

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT
NORTH BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT

TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

May, 1961

NORTH BRANFORD TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

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Yarwood & Block, Inc.

February, 1961

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PLANNING

A Comprehensive Plan of Development provides for such basic land uses as residential, business and industrial uses so that they complement one another without conflict and are in proportion to one another. An orderly growth of new neighborhoods is thus assured and the renewal of old areas is guided. Attractive and convenient locations for new schools, playgrounds and public buildings are planned and a capital improvements program is outlined as a sound basis for growth.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to serve as a guide for public and private development of the community. Because the community changes with the times, the Town Planning Commission is charged with the responsibility of continual review and evaluation of the plan to keep it alive and responsive to changing conditions.

The preparation of such a plan is a major undertaking of the planning commission and involves the collection of a great deal of basic data regarding many aspects of the town as it is now. This is followed by analysis of the data and the forecasting of the broad character of the future community, its population and its need for public and private services of all kinds.

To undertake the preparation of such a comprehensive plan for the future development of North Branford, the Town Planning Commission engaged Yarwood & Block, Inc., Town Planning Consultants of Simsbury, Connecticut. Advice and counsel have been sought from many people who are trained and skilled in the special fields related to town development.

Administrative and service staffs of the town and the Board of Education have been

especially helpful. Valuable guidance has been received from the State Development Commission, the State Highway Department, the University of Connecticut, and the U. S. Department of Commerce Weather Bureau at Windsor Locks. These and others have been most helpful in conferences, recommendations and published reports.

The consultants have endeavored to insure that the Comprehensive Plan is sound and realistic and recommend it to the Town Planning Commission with the hope that it will help in guiding a vigorous action program of civic improvement and development. The plan is vital to each resident of North Branford.

Harmony of land use protects against needless deterioration. Attractive and convenient schools with adequate open space increase residential values and the pleasure of living. Improved streets and utilities and ample parking space at shopping centers bolster stability of both residential and commercial properties. Carrying out a soundly conceived plan is money in the bank for every taxpayer.

THE PAST

Early Settlement and Incorporation

The early history of North Branford is tied in with that of Branford, of which it was a part until its incorporation as a separate town in 1831.

New Haven purchased Totoket (Branford) from the Indians in 1638. Thomas Mulliner settled early at Mulliner's Neck (Branford Point) and Thomas Whitway, an Indian interpreter, at Bare Plain. Before the New Haveners sold Totoket, they induced Milliner to relinquish part of his land and in 1691, after his death, his heirs gave up all claim to it. Forty years earlier the New Haven colony had reclaimed the Whitway lands in North Branford, for he had died without heirs. Bare Plain is a little north of the southwest part of the North Society (North Branford) and may have been settled before 1700. The land had been granted to Joseph Foote, John Maltbie and others in 1687. Northford (Paug) is near the north line of the town and may have been settled about 1720.

Early Homes

There are several examples of colonial and federal architecture still in existence in North Branford, including in Northford the Warham Williams House built in 1750 (later the rectory for St. Andrews Church), the remodeled Augur House, south on the same side of the road, and the Bela Foote House built in 1720. About two miles farther east on Route 15 is Sol's Path with the old Alling or Lindsley residence.

In North Branford is the Beers House, probably built about 1765, with interior paneling similar to that of the Rose House in the Yale Gallery of Fine Arts. Nearby are the Joseph Lindsley House, built in 1762, and the old Eels Place, erected about 1770.

On Route 80, about a mile west of the trap rock quarry on Totoket Mountain is the small Greek Revival House, and the Timothy Stevens House, built in 1764.

Early Schools and Education

Although there were no schools of the higher branches in North Branford, still it has been said that the village of ancient Northford "has furnished more liberally educated men and women for various professions, than any other place of equal size in the whole state". Residents of the town were closely involved in the development of Yale, both as students and as administrators and faculty members.

Early Industry

North Branford has been the birthplace and home of many noted people, among them the Fowler family, which included inventors of the first machines for making pins, a machine for embossing silk, and one for rolling brass lamps and other household commodities. Many industries were centered on the Farm River in North Branford.

Early Roads

In addition to the road leading from Northford to Branford and the Old Post Road, Totoket Path, known in Northford as Sol's Path, was early followed by the settlers over Totoket Mountain. In the early days when this section was used as a pasture by the settlers at the shore, Solomon, a colored man with an Indian wife, made a path of convenience across Totoket Mountain.

Religion

In 1717 the northern inhabitants petitioned the General Assembly to be set off, because of the long, dangerous walk to attend services in Branford. A church was started in 1725 and services were held in it before its completion in 1732. It was

located a little south of the present church at the center. In 1745 Salem, (Northford Society) in North Branford was established in Branford, by dividing the North Branford Society. The first church in Northford was built in 1747. The name was changed from Salem to Northford Society in 1751. The early ministers of the Northford Society included exceptional men, who contributed much to the religious and educational life of the colony as well as the community.

THE PRESENT

Location

North Branford is located in New Haven County, Connecticut on Routes #17, #22 and #80, within ten miles of New Haven. It is bounded on the north by Wallingford and Durham; on the east by Guilford; on the south by Branford; and on the west by East Haven and North Haven.

It is part of the Metropolitan Area of New Haven, which includes West Haven, Woodbridge, Hamden, North Haven and East Haven.

The distance from North Branford to Hartford is about 35 miles; and to New York about 85 miles; and to Boston more or less 125 miles.

Topography and Soil

The principal physiographic features of the town are Lake Gaillard of almost 1,000 acres in the center of the town, and the Totoket Mountains, a range of hills on the west. The highest elevation in town is 720 feet above sea level while the lowest point is 20 feet above sea level at a point in the southern part of town.

Very stony and mountainous land, in many places made up of traprock, is common throughout the town. Where there were local temporary lakes dammed by ice and controlled by natural spillways in the ice age, glacial terraces of sand and gravel deposits are found, particularly along the Farm and Branford Rivers.

Elsewhere, ground moraine, clayey to sandy till with boulders and exposed bed rock and some swamp muck are found.

Drainage

Besides Lake Gaillard, the principal water resources are Pistapaug Pond (part of Wallingford's water supply), Clear Lake, Cedar Pond, Linsley Pond and Page's Mill Pond. The flow of drainage is towards Long Island Sound to the south down the Farm, Notch Hill, Munger, Branford, Gulph, Crooked and Roses Brooks.

Climate

The climate of North Branford is seasonably variable, as in most Connecticut towns. In general, weather characteristics range from the cold, dry continental polar air of winter to the warm maritime air of summer. Because of the nearness to Long Island Sound, however, it is generally warmer than the state's interior and northern hill towns.

The following is climatological data for North Branford in comparison with inland Putnam in the northeast corner of the state, and Bridgeport on the Sound in the southwestern part of the state. Exact figures for North Branford are not available and as noted are those taken from the nearest weather bureau station at Mt. Carmel, seven miles west of the town. Averages and means are computed for the years 1931 thru 1952

	<u>North Branford</u>	<u>Putnam</u>	<u>Bridgeport</u>
Average Annual Precipitation	45.53 inches	44.33 inches	47.82 inches
	<u>Mt. Carmel</u>		
Mean Annual Snowfall	33 inches	41.3 inches	36.9 inches
Mean Annual Temperature	48.5 degrees	50.9 degrees	47.9 degrees
Mean Annual Maximum Temperature	59.4 degrees	59.4 degrees	60.7 degrees
Mean Annual Minimum Temperature	37.6 degrees	36.5 degrees	41.0 degrees
Highest Temperature	104 degrees	102 degrees	100 degrees
Lowest Temperature	-24 degrees	-23 degrees	-20 degrees
		<u>Hartford</u>	<u>New Haven</u>
Degree-day Total for 1958-1959	6284	6656	6060
Degree-day Total Normal	----	6528	6026

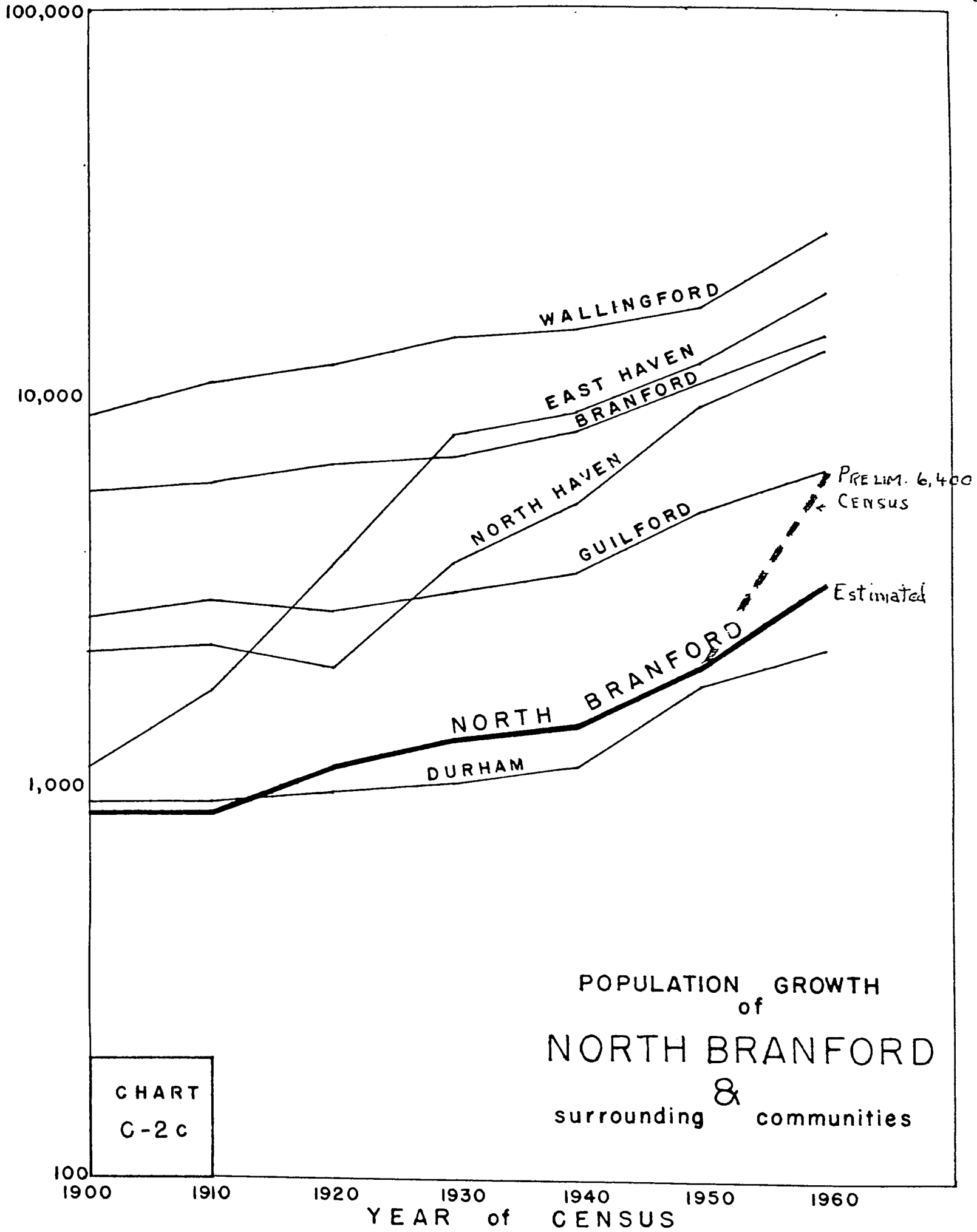


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POPULATION GROWTH
of
NORTH BRANFORD
&
surrounding communities

100 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960
YEAR of CENSUS

Population

From the time North Branford was set off from Branford in 1831 until 1920, the population of the town remained quite static. The number of people remained at about 1,000 most of the time. However, in the next 30 years to 1950 the population doubled to a total of 2,017 and the preliminary 1960 census figures indicate the present population at 6,244, the highest percent increase in the state.

Since 1910 the rate of growth of North Branford has equalled or been ahead of the rate of growth of Connecticut, New England and the United States. The 1940-1950 rate was more than double that of Connecticut and the 1950-1960 rate is 209 percent.

Growth from 1900 to 1960

A comparison of the rate of growth with surrounding towns shows North Branford thru the decade ending in 1940 increasing its population at about the same rate as adjacent towns with the exception of East Haven and North Haven. Starting at that time, however, the rates of growth began to become more nearly equal and from 1950-1960 North Branford's rate has leaped ahead of all other towns in the area.

If the town were to continue to grow at the rate of growth of the past decade, the population of North Branford could approach 18,000 by 1970. Whether or not this growth takes place will depend in part on the planning which is done now for the wise use of land in the town. In any case, a population of 12,000 seems the minimum to be expected in the next 20 years.

Slow growth until 1950 has preserved the rural character of the town. However, the recent rapid increase in the subdivision of land with the influx of home owners as population spreads outward from the New Haven area is creating problems that must be

POPULATION GROWTH CHART NORTH BRANFORD

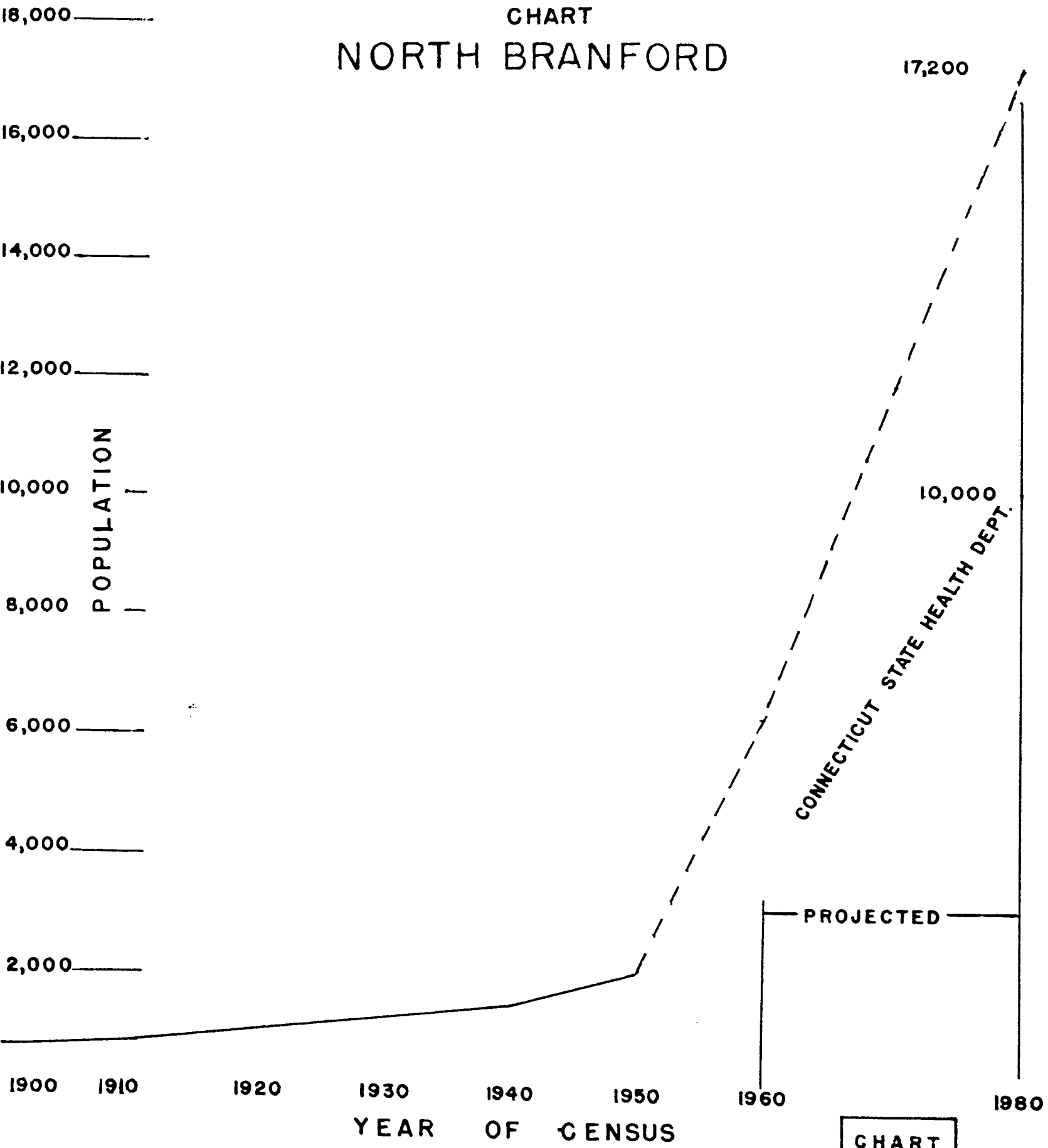


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solved before the situation becomes more critical.

Town office needs have already outgrown the old town hall and now occupy the former Center School which has space adequate for a few more years. Two relatively new fire stations are enough for now, but continued growth of the town will require expansion of present facilities and addition of others. The increase in the number of children has required planning ahead for expansion of present school facilities and others will be needed.

The business districts of the town are obviously inadequate to the needs of the community. Housed in old buildings with very limited offstreet parking and loading facilities they are in need of room for expansion.

While the town's principal industry is that of the New Haven Trap Rock Company, there is a need for additional industries to give a better proportion of land use and to improve the tax base.

Additional school sites are needed and these should be coordinated with the need for increased recreation areas. Park areas are also needed to meet the requirements of greater leisure.

The Connecticut Turnpike has relieved to some extent the overcrowding of the local routes, but this is temporary. The proposed Route #91 to the west of town will also help. However, a program of improvement of local roads should be inaugurated to keep pace with growing traffic needs.

The past twenty years have marked the beginning of North Branford's transition from a rural community to a part of the larger New Haven area. The town is being progressively influenced by the mushrooming growth of the region and the ease with which people can reach New Haven and other cities where they work.

The area of influence of New Haven extends to North Branford and beyond and more and more workers prefer to live in such outlying towns within a reasonable commuting distance over good express routes. From North Branford more than 1,700 employees covered by unemployment compensation insurance work in the New Haven Labor Market Area.

Resources for Growth

North Branford has many assets which can be exploited for benefit of the town. Good transportation routes bring centers of employment within easy commuting distance. Hilly land provides attractive home sites. Good, modern schools appeal to parents.

By careful planning now, land can be reserved for public buildings, business and industrial expansion, new school sites and recreational areas as well as for gracious residential development. But, action must be taken now before the land is used up, the schools are overcrowded, and the business and industrial needs are not met.

Joining the South Central Regional Planning Agency of Connecticut might enhance North Branford's opportunity for the planning of its growth in relation to the region. Such planning will be needed to insure the orderly development of the town and to prevent indiscriminate and unwise use of land.

One of North Branford's greatest resources is the amount of land remaining undeveloped. Because of the topography of the town and the extensive holdings of water companies, approximately one-third of the town (6,000 acres) is likely to remain undeveloped providing green space, much to be desired in long range planning.

Under the suggested land use of the Comprehensive Plan the potential holding capacity of North Branford is estimated at 27,000, arrived at as follows:

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Acres Available after Deduct. Undesirable Bldg. Land</u>	<u>Acres Per Family</u>	<u>No. of Families</u>	<u>No. Per. Fam.*</u>	<u>Estimated Population</u>
R-80	1 per 2.0 A	530	2.0	265	3.4	901
R-60	1 per 1.5 A	500	1.5	333	3.4	1,132
R-40	1 per 1.0 A	<u>7,425</u> 8,455	<u>1</u>	<u>7,425</u> 8,023	<u>3.4</u>	<u>25,245</u> 27,278

*Used by Connecticut Development Commission for estimating purposes.

Total area of North Branford is approximately 17,920 acres (28 square miles).

Proposed land use areas (Map #AA-1) and tentative zoning areas (Map #DD-3a)

are as follows:

Approximate Acreage	Proposed Land Use	Tentative Zoning Map
Residential	(8,295)	(9,425)
R-80	750	750
R-60	590	590
R-40	6,945	8,080
GA - Garden Apartments	10	5
Business	250	160
Planned Business	150	45
Business/Industry v	260	160
Industry I (New Haven Trap Rock Co.)	850	850
Industry II	735	725
Industrial Park	360	360
Public & Quasi-Public	200	---
Schools & Recreation	670	---
Roads	400	400
Watershed (Lakes, ponds, etc.)	5,750	5,750
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	17,920	17,920

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

In the following pages the Planning Commission have considered existing conditions and offer proposals for the future growth of the town. These proposals are indicated on the Proposed Land Use Map. Some of the symbols and terms used to indicate the recommended best use of the land follow:

Proposed Residential Areas

- R-80 Residential area where minimum lot size is 80,000 sq. feet
- R-60 Residential area where minimum lot size is 60,000 sq. feet
- R-40 Residential area where minimum lot size is 40,000 sq. feet
- GA Garden Apartments - Two-story buildings for 2 or 4 families

Proposed Business Area

- B - Business -- Grocery, barber shop, gas station, offices, etc.
- BP - Planned Business -- Plan of development, to be approved by Commission, (for some special use, such as) large insurance company or research laboratory.
- B-I - Business/Industry -- Area suitable for group of retail stores and/or light industry; such as, offices, shopping center, assembly-type industry, or a combination of these. Plan of development to be approved by Commission with minimum standards as for Planned Business.

Proposed Industrial Areas

Industry I -- Quarry; e. g. New Haven Trap Rock Co.

Industry II -- Light Industry; e. g. Jaycee Chemical Co.

IP - Industrial Park -- Area suitable for experimental industrial or other research laboratory requiring large site. Plan of development to be approved by Commission with minimum standards as to area, coverage, off-street parking, etc.

Buffer Zone -- An area of landscape planting to protect adjacent residential property from noise, glare, dust, etc. Should be at least 50 feet wide, one-third of which shall be planted to trees and shrubs of which 25% are evergreen.

Other Classifications of Land Use

Public Land -- Includes existing and proposed school sites, town-owned land, park and recreation land, churches and cemeteries, libraries, fire stations, post offices and municipal buildings.

W - Water Company Land -- Land owned by water companies and restricted to watershed use only.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Changing Standards

About one-third of the houses in North Branford were built before zoning or subdivision regulations were adopted and all have been built without benefit of building or housing codes. However, the advent of the Federal mortgage insurance programs in the 1930's, primarily intended to ease the purchase of homes brought as an important by-product, higher standards of dwelling construction and land improvements.

North Branford adopted the State Enabling legislation in 1952 and the Selectmen appointed members of the Town Planning Commission, Zoning Board and Board of Appeals. Although some progress was made, portions of the program were halted by vote of Town Meetings during 1954 and 1955. The program was fully reinstated in its present form late in 1955. Subdivision regulations became effective May 1, 1956. A building code became effective March, 1960.

Subdivision regulations have been revised within the past year and are awaiting action while the zoning regulations and map are under review by the Zoning Commission.

The Existing Situation

North Branford's growth has been concentrated in the north and in the southern sections of town with scattered development in between.

These neighborhoods embrace a diversity of housing types covering a wide range of prices, but mostly under twenty thousand dollars. Building permits are required and the planning commission has been able to maintain a fairly high standard for subdivision layout. Since 1956, the minimum size lot in most parts of town has been one acre. The

road ordinance which became effective April 14, 1960 (superseding one adopted in 1950) will secure to the town adequate drainage and proper design and construction of roads.

Most of the lake properties are small lots which results in a high density development. An increasing tendency is to convert summer cottages to year-round homes. This creates a problem for which there is no practical solution except to make certain that future building meets zoning standards which will protect the neighborhood, especially by requiring that the lots be sufficiently large to support both well and septic field and to meet state and FHA minimum standards.

Field surveys and study of assessors' records indicate that farming is of less and less importance as the years go by and there seems to be no way of reversing this trend when developers are willing to purchase farms from owners who find it increasingly difficult to make farming pay. Farms are scattered throughout the town and especially along Route #22. It is unfortunate that there is not much that can be done to preserve this agricultural land. Tax abatement proposals would require new legislation and this is a time consuming process.

Increasing home ownership has made people aware of development factors affecting livability and property values. Residences adjacent to business, industry or along traffic arteries are no longer considered as desirable as properties removed from these uses.

Improved subdivision layout and dwelling construction are expected nowadays. Permanent street and utility installations are considered an integral part of the home-ownership package. Today's home owner looks to the town for better guidance, protection and service, and for reservation and development of such complementary facilities as parks, playgrounds and schools.

Street patterns must be designed for safety, privacy and freedom from disturbance and should afford a maximum of convenience to pedestrians and vehicles traveling from home to school, shops and employment. High standards for street improvements, such as recently adopted in the road ordinance, are essential to safety and convenience.

The appeal of shade trees and landscape planting is especially important in maintaining a good neighborhood appearance. Good street trees, often taken for granted in such towns as North Branford, need to be preserved wherever possible and a program for planting acceptable species of street trees should be planned and carried out by the town.

Proposals for Residential Development

R-80

Between Totoket Road and the town line of East Haven and North Haven the area is quite rugged and we recommend that this area of about 530 acres be zoned for one family per two acres designated as R-80. There are about 300 acres in this area with slopes of 15% or over which justifies the largest size lot in order to assure a good house site, and provide space for sewage treatment and a well. The soil here is likely to be rocky. This area is wooded and hilly and is one of the most sightly areas for residences in the town.

R-60

A density of one family per 1.5 acres, designated as R-60 is recommended in the area bounded by Route #17, Route #22 and the North Haven Town Line because of the quality of this land and the need for a lot which would require individual well and septic field system. About 500 acres are included in recommended R-60 land.

R-40

The balance of the town's residential land amounting to 7,425 acres is designated as R-40 and allows one family per acre as is at present permitted in all undeveloped land in the town. About 1,300 acres of this residential zone has a slope of 15% or more.

Of the total area of land available for residential development, amounting to 8,455 acres, about 1,645 acres have a 15% slope or steeper.

Garden Apartments

In North Branford center opposite the post office, a small area has been indicated for the location of garden apartments. This area is centrally located and would seem to meet the needs of the town.

With the foregoing population densities the holding capacity of the land is figured at about 27,000. This means that the population could quadruple before the saturation point is reached, which might happen by the year 2,000.

SCHOOLS AND RECREATION

Objective

The objective of the comprehensive plan, as it relates to schools and recreation, is to reserve enough of the right kind of land in the right locations to provide service to all areas of the future community.

While the development and operation of neighborhood parks and playgrounds is the responsibility of the Selectmen and the Board of Education, recommendation as to location and acquisition of school and recreation sites is a problem for the planning commission now.

The Nature of Population Growth

North Branford, as well as other towns in the area, will undergo tremendous population growth during the next 20 years. Some of this growth will be natural increase, the result of early marriages, larger families and extension of the life span. However, a large share will result from people moving into North Branford with resulting new home construction.

The speed of this population increase is dependent upon social and economic factors impossible to predict accurately, but the fact of growth is certain.

Site Acquisition

Timing of site acquisition requires careful judgment as to the speed and direction of residential growth. When the need can be forecast within reasonable limits, the site should be acquired at raw land prices. Acquisition of school and recreation sites should be in advance of residential land subdivision whenever possible in order to be reasonably

sure that these facilities are in the right places at the right time.

Future Child Population

To determine the number and location of families which schools and recreation areas must ultimately serve is very difficult and to a large extent only an educated guess. It requires examination of existing population and analysis of available undeveloped vacant land in order to estimate the growth potential. Location of future school and recreation sites must be planned accordingly.

SCHOOLS

Present School Policies

As in practically every town in the country, North Branford is struggling to keep its physical plant abreast of a high birth rate and climbing enrollments.

Tentative planning by the Board of Education for future schools calls for the building of one centrally located high school, an additional junior high school in Northford area and such elementary schools as are needed to serve an expanding population.

Specifically, during the next few years it is expected that an addition to the present junior high school will be built. It has been suggested that conversion will be made temporarily to the K-6-6 plan until the secondary population justifies returning to the K-6-3-3 plan, which could be necessary in 1965.

At present pupils above 9th grade attend High School in New Haven or North Haven and number about 170. There is no certainty that these temporary arrangements will be extended beyond 1962, and the Town of North Branford must face its early need for building its own high school.

Expansion of existing elementary school facilities as indicated by the Board in the attached appendix will probably take place within the next five years.

Present School Facilities

Land now owned by the town for school sites:

William Douglas Elementary School	under 5 acres
Cedar Lake Elementary School	17.5 acres
Jerome Harrison School	<u>±</u> 5 acres

North Branford Junior High School	30.0 acres
School Site in Northford	<u>±</u> 20 acres

All present elementary schools have small paved areas with some equipment. All provide areas for either volley-ball or basketball as well as fields for free play. The Jerome Harrison School has a small baseball field. The Cedar Lake School has a small covered all-weather play area and a small baseball field.

The junior high school site has two standard baseball fields plus a volley-ball area and additional land in the process of development for recreational purposes.

Relationship of Schools to Community Activities

Schools are no longer used exclusively for teaching the 3 R's if for no other reason than economic conditions. They have become community centers used after school hours for adult education, social affairs and recreation for all age levels. The development and use of common facilities by education and recreation programs afford better community service at less cost to the taxpayer. The cooperation of all interested officials in the acquisition, development and operation of combined school and recreation sites is essential. For this reason the plan proposes combined school and recreation sites for the most part.

Use of the school plant for these several community activities naturally requires that the site be larger than is needed for the teaching function alone. The land area required by these dual functions varies to the extent of recreational development provided beyond that normally incidental to school programs.

Proposals

The community facilities plan and the proposed land use plan indicate the approximate location of new recommended school and recreation area sites in Northford, in

the vicinity of Augur Road, and in the southeast corner of town. Expansion of present facilities is also indicated on the community facilities plan.

RECREATION

Changing Standards

Recreation embraces all of the diverse activities which occupy a person's leisure time. Outdoor activities usually require space and facilities beyond the financial reach of the individual, yet they make up a large share of his recreational interests and at the same time satisfy his natural desire for doing things with other people.

Old-fashioned standards for recreational space no longer satisfy the needs of a society which finds itself with more and more leisure time.

To serve the recreational needs of its residents, both children and adults, a community such as North Branford needs areas and fields for organized team sports and, equally if not more important, facilities for non-team sports (such as tennis) and areas for non-competitive outdoor recreation of all kinds.

Open fields and woods which are now vacant "lots" offering release of youthful energy, will virtually disappear from the scene unless planned otherwise. Street areas are no longer safe places for children to play, if they ever were. So, unless we recognize the recreational value of open space still untouched, we will find ourselves in much the same situation as urban areas.

While one-acre or better lot sizes provide each family with its own "open space" to a certain extent, the provision and development of land for group recreation becomes a town responsibility since it cannot ordinarily be accomplished by private means except in limited amounts as in private country clubs.

North Branford has a unique opportunity now for planning a recreational system before land is used for other purposes. There are areas which offer opportunity for

recreational development at a relatively low cost. Public spirited citizens often donate suitable land. Such land need not be all flat or level, but may be and some of it certainly should be rough, even wild, land unsuited to any other use than a natural park.

Types of Recreational Space

A complete recreation system for North Branford would include the following types of public facilities

1. School Playgrounds and Parks
2. Community Parks and Sports Center
3. Lake Development

The proximity of the Long Island shore to North Branford affords additional recreational activity for the town as does fishing in streams which the State stocks. A unique feature in North Branford is the area on Valley Road reserved for the use of women anglers.

The National Recreation Association recommends a minimum of one acre of recreational land per 100 population. Besides this area for local needs, another standard sets up the desirability of a similar additional amount of land for regional or state parks. Cooperation with the Regional Planning Authority of South Central Connecticut would be valuable in this respect.

North Branford now has playgrounds at the Junior High School and at three elementary schools, William Douglas, Cedar Lake and Jerome Harrison, with facilities as described in the section on Present School Facilities.

With a potential holding capacity estimated at 27,000 people, North Branford should set aside as rapidly as possible, 525 acres of land for recreation. While a part of this can be in school sites, other areas should be acquired as recreational areas alone.

Kinds of Recreational Areas and Development Potentials

Type of Recreation Area	Age Served	Size	Purpose
School Playgrounds & Parks	Elementary & Older Children Adults	5-7 A.	Kindergarten: Apparatus, Tables, fenced in. Elementary: Apparatus; open space for free play & games; All-weather surface multi-use play & court games; Field Games, softball, Jr. Baseball Quiet area: crafts & passive group games.
Community Parks & Sports Center	Entire Community	12-25 A.	Active sports; Picnicking, hiking, large crowd events, rallies; Playfields for adults; Separate from schools. Playing & watching ball games, stadium events; Outdoor swimming pool; Ice rink, archery, short golf course.
Lake Areas	Entire Community	As much as can be acquired	Boating Scout activities Swimming Skating
Mountain or Hill Areas	Entire Community	By arrangement with Owners	Hiking, trails, bridle paths, Picnicking Boating Snow sports

Proposals

Acquisition of recreation areas is a real problem largely because money for this purpose is not available. The purchase of adequate school sites will help. Another solution is to require developers to set aside land for local, or neighborhood parks; or to deposit in a special fund an amount determined by the selectmen in lieu of the reservation of land. This special fund could be for the purpose of purchasing park lands and would result in larger areas at strategic locations, rather than many small parks difficult to maintain and administer.

A cooperative agreement with owners of unused land such as New Haven Trap Rock Company and the New Haven Water Company with proper safeguards might be worked out. Certain human activities can be carried on within a watershed with no real danger of pollution. This would be of tremendous benefit to the townspeople, and such areas might be restricted to use of the people of North Branford for better control.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Business Districts

A comprehensive plan should provide for the development of various types of commercial enterprises. Retail and service establishments are needed to attract consumers with buying power and to serve local people. Wholesale establishments are needed to serve retail stores both locally and regionally. Offices are needed for professional people such as doctors and dentists as well as architects, engineers and others.

Small local shopping centers with adequate offstreet parking and loading facilities will attract consumers for one-stop shopping. A substantial store, such as a grocery supermarket, is needed to provide a basis for success and this is supplemented by other service stores such as drug stores, small restaurants, package stores, barber shops and dry cleaning outlets. If large enough in area and properly located, other units would include furniture and appliance stores, as well as auto and boat sales.

Existing Conditions

Most of the stores in North Branford are scattered throughout the town, in small obsolescent buildings with inadequate storage space, parking and loading areas. Grouping of stores benefits all businesses when properly designed and located. There is almost no place for small offices except in the owner's home which is inefficient in many instances.

Proposed Business Development

The proposed comprehensive plan indicates existing business in the amount of 100 acres in Northford, North Branford center and in the Totoket section. Scattered

businesses are left as non-conforming where they do not fall within proposed business zones.

An additional 320 acres is shown in expanded business areas in the three principal centers and along Route #80, #17 and #22.

It is proposed that these areas in certain cases be zoned to permit certain light industries as well as business on the principle that small manufacturing or assembling plants often seek locations along good highways near active regional centers like New Haven.

Planned Business Areas

Provision should also be made in the zoning regulations for planned business development in areas of sufficient size to attract groups of businesses in suitable locations.

All such business or light industry areas should be designed to relieve congestion in the highways by providing adequate offstreet parking and loading facilities in attractive surroundings that will be in keeping with the attractiveness of the town of North Branford. In the case of planned business areas, this is relatively easy to control by the zoning regulations, and in the other business or industrial areas, the provision of landscaped buffer zones between business and residence should be required. West of Forest Road an area of 50 acres has been indicated for Planned Business.

Industrial Districts

In recent years a great many growing towns have looked to industry to help solve some of their financial problems, but the competition in Connecticut among its 169 towns is very keen. With manufacturing jobs producing greater retail purchasing power, more jobs in other fields and tax revenues in excess of the cost of municipal services furnished,

each town must take a good look at its own resources and actively try to sell what it has to offer.

In this evaluation of assets, a town will find that, if it does not already have good transportation facilities for employees and shipment of goods, available public utilities, zoning protection and well organized and planned industrial districts, it must somehow get these things if industry is to be persuaded to locate in the town.

Existing Conditions

In effect, North Branford is a one-industry town. The New Haven Trap Rock Company owns approximately 850 acres in the southwest section of town and it is estimated that there is a 250 year supply of trap rock in this quarry.

The quarry is served by a private railway spur from Branford owned by the Branford Steam Railroad, which is a subsidiary of the New Haven Trap Rock Company.

A local example of the type of small industrial plant for which North Branford would be particularly suitable is the Jaycee Chemical Company which has an attractive building on Route #22 half way between Northford and North Branford center.

Proposed Industrial Development

It is recommended that the New Haven Trap Rock Company land be zoned as Industrial Zone I since this is a special operation in the nature of heavy industry.

A second industrial classification should be designated as Industrial Zone II for lighter industry, while certain areas should permit either business or industrial development or a combination of the two.

The plan of development proposes that a large area in the southeast section of town below Valley Road and extending to the Branford town line from the railroad on the west to Route #22 be set aside for industrial development.

Most of this area is topographically suitable for such development, in our opinion. A railroad spur into it is feasible. Access from highways connecting with the Connecticut Turnpike is easy along Routes #1, #22 and #139. This area of about 400 acres is at present quite sparsely developed and it is adjacent to a large area zoned for industry in Branford.

Other industrial areas indicated are: (1) a tract of about 300 acres between the present Town Dump and Route 80; (2) a tract of about 45 acres near the junction of Routes 80 and 139, at present occupied by the Central Builders Supply Company lumber yard; (3) a tract of about 75 acres in the northwest corner of the town, north of Clintonville Road.

Areas along Route #80 which might be made available for either business or industry include an area of about 100 acres opposite the quarry which is unsuited for residential development because of noise, glare and dust. Another area at the intersection of Totoket Road and Route #80 for similar uses might be about 75 acres in extent.

The proposal for setting aside land for mixed business or industrial use has been made by the North Branford Industrial Development Committee. It seems to us that this is sound in the light of the competition for industry and also, because of North Branford's situation, there seems more likelihood that the town could attract small industries such as the assembly, or specialty type more easily than larger industrial plants. Also, business serving such industrial uses might be encouraged to locate near them.

Planned Industrial Parks

A provision in the zoning regulations should be made for planned industrial park development in which minimum areas would be designated with regulations as to land coverage, parking, landscape buffer zones to protect residential areas, and performance

standards to govern selection of industries. A plan of development, under such a regulation, would have to be submitted to the zoning commission for approval and a public hearing would also be required.

Two possible industrial parks are proposed: (1) an area of about 150 acres in the vicinity of the present Jaycee Chemical Company on Route #22; (2) an area of perhaps 100 acres northeast of Northford Center, and east of the Farm River.

The selection of land for industrial use has been based on a study of local conditions such as topography, drainage, accessibility and the effect of such use on surrounding land. By consolidating these areas, encroachment on other uses is minimized, congestion of streets is avoided and, with large sites, adequate space is available for expansion of plant and for offstreet parking and loading.

As has been pointed out before, industry prefers to locate where zoning has been established and in areas already zoned for industry. However, it is impossible to pre-determine every industrial site and the provision allowing for planned industrial parks indicates a willingness on the part of the town to allow establishment of such land use under certain safeguards to the public and the residential area.

TRANSPORTATION

Street and Highway Conditions

Because of the limited amount of land available, North Branford is fortunate that the Connecticut Turnpike bypasses the town on the south and the proposed Route #91 will bypass it on the west. At the same time, these routes are readily reached from North Branford so that the many residents who work out of town are within easy commuting distance of their jobs.

The principal routes through town are well paved and adequate for present traffic. The traffic interchange at Northford is not very good because of poor alignment and gradients and further study of this area should be made by the State Highway Department. The traffic lights and a one-way traffic pattern help, but these are only temporary solutions. Increased traffic, as indicated on the traffic flow map, will require changes.

While the intersection of Route #22 with Route #80 is functional today, in a few years some other system will have to be worked out, especially with the hazard of truck traffic from the quarry.

At North Branford center the junction of Route #80 with Route #139 and Route #22, in addition to local streets, presents another problem because of the railroad underpass, alignment and gradients. Again, increased traffic will require further study of this interchange and a different solution.

The connection of Route #22 with U. S. Route #1 is adequate and may remain so because of the reduced volume of traffic on Route #1 due to the Turnpike.

Proposals for Highway Improvements

The recent adoption by the Town of the revised Road Ordinance is an excellent step

forward and should insure not only well built streets in new subdivisions, but minimum maintenance over the years. The planning commission has a responsibility to see that roads are well designed and that they have proper gradients and sight lines both vertically and horizontally.

The poorest road in town in these respects is Totoket Road. The town should prepare a study to improve alignment, especially at the southern end, widen to accommodate traffic, reduce vertical curves and re-pave, as well as correct drainage faults.

There are numerous bridges which are inadequate for present traffic, let alone traffic which may be expected. The design and construction of new bridges should have a high priority in any capital improvement program.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Municipal Offices

The old town hall has long been inadequate to meet the needs of administering town affairs, so the move to the Center School in North Branford center was a good one which will meet current needs. But with the growth which has taken place and that which will come, these quarters will not prove adequate, for long. In terms of long-range planning, however, the Commission feels that the town should acquire as soon as possible a minimum of fifty acres in the vicinity of Augur Road and Forest Road, upon which to build, as need requires and finances permit: (1) a new municipal building containing offices for all town departments; (2) a police station; (3) an additional fire station; (4) public works storage facilities and garage; and (5) the required Senior High School. The first two or three might be contained in a single structure. The High School should include an auditorium adequate for public gatherings, including town meetings. Adequate parking space for all above facilities should be provided. A site in this area will have the advantage of being midway between the two principal centers of the town.

Fire Protection

Fire stations, manned by volunteers, are presently located in Northford and North Branford center. These are relatively new buildings on rather small sites. It seems reasonable to suggest that the third station, proposed above for the vicinity of Augur Road, could be a central station with more adequate equipment and facilities. It might also be combined with civil defense headquarters.

A first step towards a full-time fire protection set-up will be necessary in the very near future, with the rapid growth of frame houses in increasingly built-up areas. This

step should take the form of the creation of a small staff of paid drivers.

In the areas not served by the New Haven Water Company, the Commission urges that an expanded program of strategically located water holes be actively pursued by the Fire Commissioners.

Police Protection

The location of police headquarters, when the town has outgrown the present resident state trooper arrangement, could be in a separate building, or combined with fire protection facilities, or with the town offices, or both. Current standards indicate the need for three officers for each 2,000 population. While this may seem high for a town like North Branford, the present staff is inadequate.

Town Equipment Storage Yards

Provision for the storage of town equipment for road building, repair and snow removal should be made centrally in the vicinity of Augur Road.

State Highway Garages and Storage Yards

There is a tendency on the part of the State Highway Department to locate large, rather unattractive garage buildings too close to main highways with very large storage yards where large quantities of sand, materials and equipment are an eyesore. Cooperation between the State Highway Department and the town and its planning commission could result in a much more satisfactory arrangement. Granted it is necessary to have state highway equipment and supplies in an easily accessible central location, it need not be offensive. Garage doors need not open directly on to the highway, and the storage yards can be screened with landscape planting so that the area does not tend to downgrade the adjacent properties. Better designed buildings would be appreciated.

Refuse Disposal

The town dump location is probably satisfactory except that it is a long way from Northford. At some time in the future it will doubtless become necessary to provide an incinerator plant, which should probably be undertaken in cooperation with neighboring communities, in accordance with present trends elsewhere in the State.

Libraries

There are two town libraries located one in each center of the town. A suggestion which should be given serious consideration would be to make provision in the plans for a Senior High School for a main town library centrally located in conjunction with the school, with the present library buildings serving as local branches.

Churches

There are at present, two Episcopal, two Congregational and two Roman Catholic churches in town. Ground has been purchased for a new Roman Catholic church in the vicinity of the Junior High School. This will replace St. Augustine's Church on Route #139 in North Branford Center.

All of the existing churches have very small sites, inadequate to accommodate offstreet parking which may indicate that, like St. Augustine's, they may seek other sites in the future. It is recommended that new sites for any of these churches or of any new ones which might be established in town should be located off main highways on sites adequate for expansion with parking at least in the ratio of one car space for every four seats and that such parking areas be screened with landscape planting.

Cemeteries

Present cemeteries as shown are small and most are nearly filled. Expansion,

where possible, should be considered and perhaps some new areas provided.

Water Supply

The New Haven Water Company serves about 600 families in North Branford, chiefly in the Route #80 area but extending north to include Mill Road developments and south along Twin Lakes Road and a part of Notch Hill Road. Expansion of these facilities is limited by elevation in relation to Lake Gaillard, but it is reasonable to expect that some expansion will take place.

Most of the town, however, must depend upon individual wells. The development of community or neighborhood water supply systems, properly regulated, might be encouraged as more efficient and better conservation of our dwindling water resources.

Study might also be made of the possibility of tying into the Wallingford water system if this is possible in the Northford section of town.

Sanitary Sewage

The entire town has to depend on individual underground septic tank systems for sewage disposal. This makes it mandatory that all lots on which both an individual well and septic field are necessary be large enough to accommodate both with complete safety. The requirement of the Planning Commission that soil seepage tests be made before subdivisions are approved is absolutely necessary, and in such rugged land as exists over most of North Branford, the zoning of lots into minimum acre or larger lots is essential for health and to conserve water resources.

Some method of public sewage disposal must be given thought if the town continues to grow at the almost phenomenal rate of the past decade.

Storm Water Sewer

The State Highway Department maintains a system of storm water drainage along

its highways. The Planning Commission requires that subdivision developers install adequate storm water drainage in accordance with the road ordinance of the town, so that such drainage is adequate to protect not only the roads but also neighboring properties.

Utilities-Services

Electricity is provided throughout the town by the United Illuminating Company, the Connecticut Light and Power Company and the Wallingford Borough Electric Works. The Southern New England Telephone Company provides phone service. Gas service is expected to be extended to the southwestern part of town in the near future. Extensions of these utilities follow demand.

A C T I O N

The Town Planning Commission under Connecticut law is an advisory body and its action is limited to preparation of subdivision regulations and a Comprehensive Plan of Development for the entire town. To put this plan into action the commission has revised its subdivision regulations and authorized this study.

The Commission has acquainted the public with the progress and proposals of the Comprehensive Plan and Report through area meetings, and then held a public hearing on the Plan, as required by law.

After the legal hearing the commission may adopt the Comprehensive Plan or any part of it, and it then becomes the legal basis for zoning regulations and zoning map.

An outline of a capital improvements program follows as part of the report and is intended as a guide to the commission for recommendations to town officials. Annual revision of the capital improvements program should be made by the commission to keep the long range program up to date.

An outline of proposed revisions to the present very simple zoning regulations is included in this report to the commission. Since the Zoning Commission is a separate body, it is the responsibility of that commission to prepare any revision of their regulations and map under separate contract. The proposed zoning map indicates the consultants' suggestions for carrying out the recommendations in the proposed land use map.

The purpose of the meetings and legal hearing is to acquaint the public with the proposals contained in the Comprehensive Plan of Development, as well as to meet legal requirements. The value of the plan is in direct proportion to the understanding the public has of it, so it is important that these meetings give the average citizen an opportunity to study the maps and report and to fully discuss them with members of the Commission.

After the hearings, it is the responsibility of the Commission to weigh the discussions in the light of their benefit to the whole town and then to revise the plan if necessary before adopting it and passing along its recommendations for further action by the zoning commission in bringing zoning regulations and map up to date and in agreement with the Comprehensive Plan.

Hearings must also be held on the proposed Subdivision Regulations revision. After the hearings which must be publicized as required in the law, the Commission meets to consider comments and make any necessary revisions before adopting the new regulations. These are actions which the Commission takes rather than a town meeting which, in setting up the Planning Commission and the Zoning Commission, delegated this action to the Commission.

North Branford adopted the State Building Code March 24, 1960 and a Building Inspector has been appointed to insure that the standards are met. This is a fulltime job for a qualified person who understands the many problems of building and the requirements of the code.

A housing code may seem less important at this time, but minimum standards for living accommodations as are provided in such a code can assure decent, safe and sanitary living conditions for everybody. Rural slums can be as dangerous, and as expensive, as city slums. A housing code will do much to prevent such conditions.

Each town in Connecticut has a Health Officer. His duties include enforcement of applicable parts of all codes and regulations assigned by law as his responsibility. Such things as septic field installations, safe water supply and occupancy permits come under his jurisdiction.

The Fire Marshal is responsible for enforcing fire safety regulations in the building code and under state law. His is an important part of town government.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

The Connecticut Development Commission has recently issued "A Guide to Capital Improvement Programming in Connecticut" which is an extremely well thought-out pamphlet covering an important part of the comprehensive planning program. To follow through on such a program, however, is beyond the scope of this Report since the guide covers the subject in greater detail than was intended by the consultants in their proposal to the Commission.

However, we have made certain studies which will be helpful in following the Development Commission's outline.

A capital improvements program is a combined planning and financial operation. It should be a timetable of major projects for a period of years. Each year the program should be reviewed, revised and projected another year ahead to keep up with changing conditions. Projects included should be based on the community's need and ability to pay.

The Comprehensive Plan of Development is in a large part the basis for major projects. Included should be expenditures for construction, reconstruction, replacement, major repair, addition or other improvements to public buildings; highways, bridges, parks, playgrounds or other public works or any facility or structure appurtenant to any of these. In North Branford even small pieces of equipment might be included under the program.

The amount of money to be spent will be whatever the community can afford or is willing to pay. It will be spread over several years and will depend on such things as existing local costs, debt service and sources of income including grants from state and federal governments.

Financing may be done on a pay-as-you-go basis, borrowing or a combination of these methods.

Investigations should be made by the programming agency to determine what federal funds and state contributions are available for highways, school building construction, water and sewer systems.

The cooperation of the several agencies concerned is vital to a sound capital improvements program in order to carry out an economically sound program for the orderly development and growth of the town of North Branford.

Some of the items which should be included in a capital improvements program for North Branford are:

School site purchases, including enough land for playgrounds

School buildings

Surveying and establishment of highway rights of way

Improvement of new town hall

Conversion of old town hall

Design and construction of new bridges

Acquisition of sites for town community facilities

Permanent street name signs

Possible acquisition of land for industrial use

The above list is only a partial one intended to cover only the immediate five or six year period. While it is not the legal responsibility of the Planning Commission to prepare this program for capital improvements, it seems logical that the commission should draft such a program and present it to the town for consideration since the Commission has prepared the comprehensive plan.

Procedure

Assuming that the Planning Commission is determined to be the proper agency to

prepare a capital improvements program, each department should submit annually its estimate of capital improvements for the next six years. Estimates should also be prepared in greater detail for the current year.

The Commission would then analyze the suggested program in relation to the Comprehensive Plan of Development and consult with the other departments of the town. The selectmen and board of finance would then have a guide for allocation of money and execution of projects and the town would have an assurance that the goals of the Comprehensive Plan were being accomplished.

At all times there would be a backlog of projects in preliminary planning stages, to insure that final plans could be authorized for completion of projects at the time needed, rather than being behind current requirements.

RECREATIONAL AREAS

SCHOOL

Cedar Lake	1 semi-sheltered roof covered play area 1 paved area for volley ball Jungle gym, slides and seesaws Free play grassed area
Junior High	1 baseball diamond (standard size infield) Small volley ball area Rough field area
Center	Paved basketball court Little League ball field Slide and seesaws
Jerome Harrison	Small paved area Slides, seesaws, basketball standards, rough field area
William Douglas	Small paved area, slides, seesaws, basketball standards, rough field area

EXISTING SCHOOLS

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Grades</u>	<u>No. of Pupils</u>	<u>No. of Classrooms</u>
Cedar Lake	Twin Lakes Rd. North Branford	K - 6	334	12
William Douglas	Old Post Road Northford	K - 6	281	10
Jerome Harrison	Route 80 North Branford	K - 6	316	12
Junior High School	Route 80 North Branford	7 - 9	329	18

PROPOSED SCHOOLS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>				
1961	A	Center Northford	K & 4 - 6	400	12
1960	B	Cedar Lake Addition	Elem.	120	4
1960	C	Jerome Harrison "	Elem.	240	8
1962-65	D	Junior High	" 7-8-9	300	12

SOURCES

North Branford, Conn.

Connecticut, State of

- Agricultural Experiment Station - Reports
- Development Commission - Reports & Consultations
- Highway Department - Reports, Plans & Consultations
- Labor Department - Reports
- Secretary of State - Register & Manual
- Tax Department - Assessment & Collection of Taxes 1947 - 1958

Crofut, Florence S. March, - Guide to the History & to the Historic Sites of Connecticut

North Branford, Town of

- Board of Education, - Reports
- Fire Department
- Town Clerk - Reports
- Town Planning Commission - Consultations, Reports & Plans
 - Subcommittee Industrial Development Committee
- Town Reports

U. S. Department of Commerce, Weather Bureau, Bradley Field, Windsor Locks - Reports
U. S. Geological Survey - Maps

Utilities

- Connecticut Light & Power - Maps
- Southern New England Telephone Co.
- United Illuminating Company - Maps
- Wallingford Borough Electric Works - Maps

Water

- New Haven Water Company - Maps
- Wallingford Water Company - Maps

Zoning Maps & Regulations surrounding towns