# 3

# COMMUNITY INVENTORY

## TOWN GOVERNMENT

Putnam has a town meeting form of government with a Mayor, a six member Board of Selectmen, and a five member Board of Finance. Since 1999, a Town Administrator, appointed by the mayor and the Board of Selectmen, has been responsible for administration of all departments and agencies of Town government. Town staff provides technical services to town officials and the public, and assist volunteer boards and commissions with decision-making. Land use issues are the responsibility of four commissions (Planning, Zoning, Inland Wetlands and Zoning Board of Appeals), with staff assistance provided by one part-time Zoning Enforcement Officer, one part-time Building Official and one Clerk.

Zoning, Subdivision and Inland Wetland Regulations govern use and physical aspects of land development in Town. The Zoning Regulations have been in effect since April 16, 1987, with modifications over the years to address issues such as adult entertainment and wireless telecommunication facilities. The Zoning Commission conducts site plan review for applications for special exceptions; the filing of plot plans is required in order to obtain Building Permits and Certificates of Zoning Compliance, both required by the Zoning Regulations. The Planning Commission reviews and approves applications for the subdivision of land; the Inland Wetland Commission reviews all planning and zoning applications with wetlands or watercourses on-site and issues permits for regulated activities. The Zoning Enforcement Officer is also the wetlands enforcement officer and flood administrator for the Town. The provisions of regulatory documents should be reviewed and updated at the conclusion of the Plan of Conservation and Development process to assure consistency with the Plan's policies and goals.

As with many communities that exist as a result of town/city consolidations, there are more than physical vestiges remaining of

the formerly distinct areas. The Putnam Special Services District was created in January 1984 by the Consolidated Charter of the Town and City. The District, with the same boundaries as the old City and acting through a five member District

Authority, has the power to levy taxes and make appropriations in order to provide certain public services within the District. In Putnam, the services provided by the District include police, fire, emergency dispatch and street lights. In addition to property taxes established by the Town, property owners in the District pay taxes to the Special Services District for these services. Property owners outside of the Special Services District pay fire protection-related taxes directly to two separately organized fire districts, each with its own tax collector, with only property taxes payable to the Town.

## TAX BASE ANALYSIS

- Grand List Trends

As shown on Table 1, Putnam's 2002 net grand list totaled $339 million, of which $254 million or 75% was comprised of real estate. Personal property and motor vehicles each contributed another $44 million or 13%. The net grand list has grown 5.4% since the post-revaluation year of 1999. Putnam has a better than average base of business property taxpayers, 35% of the grand list as compared to the 27% state average in 1998.

**Table 1**
**Putnam Net Grand List Trends**
**1990-2002**

| Category | 1990 Assessment 000,000's | % of total '90 | 2002 Assessment 000,000's | % of total '02 | $ increase '90-'02 000,000's | % increase '90-'02 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Real Estate | 295 | 86.0% | 264 | 74.4% | ($41) | (13.9%) |
| Personal Property | 27 | 7.9% | 44 | 12.4% | 17 | 63% |
| Motor Vehicles | 21 | 6.1% | 44 | 12.4% | 23 | 110% |
| Total Gross Grand List | 343 | 100% | 355 | 100% | 12 | 3.5% |
| Exemptions | 5 | | 16 | | 11 | 220% |
| Net Grand List | 338 | | 339 | | 1 | 0.3% |

Source: Assessor, Town of Putnam

## Putnam Grand List by Category

Table 2 is a summary of the Town's 2002 Grand List. Residential real estate carries 47% of the tax burden in Putnam. High reliance on residential real estate is the rule rather than the exception among Connecticut towns, where reliance on homes routinely constitutes the majority of the tax base. Putnam also has a well developed commercial and industrial sector, which together constitute 23% of the 2002 grand list.

**Table 2**
**2002 Grand List**

| Use | Gross Assessment | Percentage of Total Grand List |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| All Residential | $166,333,400 | 46.9% |
| Commercial | $ 50,105,000 | 14.1% |
| Apartments | $ 9,361,000 | 2.6% |
| Industrial | $ 31,040,000 | 8.8% |
| Public Utility | $ 450,000 | -- |
| Vacant Land | $ 6,175,600 | 1.7% |
| Use Assessment | $ 620,350 | -- |
| TOTAL Real Estate | $264,085,350 | 74.4% |
| Total Grand List | $354,658,892 | 100% |

Source: Assessor, Town of Putnam

## Tax Structure

There are some areas of concern in Putnam's tax structure, however. Although Putnam has a better than average base of business property taxpayers, it also has a very high reliance on state aid. For the year ended 2000, Connecticut Policy and Economic Council (CPEC) data indicate that state aid to Putnam constituted 56% of town revenues, the second highest level of such reliance statewide behind the town of Windham. Per capita state aid to Putnam residents was $1,006 in 2000, the 15th highest level out of 169 cities and towns. In times of diminished state revenues and budget woes, having a high reliance on state aid can be challenging. The loss of State aid often results in an increase in local taxes so that service levels can be maintained. This particularly impacts low and moderate income households and those on fixed incomes.

Level of state aid is a region-wide issue, as 19 east-central and northeastern Connecticut towns receive 40% or more of their annual town budgets from state aid. Lower prevailing income levels and real estate values compared with the rest of the state and lower property tax receipts account for the higher levels of state aid.

## Spending

Putnam ranks low state-wide in its per capita expenditures – 165th out of 169 towns. Low spending per capita reflects the delivery of a more limited range and depth of services. While this is in part explained by a lower cost of living and doing business in the region, it is also indicative of lower funding for key services such as education. Putnam has also been increasing spending at a lower rate than average: between 1995 and 2000, its annualized rate of change in per capita municipal spending was 1.0% as compared to the state average of 2.4%. Putnam did well to restrain increases in spending to levels just ahead of growth in its grand list, but comparatively little is being spent per capita on several key services:

- Police: Putnam ranks 166th of 169 in per capita police expenditure. This is due to East Putnam being served by the state police. Lack of service to the area beyond the special services district, including the industrial park, has been cited as an issue by local businesses. Putnam's crime rate at 22.3 per thousand population is below the state average of 33.8.
- Fire: Putnam ranks 154th out of 169
- Public Works: Putnam ranks 115th out of 169, which is closer to the state average but which still lags the average.

As in most communities the biggest part of the town budget is the education expenditure. The profile is a mixed one. In one key respect, Putnam compares fairly well: Per pupil education expenditure is on par with the state average as of 2000, $8,533 vs. $8,572. Woodstock and Pomfret spend far less per pupil but also have fewer students requiring special education and other services. With respect to professional salaries, mainly teachers', Putnam ranks lower than the state average at $46,640 versus $52,410. Lower average salaries predominate in the region, including Woodstock and Pomfret where the averages trail Putnam's by 4 and 7% respectively.

The provision of these key services is often deemed essential by prospective residents and businesses to providing an attractive quality of life and business location.

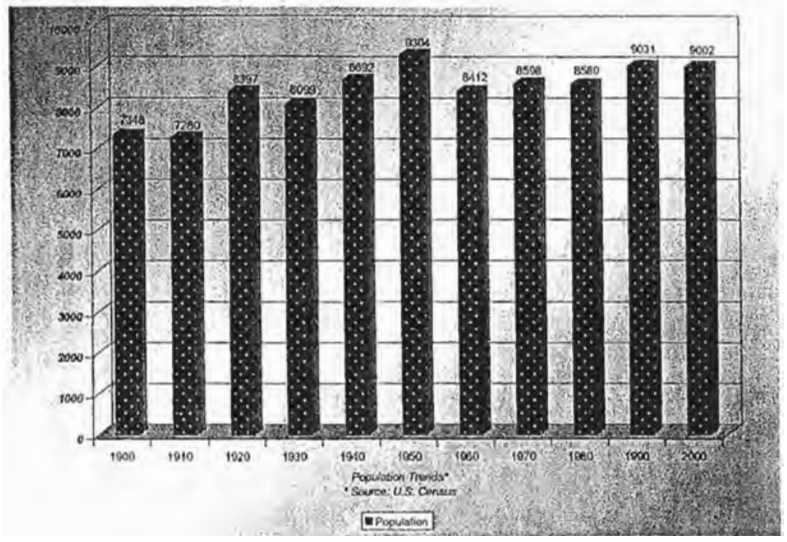
# DEMOGRAPHICS

## Population

In the last 100 years Putnam's population has remained remarkably stable. There have been periods of notable growth, such as 1910 to

1920 when the population grew by 1,117 as well as times of notable decline, such as the 1950 to 1960 decade when there was a population loss of 892. Overall, between 1900 and 2000, the population has changed only 22.5% or an increase of 1,654 people (see Table 3). This represents an average annual increase of only 16.5 people per year.

**Table 3**
**Population Trends**

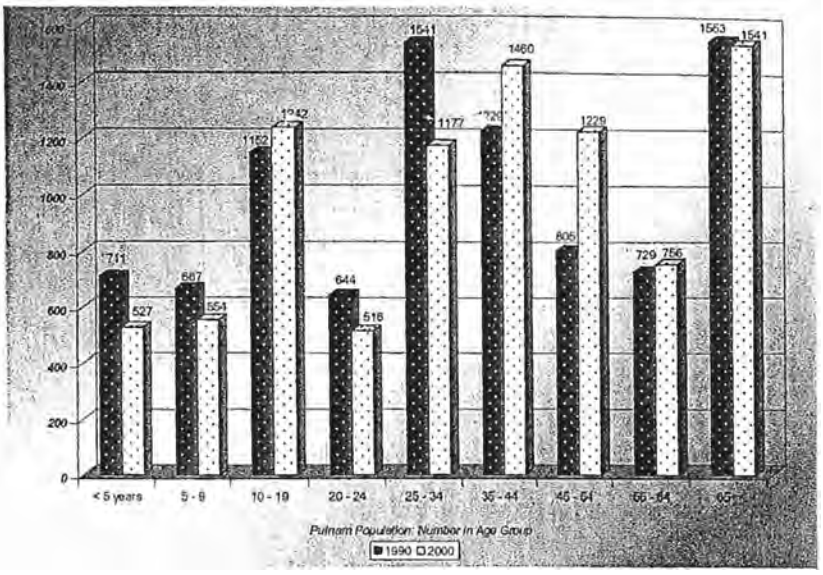



Source: U. S. Census

In the most recent census Putnam recorded a slight decline in population of 29 people (0.3%) but a gain of 108 households (3%). The increase in households while population remained flat occurred as a result of a slight decrease in average household size. In 1990, the average household was 2.48 persons – in 2000, the average household was 2.38. This trend of smaller households is widespread and reflects an aging of the population. However, since 2000, estimates by Claritas Inc., a leading source of demographic information, indicate that Putnam has added both population and households. Continued gains are projected through 2007 for an increase in population of 2.8% (9255) and in households of 5.1% (to 3869).

Age groups under 34 years (except for the age 10 to 19 category) lost population in the last 10 years while the age groups 35 years and older (except the age 65 years plus groups) increased in population (Table 4). The losses in the young adult categories (ages 20-34, prime child-bearing years) are reflected in the losses in the 0-9 year age categories. A Demographic Profile of Putnam is attached as Appendix A and an overview of Ten Year Trends town-wide and by Census Tract is attached as Appendix B.

**Table 4**
**Population by Age Group**




Source: U. S. Census

## Households

Putnam's current household profile has some notable aspects. These include:

- A high concentration of single person households, representing 30.7% of all households. By comparison, the region has 25.0% single person households. More than 1,100 households in Putnam are single individuals.
- The single households are represented in higher proportions for both men and women. Single men account for 13.2% and single women 17.5% of all Putnam households.
- A lower concentration of households is represented by married couple families in Putnam, 44.6% compared to 54.1% for the region.
- Other families, typically female-headed, are slightly more common in Putnam, 17.1% compared to 14.6% for the region.

Looking at trends in Putnam household composition, census data from 1990 and 2000 indicate that Putnam has gained non-family households and lost family households. The great majority of non-family households are singles of all ages. A smaller subset of non-family households are unrelated persons living together, which is the fastest growing segment of all household types.

Claritas projections for 2007 indicate the trend for non-family household formation to continue at twice the pace of family formation. Many of these will be singles.

## Population Distribution

Examining data at the tract level provides a geographic sense of the distribution of the population as well as an indication of where changes occurred. There are two census tracts in Putnam, Tract 9031 and Tract 9032. The boundary of Tract 9031 closely approximates the boundary of the Special Services District (see Figure 3). In 2000, 75% of the Town's' population and 79% of the Town's housing units were located in the Special Services District (Tract 9031). The data indicates that these residents tended to be younger (median age 36.3 years vs. 43.4 years in Tract 9032), are more likely to live in non-family households (41% vs. 27%) and therefore in households of smaller average size than in Tract 9032. They were also less likely to be homeowners (47% vs. 88%). In the last ten years Tract 9031 lost population (84 people) and family households (157) while showing an increase of 201 non-family households (Appendix B).

## Income Trends

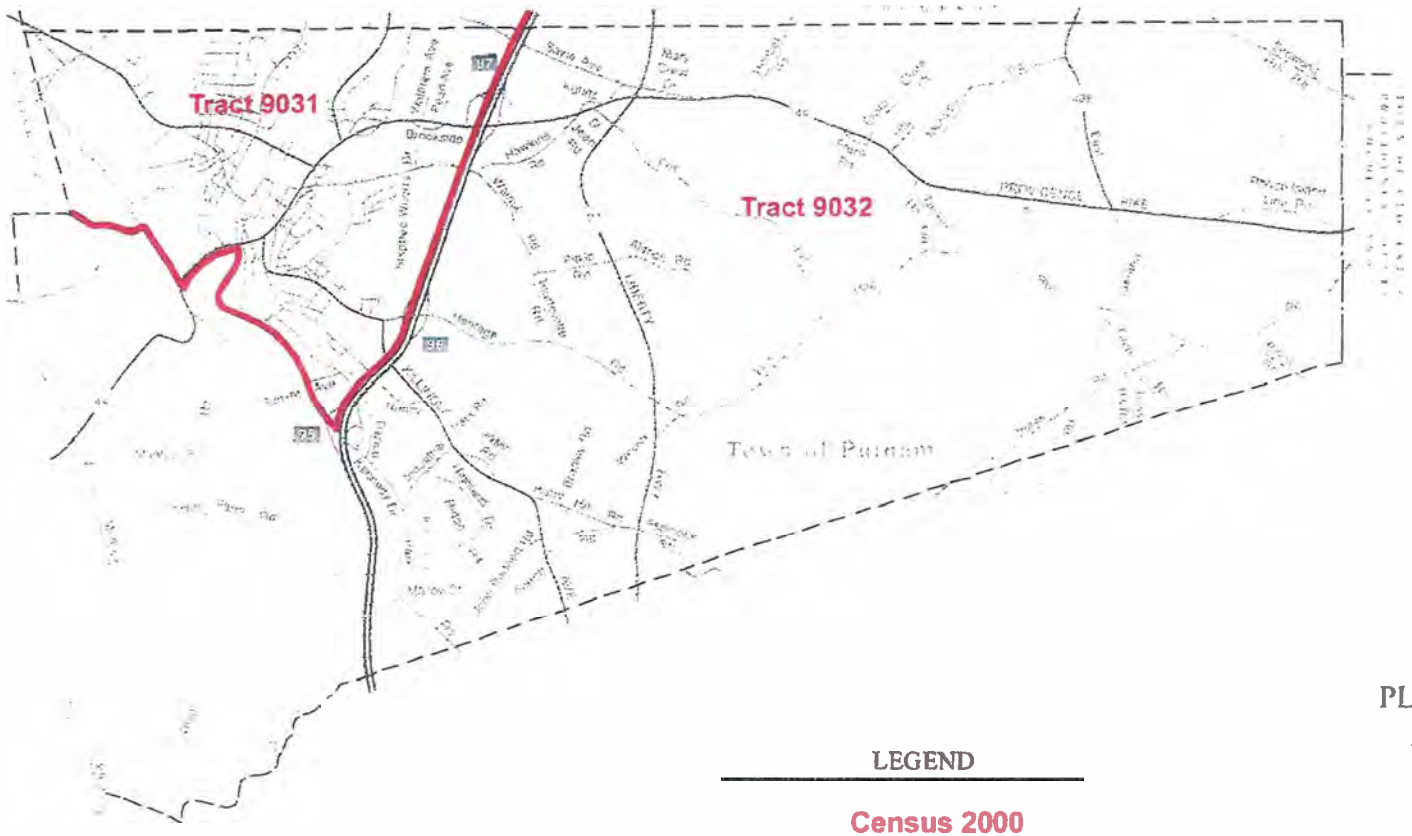
Putnam's household income distribution was fairly evenly distributed over a wide range in 2000. While there continues to be a core of lower income distribution, Putnam's poverty rate decreased from 11.1% in 1990 to 7.7% in 2000. There is good distribution in the middle income and higher ranges up to $100,000.00.

Putnam's median income trends have been positive, with substantial increases in all median measures, as shown below. Median increases have outpaced inflation of 31.8% for 1990-2000. Table 5 summarizes median income trends. While non-family median income lags, it is heavily weighted towards single wage earner households and therefore lower. Also, it is increasing at a faster rate. As mentioned previously, non-family households are expected to increase faster than family households over the near future.

**Table 5**
**Putnam Median Income Trends 1990 & 2000**

| Income Data By Household Type | 1990 | 2000 | % Increase |
|---|---|---|---|
| Median Household Income | $27,837 | $43,010 | 54.5% |
| Median Family Household Income | $34,393 | $53,460 | 55.4% |
| Median Nonfamily Hhold Income | $14,556 | $25,140 | 72.7% |
| Per Capita Income | $14,550 | $20,597 | 41.6% |

Source: U. S. Census




LEGEND

Census 2000
Tract Boundary

TOWN OF PUTNAM
PLAN OF CONSERVATON
AND DEVELOPMENT

# Census Tracts

TPA DESIGN GROUP

SOURCE Map prepared by and used with the permission of
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FIGURE 3

## Housing Trends

Housing data for 1990 to 2000 reveals the following trends:

- Putnam's housing is older than average for the area; much of it was built during the period of industrialization, resulting in half of the units having been built before 1950. Statewide, about one third of housing is older than 1950.
- Half the housing is single unit (single family) and half is multi-family. The trend over the last 10 years (see Table 6) has been toward the creation of new single family housing, in many cases by consolidating two family units into one family.
- Putnam witnessed an increase of 189 detached single family homes and 69 attached single family homes, averaging 26 a year for the period.
- The town lost 86 two family units, in many cases due to consolidations, and saw little activity in multi-family construction.
- The rental vacancy rate fell from 5.7% or 215 units to 3.0% or 122 units, a positive absorption of 93 units.
- The number of homes for sale decreased from 85 in 1990 to 30 in 2000, a positive absorption of 55.

**Table 6**
**Putnam Housing Profile 1990-2000**

| Year End | All units | 1 unit | 2 unit | 3-4 units | 5+ units | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1990 | 3,790 | 1,874 | 667 | 769 | 447 | 33 |
| 2000 | 3,955 | 2,132 | 581 | 777 | 465 | 0 |
| Unit Increase | 165 | 258 | (86) | 8 | 18 | (33) |

Source: 1990 & 2000 U. S. Census

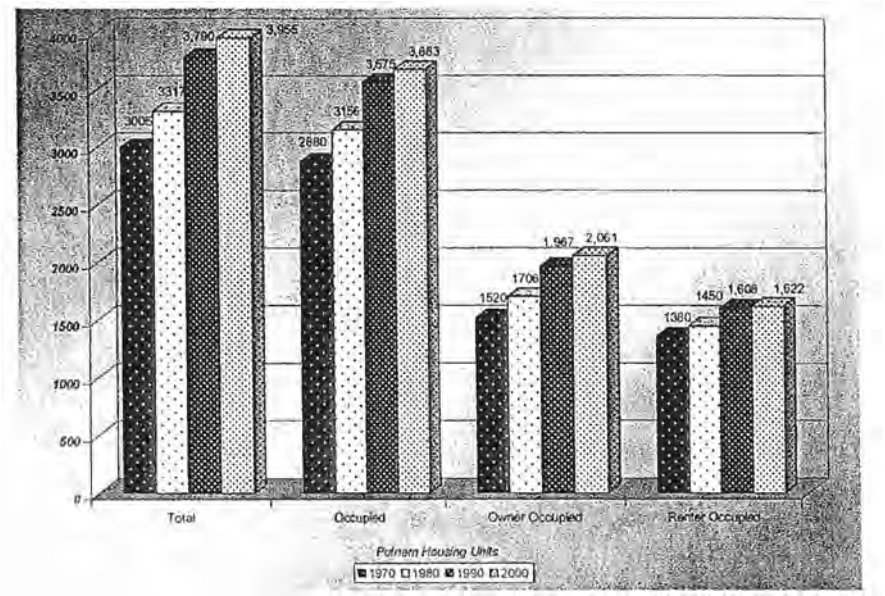
In contrast to population numbers that have fluctuated up and down, housing construction in Putnam has shown consistent increases. Table 7 summarizes changes in the number of housing units over the last forty years and shows consistent increases in construction and occupancy. The rate of growth for owner-occupied units has consistently exceeded that for renter-occupied units, though Putnam remains a key source of rental housing in the region.

The Putnam Housing Authority's inventory presently includes 124 public housing units, 40 state elderly units, 27 State Section 8 units, and 34 Section 8 vouchers. As a result of high vacancy rates in its elderly housing projects, the Housing Authority sold the 20 unit Johnston Apartments (elderly units) to the Town in 2002 and relocated tenants to its other elderly housing facilities. Private and

non-profit housing providers have also developed assisted housing so that at the time of the 2000 census there were 791 subsidized housing units in Putnam.

A comparison of building permits and certificates of occupancy issued in the last five years indicates an active housing market. The data in Table 8 shows a close correlation between the number of residential building permits and

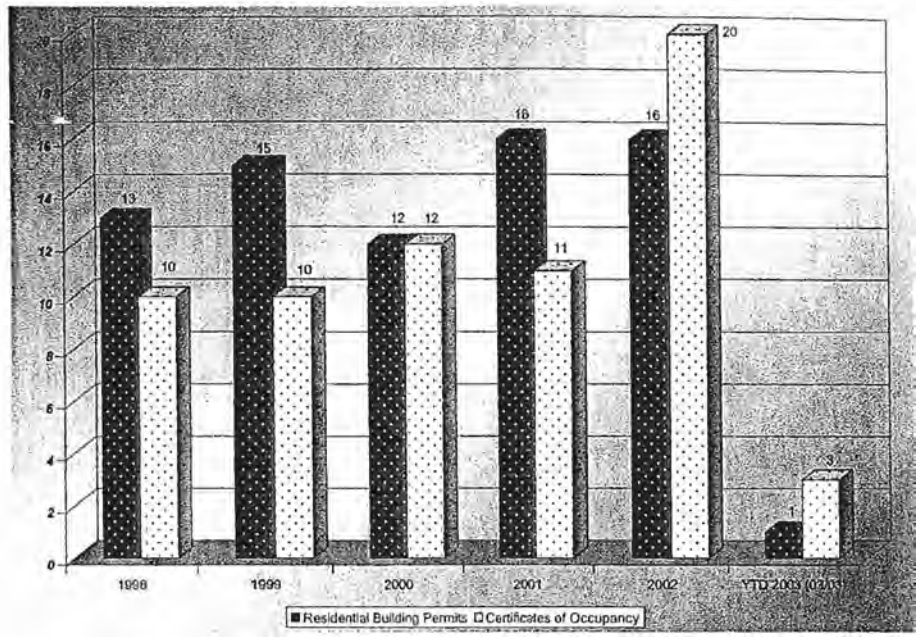
**Table 7**
**Housing Trends**




Source: U. S. Census

certificates of occupancy issued in Putnam. Units got started, completed and occupied. Housing construction and population mobility are also indicated by the fact that in the 2000 census more than 57% of households reported moving into their living unit in 1990 or later. Part of the attraction of Putnam may be its relative housing affordability, though 16.6% of homeowners and 24.4% of renters still spend more than 30% of their gross income (the break-off point for "affordability") on housing.

**Table 8**
**Building Permits/Certificates of Occupancy**




Source: Building Department, Town of Putnam

## Housing Market

Putnam at the time of the 2000 census had begun to experience a rebound in housing values which continues to the present. Median single family home values have increased 51% since 1997, while condominiums have shown a 44% increase. The increasing number of transactions indicates good liquidity and turnover. Table 9 indicates that sales transactions decreased slightly in 2002 while median prices continued to increase: this trend has been prevalent in Connecticut where advantageous interest rates have made ownership more affordable but the supply of homes has remained static. Year to date medians through June 2003 are $139,450 (62 sales) and $130,000 (6 sales), indicating that the Putnam market is still experiencing an up trend in values.

**Table 9**
**Town of Putnam Transactional Data**

| | Single Family Homes | | Condominiums | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | Median | Number of sales | Median | Number of sales |
| 2002 | $119,000 | 119 | $108,000 | 21 |
| 2001 | $112,500 | 124 | $83,950 | 22 |
| 2000 | $97,000 | 102 | $86,000 | 14 |
| 1999 | $89,950 | 114 | $82,000 | 9 |
| 1998 | $90,000 | 104 | $75,000 | 9 |
| 1997 | $78,750 | 88 | $75,000 | 9 |

Source: The Warren Group

## Employment

The total civilian labor force is defined as all residents age 16 years and older. In 2000, this was 80% of Putnam's total population. Of these, 68% (4877 people) reported themselves as being part of the labor force (employed or actively seeking employment). In May 2003 the Connecticut Department of Labor's figures indicated an increase in the Labor Force in Putnam to 5,236 persons. Since the population is relatively stable, this growth in labor force is probably attributable to an increase in jobs and in-migration. A slight increase in the unemployment rate has accompanied this growth in labor force. Journey to work data indicates that fewer residents were working in Putnam in 2000 than in 1990.

Putnam residents tend to have spent fewer years in school than residents of the region and the state. Of residents 25 and older, 35% do not have a high school diploma (29% for the region, 20% for the state). Thirteen per cent of Putnam residents hold a four year college or graduate degree compared with 18% for the region and 28% for the state.

Residents' occupations reflect this educational profile. At the time of the 2000 census the majority of residents held jobs in one of three employment categories: manufacturing (22.4%); educational, health and social services (21.9%); and retail trade (13.6%). Putnam and the region present a fairly sharp contrast to the occupational profile of the State as a whole. Connecticut is characterized by a greater concentration of executives and professionals.

## Journey to Work

Claritas demographic estimates for 2002 indicated that Putnam residents have relatively short work commutes as compared to the region and state. Eight out of ten workers travels less than 30 minutes to work, which is considered the break point between tolerable and onerous commutes. Putnam commuters are a little more likely to carpool than the rest of the state, most likely because public transportation options are limited.

The comparison of journey to work data for Putnam residents for 1990 and 2000 indicates that while Putnam itself is still the major work destination, Massachusetts was the second most common destination of the resident labor force and its percentage is increasing. Real estate agents indicate that northeastern Connecticut is increasingly becoming home to workers commuting to Massachusetts. Putnam workers are also commuting west in greater numbers to Woodstock and Pomfret and south to Killingly and Plainfield. Major destinations are summarized in Table 10.

**Table 10**
**Workers Commuting from Putnam, 1990 and 2000**

| Place of Destination | 1990 Number | 2000 Number | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Putnam | 1,851 | 1,609 | -13.0% |
| Massachusetts | 577 | 714 | 23.7% |
| Killingly | 527 | 595 | 12.9% |
| Woodstock | 180 | 262 | 45.5% |
| Thompson | 148 | 176 | 18.9% |
| Pomfret | 103 | 167 | 62.1% |
| Rhode Island | 62 | 107 | 72.5% |
| Plainfield | 60 | 127 | 112.7% |
| Windham | 53 | 105 | 98.1% |

Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census

Although not major sources of employment for Putnam residents, the gaming towns of Ledyard and Montville drew workers from Putnam as well: 72 to Ledyard and 35 to Montville. Norwich accounted for 107, Groton 48 and Boston 23.

The data for workers commuting to Putnam is summarized in Table 11 by major source towns and states. Putnam employers are diversifying their workforce by place of origin although still relying heavily on Putnam residents. Data from the previous table and the one following also demonstrate that Putnam is a net exporter of workers to Massachusetts and a net importer of workers from Rhode Island. Another important source of workers coming to Putnam is Windham, which generated 100 Putnam workers.

**Table 11**
**Workers Commuting to Putnam, 1990 and 2000**

| Place of Origin | 1990 Number | 2000 Number | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Putnam | 1,851 | 1,609 | -13.1% |
| Killingly | 922 | 1,059 | 14.9% |
| Thompson | 581 | 620 | 6.7% |
| Woodstock | 436 | 486 | 11.5% |
| Brooklyn | 249 | 228 | -8.4% |
| Pomfret | 234 | 306 | 30.8% |
| Plainfield | 226 | 312 | 38.1% |
| Rhode Island | 204 | 269 | 31.9% |
| Massachusetts | 192 | 228 | 18.8% |

Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census

## PUBLIC BUILDINGS

In recent years, the Town has grappled with an obvious need to upgrade two major public buildings, the Town Hall and its Library (now located within Riverfront Commons on Kennedy Drive). In 2000 the Town began the process of addressing Town Hall and other public facility needs with a space needs analysis by Ames and Whitaker, Architects for Town Hall and the Library as well as a new Community Center. This comparative site study investigated numerous potential sites, settling on two viable alternatives: renovation of Putnam Catholic Academy or construction of a new building at Tarr Park. In 2001, the analysis was expanded in a study by the Downes Group/Jacunski, Humes Architects, to include consideration of the Putnam High School building.

For the Plan of Conservation and Development update town agencies were asked to report on physical improvements undertaken since completion of the last Plan of Conservation and Development (1989) as well as to indicate anticipated need for additional facilities or land acquisitions in the next ten years. These results are included in the following summaries.

- Town Hall

Computer upgrades and related office equipment additions for record storage were the most commonly cited changes in the last ten years for departments located at Town Hall. No expansion of work space or parking area was undertaken to deal with the major deficiencies of cramped space and lack of off-street parking cited in the 1989 Plan of Development. These deficiencies have been exacerbated by technology and needs for additional personnel. The issue of record storage continues to be a major need, increasingly paired with concerns about the ability of the current building's infrastructure to adequately and safely meet the needs of new technologies already in place or operationally desirable to be brought into Town hall (e.g. a climate-controlled vault for the Town Clerk's office or a Geographic Information System for the Assessor).

It was estimated by Ames and Whitaker that net useable building area of 16,029 square feet will be required to accommodate all administrative functions in Town Hall (Economic Development, the Director of Public Works and some Board of Education departments are now located off-site) as well as to provide for expansion through the year 2020. The existing Town Hall provides net useable area of only 7,100 square feet.

## Library

Maintenance and refurbishment activities at the library since completion of the last plan have included replacing the furnace; new carpets, light fixtures and curtains on the main floor; and carpeting, paint and light fixtures in the basement. The space deficiencies noted in the 1989 Plan (crowding in the adult section of the facility) have been exacerbated by the need to accommodate new technology, media and service needs. Physical expansion of the building (built in 1955, children's wing added in 1979) is needed so that efficiency of operation is maintained and adequate space for books, computers and staff work areas is available. Ames and Whitaker estimated that net useable library space of approximately 15,000 square feet will be adequate through the year 2020. The library is centrally located with a good supply of parking; its expansion needs should be carefully evaluated to determine whether its present location can accommodate expansion while maintaining a positive interface with the proposed redevelopment of Riverfront Commons. The Town intends on soliciting developers to examine the reuse of Hale Mill as a library and Town Hall complex.

## Municipal Garage

The municipal garage facilities have essentially been consolidated at the Fox Road location. The Public Works Department retains responsibility for the Church Street property and continues to use approximately one-half of the building for departmental vehicle storage. The other half of the Church Street building has been remodeled to accommodate two ambulances and associated emergency medical services. It is expected that additional vehicle storage areas and a salt/sand storage building will be needed in the future. There is adequate space at the Fox Road location to accommodate these expansion needs.

## Educational Facilities

Since completion of the last Plan of Development the Town built a Middle School facility adjoining the elementary school, completed a high school addition and refurbished the building at Murphy Park to accommodate the Putnam Alternative Learning School (PALS). Three educational buildings now comprise the school system:

- Putnam Elementary School (Grades PK-5). Built in 1975 and containing 59 permanent classrooms and the Family Resource Center.
- Putnam Middle School (Grades 6-8). Built in 1992 and containing 29 permanent classrooms.

- Putnam High School (Grades 9-12). Built in 1951 and containing 32 permanent classrooms.

Over the period 1990-2000 Putnam lost enrollment faster than population: enrollment dropped at the rate of 4.5% (66 students) while the Town lost 0.3% (29 people). While Putnam has not had to face the burden of burgeoning school populations faced by many Connecticut towns over the period (for example Woodstock where the student population doubled), it has not reaped the community benefits of attracting young families with school aged children. Enrollment is anticipated to stay flat through 2006. Although test scores are improving, Putnam ranks below State averages in many categories.

The school department has indicated the need for a new high school, an expanded Family Resource Center and an additional alternative learning building in the next 10 years as well as central office expansion and infrastructure improvements such as computers, technology and athletic field/playground improvements.

## PUBLIC SERVICES

### Fire Services

The Putnam Fire Department, serving the Special Services District, is located in the station at 189 Church Street. Since the last Plan of Development the department has replaced two of its fire engines (1992 and 1999) and its ladder truck (2003). Its two other engines (1979 and 1966) continue in service, the latter generally considered a spare and used as the department's forestry/brush truck. The department's 1985 rescue unit continues in service.

The department has averaged 171 response calls annually in the last five years with approximately 25% of these in the "miscellaneous" category (not fire-related). The department consists of two hose companies, one hook and ladder company and one rescue company. Each company has a captain, a lieutenant and nine firefighters assigned to it.

Fire protection outside of the Special Services District is provided by two fire districts, one in East Putnam manned by a volunteer force of 25, and the other in West Putnam which contracts with the Putnam Fire Department for service. These districts have taxing power to fund the provision of service. The East Putnam volunteers have a station on Route 44 (approximately one mile from the Rhode Island border) that houses a tanker truck, engine, forestry truck and rescue truck. The engine is scheduled to be replaced in the next two years. The East Putnam District covers

everything east of the Special Services District/Kennedy Drive. The District does not own the fire house or land where a more centrally located house could be built. The recruitment of volunteers is becoming increasingly difficult as work situations change and time commitments for training and service increase. In the next ten years it may be necessary to address a shift from a 100% volunteer department to other options such as a combination of paid on-call volunteers and/or career firefighters.

- Police Services

Putnam Special Services District police services are also headquartered at 189 Church Street. The Putnam Emergency Dispatch Center, which handles all emergency and routine calls for the Putnam Fire Department, Putnam Police Department and the Putnam Ambulance Corps, is also housed at this location. The Police Department has 15 sworn police officers (the same staffing level since 1972) and includes patrol, investigation, bicycle units and DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) instructors for public school programs. Public safety outside the Special Services District is handled by the Connecticut State Police.

- Waste Management

Prior to 1998, the Town operated a local landfill which has been closed and capped in accord with Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection standards. The Public Works Department is responsible for periodic inspections and quarterly reporting on groundwater monitoring wells located at the site. The Town engages a vendor to provide curbside trash and recycling pick-up to residential structures of 6 families or less. The trash is hauled to the waste-to-energy facility in Lisbon owned by the Eastern Connecticut Resource Recovery Authority; recyclables are sold to various markets.

- Municipal Water

With limited exception, the Town's water and sewer service areas correspond to the Special Services District. Water service is also provided to approximately 17 residences on Oak Hill Drive in Thompson, approximately 43 residences in Woodstock, and to commercial development on Route 44 east of Exit 97 (the Putnam Parkade). An estimated 25 residences in the Special Services District have private wells. Via an interconnection to Killingly in Tracy Road, emergency water supply service is provided to industrial development at the Killingly border. This interconnection to Killingly also allows Putnam to purchase water from Killingly.

There are two primary water supply sources for the Putnam municipal water company, operated by the Putnam Water Pollution Control Authority. Surface water from the Little River is diverted via a man-made dam to the Peake Brook Road water treatment plant (WTP) located in Woodstock. This source provides approximately 60% of total water demand. The second source is groundwater from a well field on the Quinebaug River at Park Street. Groundwater is diverted to the water system from the 2 production wells located in the 3-well well field. Diverted groundwater provides about 40% of total demand, servicing the industrial park and the southern portion of the system. Roseland Lake (in Woodstock) is no longer managed as a reservoir for the Putnam water system. Because the lake is connected to the Little River source the WPCA performs treatment in the spring and summer to control algae growth.

The facilities associated with the water system include a 4 mgd pre-fabricated building and treatment unit facility built in 1994; two one million gallon water storage tanks located on Richmond Road and Prospect Street; well house buildings; more than 250 fire hydrants and approximately 38 miles of distribution piping.

Since completion of the last Plan of Development the above-referenced water treatment plant was built and has been upgraded to comply with EPA regulations, installation of residential meters was completed, the dam at the WTP was replaced, one of the water storage tanks was replaced and the other refurbished, and several miles of water mains were replaced under an on-going water main replacement program. The WPCA has been replacing the system's original unlined cast-iron pipes with ductile iron pipes since 1984.

According to the Town's "Water Supply Plan" (Consulting Environmental Engineer's Inc., Revised November 16, 1999) the distribution system "appears to be in generally good condition", however, it recommends three major improvements/alterations:

1. Develop additional supply or capacity to satisfy future demand;

2. improve record keeping and equipment monitoring; and

3. improve service protection measures and public education.

Figure 4 shows the water service area.

■ Sanitary Sewers

Sewer service outside the Special Services District is confined to Route 44 east of Exit 97 to approximately Mary Crest Drive, and

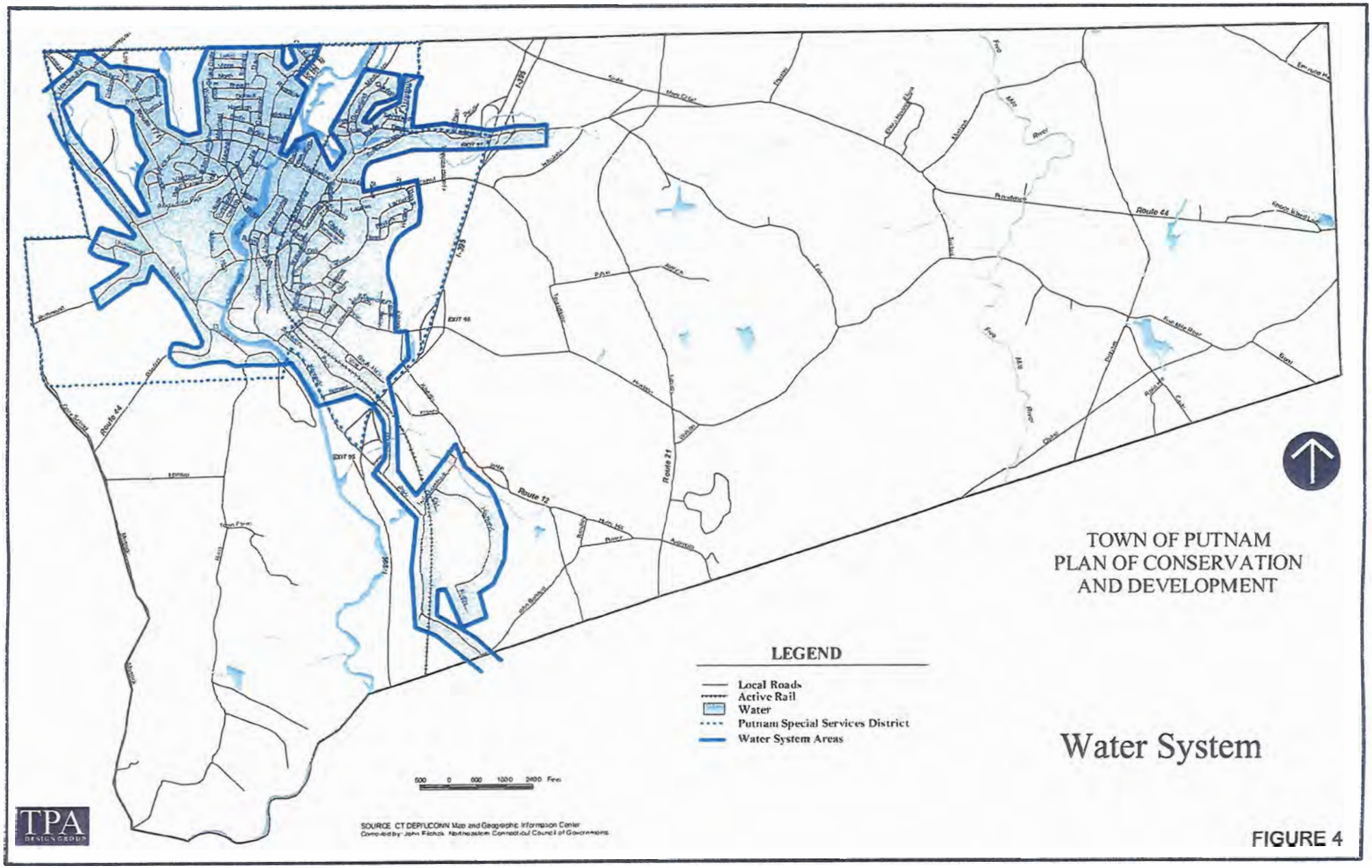

TOWN OF PUTNAM
PLAN OF CONSERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT
Water System
LEGEND
Local Roads
Active Rail
Water
Putnam Special Services District
Water System Areas
Route 44
Route 12
Route 21
EXIT 95
EXIT 96
I-395
500 0 500 1000 2400 Feet
SOURCE: CT DEP/UCONN Map and Geographic Information Center
Compiled by: John Filchak, Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
TPA
DESIGN GROUP

FIGURE 4

the Putnam Industrial Park. Recent sewer extensions in Route 44 have been constructed as private lines but may eventually be accepted by the WPCA and incorporated into the public system. Figure 5 shows sanitary sewer service areas.

The existing sewage treatment plant, in operation since 1971, has an average daily flow capacity of 2.91 mgd. At present the average daily flow is 1.07 mgd. Since preparation of the last Plan of Development the WPCA has completed treatment plant equipment replacement/upgrades, upgraded the plant's laboratory, completed improvements to lift station equipment and buildings, upgraded its computer system and undertaken engineering studies to evaluate plant operation and identify potential improvements needed.

An additional future flow requirement of approximately 342,000 gpd has been projected by an engineering consultant for the WPCA. It has been estimated that 200,000 gpd or 58% of this future flow will be required to serve industrial development. The feasibility study also examined upgrades to the plant that would be necessary to allow the system to accept industrial wastewater with higher biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and to reduce the amount of nitrogen in the treatment plant effluent. Preliminary design of a plant addition and equipment modifications to increase average daily flow to 1.6 mgd and incorporate treatment facilities for higher BOD wastewater has been completed. The engineering feasibility study recommended a two phase implementation program. The first phase involves the addition of a chemical feed building as well as equipment modifications at an estimated cost of approximately $2.4 million. This project is one of the priority projects in the Northeastern Connecticut Economic Partnership's regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Phase II would consist of additional equipment; costs for Phase II have not been determined.

No publicly initiated extensions of the sewer system are anticipated at this time. However, it is recognized that the sewer service area may be expanded as a result of growth by either developer initiated extensions or town-mandated requirements for sewer service as a condition of project approval.

- Storm Water Sewers

Approximately 40% of the town-maintained roads include a piped storm water system. These areas are located within the Special Services District. The town's roads outside the District are considered "rural" and do not include piped storm water systems. All new subdivisions, however, are required to construct a piped

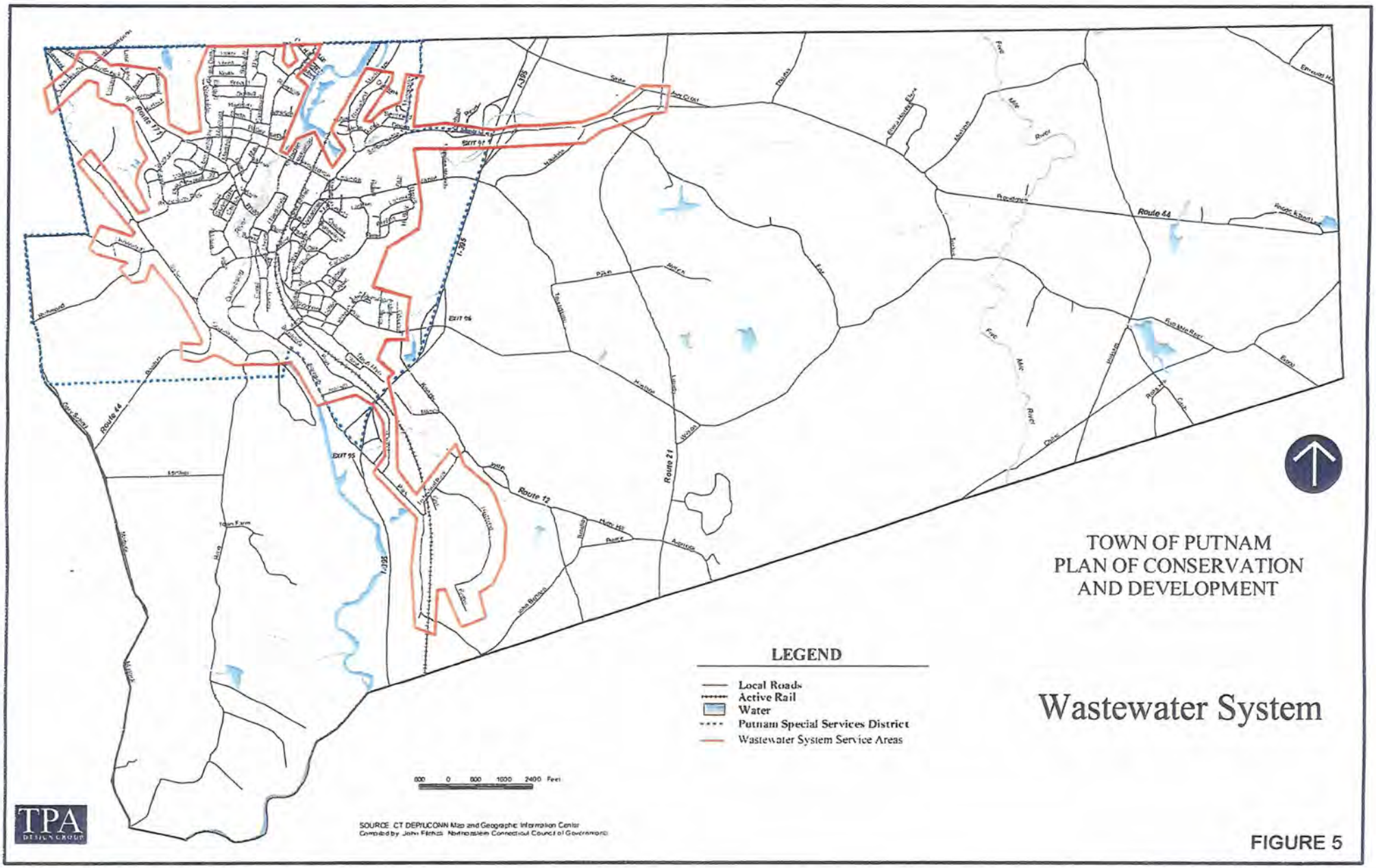

TOWN OF PUTNAM
PLAN OF CONSERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT
Wastewater System
LEGEND
Local Roads
Active Rail
Water
Putnam Special Services District
Wastewater System Service Areas
Route 44
Route 12
Route 21
Route 171
I-395
EXIT 95
EXIT 96
SOURCE: CT DEP/UCONN Map and Geographic Information Center
Compiled by: John Filchak, Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
TPA
DESIGN GROUP

FIGURE 5

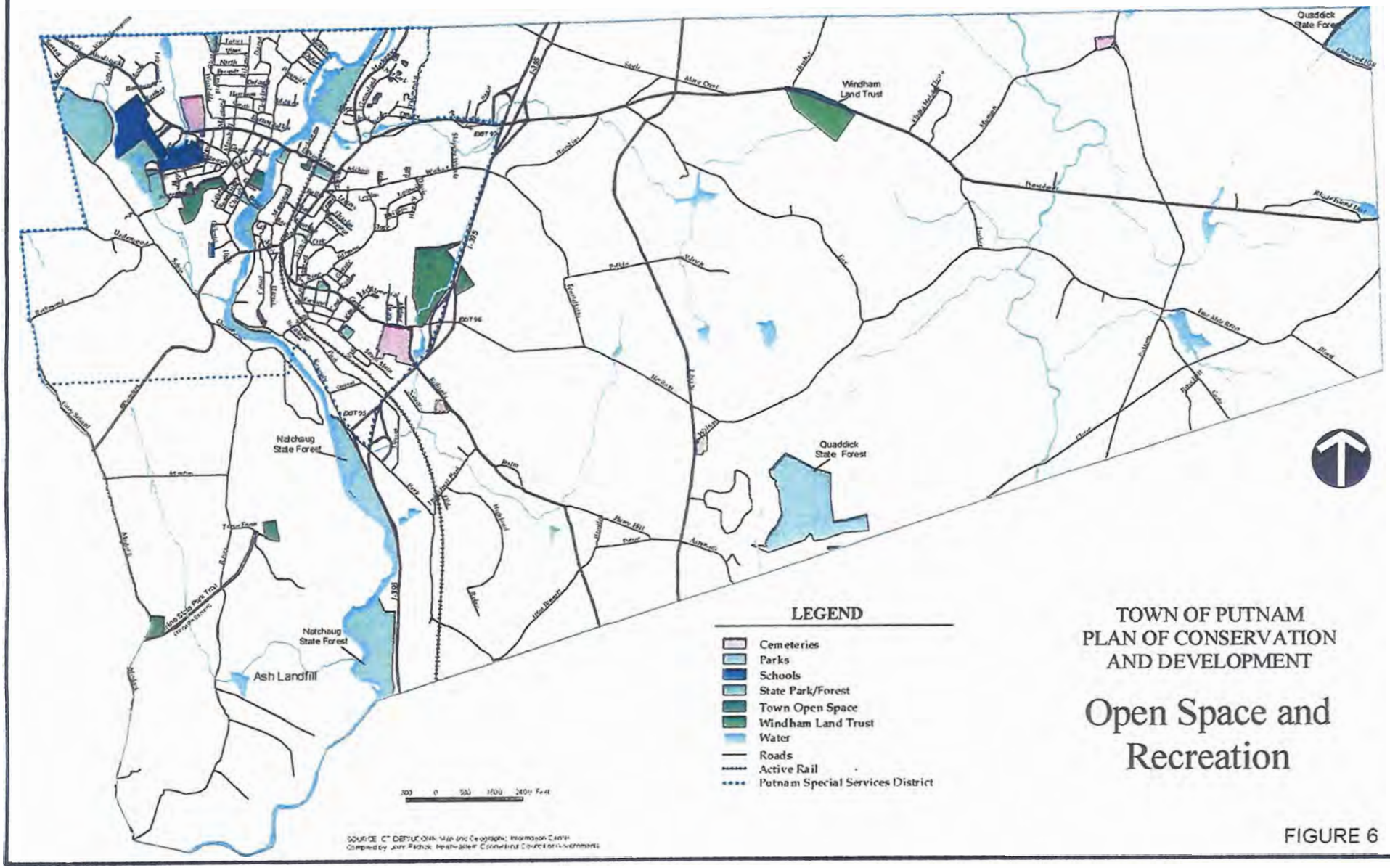
storm water system in new roadways, even if connection to the public system is not available.

## RECREATION FACILITIES

Major improvements and expansion of the active recreational areas in Putnam have occurred since completion of the last Plan of Development. These include development of the St. Marie-Greenhalgh Sports Complex, improvements to the recreation building at Murphy Park (in conjunction with the alternative learning project), development of Skateboard Park and refurbishment of the associated tennis courts and basketball court on Church Street, acquisition of King's Field, refurbishment of Chase Street playground (by a scout troop) and construction of a bandstand at Rotary Park. Table 12 summarizes the recreation and open space opportunities available to residents. These areas are shown on Figure 6.

Cooperative efforts between the Recreation Department and the School Department allow shared use of the town's outdoor and indoor recreation and educational facilities. The Recreation Department relies heavily on indoor school facilities for its programs, using everything from gyms and auditorium to the cafeterias. The school department has also made facilities such as the Project Adventure areas at the Middle and High Schools, and the high school fitness center available for recreational use.

Development activities envisioned over the next 10 years include development of the Sabin Street property behind the Middle School either in conjunction with construction of a high school or to meet recreational needs. The director feels that recreational/school demand warrants another gym and that a swimming pool/community center is needed in the community. Departmental evaluation of needs in the next 10 years in order of severity include improvements to Murphy Park, a swimming pool, a community center, improvements to Tarr Park, irrigation system improvements,




TOWN OF PUTNAM
PLAN OF CONSERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

# Open Space and Recreation

FIGURE 6

**Table 12**
**Town Of Putnam**
**Recreation/Open Space Facilities**

| Active Recreation Areas | Open Space Areas (Town-owned) |
|---|---|
| | |
| St. Marie – Greenhalgh Sports Complex – Wicker Street | Adams Property |
| Track and football field with grandstands, multi-purpose building | Canal |
| Park – Wicker Street | Church Street |
| Multi-purpose Ballfields, bleachers, rest rooms, recreation building, | Dowell Property (2 parcels), includes Perry Pond |
| Summer camp, nature trail, and public spring (now closed) | Durand Property |
| Owen Tarr Park – Providence Street and Route 44 | Dzroba Property |
| Lighted baseball/softball/soccer field, walking track | Gray Property |
| Church Street – Skateboard Park | Harrisville & Peake Roads |
| Skateboard area, 3 tennis courts, one basketball court | Keech Street |
| Recreation Park Road Youth Soccer Field | Kennedy Property |
| King's Field – South Main and King Streets | Lachance Property |
| Youth field, sledding | Lucier Property |
| School Fields – Wicker Street | Modock Road |
| 2 softball fields, one soccer field, one practice football field, | Perry Property |
| Project Adventure areas at the Middle School and High School | Powhattan Street |
| Chase Street Playground | Russo Property |
| swings, slide, seesaws | Streeter Property |
| Hampshire Heights (Putnam Authority properties) | Town Farm Road |
| 1 basketball court, community building | Travis Property |
| | |
| Passive Recreation Areas | Open Space Areas (Other Public, Quasi-Public Ownership) |
| | |
| Simonzi Park – Kennedy Drive | Hurlbert's Pond (leased – public skating allowed) |
| Rotary Park and Bandstand – Kennedy Drive | Windham Land Trust (Route 44) |
| Putnam River Trail – along Kennedy Drive and the Quinebaug River | Airline State Park Trail (Northern Section) |
| Veteran's Memorial Park – Bridge Street and Church Street | Natchaug State Forest |
| Miller Park – Kennedy Drive and Providence Street | Quaddick State Forest |
| Civic Memorial Park – Grove Street and Ring Street | |
| Greenspace – Providence Street and Marshall Street | |
| Greenspace – Grove Street | |

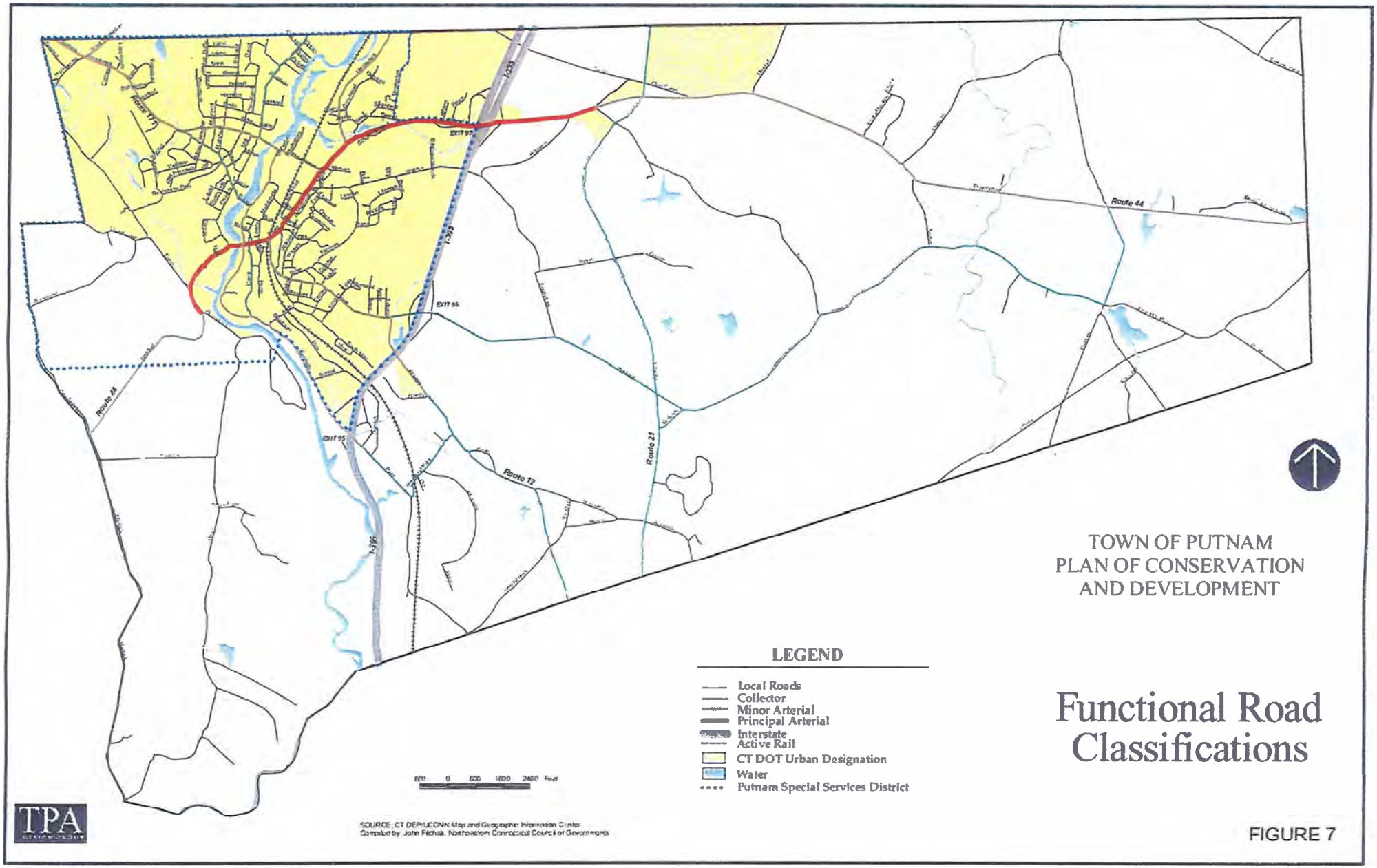
vehicle/tractor replacement, Simonzi Park electrical system and river trail connections to Thompson and Killingly.

## TRANSPORTATION

As of December 31, 2001 the Town of Putnam had a total of 84.96 miles of public roads. Seventy-five percent of these (63.65 miles) are maintained by the Town. The remainder (21.31 miles) are state-maintained public roads. For planning purposes the regional planning agency (as required by the Federal Government) has categorized these roads based on the service they are intended to provide in the road network. Broadly defined these "functional classifications" are interstates (some statewide as well as interstate travel), arterials (carry most of the trips entering and leaving urbanized areas), collector roads (link to the arterials), and local streets (provide access to adjacent land). Table 13 is a summary of the functional classifications of the roadways in Putnam as shown on Figure 7. More detailed definitions for these classifications may be found in Appendix C.

These functional classifications are important because roadways that are classified as Minor Arterials, Principal Arterials or Interstate are eligible for Federal Aid or Non-Federal Aid through the regionally administered Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for road reconstruction projects.

Average daily traffic counts taken in 2000 by the Connecticut Department of Transportation at various locations on the state-numbered routes in Putnam are summarized in Appendix D. Recent traffic trends on these roadways were determined by comparing this 2000 data with counts from the last Plan of Development (1988 and 1972 data). Most locations experienced traffic volume increases, though at slower rates and in smaller actual numbers than during the period between 1972 and 1988. The largest rate of increase occurred on Route 44 between East Putnam Road and the Rhode Island state line; the largest numerical increases occurred on I-395. Some locations actually had less traffic in 2000 than they did in 1988, most notably Route 12 north of Industrial Park Road and on the Mechanics Street segment north of Route 44 to Thompson.




TOWN OF PUTNAM
PLAN OF CONSERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

# Functional Road Classifications

FIGURE 7

**Table 13**
**Functional Road Classifications**
**Putnam, Connecticut**

| Classification | Locations |
|---|---|
| Interstate | I-395 |
| Principal Arterial | Route 44 from Quinebaug Avenue to Mary Drive |
| Minor Arterials | Route 171 (Woodstock Avenue/Providence Street)<br>Route 12 from School Street to Thompson TL<br>Kennedy Drive from Exit 95 to Providence Street<br>Route 44 from Pomfret TL to Quinebaug Avenue<br>Route 12 from Front Street to Nancy Drive<br>Route 44 from Mary Drive to the Rhode Island SL |
| Collector Roads | Woodstock Avenue from Wicker Street to Kennedy Drive<br>Church Street from Providence Street to the Thompson TL<br>Canal Street from Front Street to Kennedy Drive<br>Park Road from I-395 to Industrial Park Road<br>Industrial Park Road from Park Street to Route 12 (Killingly Road)<br>Route 12 (Killingly Road) from Nancy Drive to the Killingly TL<br>Grove Street / Heritage Road / Five Mile River Road from Edmond Street to Putnam Road<br>Putnam Road from Five Mile River Road to Route 44 (Providence Pike)<br>Route 21 (Liberty Highway from the Thompson TL to the Killingly TL (including Wilson Road) |
| Local Roads | All other roads |

Source: Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments

Accident data for state-numbered routes is compiled by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The most recent data available is for the period 1998 – 2000. The ten locations in Putnam with the highest cumulative number of accidents during this period are:

| | |
|---|---|
| I-395 at Kennedy Drive Interchange | 37 |
| I-395 at Rte 44 (School Street) Interchange | 30 |
| I-395 at Rte 12 (Heritage Road Interchange) | 19 |
| Route 44 between Pearl Avenue and I-395 off Ramp | 17 |
| Route 44 between Northbound Ramp and Tetreault Rd. | 17 |
| Route 44 between I-395 NB on and off ramps | 15 |
| Route 44 between Tetreault Road and Tetreault | 13 |
| Route 44 at I-395 off and on ramps Southbound | 11 |
| I-395 between Rte 44 and Exit 98 Interchange | 11 |
| Route 21 at Heritage Road and Five Mile Road | 7 |

Source: Connecticut DOT 1998-2000 Traffic Accident Report

Two of these locations – Route 44 between Pearl Avenue and the I-395 off-ramp, and Route 44 between the I-395 northbound ramp and Tetreault Road – are included in the state's Suggested List of Surveillance Study Sites (SLOSSS). This means that the rates of accidents occurring at these locations are excessive in relation to the volume of traffic. The SLOSSS is reviewed annually by DOT; locations are selected for improvements based on severity and cost-effectiveness of improvements, which may range from signage or signalization to road reconfiguration. None of the intersections listed are signalized.

# 4

# HOW WE MEASURE UP

Gaining perspective on where the Town stands today can be achieved by looking not only at the changes that have occurred inside its borders but by benchmarking against other communities in development-related categories such as population size, geographic location, infrastructure and economic base. We can evaluate Putnam by looking at it from the perspective of its location in the northeast corner of Connecticut, in comparison to communities of comparable population size, compared to communities having comparable socio-economic characteristics (based on Educational Reference Group), and to the State as a whole. Appendix E contains benchmarking results for Putnam and eight communities to which it can be compared because of one or more shared characteristics.

## The Northeast Corner

Putnam is one of eleven Connecticut towns in the northeast corner that form the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments, the regional planning organization for the region. These towns vary in population and economic base, with those most comparable to Putnam in these respects being Thompson (population) and Plainfield and Killingly (economic base). Three towns in Massachusetts – Dudley, Oxford, and Webster – are geographically close enough to be used for comparison purposes.

In most categories Putnam ranks in the mid-range among these communities; fourth in median household income (1999), educational attainment of high school graduate or higher, and percent of the population below the federal poverty level (1999), and fifth in the total number of housing units. Putnam ranks toward the bottom in two categories: sixth in population in 2000 and seventh in the value of the 2001 gross grand list (Killingly tops the list). These two rankings are of interest when considered in relation to the two categories in which Putnam ranks near the top: second highest median age and second lowest in residential real estate (Killingly was the lowest) as percentage of gross grand list (2001). These rankings would seem to indicate a potential gap between Putnam's resident work force and its expanding commercial/industrial tax base.