KONSTAM DOMINIC	12.87695
417 0 12	Chapter 61	0 FOX RD	GARFIELD LESLIE&JOHANNA- TRUSTE	48.39538
417 0 3	Chapter 61	0 FOX RD	GARFIELD LESLIEJOHANNA- TRUSTE	53.96745
417 0 4	Chapter 61	71 FOX RD	SANTAMARIA ROBERT F	112.872
418 0 11	Chapter 61	44 SO SANDISFIELD RD	SCHIPRITT WILLIAM	21.96499
418 0 14	Chapter 61	0 SO SANDISFIELD RD	STOLFI DOMENIC	110.1867
419 0 18	Chapter 61	0 NORFOLK RD	DOOLITTLE LAKE CO	150.7986
419 0 19	Chapter 61	0 NORFOLK RD	DOOLITTLE LAKE CO.	73.3703
420 0 13	Chapter 61	0 ROBERTS RD	BOBRIWKA UKRANIAN	220.7798
420 0 33	Chapter 61	0 NEW HARTFORD RD	DOLBEY HELEN	21.02686
420 0 34	Chapter 61	0 NEW HARTFORD RD	DOLBEY HELEN	14.81499
421 0 10	Chapter 61	END ROBERTS RD	GERRITY DANIEL	11.10773
421 0 11	Chapter 61	0 ROBERTS RD	GERRITY DANIEL	131.7574
421 0 8	Chapter 61	0 BEECH HILL RD	STATE LINE FARM INC	74.71263



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APPENDIX D: MGL 41S81D

PART I. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

TITLE VII. CITIES, TOWNS AND DISTRICTS

CHAPTER 41. OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF CITIES, TOWNS AND DISTRICTS IMPROVED METHOD OF MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Chapter 41: Section 81D. Master plan; economic development supplement

Section 81D. A planning board established in any city or town under section eighty-one A shall make a master plan of such city or town or such part or parts thereof as said board may deem advisable and from time to time may extend or perfect such plan.

Such plan shall be a statement, through text, maps, illustrations or other forms of communication that is designed to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality. The comprehensive plan shall be internally consistent in its policies, forecasts and standards, and shall include the following elements:

(1) Goals and policies statement which identifies the goals and policies of the municipality for its future growth and development. Each community shall conduct an interactive public process, to determine community values, goals and to identify patterns of development that will be consistent with these goals.

(2) Land use plan element which identifies present land use and designates the proposed distribution, location and inter-relationship of public and private land uses. This element shall relate the proposed standards of population density and building intensity to the capacity of land available or planned facilities and services. A land use plan map illustrating the land use policies of the municipality shall be included.

(3) Housing element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives

including programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing. This element shall identify policies and strategies to provide a balance of local housing opportunities for all citizens.

(4) Economic development element which identifies policies and strategies for the expansion or stabilization of the local economic base and the promotion of employment opportunities.

(5) Natural and cultural resources element which provides an inventory of the significant natural, cultural and historic resource areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the protection and management of such areas.

(6) Open space and recreation element which provides an inventory of recreational and resources and open space areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the management and protection of such resources and areas.

(7) Services and facilities element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public.

(8) Circulation element which provides an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation systems.

(9) Implementation program element which defines and schedules the specific municipal actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element of the master or study plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities or circulation system components and the anticipated costs and revenues associated with accomplishment of such activities shall be detailed in this element. This element shall specify the process by which the municipality's regulatory structures shall be amended so as to be consistent with the master plan.

Such plan shall be made, and may be added to or changed from time to time, by a majority vote of such planning board and shall be public record. The planning board shall, upon completion of any plan or

report, or any change or amendment to a plan or report produced under this section, furnish a copy of such plan or report or amendment thereto, to the department of housing and community development.

A city or town which has an established master or study plan under section eighty-one A and applies for a state grant from the Commonwealth shall prepare and keep on file within such city or town an economic development supplement; provided, however, that such city or town shall not be required to prepare such supplement if such city or town has a supplement on file. Such supplement shall be at least one page in length and shall contain the goals of the city or town with respect to industrial or commercial development, affordable housing, and preservation of parks and open space.



APPENDIX E: PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

Sandisfield Master Plan: Survey Results

Overview

The Sandisfield Master Plan intends to create a broad outline for the future of the Town. This plan relies on data to allow for well informed decision making. A public opinion survey was developed to determine overall opinion about the town and its initiatives. This report summarizes the results of that survey.

Thirty questions were asked in the survey. The question results provide information that ranges from basic demographic identifiers (age, status of residency) to favorite recreational activity (hiking, cycling), to housing importance to road maintenance needs. One hundred thirty two (132) respondents answered some or all of the questions in the survey: questions could be skipped or left unanswered. The questions, as they were stated in the original survey, as well as the accompanied results of each question are presented here. The hope of this survey is to provide an accurate reflection of the desires and areas of concern about the town of Sandisfield. The survey was available from July 31st to August 31st, 2015.

Age of Respondents

The results of the survey are skewed towards the views of older residents. In Sandisfield, roughly 40% of the year-round population is below the age of 45 with the remaining 60% being older than 45. Of year-round residents that responded to the survey, only 5% were below the age of 45 and 95% were older than 45.

Year Round vs. Seasonal Resident Breakdown

Select survey responses were examined to determine differences in answers between Year-round and Seasonal Residents. Please note that residency status can only be determined based on responses to Q27. Of the 132 total survey respondents, 24 did not answer Q27, so residency cannot be determined for these individuals, this amounts to 18% of all survey respondents. This means year-round resident responses are based on only 44 total responses and seasonal resident / second homeowner responses are based on just 54 total responses.

Of the 108 respondents to Q27, 40.7% or 44 described themselves as year-round residents. The remaining 59.2% or 64 of respondents described themselves as seasonal residents or second homeowners. Of year-round residents, 7/44 or 15.9% indicated that they used to be seasonal residents or second homeowners. Based on the 2010 Census, 44/915 or 4.8% of year-round residents responded to the survey.

Additionally, 17/64 or 26.5% of seasonal residents / second homeowners indicated that they were planning on becoming year-round residents of Sandisfield.

1. What aspects of life do you like the most in Sandisfield?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Natural and Scenic Beauty	87.88%	116
Peace and Quiet	84.85%	112
Small Town Atmosphere	59.85%	79
People and Community	52.27%	69
Total		132
Skipped		0

Only options that were selected by 50% of more of respondents are shown above.

2. What is the single greatest aspect of living in Sandisfield? (List only one).

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Natural and Scenic Beauty	46.90%	53
Peace and Quiet	24.78%	28
Rural Setting	11.5%	13
People and Community	10.62%	12
Arts/Culture/Recreation	4.42%	5
Privacy	4.42%	5
Small Town Atmosphere	1.77%	2
Family History	1.77%	2
Total		113
Skipped		19

113 total responses were divided into 9 categories. Natural and Scenic Beauty and Peace and Quiet were the top write in response to this category, reinforcing data from Q1.

3. What do you like the least about living in Sandisfield (List as many items as you like.)

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Roads	23.89%	27
Lack of Business/Services	19.47%	22
High Taxes	15.04%	17
Lack of Internet/Cell Service	11.5%	13
Town Government	10.62%	12
Distance from Services	9.73%	11
Lack of Town Center	7.96%	9
People	7.96%	9
Other	7.96%	9
Lack of Social Opportunities	7.08%	8
Distance to Dump	4.42%	5

Pipeline	2.65%	3
Total		113
Skipped		19

113 total responses were divided into 13 categories. Only categories with more than one response are shown above.

4. How important is it to conserve the following types of open space?

Answer Options	Important	%	Neither important or unimportant	Unimportant	Response Count
Forests	108	93.91%	7	0	115
Farmlands	97	85.84%	16	0	113
Historic sites or buildings	87	76.99%	25	1	113
Open space for drinking water needs	95	85.59%	14	2	111
Open space for recreational needs	79	73.15%	27	2	108
Waterfront areas along rivers, ponds and lakes	95	86.36%	14	1	110
Wetlands	80	73.39%	26	3	109
Vernal Pools	71	66.98%	33	2	106
Wildlife habitat	106	94.64%	6	0	112
				Total	116
				Skipped	16

All answer options for Q4 were selected as “important” by at least 66% of respondents. Forests were selected as important 93.91% of the time. Vernal pools were selected by 66.98% of respondents, the least of any category.

5. How satisfied are you with existing recreation areas in Sandisfield?

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Satisfied	31.03%	36
Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	53.45%	62
Dissatisfied	15.52%	18
	Total	116
	Skipped	16

Over half of all respondents to this question were neither satisfied or dissatisfied with existing recreation areas.

6. How satisfied are you with state owned land facilities and amenities in Sandisfield?

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Satisfied	38.79%	45
Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	42.24%	49
Dissatisfied	18.97%	22
<i>Total</i>		116
<i>Skipped</i>		16

No response to this question was selected by more than 50% of applicants. Most responses were either neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied) (42%) or satisfied (38%).

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

Seasonal Residents were more satisfied (49%) with state owned land and amenities than Year Round Residents (29%).

7. What are your top recreational activities in Sandisfield. Check up to 5 responses.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Hiking	44.0%	51
Canoeing/Kayaking	30.2%	35
Fishing	17.2%	20
Bicycling	14.7%	17
Birdwatching	29.3%	34
ATV riding	4.3%	5
Snowmobile riding	5.2%	6
Basketball	1.7%	2
Dirt Bikes	0.0%	0
Dance / Yoga	4.3%	5
Horseback riding	4.3%	5
Boating	5.2%	6
Gardening	41.4%	48
Running	5.2%	6
Walking	52.6%	61
Indoor recreation / Fitness activities	10.3%	12
Swimming	22.4%	26
Hunting	6.0%	7
Ice Skating	2.6%	3
Cross-Country Skiing	11.2%	13
Downhill/Alpine Skiing	7.8%	9

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Snowshoeing	11.2%	13
Playgrounds	1.7%	2
Horseshoes	0.9%	1
Camping	0.9%	1
Tennis	4.3%	5
Cards / Board games	4.3%	5
Cultural activities and events	36.2%	42
None of the above	4.3%	5
	Total	116
	Skipped	16

This question allowed for multiple selections of activities that participants liked to engage in. The most widely reported activities were Walking (52%), Hiking (43%), Gardening (41%), Cultural events and activities (36.21%), Canoeing and Kayaking (30.17%). Ten write in responses were also provided by respondents to this question and include reading, farming, socializing and wildlife observation among others.

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

Year-Round Resident Top Activities

Gardening, Walking, Cultural Activities, Hiking, Bird Watching

Seasonal Resident Top Activities

Walking, Hiking, Gardening, Cultural Activities, Canoeing/Kayaking

8. What are some of the greatest needs for open spaces in Sandisfield? (List up to three)

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Don't Know / None / Keep Same	15.63%	10
Wildlife / Habitat	14.06%	9
Hiking / Trails	12.5%	8
Community Space / Gathering Area	7.81%	5
Playground / Picnic Areas	7.81%	5
Athletic Fields	6.25%	4
Limit Development	6.25%	4
Preservation & Conservation	6.25%	4
General (Peace & Quiet, etc.)	4.69%	3
Recreation for Families / Children	4.69%	3
Yanner Park	4.69%	3
Economic Development	3.13%	2

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Forests	3.13%	2
River Access	3.13%	2
	Total	64
	Skipped	68

A total of 64 responses were divided into 24 categories. Only categories with more than 1 response are shown above. Answers of “none” or “don’t know” were provided by 15.63% or 10 respondents. Answers about the need to preserve wildlife or wildlife habitat were mentioned in 14.06% or 10 responses. The need for trails or more opportunities for hiking were mentioned in 12.5% or 8 responses.

9. What are the greatest needs for recreation in Sandisfield? (List up to three)

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Hiking / Trails	18.92%	14
None / Don’t Know	14.86%	11
Water Recreation / Access	13.51%	10
Playground	10.81%	8
Recreation for Families/Children	9.46%	7
Yanner Park	9.46%	7
Community Space / Gathering Area	8.11%	6
Promote What We Have	6.76%	5
Athletic Fields	5.41%	4
Improve Access	5.41%	4
Improve State Owned Areas	4.05%	3
More Events	4.05%	3
Bicycling	2.70%	2
Bird / Wildlife Watching	2.70%	2
Senior Center / Options for Elderly Residents	2.70%	2
	Total	74
	Skipped	58

Responses to Q9 were similar to Q8. Hiking / Trails were mentioned by 18.92% or 14 respondents. An answer of “none” or “don’t know” was provided by 14.86% or 11 respondents. Water recreation of all types including swimming, boating, beaches or the need for better access to the water was provided as an answer by 13.51% or 10 respondents.

10. Which types of business do you currently use in Sandisfield versus elsewhere in Berkshire County? What types of business would you like to see encouraged or discouraged in Sandisfield? (Answer all items)

Business Type	Currently Use Sandisfield Business	Business to Encourage	Business to Discourage	Total Respondents
Country Store	10.10% 10	90.91% 90	2.02% 2	99
Gas Station/Convenience store	9.38% 9	78.13% 75	14.58% 14	96
Inn or B&B	11.90% 10	88.10% 74	2.38% 2	84
Farming / agriculture / farm stand	45.36% 44	73.20% 71	3.09% 3	97
Restaurants	53.77% 57	65.09% 69	1.89% 2	106
Professional services - such as architects, engineers, or accountants	13.33% 10	81.33% 61	12.00% 9	75
Health Services	5.19% 4	77.92% 60	18.18% 14	77
General services - such as landscapers or handymen	42.86% 42	60.20% 59	5.10% 5	98
Trade services - such as plumbers or electricians	45.65% 42	61.96% 57	5.43% 5	92
Personal services - such as hairdressers	1.41% 1	71.83% 51	26.76% 19	71
Forest Products	21.33% 16	61.33% 46	24.00% 18	75
Retail	11.39% 9	53.16% 42	41.77% 33	79
Auto repair	49.32% 36	34.25% 25	20.55% 15	73

Business Type	Currently Use Sandisfield Business	Business to Encourage	Business to Discourage	Total Respondents
Construction (includes trucking and hauling)	13.89% 10	23.61% 17	65.28% 47	72
Industrial	0.00% 0	12.00% 9	88.00% 66	75
				Total 115
				Skipped 17

The types of business most currently used include restaurants (53.77%), Farming / Agriculture / Farm Stands (45.36%), General Services (42.685), Trade Services (45.65%) and Auto Repair (49.32%). The types of business that respondents most wanted to encourage include a Country Store (90.91%), Gas Station (78.13%), Inn or B&B (88.10%) and Farming / Agriculture (73.20%). All categories in “business to encourage” received over 50% support with the exception of Auto Repair, Construction (including trucking and hauling) and Industrial. Businesses that respondents wanted to discourage included Industrial (88%), Construction (65.28%), and Retail (41.77%).

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

Year-Round Residents – Construction, Auto Repair, Restaurants, and Industrial business types had less than 50% support for “business to encourage”

Seasonal Residents – General Services, Auto Repair, Construction, and Industrial business types had less than 50% support for “business to encourage”

11. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about economic development in the Town of Sandisfield? (Select only one)

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
There is too much economic development in Sandisfield and we should discourage it.	.89%	1
Development of new businesses and services is good for the local economy, we should encourage it.	70.54%	79
Sandisfield should focus on retaining and supporting existing business, rather than encouraging more.	9.82%	11
Unsure about economic development in Sandisfield.	10.71%	12

None of the above statements describe my opinion.	8.04%	9
	Total	112
	Skipped	20

The majority of respondents, 70.54%, or 79 total respondents, were in favor of the development of new businesses and services. A variety of well thought out responses, 21 in total, were included in the write-in section of this question and clarify many respondents thoughts on this broad question. Please refer to the full text of the survey responses for more details.

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

Responses were similar for year-round vs. seasonal residents. Year-round residents supported encouraging economic development at a higher rate (81%) than Seasonal residents (63%).

12. In addition to you, who else lives in your home? (Check all that apply)

Answer Response Category	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
No one else lives in my house	13.9%	15
Spouse or partner	77.8%	84
Child/children under 18	13.9%	15
Child/children 18 or older	8.3%	9
Child/children away at college	2.8%	3
Other relative 18 or older	7.4%	8
Other relative under 18	3.7%	4
Friend or roommate 18 or older	0.0%	0
Live in caregiver	0.0%	0
	Total	108
	Skipped	24

The majority of survey respondents, 77.8% or 84 total respondents, lived with a spouse or partner. 13.89% of, or 15 total respondents lived alone. An equal number had a child or children under 18 living with them. Ten write-in responses to this question were also provided and mentioned visiting children or grandchildren, renters, or shared seasonal use with other owners.

13. How important is it for Sandisfield to have the following types of housing options?

Response Category	Important	Neither Important or Unimportant	Unimportant	Total Respondents
More Options for seniors / elderly (single story or assisted living)	58.25% 60	28.16% 29	13.59% 14	103
Adaptive re-use or re-development of older / historic properties	57.89% 55	35.79% 34	6.32% 6	95
More options for young families (starter homes)	50.98% 52	31.37% 32	17.65% 18	102
More second homes	41.67% 40	41.67% 40	16.67% 16	96
More single-family homes	36.73% 36	48.98% 48	14.29% 14	98
More high-end homes	27.84% 27	47.42% 46	24.74% 24	97
More housing for low income families	23.16% 22	34.74% 33	42.11% 40	95
More apartments and rental units	20.21% 19	28.72% 27	51.06% 48	94
More multi-unit/multi-family housing such as condominiums	14.29% 14	23.47% 23	62.24% 61	98
				Total 112
				Skipped 20

Housing options for seniors, including single story or assisted living, Adaptive re-use, and options for young families were supported by over 50% of respondents. Multi-Family/Multi-unit housing such as condominiums were listed as unimportant by 62.24%, or 61, respondents. Apartments and rental units were listed as unimportant by 51.06%, or 48, respondents. Housing types that respondents were most “neutral” about include single-family homes, high-end homes,

and second homes. Nineteen write-in responses were also provided and clarify some of the answers to this question.

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

Year-Round Resident Housing Importance

Options for seniors, Options for young families, Adaptive re-use, Single-family homes

Seasonal Resident Housing Importance

Adaptive re-use, options for seniors, options for young families, more second homes

14. Which of the following statements describes how you feel about housing development in Sandisfield? (Select only one)

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
There is too much development in the community, we should do everything we can to discourage more development.	1.8%	2
This community is growing at an appropriate rate, we should keep it at the same rate.	22.52%	25
Development in the community is good for the economy, we should do everything we can to encourage it.	52.25%	58
Unsure	17.12%	19
None of the above	6.31%	7
	Total	111
	Skipped	21

Over 50% of respondents were in favor of encouraging development in Sandisfield. Eighteen write-in responses were also included with this question. These write in responses provide more nuance to a broad question concerning development in Sandisfield.

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

Year-round residents were overall more in support of encouraging development in Sandisfield than Seasonal residents. Year-round residents said “encourage development” at a rate of 68%. Seasonal residents supported that statement at a rate of 41%. Seasonal residents were more likely to choose answers of “keep the same” or “unsure” than year-round residents.

15. Towns can take certain steps to manage or control development, such as through zoning, wetlands permitting, etc. Please rate the current level of control for the following uses or resources in Sandisfield. (Answer all items)

	Too Much Control	Controls are at the right level	Too Little Control	Don't Know/ Need More Information	Total Respondents
Residential Development	7.96% 9	38.05% 43	14.16% 16	39.82% 45	113
Environmental Resources	15.32% 17	27.03% 30	22.52% 25	35.14% 39	111
					Total 114
					Skipped 18

In response to residential development controls, most responses were split between “controls are at the right level” and “don’t know / need more information”, with no clear majority for any answer choice. In response to Environmental Resources, there was a similar pattern of response with no clear majority supporting any answer option. Responses were split between “controls are at the right level” and “don’t know / need more information” with 35.14% supporting the latter statement.

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

Seasonal residents were more likely to answer “don’t know/need more information” to Q15 than year-round residents.

16. If you have any additional comments about land use regulation, please include them below.

A total of 24 responses were provided to Q16. Responses were mixed and were not categorized. Respondents provided write-in answers regarding zoning, the Sandisfield Conservation Commission, concerns about development and the proposed gas pipeline project.

17. Should the level of road maintenance in Sandisfield be kept the same, reduced, or expanded?

Response Categories	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Keep the Same	28.57%	32
Reduce	2.68%	3
Expand	62.50%	70
Don't Know	6.25%	7
Total		112
Skipped		20

The majority of respondents were in favor of expanding the level of road maintenance in town.

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

69% of year-round residents supported expanded road maintenance, 18% said “keep the same”. 55% of seasonal residents said to expand road maintenance. 36% of seasonal residents said “keep the same”.

18. If you support road improvements, what road, or section of road, would be most important to improve? (List only one)

Answer Response Category	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Route 57	32.81%	21
Town Hill Road	18.75%	12
New Hartford Road	18.75%	12
General	15.63%	10
Beech Plain Road	9.38%	6
Unpaved / Dirt Roads	4.69%	3
West Street	4.69%	3
Hammertown	3.13%	2
Route 8	3.13%	2
Total		64
Skipped		68

Sixty-four write in responses were provided for Q18. Responses were divided into 14 categories. Route 57 was rated most important to improve with 32.81% or 21 respondents mentioning this roadway. Categories with only one response were not included in this summary.

19. Please indicate your level of support for the possible creation of a public route through Sandisfield. A possible public transportation route might include a stop in Sandisfield along a route that served several area towns and could bring riders to places like Otis, Lee, Great Barrington, or Pittsfield.

Response	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Support	61.06%	69
Neither Support or Oppose	17.70%	20
Oppose	5.31%	6
Don't Know / Need more information	15.93%	18
Total		113
Skipped		19

The creation of a public transportation route through Sandisfield was supported by 61.06%, or 69 respondents.

20. Should transportation services for elderly or disabled Sandisfield residents (such as those provided through BRTA paratransit or Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation) be kept the same, reduced or expanded?

Response	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Keep the Same	23.68%	27
Reduce	0.00%	0
Expand	34.21%	39
Don't Know	42.11%	48
	Total	114
	Skipped	18

There was no clear support for any response to Q20. "Don't Know" was the most supported answer choice at 42.11%.

21. If you had an option for alternative transportation in Sandisfield (other than your own vehicle), what form should it take? (Please select the 3 most important forms of alternative transportation you would like to see in town)

Response	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
Public transportation route through town	66.67%	62
Car share	11.83%	11
Carpool or ride share	25.81%	24
Transportation for older or disabled residents	69.89%	65
Bicycle lanes	31.18%	29
Commuter lot on Route 8	17.20%	16
	Total	93
	Skipped	39

Only two responses to this question were supported by the majority of respondents. The creation of a public transportation route was supported by 66.67%, or 62 respondents. Transportation for older or disable residents was supported by 69.89%, or 65 respondents. Ten write-in comments were also provided to this question and include a variety of answers.

22. If you were to use public transportation or any of the alternative transportation services listed in the previous question, what would be your reasons for doing so? (Please choose your top 3 reasons)

Response	% of Respondents	# of Respondents
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Commute to Work	7.78%	7
Visit Friends and Family	3.33%	3
Shopping or errands in surrounding towns	73.33%	66
Travel to doctor or dentist appointment	36.67%	33
Attend nightlife activities, such as bars, restaurants, or movie theaters	25.56%	23
Access other regional transportation, such as airports, train stations or bus terminals	45.56%	41
Attend cultural events, such as concerts or plays.	44.44%	40
<i>Total</i>		90
<i>Skipped</i>		32

23. What town services do you believe need to be kept the same, reduced, or expanded?

Response category	Keep service the same	Reduce service	Expand service	Don't know	Total Respondents
Farmington River Regional School	41.51% 44	5.66% 6	6.60% 7	46.23% 49	106
Sanitation inspection (Board of Health)	55.14% 59	3.74% 4	6.54% 7	34.58% 37	107
Site plan review by Planning Board	52.83% 56	4.72% 5	8.49% 9	33.96% 36	106
Dept. of Public Works	36.45% 39	5.61% 6	25.23% 27	32.71% 35	107
Historical Society	49.52% 52	4.76% 5	13.33% 14	32.38% 34	105
Building permitting and inspection	54.21% 58	5.61% 6	9.35% 10	30.84% 33	107
Permitting and inspection by	51.43% 54	7.62% 8	10.48% 11	30.48% 32	105

Response category	Keep service the same	Reduce service	Expand service	Don't know	Total Respondents
Conservation Commission					
Police Protection	50.00% 55	5.45% 6	19.09% 21	25.45% 28	110
Rescue Squad / Ambulance / EMT	52.29% 57	0.00% 0	23.85% 26	23.85% 26	109
Access to town records and town services	45.71% 48	0.00% 0	30.48% 32	23.81% 25	105
Fire Protection	62.04% 67	1.85% 2	13.89% 15	22.22% 24	108
Library	31.48% 34	5.56% 6	43.52% 47	19.44% 21	108
Town Website	32.41% 35	1.85% 2	48.15% 52	17.59% 19	108
Transfer Station	51.40% 55	0.93% 1	14.95% 16	14.95% 16	107
Town Communications to the Public	36.70% 40	0.92% 1	13.76% 15	13.76% 15	109
					Total 111
					Skipped 21

Over 50% of respondents supported keeping the following services the same: Fire Protection, Sanitation Inspection, Building permitting, Rescue Squad, Site plan review by the Planning Board, Police Protection, Transfer Station, and permitting by the Conservation Commission. No services received over 50% support for expansion. However, town communications and the town website both had 48% support for expansion, while the library received 43% support for expansion.

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

60% of year-round residents said “expand service” in regards to town communications. 48% said to “expand service” in regards to the town website. 44% said “expand service” in regards to the Library. Responses for “expand” service were similar for seasonal residents, but did not exceed 50% for any category.

24. What services not on the above list do you believe need to be reduced or expanded?

Eighteen write-in responses to Q24 were provided by respondents. They encompass a variety of answers.

25. If you have additional comments about services provided by the town, please explain below.

Seventeen write-in responses to Q25 were provided by respondents.

26. Please indicate your level of support for the following town initiatives or proposals.

Response category	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Never heard of it / Not enough information	Total Respondents
Energy efficiency upgrades to existing town buildings	83.78% 93	8.11% 9	3.60% 4	4.50% 5	111
Commercial development along Route 8	49.11% 55	21.43% 24	22.32% 25	7.14% 8	112
Establishment of a town center	66.97% 73	16.51% 18	8.26% 9	8.26% 9	109
New multipurpose town building including administrative offices as well as space for community activities	55.86% 62	14.41% 16	18.92% 21	10.81% 12	111
New DPW Garage	40.37% 44	30.28% 33	11.93% 13	17.43% 19	109
Asking the state for more amenities or facilities in the state forest, such as a town beach	73.21% 82	14.29% 16	6.25% 7	6.25% 7	112
Make some use of Yanner Park	56.25% 63	22.32% 25	5.36% 6	16.07% 18	112
Improvements to the playground next to the library	58.56% 65	26.13% 29	5.41% 6	9.91% 11	111

Response category	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Never heard of it / Not enough information	Total Respondents
					Total 113
					Skipped 19

All possible initiatives or proposals received greater than 50% support with the exception of Commercial development along Route 8 (49%) and a new DPW garage (40%).

Year-Round Vs. Seasonal

Year-round residents had greater than 50% support for all listed proposal and initiatives with the least support being for the new DPW garage (57%). Among year-round residents, support for commercial development along Route 8 was at 65%. In contrast, only 29% of seasonal residents supported the new DPW garage, and only 38% supported commercial development along Route 8.

27. Are you a year-round or seasonal resident/second homeowner?

Answer Choices –	Responses –
Year-round resident	34.26%
	37
Year-round resident who used to be seasonal / second homeowner	6.48%
	7
Seasonal resident / Second homeowner	43.52%
	47
Seasonal resident / second homeowner who is planning on becoming a year-round resident	15.74%
	17
Total	108
Skipped	24

Of the 108 respondents to Q27, 40.7% or 44 described themselves as year-round residents. The remaining 59.2% of respondents described themselves as seasonal residents or second homeowners. Of year-round residents, 7/44 or 15.9% indicated that they used to be seasonal residents or second homeowners. Based on the 2010 Census, 44/915 or 4.8% of year-round residents responded to the survey.

Additionally, 17/64 or 26.5% of seasonal residents / second homeowners indicated that they were planning on becoming year-round residents of Sandisfield. Unfortunately, 24 respondents did not answer this question, amounting to 18% of all survey respondents.

28. If you are a year-round resident, how many years have you lived in Sandisfield?

Answer Choices –	Responses –
0-5	6.67%

Answer Choices –	Responses –
	3
6-10	8.89%
	4
11-15	24.44%
	11
16-20	15.56%
	7
21-25	8.89%
	4
26-30	4.44%
	2
30+	31.11%
	14
Total	45
Skipped	87

Over 31% of year round residents have lived in town for 30 years or more, and over 24% have lived in town for 11-15 years.

29. If you are a seasonal resident or second homeowner, how many years have you lived in Sandisfield?

Answer Choices –	Responses –
0-5	27.27%
	18
6-10	10.61%
	7
11-15	16.67%
	11
16-20	6.06%
	4
21-25	3.03%
	2
26-30	7.58%
	5
30+	28.79%
	19
Total	66
Skipped	66

Over 28% of seasonal residents and second homeowners have lived in Sandisfield for 30 years or more. Just over 27% have lived in town for 0-5 years.

30. What is your age?

Answer Choices –	Responses –
0-19	0% 0
20-44	4.50% 5
45-64	43.24% 48
65 and older	52.25% 58
<i>Total</i>	<i>111</i>
<i>Skipped</i>	<i>21</i>

Over half of survey respondents were 65 or older, and over 95% of survey respondents were 45 years or older. There were no respondents below the age of 20.

Conclusion:

The Sandisfield Master Plan survey was answered by just under 5% of year round residents and many seasonal residents and second homeowners. Roughly 40% of survey respondents were year-round residents with the remaining 60% being seasonal residents or second homeowners. Many year-round residents reported that they originally lived in town as seasonal residents or second homeowners, and many seasonal residents reported that they intended on becoming year-round residents in the future. The vast majority of respondents were above the age of 45, with many residing in town for 30 years or more. Most survey respondents were married, with a small percentage having children living at home.

Overall respondents enjoy the natural and scenic beauty and peace and quiet that a small town like Sandisfield provides, as well as the people and community it affords. Unfortunately, while a town like Sandisfield in the southern Berkshire region is both rural, beautiful, and quiet, many survey respondents disliked the lack of businesses and services, including high-speed internet, the distance to nearby amenities, and the condition of Sandisfield's roads.

Survey respondents were generally in favor of conserving various types of open space in town, however, no clear majority were satisfied with existing recreation areas or the amenities provided by the number of state-owned lands and facilities in town. Respondents participated in a variety of recreational activities, with walking being the only activity that the majority of respondents claimed to participate in. However, survey respondents reported participated in hiking, gardening, cultural activities, and canoeing or kayaking more than other listed activities. Many survey respondents were unsure about future needs for open space or recreation or responded that no improvements were necessary. However, respondents also provided a variety of possible ways to improve open space and recreation in the town including more hiking and other trails, supporting wildlife habitat, improving water recreation and access to water resources, continuation of improvements to Yanner Park and existing playground facilities. Additionally, concerns about the amount of preserved land in town and its effect on the tax base were brought up in open response questions

In regards to business and economic development, survey respondents were generally in favor of economic development. However, they wanted to discourage industrial or construction type businesses including trucking and hauling. The many write-in responses to questions regarding economic development urge caution and to assess what form economic development might take and how it could affect town character and setting.

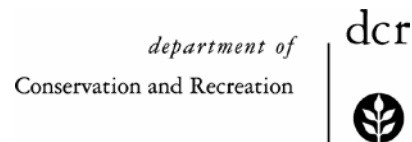
Likewise, respondents, when viewed as a whole, were generally in favor of encouraging housing development (52%), and supported more housing options for seniors, young families, and the adaptive re-use of historic properties. However, there were important differences between the responses of year-round and seasonal residents. In regards to housing development, year-round residents were more in favor of encouraging development (68%) than seasonal residents, with seasonal resident support for “encouraging housing development” at 41%. In general, respondents were not supportive of housing options such as apartments, rental units, and condominiums. Additionally, respondents were ambivalent about controls for residential development and environmental resources, with no clear majority supporting identifying if developmental controls such as permitting or zoning were at “correct levels” or not.

Roads and transportation are another crucial issue in town. Most respondents supported expanding road maintenance services, and identified Route 57, New Hartford Road, and Town Hill Road as town roads most in need of improvement. Respondents were generally in favor of a possible public transportation route through town, citing shopping or errands as the top reason they would use such a service. However, respondents were unsure about expanding or reducing existing transportation options for senior or disabled residents.

Respondents were in favor of keeping the level of many town services the same. However, support for expansion of town communications to the public, the town website and the library was the highest for any of the town services mentioned. There were important differences in support of town initiatives between year-round and seasonal residents. Residents supported all proposed projects, with the least support being for the DPW Garage (57%). Seasonal Residents supported all proposed projects with support below 50% for the DPW garage and commercial development along Route 8. The low support for these projects by seasonal residents reduced the overall support below 50% for these two proposed projects when responses were viewed in aggregate.

APPENDIX F: FORMS AND RESOURCES

**Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Trail Proposal and Evaluation Form**



1. Requester's Information and Contact:

2. DCR Facility (Park or Forest) and DCR Field Team Leader and District Manager Contact:

3. Description of Proposed Trail:

Is this an: Upgrade of existing () Relocation of existing () New trail () Change in Use ()

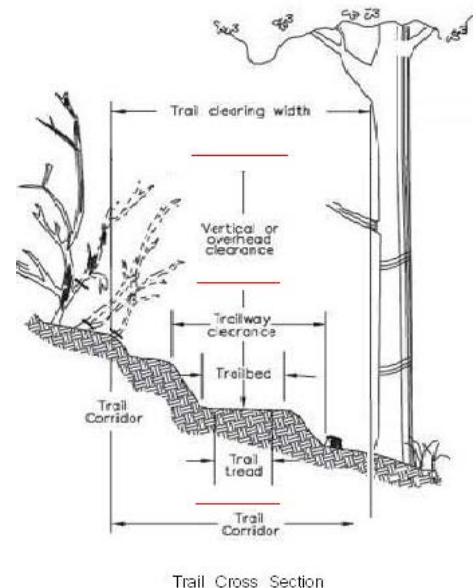
Length: _____

What is the primary Designed Use for the trail? (i.e. pedestrian, equestrian, OHV, xc-skiing, etc.)

What is the Proposed Trail Class (1-5)?

(See DCR Trail Guidelines Manual, Section III, Trail Classification, page 36, and Appendix F.)

What are the Design and Maintenance Standards for the Proposed Trail? (tread width, clearing width, obstacles, target grades, max grades, etc.). You can label the diagram.



4. Location of Proposed Trail:

Attach a detailed map of the proposed trail location. Map should show contours, wetland resources, vernal pool, priority habitat for rare species, etc. (see http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/map_ol/oliver.php for on-line mapping)

5. Wetland and Stream Crossings:

Will there be any new wetland or stream crossings on this trail?

Please describe in details (type, length, material) and include drawing of the design.

6. *Signage and Marking:*

What blazing, marking and signage is proposed? Please include sample sign designs.

7. *Support and Success of Trail Project*

Who supports this initiative?

What is the evidence for the demand or need for this project?

Who will construct / complete these improvements? (If Volunteers, then a Volunteer Stewardship Agreement will need to be developed)

What materials or other costs are associated with this project and how will these be funded?

Who will maintain this trail project for future use?

8. *Closures:*

What trails or trail segments are proposed to be closed in conjunction with this project? (DCR desires to reduce mileage of less sustainable trail when any new trails are considered for a no net gain.)

DCR Review of Proposed Trail Project

(To be filled out by DCR staff. It can be most helpful for key staff to meet jointly at the site to complete.)

1. *Is this project supported by existing DCR plans? Is it embodied in an RMP or Trail Plan? If not, is it supported by operations and planning staff? Should it be pursued? (DCR reserves the right to reject any trail proposal.)*

2. *What are the potential short and long term management issues associated with this project?*

Design, construction and maintenance issues:

Management issues (abutter concerns, user conflicts, safety, resource impacts):

3. **Would this trail need to meet FS Accessibility Standards? Yes/No? Why?**
(e.g. 5% grades (up to 12.5% for 10 feet), 36" clear opening, firm and stable tread, < 2" obstacles - See Trails Guidelines Manual, Section II, Page 28.)

4. **Site Evaluation**

Discuss issues with the location topography, steepness and trail alignment, and possible alternatives:

Discuss Historic, Cultural or Archeological resources, impacts or issues:

Discuss Forestry Management impacts or issues:

Rare, Species or Natural Communities: Is it in NHESP Priority Habitat? Or identified Natural Community? If so, what are the potential species and management issues.

Wetland and Stream Crossings: Discuss wetland issues, vernal pools, stream crossings.

Discuss other potential impacts or conflicts:

5. **Permitting: Massachusetts Regulatory Review Checklist**

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Will any of the work require digging, pulling or scaring of ground surfaces?

If yes, DCR shall have project reviewed by DCR Archeologist. Proponent shall file permits with MHC is such as required after initial archeological review. All permits shall be reviewed by DCR prior to submittal.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Will any work occur within 200 feet of a stream or river or within 100 feet of a wetland resource?
If yes, contact your local conservation commission for help preparing an RDA or NOI. All permits shall be reviewed by DCR prior to submittal.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Does the project area intersect with any Priority Habitat Area?

If yes, DCR shall send a project review request to NHESP. Proponent shall file permits if such are required by NHESP. All permits shall be reviewed by DCR prior to submittal.

*For additional information on permitting, please see DCR Trail Guidelines Manual, Page 29.

Approval:

Facility Supervisor / Team Leader

Comments / Recommendations:

Approve ()

Disapprove ()

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Management Forester

Comments / Recommendations:

Approve ()

Disapprove ()

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Trail Coordinator

Comments / Recommendations:

Approve ()

Disapprove ()

Signature: _____

Date: _____

District Manager

Comments / Recommendations:

Approve ()

Disapprove ()

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Conditions: DCR places the following conditions on this project.

Failure to comply, may result in...

- immediate suspension of the project***
- fines for violations of CMR 302 12.12(11)***

Scan and submit a copy of completed forms the DCR Bureau of Planning and Resource Protection, Greenways and Trails Program, Paul Jahnige, paul.jahnige@state.ma.us for tracking purposes.



2016 SPECIAL USE PERMIT SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for considering the DCR for your event! Completing this form is only the first step in your application process. **This is not your permit.** Due to the numerous requests we receive, completing and submitting this application does not confirm your date nor signify any intention by the DCR to approve this application. *The DCR accepts special event permit applications for the 2015 season November 1, 2015 through May 1, 2016.*

Applying for a Permit

STEP #1

Complete **ALL** fields on the Special Event application. Please attach all event information including route maps, site set up diagrams, list of vendors and any additional information relevant to your event. If you are a non-profit organization, please submit a copy of your 501C3 non-profit determination. (Please note a certificate of liability insurance is still required for non-profit organization.) Submit the completed application **at least 45 days prior** to the actual event date, and retain a copy for your records.

STEP #2

Return completed Special Event application with a check or money order for the \$45.00 application fee at least 45 days prior to the actual event date. Money orders or checks should be made payable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts/DCR. Credit cards and cash are not accepted.

STEP #3

Mail applications with fee to:

**The Department of Conservation and Recreation
Attention: Office of Special Events
251 Causeway Street, 9th Floor**

What happens next?

1. Your application will be reviewed by all appropriate DCR staff and Public Safety officers. If your event requires any DCR staff, equipment or services, there will be event costs. You will be responsible for payment of costs prior to event.
2. Commercial applicants will be responsible for outdoor event venue rental fees.
(302 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 4.02: Fees For Licenses, Permits, and Services To Be Charged By State Agencies)
 1. Small event (100-500 people) \$250 per day
 2. Mid-size event (501-1,500 people) \$1000 per day
 3. Large event (1,501-10,000 people) \$2000 per day
3. **You must secure and submit a Certificate of Liability Insurance** to DCR at least **14 days** prior to your event. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Conservation and Recreation must be named as additional insured for the date and location of your event with a minimum amount of 1 million dollars (\$1,000,000) in liability. This is required for **all** special use permits and your permit will not be issued without the certificate.
4. Your permit will be mailed, emailed and/or faxed to you. Due to the many changing components of an event, Special Event Permits are often issued only a few days in advance of your event.

Important Information

- ❖ All event publicity, printed materials and communications with your participants, shall state DCR in the title when referring to your event location. (Example: "DCR Borderland State Park".)
- ❖ No alcohol or tobacco sponsors are allowed. Alcohol cannot be consumed, sold or given away on DCR property.
302 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 12.04 Alcoholic Beverages Prohibited without authorization.
- ❖ Setting up of tents/staging, scaffolding, certain inflatable items will require approval from the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety. <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/docs/dps/appl/form-bbrs-state-building-permit-04-09-2011.pdf>
- ❖ All non-profit organizations must submit a copy of your 501C3 non-profit determination letter.
- ❖ Department of Conservation and Recreation (617)626-1250.



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

Attention: Office of Special Events, 9th Floor

251 Causeway Street, Boston MA 02114

2016 SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION

Application Fee \$45

Complete ALL fields below

for office use only:

PERMIT NUMBER:

CHECK NUMBER:

EVENT DATE(S): _____

PARK NAME: _____

LOCATION REQUESTED: _____

(Current site set up maps, road closure plan, walk and run route maps **MUST** accompany the application)

Name of Event: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____ Cell Phone #: _____

Fax #: _____ Event Website: _____

Email Address(Required): _____

Number of Participants(Required): _____ Number of Spectators: _____

TYPE OF EVENT (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

Run _____ Boating _____ Festivals _____

Walk _____ Swimming _____ Concert _____

Other(specify) _____

	DATE(S)	START TIME (include am/pm)	END TIME (include am/pm)
Event Set Up:			
Registration:			
Event:			
Clean Up:			

CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE REQUIRED. THE CERTIFICATE MUST NAME THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION AS ADDITIONALLY INSURED FOR THE DATE AND LOCATION OF YOUR EVENT. YOUR CERTIFICATE DOES NOT HAVE TO BE SENT WITH THIS APPLICATION, BUT MUST BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 14 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR EVENT FOR YOUR PERMIT TO BE ISSUED.

DESCRIBE YOUR EVENT IN DETAIL. ATTACH **CURRENT** SITE SET-UP MAPS, WALK AND RUN ROUTE MAPS WITH WATER STOPS/CHECK POINTS AND DESCRIPTIONS, ROAD AND LANE CLOSURE PLAN.

Please indicate whether the following items pertain to your event:

YES	NO	Does your event require electricity? If yes - are you bringing a generator? _____ If yes - are you REQUESTING a DCR power source? (may require additional DCR staffing charge) _____ If yes- what is the electricity for? _____
YES	NO	Are you placing portable toilets? If yes - what company _____ Set-up Date & Time: _____ Removal Date & Time: _____
YES	NO	If available-Do you REQUEST the use of DCR Restrooms? (may require additional DCR staffing charge) If yes - what time do you want them open? _____ Closed? _____
YES	NO	Are you placing any tents or other structures at your event? (note: tents larger than 20x20 require Dept. of Public Safety approval.) If yes-what is the name of the tent company? _____ Set-up Date & Time _____ Removal Date & time _____
YES	NO	Are you setting up any stages? (all stages require Dept. of Public Safety approval.) If yes-what company? _____ Set-up date & time _____ Removal Date & Time: _____
YES	NO	Are you serving any refreshments? If yes-What are you serving? _____
YES	NO	Are you REQUESTING to have any Vendors? (Food, fire & health permits required) If yes -- Please list vendors and items for sale on a separate sheet.
YES	NO	If your event is a walk or run, will you have any waterstops/checkpoints? If yes-must include a map with the locations.
YES	NO	Are you REQUESTING a road closure? Location: _____
YES	NO	Are you REQUESTING a lane closure? Location: _____

**** NOTE:** All **"REQUESTS"** must have DCR approval and may require additional charges.

Permittee accepts complete liability and responsibility for Permittee's use of the property and its actions and the actions of its members, guests, invitees, agents and employees upon the site, and an agreement that the Permittee will indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Department against any and all claims that may arise.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

DATE:

(applications will not be processed without a signature)

MASTER PLAN

2016

Town of Sandisfield,
Massachusetts