

3. Economic Development

The Town of Dennis is located in Southeastern Massachusetts in the mid-cape region of Cape Cod. It is 85 miles from Boston and Providence R.I. and 260 miles from New York City. Dennis is a popular summer resort due to its proximity to population centers of the Northeast. Three intrastate highways and a freight railroad line serve the town.

Dennis is bordered by Cape Cod Bay on the north, the towns of Brewster and Harwich on the east, Nantucket Sound on the south and Yarmouth on the west. Bass River and Chase Garden Creek are tidal streams that separate most of Dennis from Yarmouth. Dennis comprises 20.66 square miles or 13,222 acres. The town covers 7.5 miles north to south and ranges 1.5 to 4 miles in width.

The annual air temperature averages about 50°F. July and August are the hottest months (72°F), while January and February are the coldest (31°F). Freezing temperatures occur about 120 days per year. South coastal Massachusetts experiences about eight to ten 90°F+ days occurring almost exclusively in June, July and August. The average annual precipitation for the period 1981-1995 was 50.87".

History

Settled in 1639 by Europeans as the eastern part of the town of Yarmouth, the area which is now the town of Dennis had already been the home of Native Americans for thousands of years. Living here was a clan or sub-tribe of the Wampanoag tribe of the Algonquin Nation, known as Nobscussetts, and the area was so-called. The Nobscussetts were not resistant to the newcomers.

The first English families to settle at Nobscusset were attracted to the mid-Cape area because of the large expanses of fresh and salt marsh. Their plan was to raise cattle to supply the needs of the large number of immigrants arriving from England, but their plans were thwarted by the English Civil War and a subsequent slow-down of immigration. Whale oil and bone brought substantial profit to the men of Nobscusset. The economy during this period was largely agricultural, with every family self-sufficient.

With the expansion of fishing and whaling, the population of the old town of Yarmouth had grown and the town was divided into two precincts in 1716. These two precincts related to the new parish boundaries for the Second Meeting House in Nobscusset. For the purpose of clarity, the following discussion will always refer to these precincts as "parish" given the direct relationship to the creation of the new meeting house. The area known as the East Parish is now Dennis.

During the American Revolution, the militia of East Yarmouth was called to duty many times, serving at Marshfield in 1775, Rhode Island in 1777 and Dartmouth and Falmouth in 1778. East Parish men also served in the Continental Army, reinforced Dorchester Heights, and served in guarding the coastline both at the Elizabeth Islands and on other shores of Cape Cod.

After the end of the Revolution, the Cape began to experience a period of expansion. Part of the economic boom was due to the new salt industry. Captain John "Sleepy" Sears of East Dennis built

the first string of saltworks in Barnstable County on Quivet Neck in 1776. Soon salt making was the most lucrative business in all of Barnstable County. Industries in the 1700s and early 1800s included fishing, shipbuilding and trading. Wharves and piers to accommodate fishing and trading fleets were built along all of the coasts, including Bass River.

As both the East Parish and the West Parish prospered, the time came to consider each becoming an independent town. The East Parish of Yarmouth was incorporated as a separate town in 1793. The name DENNIS is said to have been suggested in honor of the first pastor of the East Parish, Josiah Dennis.

A new industry developed on the Cape as a result of a chance discovery made by a Dennis man. About 1817, Captain Henry Hall found that sand blown upon a wild cranberry bog greatly improved its productivity. Dennis was a leader in cranberry production for many years. By 1870 there were over 200 acres of bogs under cultivation in the town. Today there are less than 10.

Some of the fastest clipper ships in the world were built at the Shiverick Brothers Shipyard at Sesuit Creeks. The men of Dennis served as masters and crew of these magnificent vessels. As the town's economy prospered, the population grew to an all-time high of 3,497 residents in 1855. The wave of economic prosperity was interrupted by the Civil War, in which more Dennis men died while in the country's service than in any other war in history.

The end of the war heralded the end of the Golden Age of Sail and new ways of earning a living had to be found. Attempts were made to establish light manufacturing in Dennis, but were not very successful. The largest attempt was the construction of three-story building in West Dennis for the manufacture of shoes and boots.

The first large establishment designed to attract summer visitors was erected at the end of Nobscusset Road in Dennis in 1872. The Nobscusset House was the premier Dennis summer hotel before it closed in the 1930s. A wooden observation tower with a telescope was built on the top of Scargo Hill in 1874. The present stone tower has been in place since 1900 and remains a popular spot for visitors. Tourism prospered but could not replace the lost maritime industries. In 1900 the population had dropped to 2,335, and the census for 1915 showed only 1,536 year-round residents.

In the 1920s the town began to purchase "Beach Reservations" and provide bathhouse facilities and playgrounds in each of the villages with beaches. In 1927, summer business had grown to the point where Mr. Raymond Moore elected to build a summer theater in Dennis. The Cape Playhouse became a class attraction as did the cinema Moore built near it in 1930.

The Great Depression of the 1930s was actually beneficial as ERA and WPA projects brought cash to the town for the first time in years. The building of the bridges across the canal also improved the Cape's position as a vacation destination. By the time of the outbreak of World War II, the population of Dennis had risen to 2,017.

After the war, the return to civilian manufacturing of automobiles and the extension of the Mid-Cape Highway to Dennis in 1955, contributed to the increased flow of tourists. With the expansion came

growing pains in schools and other public services. In 1947 the town adopted regulations requiring that a sub-division plan be filed with the Planning Board before development began, but they had few tools to regulate such sub-divisions. The Planning Board repeatedly prepared zoning by-laws, which the town meeting repeatedly rejected. Spot zoning was initiated by petition at the annual town meeting of 1951. Under the first by-law, the minimum lot size in residential zones was 6,000 square feet.

The year-round population had grown to 3,322 by 1950, with many more summer residents than year-round. Motels came to the town in 1952 and as many as ten were built each year for the next twenty years, until a zoning by-law requiring 3 acres of land for multiple family dwellings brought a halt to motel construction.

By 1970 the census showed 6,454. In 1972, town government was restructured to include an Executive Secretary and a five member part-time Board of Selectmen. The 1970s also saw the creation of the Council on Aging, the Conservation, Recreation and Historical Commissions, and a Comprehensive Zoning By-Law which consolidated and updated all previous zoning regulations.

In The Human Condition, a County-wide study conducted in 1995 by the Barnstable County Department of Human Services, 94% of Dennis respondents rated their town as a "Good" or "Excellent" place to live.

Inventory

The Use of Data

The statistics used in this inventory will begin to give the reader some indication of what defines Dennis. Much of the discussion that follows will reflect Dennis of 1990, the last U.S. Census to have complete data released.

Population

Dennis has a population that is somewhat older, more seasonal and slightly less wealthy than the Cape as a whole. The population of the Town of Dennis fluctuates significantly between winter and summer. The year-round population was reported at 13,945 based on the 1995 U.S. Census. The summertime population estimate is 40,000.¹

¹ Board of Selectmen estimate for the Alcohol Beverage and Control Commission.

Chart 3.1
Population Trends of the Town of Dennis 1855 – 2000

| YEAR | POPULATION | YEAR | POPULATION |
|------|------------|------|--------------------|
| 1885 | 3,497 | 1955 | 3,322 |
| 1900 | 2,335 | 1960 | 3,727 |
| 1915 | 1,822 | 1965 | 4,374 |
| 1920 | 1,536 | 1970 | 6,454 (7,443) |
| 1925 | 1,749 | 1975 | 9,309 |
| 1930 | 1,829 | 1980 | 12,709 (12,360) |
| 1935 | 2,017 | 1985 | 13,040 |
| 1940 | 2,085 | 1990 | 13,236 (13,864) |
| 1945 | 2,015 | 1995 | 13,493 |
| 1950 | 2,499 | 2000 | (15,973) |

SOURCE: Annual Town Reports (U.S. Census)

Table 3.1 shows the change in the population from 1885 to 2000. There was a 49% increase in population from 1950 to 1960. Between 1970 and 1980 population increased by nearly 75%. From 1980 to 1990 the population increased by 12.2%. In the same period, Barnstable County grew at 26% and the state grew by 4.9%. This decline in the growth rate between 1980 and 1990 reflected a statewide slowdown in growth. So, while the Dennis rate of growth slowed, its growth in relation to the rest of the state continued to exceed statewide growth. Economic factors that existed in the northeast, which led to a large out-migration of population overall included a curtailment of oil exports (1972 Arab Oil Embargo), high costs of labor in the northeast leading to manufacturing positions relocating in record numbers to the southeast and southwest, and a much higher cost of living in the northeast than in other parts of the country. Between 1990 and 2000 the town growth rate rebounded slightly to 15.1%, which is nearly three times the state's growth rate of 5.5% and just a little below the Barnstable County growth rate of 19.1% for the decade. The dwindling supply of buildable land in Dennis is one factor in a reduction in growth from the 1970's. However, the attractiveness of Cape Cod living is illustrated in the Dennis growth rate continuing to exceed the state rate of growth due to the conversion of seasonal housing to year round housing.

Table 3.2
Dennis Resident Births/Deaths 1970-2000

| | | | |
|--|--------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Population 1980 | 12,841 | Deaths 1980-89 | 1,842 |
| Births 1970-79 | 982 | Natural Increase 1980-89 | (326) |
| Deaths 1970-79 | 1395 | Residual Change 1980-89 | 721 |
| Natural Increase ² 1970-79 | (413) | Population 2000 | 15,973 |
| Residual Change ³ 1970-79* | 6800 | Projected Births 1990-2000 | 1522 |
| Population 1990 | 13,236 | Projected Deaths 1990-2000 | 2269 |
| Births 1980-89 | 1,516 | Natural Increase 1990-2000 | (747) |
| | | Residual Change 1990-2000 | 3,984 |

Source: Annual Town Reports, MISER Report 1994.

*Population 1970 = 6454

The Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) population projections for 2000 and 2010 are below the actual 2000 census counts. This table shows that in each recent ten year period Dennis has a negative natural increase. This is despite the fact that population increases in each ten year period. This indicates that population growth is primarily due to in-migration. The in-migration does appear to include a significant number of older individuals. This may skew the "natural increase" figures. We have no information that tracks death information as to length of residency in Dennis. Therefore it is possible that the base population is increasing from decade to decade, and that the numbers illustrating deaths outpacing births include significant numbers of recent in-migrants passing away.

Population projections from the Monomoy Capacity Study show Dennis with a population of 13,828 in 2010 also significantly below the actual 2000 census figures. This study also prepared population projections considering a 50% "seasonal shift" of seasonal units to year-round units. This scenario estimates population resulting from a shift from seasonal to year-round occupancy. For 2015 the population projection with seasonal shift is 20,885. This population growth scenario suggests a 30%

²Natural Increase = Births - Deaths

³ Residual Change = Change in Population - Natural Increase. It is a measure of the in-migration in Dennis for the given periods.

increase in population over the next 15 years. This would be higher than the town growth rate over the past twenty years, but is not entirely implausible given recent increases in the town's rate of growth.

Age Structure

In 2000, the median age in Dennis increased to 49.4 years according to the U.S. Census, compared to a median age of 44.6 years for Barnstable County, and 36.5 for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In contrast, in 1990, the median age in Dennis was 44.5 years according to the U.S. Census compared to a median age of 39.5 years for Barnstable County and 33.6 years for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In 1980 the median age in Dennis was 43.7 compared with 37.1 years of age for Barnstable and 31.1 years of age for the Commonwealth.

In 1970 the largest two age groups in Dennis were the 5-14 and 15-24 age brackets, the so-called "Baby Boomers." It is interesting to watch these age groups as they pass through the following three decades, as they not only continue to represent the largest age groups (in ten year increments), they also are increasing in numbers, these increases represent the in-migration of new residents to the town. The 1970 15-24 year old age bracket had 748 people. In 1980, when these had grown into the 25-34 age bracket there were 1,694 people an increase of 946 new residents. By 1990, when this group had reached the 35-44 age bracket, there were 1,822 people an increase of 128 new residents. Finally, and in 2000 there were 2,300 people in the 45-54 age bracket and additional increase of 478 new residents.

The fastest growing segments of Dennis population, for growth rates, for the period 1970-2000 are between the 35-44 and 45-54 age brackets. These age groups grew by over 200% in that thirty year period. However, the 65+ age bracket is the fastest growing segment of the population in real numbers, having increased by nearly 3,000 people over the last thirty years. The working age population of Dennis has increased over the thirty-year period 1970-2000 relative to the population as a whole and now comprise approximately 50% of the total population, up from about 43% in 1970. On a percentage of overall population, children make up a smaller portion of the population in Dennis now than in the past.⁴

Education

In 1990, 88.4% of Dennis residents aged 25 or older had a high school or college degree as compared to the county average of 88.3% and the state average of 80%. A closer comparison to Barnstable County reveals that the town and the county have similar high school drop-out figures, approximately 11.6% of both county and town residents do not have high school educations. The county on the other hand has 2.7% more college and post-graduate educated residents than the town. This suggests that the Dennis labor force is slightly less educated than the labor force on the remainder of Cape Cod. Table 3.3 provides the statistics related to the town and county comparison.

⁴ For the years 1970 and 1980, the age ranges 5-17, 18-24 are actually 5-19, 20-24. Therefore, comparison between years in these categories may be misleading.

Table 3.3
Educational Attainment of Dennis Residents aged 25+, 1990

| | Number in Dennis | Percent in Dennis | Percent in Barnstable County |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| <9th grade | 230 | 2.2% | 3.0% |
| some high school | 981 | 9.4% | 8.6% |
| high school graduate | 3,387 | 32.6% | 30.7% |
| some college | 2,222 | 21.4% | 20.7% |
| associate degree | 947 | 9.1% | 8.9% |
| bachelor degree | 1,798 | 17.3% | 18.8% |
| graduate/professional | 837 | 8.0% | 9.3% |
| % H.S. grad or higher | 88.4 | | 88.3 |
| % bach. degree or higher | 25.3 | | 28.0 |
| TOTAL | 10,402 | | 133,951 |

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 (CapeTrends, 2nd ed.)

Income

In 1989, median household income in Dennis was \$27,900 compared to \$31,766 for Barnstable County, a difference of 14%.⁵ Dennis median income is 32% below the state median of \$36,952. As is illustrated later in the discussion on poverty rates and low/moderate income households, incomes are lower across the board in town, not simply focused to one particular age group.

People get their income from a variety of sources. The members of a household may receive income from one or several sources. The figure below shows the sources of income for households in Dennis, Barnstable County and the state. The proportions of households who receive income from self-employment, and public assistance are about the same in Dennis as in Barnstable County and the state. However, a greater proportion of households receive at least part of their income from social security or retirement income in Dennis, while fewer Dennis households receive wage and salary income. This data reflects the large number of retired or semi-retired households in Dennis.

Table 3.4

⁵ A household is an individual, or group of individuals not necessarily related by blood living in a single dwelling unit.

SOURCES OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

| | Town of Dennis | | Barnstable County | |
|---|----------------|---------|-------------------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Wage or Salary Income | 3814 | 61% | 52378 | 67% |
| Self-Employment Income | 873 | 14% | 12075 | 16% |
| Farm Self-Employment Income | 51 | 1% | 557 | 1% |
| Interest, Dividend or Net Rental Income | 3057 | 49% | 34252 | 44% |
| Social Security Income | 2908 | 47% | 29447 | 38% |
| Public Assistance Income | 504 | 8% | 4640 | 6% |
| Retirement Income | 1992 | 32% | 19340 | 25% |
| Other Income | 630 | 10% | 8637 | 11% |

The poverty rate is a measure of who in the community does not have the resources to purchase the necessities of life. The federal government's definition of poverty in 1995 was \$7,470 for an individual and \$10,030 for a two-person household. According to the U.S. Census 1990, 10.6% of Dennis residents (1,446 total) had incomes at or below the poverty level. The state and county rates are 8.9% and 7.5% respectively. Nearly one in five (18.6%) Dennis' children under 18 are living in poverty. The Barnstable County average is 11.1%.

Table 3.5
Income Distribution of Households in Dennis and Barnstable County

| TOWN | Below \$25,000 | % of Total | \$25,000-\$49,999 | % of Total | \$50,000-\$74,999 | % of Total | \$75,000-\$99,999 | % of Total | \$100,000 or More | % of Total |
|---------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| Dennis | 2,747 | 44 | 2,210 | 36 | 887 | 14 | 250 | 4 | 124 | 2 |
| County | 28,898 | 38 | 27,326 | 35 | 13,264 | 17 | 3,978 | 5 | 3209 | 4 |

SOURCE: U.S. Census, 1990.

In 1990, about 2,500+ Dennis households were considered as meeting the county's target for "low income" status. In 1990 this target was approximately \$25,000. These residents met the eligibility requirements to live in housing units created under Chapter 40B and other affordable housing programs. These 2,500+ households account for over 40% of all households (6,218) in Dennis in 1990.

Of the 2,500 households, about 62% (1,500 + households) were headed by a person 65 years or older. Among the elderly, approximately greater than 60% of all elderly households (2,594) are considered to be "low income" and eligible to reside in Chapter 40B housing units. Year 2001 "low income" limits for affordable housing in Barnstable County is \$41,360.

The Town of Dennis is currently rated as having only 3.37 % of its housing units considered affordable. We are required to have 10% of the housing units rated as affordable.

Thirty-five percent of Dennis households are non-family households. High levels of non-family households are indicative of situations where housing costs out-strip personal income. This situation forces people into roommate and house sharing arrangements. The high levels of poverty and the lack of affordable housing are clearly indicative of this problem.

Employment in Dennis Businesses

According to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training in 1981 there were 345 business establishments in the Town of Dennis⁶, while in 1990 the number of establishments was 536. This is an increase of 35.6% for the decade. Employment in Dennis businesses increased 41% in the period 1981-1990, from 2,328 to 3,916 employees. Population increased 5% in the same period. These figures may show that Dennis' economy serves more than the local population.

Dennis' economy is centered around the retail and services sectors as shown in the following graph. In both 1981 and 1990, these two sectors accounted for nearly 70% of the jobs in Dennis; by 1994 these sectors made up 77% of the jobs. The greatest growth from 1981 to 1994 was associated with employment in "services", growing from 14.2% to 32.6% of Dennis jobs⁷.

Commuting Patterns

Of the 4,294⁸ workers in Dennis businesses, 2,039 live in Dennis. 1,439 workers live in one of the neighboring towns of Brewster, Harwich or Yarmouth.

Of the 5,470 Dennis residents who work, 2,039 are employed in Dennis. 1,521 residents work in one of the neighboring towns of Brewster, Harwich, or Yarmouth. 409 residents are employed Off-Cape.

Analysis

Aquaculture

There are two types of shellfishing: commercial and recreational. The limiting factor to these activities is that the state must approve the waters for shellfish harvesting. Commercial activity is made up of wild harvest fishing and aquaculture. The wild harvest fishing permits have been decreasing over the years but have increased the last two years. Aquaculture can only be pursued in areas designated as approved. The only area presently with that designation is in Cape Cod Bay.

⁶ Number of businesses only includes those subject to Unemployment Compensation Laws

⁷ Establishments primarily engaged in providing assistance, as opposed to products, to the general public for personal or household use. The service industry includes banking, real estate, food service etc.

⁸ Note that the U.S. Census employment data and the State Department of Employment Training data are not from the same time periods, thus the discrepancy in employment figures. The DET data is an annual average employment figure, while the Census data represents conditions on Census day April 1st 1990.

The main constraint to further aquaculture is water quality. (See Water Resources) The main source of this problem continues to be human waste from overly dense development and aging septic systems. High seasonal tourism also contributes to water quality problems in that septic systems that only receive seasonal use do not maintain adequate bacteria levels to properly treat human wastes. Road runoff contributes to water quality problems through the introduction of hydrocarbons, sulfur, road salt and other pollutants from automobiles and road treatment into surface water bodies or ground water. Finally, wildlife, in particular waterfowl, contribute to water pollution problems in much the same way as humans. The waste associated with waterfowl defecation directly introduces untreated waste into the water system. In an attempt to remedy this problem, the town has adopted a bylaw to restrict feeding wild birds.

It is unlikely that shellfishing will be a significant factor in the economy. Other towns, such as Wellfleet, already have well established aquaculture programs. The Town of Harwich has an upwelling system operating from Allen Harbor. But, while shellfishing may not be a significant economic factor, the ability to shellfish still attracts vacationers and potential home buyers.

Research and technology in this area are growing so rapidly and may present potential opportunities in the future. The economic value of shellfishing lies partially in its contribution to the community's character. The ability to shellfish, much like the commercial fin fishing industry, attracts visitors and retirees. Shellfishing, recreational or commercial, is a part of what defines Cape Cod.

The Arts

There is an abundance of artists and craftsmen within the Town of Dennis. They bring to the community a certain quality as well as provide a great economic base. There are, however, many concerns that the artists and craftsmen have with regard to their role in the community. A meeting was held in July of 1996, sponsored by the Local Planning Committee and the Arts and Culture Council, to gather input from artists and craftsmen on the role of the arts and economic development. Several concerns were raised by those participating in the meeting. There appears to be a lack of recognition of the art community. Participants suggested that a map of the gallery locations be created and that media efforts need to unify to send simple comprehensive guides to visitors. It was also suggested that there be exhibitions of local artists and that complementary businesses are important to arts/crafts identification.

Another concern raised was the ability to sell products. Existing regulations inhibit selling products from home, and the sign code limits the size of the signs that a home craftsman is allowed to post. In addition, there is a need for artist and craftsmen continuing business education. Additional space is needed for artists and craftsmen education and training, and they need to be better educated about the institutional assistance that is already available to them. One way to accomplish this may be to broaden the charge of the Arts and Cultural Council to take a leadership role and work with organizations such as the Community Foundation to provide business training and assistance.

This leads to a major concern, which is not just an economic concern, the quality of life for artists and craftsmen. Often, up and coming artists and craftsmen have a difficult time making ends meet.

With the costs of materials for their specific talents, there is often little money left to live on, which results in the taking on of a second or third job. Finding affordable housing and health insurance can be very difficult.

One final concern raised by the participants of the arts and economic development meeting was the need to educate the town. It was felt that general education is needed regarding artist rights and censorship. There is a general mistrust of the Town among many artists. It is important to maintain the arts in the community, but it is clear that there may need to be some changes in order to maintain and promote the arts in the Town of Dennis.

The Retiree Community

"The greatest source of revenue inflow onto Cape Cod is that which come with retirees who move here", was a statement made at a July 1996 meeting sponsored by the Local Planning Committee, Elders and the Economy. This July meeting was attended by members of the following groups: Friends of Dennis Senior Citizens, Council on Aging, Cape Cod Bank and Trust, Elder Services and the Human Services Advisory Committee.

Seniors are attracted to Dennis for a variety of reasons: good memories of summers spent in Dennis, the town tax rate, availability of activities for seniors. Many may have already owned property here and were just waiting to the day that they could retire here. From a retiree's standpoint, the town's low tax rate and the level of services provided with the tax rate make Dennis an attractive place to live.

It is important to try and create a balance between the young people and the seniors. At the same time the seniors need to be educated on the needs of schools and education, younger people need to be educated on the needs of the seniors. But, just look at the wealth of knowledge the seniors bring that can be shared with the young people.

Several concerns were raised at the July 1996 meeting. Among them were the fact that retirees are planning for long-term future needs. They are seeking communities that help provide, or at least have access to, recreational, social, transportation, safety, housing options, health care and health insurance. Seniors who move here find that there is little public transportation, which can make getting around difficult. Current zoning discourages housing development that meet the need of seniors, such as congregate housing. It is essential though, that higher density be balanced with environmental concerns. The Town needs to market itself, accommodate and provide for seniors without compromising other issues.

Isolation is another concern. Human contact enhances quality of life. Many of humanities advances, computers, faxes, etc. reduce human contact. While technology can help the elderly, it is important to maintain human contact. Isolation fuels problems. Abuse and ill-health can be monitored during visits. At the meeting it was also identified that isolation can be a real problem for may long-time residents. The needs of the native senior can be different. Many are very independent, proud and hard to reach through their seclusion. Many native seniors are house-poor, often time have difficulties paying their assessed tax bills.

It must be recognized that as the population ages it also brings increased demands on services that must be paid for. Health, transportation and daily living needs can increase public and private expenses. This problem will be exacerbated as the "baby boomers" reach retirement age with less resources available to them.

The Beaches, Harbors, Recreation and Golf

The beaches in Dennis are some of the most beautiful in southeastern Massachusetts. Each year thousands of people come to Dennis to enjoy these beaches spending their money along the way. In fiscal year 1996 the Beach Department had a budget of \$365,000 while generating \$690,000. This revenue works to keep the tax rate down. Not only are people spending money at the beaches but they are spending money at the restaurants, shops, etc. which adds to the economy of the Town. The beaches are an asset to the entire Cape. Many visitors staying in other Cape towns purchase weekly passes to Dennis beaches. This is due primarily to the warm water temperatures found at Dennis beaches. Parking continues to be a problem at both the north and south side beaches. If the town sells all these parking passes, the town has to have someplace to put the cars.

Although the Recreation Department does not generate substantial revenue this is an important component for the economy of the Town. The services provided by the Town are directly related to why people come to Dennis either to live or visit. The major problem facing the town regarding recreation is a lack of year-round recreation options. At the moment, there is not enough space in programs for all of the children who would like to participate. The best solution would be a facility to incorporate the adult population, children and the elderly. A study was completed by the Building Study Committee a few years ago. It found that a full-service facility - basketball court, pool, weight rooms, etc. - was necessary for a potential facility to succeed. There is land available near Johnny Kelley Park, so additional land would not have to be purchased.

The Golf program in town continues to expand with 1,951 members in the year 2000. However, play was down due to rainy spells and a cooler than normal summer. The Golf Department had a net surplus of \$678,000 in 2000. This surplus will allow the golf courses to renovate and improve the playing areas, including the planting of additional trees and renovating the bunker areas. These improvements are all a part of a long range master plan to keep the golf courses competitive with other courses. In 2000 money was also approved for the preliminary design of a third golf course in town. People come to play golf, but they are also using other resources that the Town has, restaurants, shops, etc.

The Harbor areas in Dennis brought in approximately \$330,000 in 1995. There has been, recently a noticeable decrease in the number of daily transient ramp users that are coming into the Sesuit Harbor area. This could be a result of the fee for such use. The Town operates a 230 boat marina in Sesuit Harbor. Currently there are over 200 people on the waiting list for a slip. The Town also assigns 40 moorings, with a waiting list of 35, in Sesuit Harbor. The Bass River has 230 moorings assigned by the Town.

The Harbor uses, both recreational and commercial (fishing and pleasure), are of vital importance to

the Town of Dennis. Problems that exist are town landings that are too small to accommodate the need and they are located, generally, within residential neighborhoods. There is not adequate parking for vehicles and trailer. The Town also lacks a marina on the south side. Recently there have been preliminary discussions with various town agencies about the possibility of the installation of a marina in the vicinity of West Dennis Beach.

Telecommunications

As we write this plan, there is a world wide communications revolution taking place. If the technology is to be a "gateway to a productive life" its benefits and opportunities must be available to all. Questions concerning delivery systems, education, training, research, and America's ability to develop and market technological advances will have an impact on the residents of Dennis.

While this section addresses the role of technology in Economic Development, its impact will be much broader and will affect the role of local government, citizens of all ages and the infrastructure that must be developed. These technological advances may offer Dennis opportunities to develop more home businesses and expand the markets of existing businesses. While Dennis must make decisions and develop the tools for local economic development, the sending and receiving methodologies are a Cape wide issue. At this time, it is far from clear as to how the services will be delivered and by whom. In addition to the technical problems (fiber optics, cellular, television, etc.) there is the concern for the environmental impact some of these technologies may cause; i.e. cellular towers and perhaps additional over head wires.

Dennis will work closely with all the involved organizations who will be monitoring these activities as well as keeping up to date on all programs. These organizations will include the Cape Cod Commission, the Cape Cod Economic Development Council, the Cape Cod Technology Council, Public Access Television and any other groups that may develop a role in this important research, oversight, and monitoring.

Economic Development and Transportation

The nature of the Cape Cod and Dennis economy are ones that do not provide adequately paying jobs to meet the high costs of living encountered by residents. The costs of living are driven by the demand for second homes in the area, which artificially force up the cost of housing here. Yet salaries are pretty much driven by the overall market for a product. Therefore, a decent salaried position, that is market competitive, is going to pay the same, whether it is located in Fitchburg or Dennis. The Regional Policy Plan established a Level of Service C as a transportation level of service to be maintained through-out the region. Level of Service C is often considered to be a high design standard. The ITE Transportation and Traffic Engineering Handbook suggests that at the high end of the Level of Service C, where a facility operates at near 75% of capacity, average operating speeds are 50 mph. At the low end, when the facility is operating at 55% of capacity, average operating speeds are 55 mph. Providing traffic improvements that maintain such free-flow operating characteristics will denigrate the visual character of a community. In addition, when planning traffic improvements in a seasonal use area such as Cape Cod and the town of Dennis, maintaining a Level of Service C in summer

peak conditions will mean facilities that area extremely over-built for the non-peak time periods. In essence, to maintain a Level of Service C on Route 6 for summer conditions, would require a highway facility nearing four lanes in the peak direction. Placing a requirement that such a potential employer will be held to a Level of Service C standard in an area which already commands high salaries due to the housing cost, will drive away potential employers. This will ultimately reduce the possibility of achieving a jobs-housing balance in the area that matches employees skills with the jobs available – thereby reducing overall vehicle miles of travel.

The town of Dennis in promoting economic development will promote other alternatives relative to overall roadway performance, such as the potential to reduce vehicle miles of travel. Opportunities to increase telecommuting for instance – such as the satellite office (sometimes in a shared business environment) will improve overall VMT on a regional basis, while possibly decreasing a local level of service. In addition, if we can promote an employer to add a child-care center at the job-site, the child-care center will generate it’s own trips. Yet on a regional basis, the child care center will tend to reduce vehicle miles traveled, hot and cold starts, possible idling time, etc., by combining trip ends. A straight level of service analysis will ignore all of these potential benefits.

Levels of service C for outside growth centers and D within growth centers shall be strived for, while recognizing that pre-existing traffic levels and the potential historic nature of a neighborhood could affect the possible design standards to actually be implemented

It is also important that Dennis and other Cape communities target particular areas that will grow to densities that will properly support public transportation. Reviewing development based solely upon roadway level of service will force densities to ones that are more auto-related. The town needs to reduce the commercial floor space opportunities in the Dennis Zoning By-law. The commercial floor space potential needs to be replaced by methods to protect the open space around the growth center, through transfer of development rights, down-zoning and possibly up-zoning certain areas. This will all be reviewed within the context of the proposed growth centers.

3. Economic Development, Goals and Policies

3.1 Goal: To promote economic development that is compatible with Dennis' environmental, cultural and economic strengths in order to ensure a balanced economy.

Town Policies

- 3.1.1 Dennis will maintain and support the domestic visitor industry, and encourage and develop the international visitor industry during the off-season as well as the summer.
- 3.1.2 Dennis will recognize the retired population as a significant part of the Town's economy and

community life.

- 3.1.3 Dennis will maintain, promote, and improve economically productive recreational resources such as the beaches, golf courses, harbors and fishing areas. These areas should be maintained specifically for those uses and expanded where possible.
 - 3.1.4 Dennis will maintain and support the cultural, arts and crafts industries, including individuals, businesses and institutions.
- 3.2 Goal: To preserve the character of Dennis' unique village centers, locate developments so as to minimize adverse impacts and enhance the quality of life.**

Town Policies

- 3.2.1 Dennis will encourage redevelopment over new development through creative redesign, revitalization and in-fill of existing strip commercial developments, where adequate infrastructure is available. The Town will discourage haphazard sprawl and strip developments.
- 3.2.2 Dennis will provide aesthetic and infrastructure improvements to enhance and revitalize traditional village centers.
- 3.2.3 Dennis will develop village amenities such as walkways, beautification, and identification of historic buildings and areas through better signage.

Minimum Performance Standards

- 3.2.4 The following incentives shall be provided to encourage development and redevelopment to locate in designated growth centers.

The nitrate-nitrogen standard for ground water may be increased to 10 ppm where such increase will cause no significant adverse impact on specific identified resources.

Traffic conditions may be reduced to Level of Service D if there is a provision for safe pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic.

Public and private sewage treatment facilities may be used.

Open space requirements for both residential and commercial projects in growth/activity centers may be reduced to 40% of the site area where significant natural resource areas are not present

- 3.2.5 New retail and other commercial development and redevelopment shall be in scale with their sites and existing surrounding buildings.

Development Review Policies

- 3.2.6 Village growth centers should be maintained and revitalized by concentrating small scale professional service, retail, office, home-based industry and community activities in these areas.
 - 3.2.7 In the village centers, large-scale commercial activities, including large-box retailers, manufacturing and warehouse businesses should be discouraged.
 - 3.2.8 Both residential and essential community businesses should be encouraged in village centers. In addition, appropriate neighborhood scale commercial uses should be identified which could support local needs without drawing regional or town-wide customers.
 - 3.2.9 Development and redevelopment should be concentrated in designated growth centers in order to use land more effectively to create places oriented to pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit, to preserve open space and maintain Dennis' attractiveness.
 - 3.2.10 Alternate transportation modes to village centers should be encouraged.
 - 3.2.11 Large-scale commercial activities should be concentrated in regional growth centers where adequate infrastructure is available.
 - 3.2.12 Manufacturing and warehousing business activities should be concentrated in industrial growth centers.
 - 3.2.14 All new development and redevelopment, including that within neighborhood business districts, village centers, growth centers and Economic Opportunity Area's, should be aesthetically pleasing and consistent with traditional Cape Cod styles.
- 3.3 Goal: To encourage the creation and diversification or year-round employment opportunities.**

Town Policies

- 3.3.1 Development and redevelopment will be evaluated for job creation, occupational and salary opportunities for local workers, and for their impact on decent affordable housing for employees.
- 3.3.2 Dennis will encourage projects which provide permanent, year-round jobs with benefits, and should encourage employee training opportunities for Dennis residents.
- 3.3.3 Dennis will encourage individual and home business.

- 3.3.4 Dennis will encourage embryonic businesses such as incubator projects that relate to the Town's resources, and where possible, should seek growth through local resources rather than through importing.
- 3.3.5 Dennis will create a regulatory climate that makes Dennis more business friendly, both to retain existing businesses and to attract diversified small-scale business.
- 3.3.6 Dennis will assist prospective business owners with the permitting process and dealing with the various Town departments to make this process more effective, timely, and less costly.
- 3.3.7 Dennis will identify and promote the use of economic opportunity areas and discourage haphazard sprawl and strip developments.

Action Items:

1. Dennis should work with appropriate community organizations such as the Dennis Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations to extend the tourist season in the fall and spring and to explore alternative off-season uses of facilities now used primarily in the summer.

Responsible Party: BOS, EDC, ACC
 Priority: H
 Timeframe for Completion: On-going

2. Dennis should improve facilities for visitors, such as public restrooms, adequate local transportation, and special assistance for foreign travelers.

Responsible Party: BOS, CCCC
 Priority: H
 Timeframe for Completion: On-going

3. Dennis should work with appropriate community organizations to address the needs of retired citizens and work with these organizations on ways in which they might further contribute to the community.

Responsible Party: COA, HSAC
 Priority: H
 Timeframe for Completion: On-going

4. The role of the Arts and Culture Council should be expanded to take a more aggressive role in the support of promotion of the Arts Community.

Responsible Party: BOS, ACC
 Priority: H
 Timeframe for Completion: On-going

5. Review existing bylaws including the sign code to see that they support and encourage home businesses consistent with environmental and community character concerns.

Responsible Party: PB, BOS
Priority: H
Timeframe for Completion: 2002
6. Investigate potential sources of light industry to locate within the town consistent with Goals 2 and 3.

Responsible Party: EDC
Priority: H
Timeframe for Completion: On-going
7. Expand the charge of the EDC to actively solicit year-round employment opportunities.

Responsible Party: BOS, EDC
Priority: M
Timeframe for Completion: On-going
8. Work closely with organizations such as CCEDC and SEED to explore ways for small new business to obtain capital.

Responsible Party: BOS, EDC
Priority: H
Timeframe for Completion: On-going
9. Hire a Grant Writer to develop partnerships with relevant organizations to work on and explore Grant availability to meet the growing needs of the Town.

Responsible Party: BOS, EDC
Priority: M
Timeframe for Completion: 2005
10. Identify and promote economic opportunity areas within Dennis.

Responsible Party: EDC, PB
Priority: M
Timeframe for Completion: On-going
11. Work with the Cape Cod Commission to identify existing infrastructure and needed infrastructure, establish priorities, and identify potential funding sources for the provision of infrastructure through the long-range Regional Infrastructure and Facilities Plan.

Responsible Party: EDC, PB
Priority: M
Timeframe for Completion: On-going

12. The town shall review and revise its Special Permit Procedures within the Zoning By-law to improve and strengthen the review that occurs. Such improvements to the by-law should include requirements to analyze internal and external traffic conditions, preparation of an environmental impact assessment and recommendations to reduce vehicle miles of travel.

Party: ZBSC, PB
Priority: H
Timeframe for Completion: 2003

13. Dennis will promote mixed use development, including activity centers which provide a variety of services geared towards the employees and residents of the activity center such as child-care facilities, small-scale services such as on-site dry-cleaning and banking services, etc.

Party: ZBSC, PB
Priority: H
Timeframe for Completion: 2005