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A Survey of Growth Management Priorities in Rhode Island

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A SURVEY OF GROWTH MANAGEMENT
PRIORITIES IN RHODE ISLAND

BY

JENNIFER R PAQUET

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
COMMUNITY PLANNING

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

2003

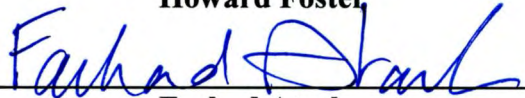
MASTER OF COMMUNITY PLANNING
RESEARCH PROJECT
OF
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Title: A survey of Growth Management Priorities in Rhode Island

Chapter 1: Introduction and Growth Issues

Summary

There are many identified and perceived problems associated with rapid and unmanaged growth in Rhode Island communities. These problems include destruction of historical and cultural resources, loss of a sense of community, loss of forest and farms to new subdivisions, inability of local governments to provide increasing demand for services (including school expansion for influx of new children) in a timely manner, loss of local mom and pop businesses to corporate big box commercial development, pressure to develop environmentally sensitive areas, and traffic congestion (WCRPC, July 2000).

The objective of this study was to determine local growth management priorities through a survey of all communities in Rhode Island. Specifically, the study investigated the following questions:

- What are the priorities of growth management, as espoused by professional planners and elected public officials, in Rhode Island communities?
- What are the differences or similarities in priorities between professional planners and elected public officials?
- What are the differences or similarities between the priorities of old urban, new urban, established suburban, and rural communities? (community types)
- What are the differences or similarities between the priorities of the older central cities, inner ring, outer ring, Western, and coastal communities of Rhode Island? (spatial zones)
- Is there a correlation between the most important reason for growth management and the most important tool for growth management?

It is assumed that there are differences of opinion based on the responsibilities of each position. The planner is assumed to be educated in planning issues and tools, and thus should have a holistic, professional, and long-term opinion, while the public official

is assumed to represent an issue-based and short-term opinion, based on the perceived impact of growth.

The growth issues of the community types of rural, suburban, new urban, and old urban communities are assumed to be different for each community type, and thus the priorities of growth management approaches should be different. For example, urban communities (high density, mixed use areas) are more likely to be concerned with traffic congestion (due to amount of traffic and narrow streets) and property values (due to disinvestment) than with sprawl (scattered, low density development) and preserving character, whereas suburban and rural communities (lower density, more pristine land) are more likely to be concerned with protecting natural resources and preserving community character.

There are also assumed to be differences in priorities between regional, or spatial zones, across the State. For instance, the western (remote rural/farming) and coastal (sea-side character/ ocean based economy) communities may be more concerned with protecting natural resources, maintaining community character, and preventing sprawl, whereas the inner ring communities (urban-fringe development pressure) may be more concerned with emerging traffic congestion and stabilizing the municipal budget.

The study results show that the most important reason that Rhode Island communities to implement a growth management plan is to preserve community character, and that the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, and land development and subdivision regulations are perceived to be the most important tools for implementing a growth management plan.

This study also revealed that there is little difference in priorities between the professional planner and the chief elected official for both the most important reasons for growth management and the most important tools for growth management.

There were slight differences discovered between the priorities of the communities when analyzed by spatial zone. The Outer Ring, Western, and Coastal communities perceive preserving community character as the most important reason for growth management, whereas the Older Central Cities and Inner Ring communities were split between priorities of preserving character, stabilizing taxes, and protecting resources.

Often, the reason ranked last in priority revealed more differences between the spatial zone communities than the first priority. The Outer Ring and Western communities were least concerned with reducing traffic, whereas the Coastal communities were least concerned with maintaining property values. The Older Central Cities were least concerned with containing sprawl, as were the Inner Ring communities.

All of the Spatial Zones prioritized the land development regulations as the most important tools for implementing growth management, with the exception of the Coastal communities, who ranked open space protection as a more important tool.

Impact fees, property tax relief, and limiting building permits were generally prioritized by the Spatial Zones as either the last, or second to last priority.

The study also revealed differences between each Community Type. The Established Suburbs and Rural communities prioritized preserving community character as the most important reason for developing a growth management strategy in their communities. The New Urban community type prioritized stabilizing the tax base as the

most important reason. The Older Central Cities were split on what they perceive the most important reason is, between containing sprawl, preserving character, stabilizing taxes, reducing traffic, and protecting resources.

The least important reason to the Older Central Cities, New Urban communities, and the Established Suburbs included containing sprawl, whereas the least important reason to the Rural community type was reducing traffic congestion.

There was no difference in first priority between the Community Types for the most important tool for growth management. Each Community Type overwhelmingly chose the land development regulations as the most important tool.

The Older Central City community type ranked impact fees as the lowest priority tool for implementing growth management, whereas the Established Suburbs and the Rural communities ranked property tax relief as least important. The New Urban communities were split between open space and limiting building permits as the least important tools.

Discussion of Issues in Growth Management

There is a wealth of literature addressing growth management issues, strategies, and case studies. The topic of growth management can be sub-categorized into functional areas covering ecological management (habitat preservation), resource management (drinking water, fertile soils), financial management (municipal budget), transportation management (congestion, public transit), and anti-sprawl management. Within each of these sub-categories, there are growth management strategies and tools that may be implemented in order to halt or change the consequences of current growth patterns. Each growth management strategy may be utilized to tackle one or more of these functional areas.

Rhode Island Land Use Trends

The July 2000 technical paper, "Rhode Island Land Use Trends and Analysis," examines twelve land use trends that have been observed for the period between 1970 and 1995. These trends are as follows:

1. Population has increased at a slow rate, but the rate of household formation has increased much faster.
2. Rhode Island has become more developed.
3. Development has increased nine times faster than population.
4. The largest source of development is residential land use.
5. Population has migrated toward the rural parts of the state.
6. Employment centers have expanded away from central cities.
7. Industrial land use has increased and moved farther into the suburbs.
8. The most visible source of development has been commercial land use.
9. The amount of land dedicated to transportation has increased.
10. Agricultural use of land has been in long-term decline.
11. Protection of undeveloped land has increased.
12. The state is increasing urban and there is a qualitative difference between the traditional central cities and the newly urbanized suburbs.

(Statewide Planning Program: Rhode Island Department of Administration. Technical Paper Number: 149, July 2000)

To explain the first trend, household formation has been increasing at a faster rate than the population increase because average household size has been decreasing. As household size decreases while population remains constant, there is a need for more housing. Trends 2 through 4 follow as a result; there was a 47 percent increase in the amount of developed land from 1970 to 1995, despite only a 5 percent increase in population. Residential development increased by 55.5 percent, which translates to a rate of 2 new units per 1 new person. Following in the path of residential development, commercial development increased by 87.6 percent and industrial development increased by 60.7 percent.

Statewide Planning categorizes communities in two different ways. These are by community types and by spatial zones. See Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1. Community Types

Older Central Cities	Providence, Central Falls, Pawtucket, Newport, and Woonsocket
New Urban Communities	East Providence, Cranston, Warwick, West Warwick, and North Providence
Established Suburbs	Barrington, Bristol, Cumberland, East Greenwich, Jamestown, Johnston, Lincoln, Middletown, Narragansett, North Kingstown, Portsmouth, Smithfield, Warren, and Westerly
Rural	Burrillville, Charlestown, Coventry, Exeter, Foster, Glocester, Hopkinton, Little Compton, New Shoreham, North Smithfield, Richmond, Scituate, South Kingstown, Tiverton, and West Greenwich

Table 2. Spatial Zones

Older Central Cities	Providence, Central Falls, Pawtucket, Newport, and Woonsocket
Inner Ring	East Providence, Cranston, Johnston, Lincoln, Middletown, North Providence, and Warwick
Outer Ring	Barrington, Bristol, Cumberland, East Greenwich, North Kingstown, North Smithfield, Smithfield, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Warren, and West Warwick
Western	Burrillville, Coventry, Exeter, Foster, Glocester, Hopkinton, Richmond, Scituate, and West Greenwich
Coastal	Charlestown, Jamestown, Little Compton, Narragansett, New Shoreham, South Kingstown, and Westerly

Trend 5 is related to trends 6, 7, 8, and 9. In the 1930's and 1940's, central cities population growth had begun to stagnate, while growth in the inner and outer rings of urban areas began to accelerate (see Figures 1. and 2.).

Figure 1. Spatial Zone Communities

Taken from Statewide Planning Program Technical Paper Number 149, July 2000

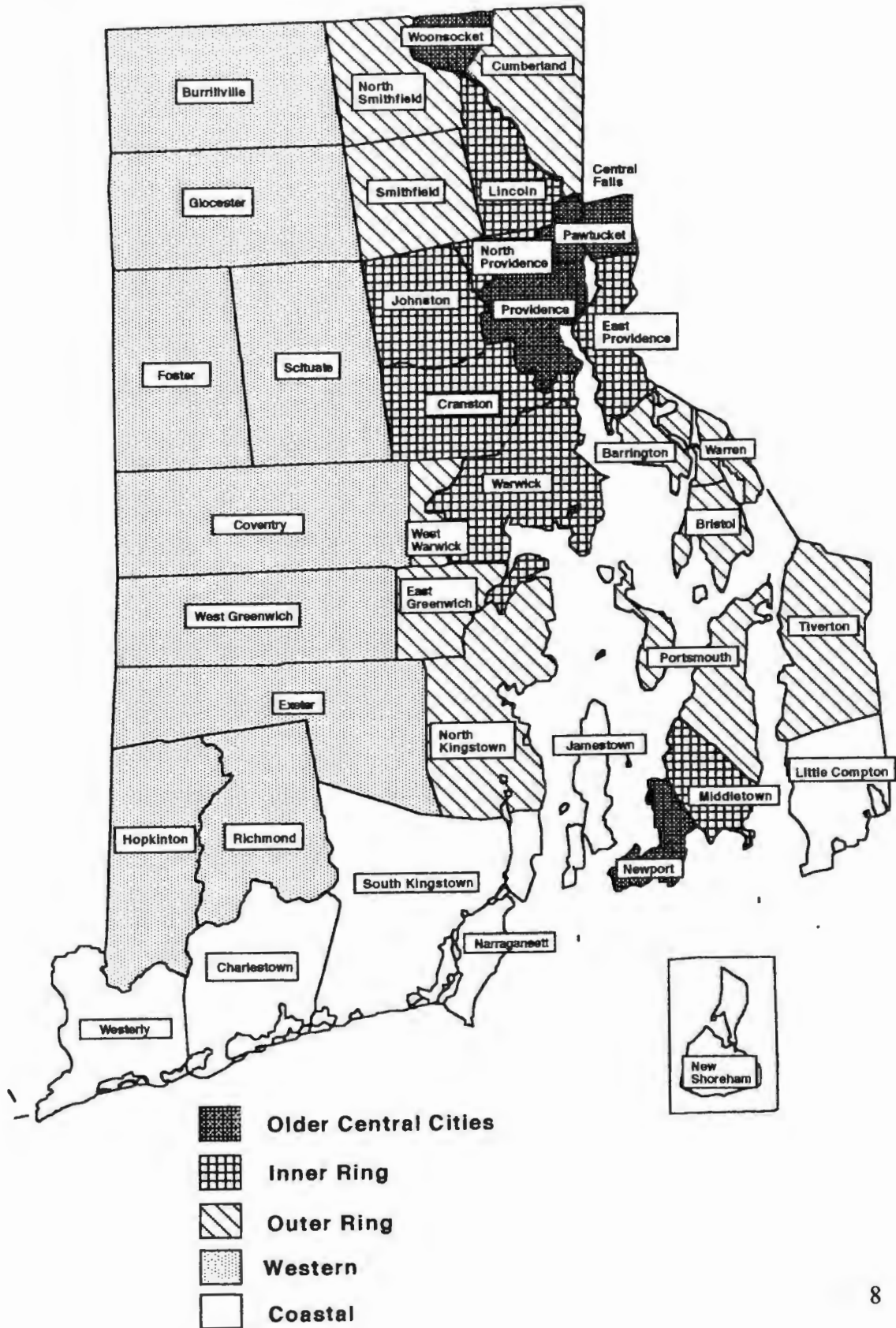
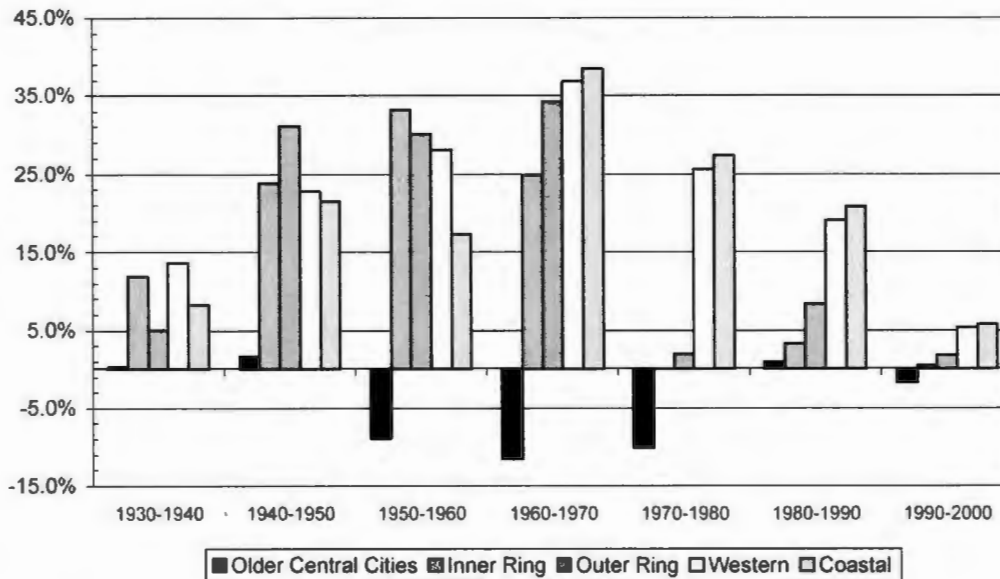


Figure 2. Population Growth by Spatial Zone, 1930-2000



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and RI Statewide Planning Program

Taken from Statewide Planning Program Technical Paper Number 149, July 2000

From 1950 to 1970, the urban core began to lose population while the rural western and coastal communities continued to experience an accelerated rate of growth and the inner and outer rings maintained a more steady growth rate. Since the 1970's the rural communities have continued to experience a greater rate of growth compared to the urbanized areas (older urban core, and inner and outer urban rings). Therefore, as urban population decreases and rural population increases, (with overall population growth fairly constant) the population in Rhode Island has been spreading out and migrating toward more rural areas.

In addition to more and more people moving farther away from the central urban areas, businesses began to expand away from urban areas (Trend 6), and new businesses choose to locate in the suburbs. Between 1970 and 1995, the central core cities have

experienced a slight decrease (-6.17%) in the number of jobs, whereas the inner and outer ring communities have experienced a significant increase in the number of jobs (58.99% and 25.6%, respectively) (see Figure 3.). The rural western and coastal communities have also experienced a significant increase in jobs (29.88% and 118.36%, respectively).

Figure 3. Rhode Island Employment by Spatial Zone, 1970-1995

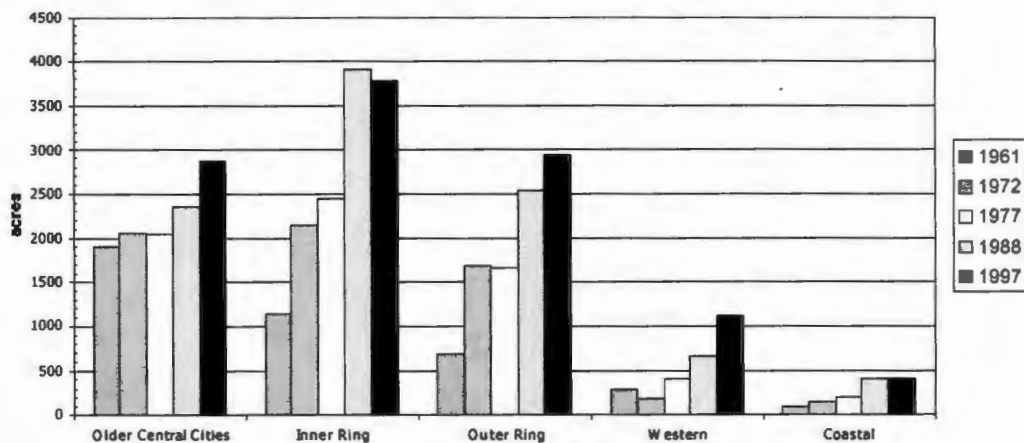
Spatial Zone	1970	1980	1990	1995	1970-1995 % Change
Older Central Cities	168,438	162,210	164,331	158,047	-6.17
Inner Ring	75,284	91,377	110,463	119,694	58.99
Outer Ring	43,207	51,250	51,234	54,279	25.6
Western	10,068	9,132	11,616	13,076	29.88
Coastal	9,991	13,259	17,939	21,816	118.36
State Total	306,988	340,555	386,137	373,962	21.82

Source: Modified from Statewide Planning Program Technical Paper Number 149, July 2000

Rhode Island Statewide Planning's inventory of land zoned for Industrial Use reveals that the largest percent increase in industrial land over the past forty years has been in the established suburbs (over 400% increase) (Trend 7), followed by the rural areas of the state (over 200 % increase). (see Figure 4 and Figure 5.)

Along with the industrial development has been commercial development (Trend 8). This type of development has been the most visible due to its locating predominantly along major local and State collector roads (see Figure 6). It is interesting to note that by 1995, the amount of commercially developed rural land was almost as much as in the Older Central Cities (2,820 acres in cities versus 2,624 in rural areas).

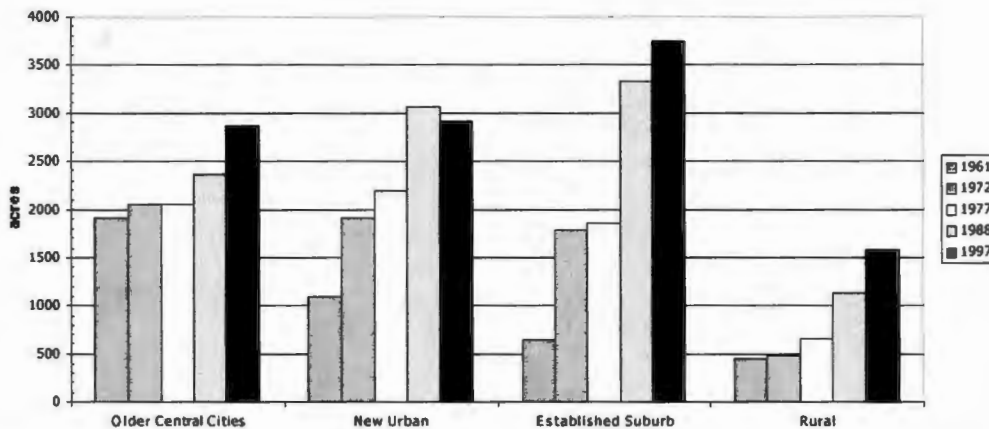
Figure 4. Industrial Land Use by Spatial Zone, 1961-1997



Source: Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, *Land Zoned for Industrial Use*, Technical Paper Number 20, January 1972.
 Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, *Land Zoned for Industrial Use: Inventory and Analysis*, Technical Paper Number 76, November 1978.
 Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, *Industrial Land Use Plan*, Report Number 66, May 1990
 Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, *Industrial Land Use Plan*, Report Number 100, June 2000

Taken from Statewide Planning Program Technical Paper Number 149, July 2000

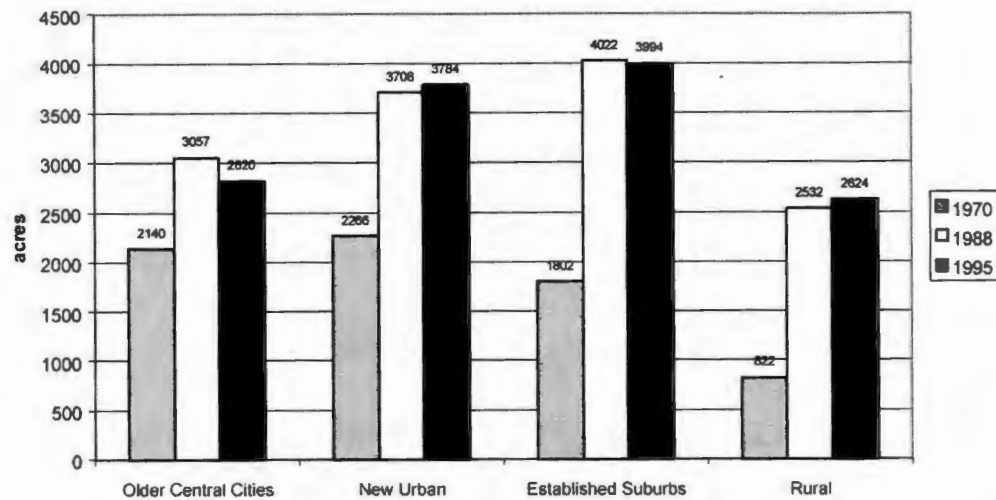
Figure 5. Industrial Land Use by Community Type, 1961-1997



Sources: Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, *Land Zoned for Industrial Use*, Technical Paper Number 20, January 1972.
 Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, *Land Zoned for Industrial Use: Inventory and Analysis*, Technical Paper Number 76, November 1978.
 Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, *Industrial Land Use Plan*, Report Number 66, May 1990
 Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, *Industrial Land Use Plan*, Report Number 100, June 2000

Taken from Statewide Planning Program Technical Paper Number 149, July 2000

Figure 6. Commercial Land Use by Community Type, 1970-1995



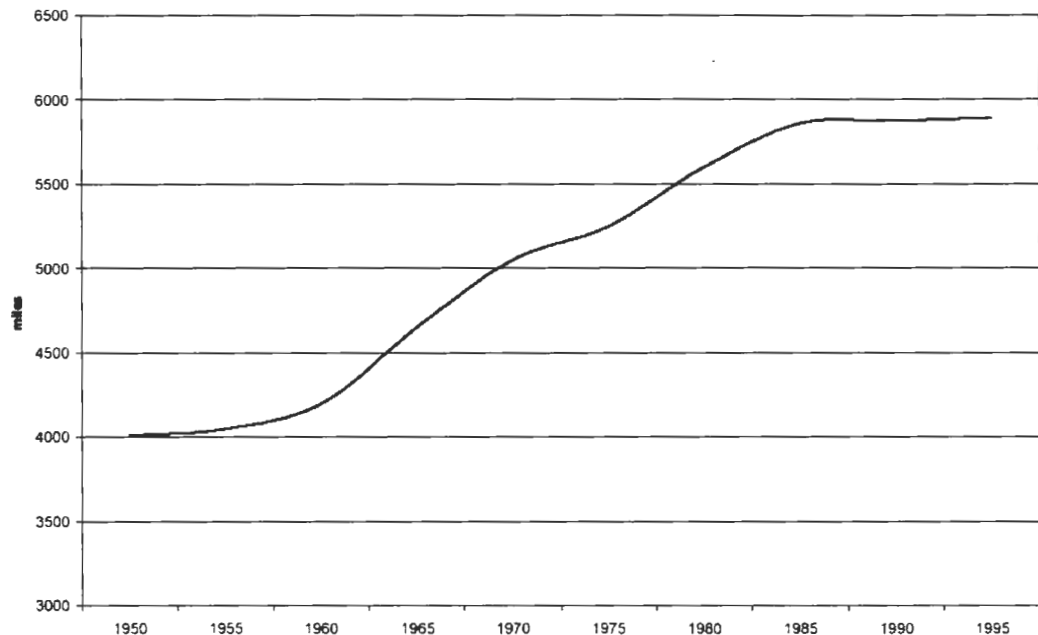
Source: RI Cooperative Extension Service, *Remote Sensing Land Use and Vegetative Cover in Rhode Island* Bulletin No. 200, 1974 and RI Statewide Planning Program RIGIS data for 1988 and 1995.

Taken from Statewide Planning Program Technical Paper Number 149, July 2000

Naturally, as more land is developed, especially in a low-density manner, roadways must be increased to provide access to those areas. Trend 9 reflects this. Between 1955 and 1995, the number of miles of road has increased by approximately 45 percent (from approximately 4,000 miles to approximately 5,900 miles) (see Figure 7).

Over the past 150 years, the amount of land being used for farming in Rhode Island has been in decline as food production has become commercialized (Trend 10). Much of this farmland has grown into forest; however, this undeveloped land is now being consumed by residential, commercial, and industrial development as these uses move into the more rural areas of the State. People have become sensitive to the loss of open space in undeveloped areas and have actively sought to preserve some of the undeveloped land as permanent open space or recreational parks (Trend 11).

Figure 7. Rhode Island Public Road Miles, 1950-1995



Source: Governor's Highway Commission. *Rhode Island Roads*. 1958
Rhode Island Department of Public Works. *Rhode Island Statewide Traffic Study*. 1964.
Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program. *1968 Rhode Island Highway Classification Study*. 1969.
Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program. *A Department of Transportation for Rhode Island*. Report Number 15. March 1971.
Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program. *1972 Rhode Island Transportation Inventory for 1974 NTS*. Technical Paper Number 34. March 1973
Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program. *Transportation 2010 - Ground Transportation Plan*. Report Number 75. March 1992
Rhode Island Department of Transportation. *Rhode Island Road Facts*. 1998

Taken from Statewide Planning Program Technical Paper Number 149, July 2000

Trend 12 summarizes the cause of sprawl in Rhode Island in a broad sense. A larger percentage of the State has become urbanized, without having been planned as urban. In other words, the older central cities of Providence, Central Falls, Pawtucket, Newport, and Woonsocket were planned for high densities and an integration of commerce with residential living, whereas emergent urban areas are suburbs that were planned for lower density, primarily residential use, with commerce separated by Euclidean zoning. These new urban areas are East Providence, Cranston, Warwick, West Warwick, and North Providence.

Though suburbs were originally planned to serve a different purpose than a city, growth, as demonstrated through Trends 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, has led to an inefficient urban use within a suburban pattern. Negative consequences as recognized in Statewide Planning Program Technical Paper 149 include; increased infrastructure costs, especially for new schools and roads; mismatch between property tax revenue and per property expenditures; increased traffic and perception of congestion; and destruction of natural drainage systems and habitats.

Concerns of Growth in Rhode Island

Recently, growth management has received a lot of attention in the State of Rhode Island. In December of 1999, the Providence Journal featured a lengthy segment on the impacts of sprawl in southern Rhode Island. Since the mid-1990's, Washington County communities have been experiencing a period of more rapid growth than the rest of Rhode Island. Highlighted concerns of new development in Washington County included crowded schools, lack of public funding for school construction and road maintenance, possible property tax rate increases, loss of farmland, and destruction of rural character (Sabar, 12/12/1999).

Since Washington County has been experiencing this latest growth boom, the communities have been examining the extent of growth and its effects, and many have hired consultants to develop a growth management plan for them. These communities have even banded together to form the Washington County Regional Planning Council, whose main focus is on growth management (Bartish, 5/31/2000).

As a result of this collaboration, Washington County seems to be more informed and prepared for coping with growth than other communities in Rhode Island. How does

the rest of Rhode Island compare to Washington County communities in their opinions of reasons for, and tools of, growth management?

Continuing its coverage on sprawl and growth, the Journal ran a series of articles in the spring/summer of 2000, under the theme, "Vision 20/20." These articles were based on the goals document by the Washington County Regional Planning Council entitled, "A Shared Future: Washington County in 2020" (July 2000). Beginning with an introductory overview, each of 5 weeks focused on a different affected area. Topics were land use, water resources, housing, transportation, and economic development.

The issue of growth and growth management has more recently been focused upon during this past election. It was the major concern in a number of Washington County communities including North Kingstown, South Kingstown, Charlestown, and Richmond. What's interesting is that it was also a major issue in communities outside of Washington County. These communities include Exeter, Coventry, and West Greenwich of Kent County; Little Compton, Portsmouth, Tiverton, and Middletown of Newport County; and Cumberland, Warwick, East Providence, Foster, and Scituate of Providence County.

A recent report commissioned by Grow Smart Rhode Island entitled, "The Costs of Suburban Sprawl and Urban Decay in Rhode Island" analyzes the spatial patterns of growth, density, and development in Rhode Island, and the impacts of these spatial shifts. It states that sprawl development patterns and urban decay will cost the taxpayers of Rhode Island approximately \$1.5 billion. The majority of this cost is due to loss of tax revenue from disinvestment and declining property values in the urban areas. While

infrastructure goes underutilized in the urban areas, extra infrastructure adds to the cost to taxpayers in non-urban areas.

Other trends that this report points out are the accelerated rate of development and the loss of farms and forested land in Rhode Island. The report states that in the past 40 years, 1.5 times more land has been developed than in the previous 300 years. A more interesting statistic is that this developed land has increased 9 times faster than the population growth rate. Also in this past 40 years, approximately 50 percent of the remaining 103,801 acres of farm land in Rhode Island has been lost. (H.C. Planning Consultants, Inc. and Planimetrics, LLP, December 1999)

Reasons for Growth Management

Richmond and South Kingstown were the first towns in Rhode Island to implement growth controls as part of a growth management strategy (Sabar, 12/12/1999). South Kingstown's plan is based on the reports prepared by Philip B. Herr & Associates. The 1994 Herr report, "The Quarterly Quota: South Kingstown, RI," states that while many factors are negatively impacted by growth in a community, there are only a few that can be justified in the courts as legitimate reasons for instating growth controls. The reason is that growth controls can violate individual property rights, resulting in a taking. In the case of South Kingstown, Herr suggests that only the town's inability to adequately serve the school age children can be used as a legal basis for enacting growth controls (Herr & Assoc.,12/22/1994). This reason was also given as the only justification to control growth for the Town of Hopkinton by the consulting team of Shamoan and Teitz (Goldsmith, 10/13/2000).

Ability to serve the school age population is intimately tied to the financial management and general management of a community. Has this one-dimensional aspect of growth dominated the implementation of growth controls for the ensuing communities who have already or are currently considering implementing a growth management program? Herr also listed limited natural resources and ability to provide timely public infrastructure and services as areas impacted by growth that could warrant a community to implement growth controls (Herr & Assoc., 4/5/1994). The most immanently impacted resource is drinking water. An increasing population creates increasing wastes and increasing demands. This resource can be threatened by both over-consumption and pollution. (Open space can also be perceived as a natural resource.)

Herr also suggests, however, that variables such as quality of life and town character may someday warrant justification for implementing growth controls (Herr & Assoc., 12/22/1994). Has the legal basis for allowing growth controls caused other communities to shy away from explicitly stating other reasons for implementing growth controls?

Another major reason for implementing growth management has been the controversial issue of “sprawl.” While sprawl is associated with destruction of town character, cause of traffic congestion, consumption of open space, inefficient use of public finances, and the wasting of natural resources (not to mention its social, economic, and aesthetic design impacts), it is distinguishable from these effects in that it lends a physical dimension to the pattern of development often attributed to growth—“low density scattered development” (Nelson and Duncan, 1995).

In Rhode Island, the term sprawl often conjures up images of Route 2 in Warwick with its miles of strip malls and big-box retail, fed by hordes of vehicles herded into oceans of parking lots. But, commercial development is often hailed as the solution to town financial management—it generates revenue without contributing any school-age children.

Growth implies dimension, not just an increase in population (Chintz, 1990). The shape of that dimension can vary. A town's or city's character is tied to aesthetics and patterns of physical development. One of the concerns stated in the "Shared Future" document is that current land-use regulations do not support traditional village centers (WCRPC, July 2000). A village center (or a main street) with its surrounding farmland (or wooded lots), often defines the character of a small New England town (Lacy, 1990), such as those of rural Washington County.

The other undesirable perception of Route 2 is the traffic. While design of the traffic system may not be as efficient as possible, the amount of traffic, especially turning traffic, requires constant alert on the part of a driver, and often means getting stuck at the same red light for two or three cycles. A diminishing Level of Service is also currently being experienced by inhabitants of Washington County, due largely to their increasing amount of new neighbors. A major way to reduce traffic congestion is to take advantage of public transportation, or to make it feasible to create a public transportation system. This feasibility is tied to population density and the demand for service. (One thing planning can control is density.) Also, traffic studies analyzing turning patterns may lead to recommendations for upgrading and coordinating traffic patterns more efficiently. Such a traffic study may be planning for through a Capital Improvement Program.

Tools of Growth Management

The most frequently used growth control tools in Rhode Island have been annual building permit limits and impact fees (Sabar, 12/12/1999). Limiting building permits affects timing of development, while impact fees are used to aid with financial management of a community. Building permit caps and impact fees do nothing to create a village center. These tools are predominantly to offset the impact on the schools. Limiting building permits slows the pace of incoming new school children, which gives the town time to plan for and build a new school, often funded partly through impact fees. Impact fees, when linked to a Capital Improvement Plan, can also go toward town infrastructure such as libraries, and may be used to purchase open space.

Purchasing development rights and granting property tax exemptions are ways to preserve open space and farmland by lightening the financial burden on the owner of the property as an alternative to developing the property (Nelson and Duncan, 1995). This is because land is sometimes assessed on its development potential, which results in a taxation that is mismatched with the actual use of the property. By preserving strategic land, a town can help to maintain its rural or village centered character (TPL, 1999). Often, a land trust is a public or private entity that is created in a community to serve the purpose of targeting and purchasing open space.

Purchasing development rights affects location of development and also helps with financial management of a community, if the land would have otherwise been developed with housing. Residential land has been shown to cost a community more in services than the property tax revenue it generates, (Commonwealth Research Group, Inc., 1995), largely due to the cost of education. In contrast, open space land tends to

cost less in services than it generates in revenue (Commonwealth Research Group, Inc., 1995).

The Zoning Ordinance, Land Development and Subdivision Regulations, and the Comprehensive Plan are three documents that go hand in hand. The comprehensive plan is the vision and goals of what the community wants to look like, what resources it wants to protect, what facilities and public services it wants to provide, and the amount and types of housing and businesses it wants to include. One of the major means to realize these goals is through the zoning ordinance.

The zoning ordinance controls density patterns and use patterns. Varying density and use can be used to achieve certain effects. For instance, high density with mixed use can be required to create a town center, while low density residential use can be required to protect a drinking water source.

The Subdivision and Land Development Regulations include a checklist of requirements for new development. These requirements can include provisions to make sure that new development is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, that it will not cause significant negative impact to the environment, and that a portion of the developable land, or a fee at the market value of the land, will go towards open space or town recreation. These requirements can also include a phasing schedule, which paces the construction of a large residential subdivision over the course of a number of years in order to prevent a large influx of school-age children into the system all at once, and gives the community time to prepare for needed services.

Working with the Zoning Ordinance, the Subdivision Regulations expand on the density requirements with performance standards, for both traditional and alternative

zoning techniques, such as width and shape of road, building setbacks, and landscaping requirements. Performance standards can dictate the amount and shape of new town infrastructure, which becomes a maintenance responsibility for a community, and they help to create or maintain community character, with requirements such as vegetated buffers, sidewalks, tree-lined boulevards, winding country roads, gridiron blocks, on-street parking, etc .

The Land Development and Subdivision Regulations can also include design review standards to ensure architectural and massing compatibility with an area, especially for Historic Districts.

The Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, and Comprehensive Plan all govern land use patterns which are intimately related to aesthetics, character, and function of a community.

The Capital Improvement Plan can be used in a number of ways to control or shape growth. A town may decide that it will not provide certain public services, such as sewer, to certain areas of the town in order to discourage growth in those areas, while encouraging it in others. Another method may be to implement a concurrency requirement which won't allow any development to areas that don't have improvements (Nelson and Duncan, 1995). If the community's budget can't afford the infrastructure, the developer must make the improvements through private investments before the land can be developed.

The Capital Improvement Plan also works with the Comprehensive Plan, which identifies areas to target for infrastructure improvements. This can steer growth towards areas with improvements, thus affecting the spatial layout of a community.

Which of these stated reasons for, and tools of, growth management are perceived as the most important to Rhode Island Communities?

Methodology

The research method consisted of a short opinion survey administered by mail to the professional planner and highest elected public official of each of the thirty-nine Rhode Island municipalities. In cases where a municipality had no planner, the survey was sent to either the Planning Board Chairperson or other planning staff person, such as Administrative Officer. A pilot survey was used to test the survey for validity and reliability. Participants were asked to rank, in order of priority, six reasons ('contain or prevent sprawl,' 'preserve community character,' stabilize tax base and municipal budget,' reduce traffic congestion,' maintain property values,' and 'protect natural resources') to implement a growth management plan, and seven tools ('land trust / open space purchases,' 'capital improvement plan,' 'zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and comprehensive plan,' 'impact fees on new construction,' 'limiting building permits issued each year,' 'purchase of development rights,' and 'property tax relief') used to implement a growth management plan.

These reasons and tools were not defined for the survey participants; however, the choices can be defined as follows:

Reasons:

Sprawl- inefficient use of land; uses spread out across the land requiring more extensive infrastructure, rather than being contained and compacted in such a way as to promote walkability and feasibility for public transportation, and to spread cost of infrastructure over more people, thus increasing its cost effectiveness. There are State and Federal efforts to reduce sprawl, such as the Governor's Growth Council in Rhode Island, and the Clinton-Gove Livable Communities Initiative. A local movement is spearheaded by Grow Smart Rhode Island.

Community Character- characteristics of a community, desired to be preserved for sentimental, historical, and quality of life reasons; often unarticulated; can refer to farmland, woodland, historic districts, main streets, village centers, scenic roads, smells, views, way of life, etc.

Tax Base and Municipal Budget- tax revenue versus municipal expenditures. Single family residential uses have been demonstrated to cost more in community services than they generate in revenue, largely due to the cost to educate children. The desire is to not increase taxes, and to find a balance between residential and commercial tax base.

Traffic Congestion- increased population brings increased cars and traffic. This issue is directly related to growth. Increased traffic congestion also affects quality of life and community character by increasing risks to safety and adding stress and time delays to people's lives.

Property Values- development of pristine land can be perceived to diminish quality of life and thus property values. Also, increase in density leads to congestion which can be perceived as undesirable, thus affecting property values.

Natural Resources- resources which sustain life and add to quality of life, such as drinking water, breathable air, recreational waters, wildlife, scenic vistas, etc.

Tools:

Land Trust / Open Space – Land Trust is a vehicle for purchasing undeveloped land, in order to create public passive recreation areas, prevent additional single family homes from burdening the tax base, provide wildlife habitat and scenic views, protects watersheds for drinking water, etc.

Capital Improvement Plan- a community's action plan for determining which, where, and when infrastructure improvements will occur. For instance, extending a sewer line to a certain area may allow for an increase in density to that area, or preventing a sewer line may discourage development to other areas.

Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, and Comprehensive Plan- documents containing goals and regulations set forth to create a desired effect in the community. Controls uses, density, landscaping and design requirements, infrastructure creation, etc., spatially throughout a community.

Impact Fees on New Construction- fee assessed to new residential units to pay for increased service needs which are a direct result of the new development. Fees can go towards school infrastructure, libraries, recreation, fire stations, etc.

Limiting Building Permits Issued Each Year- controls the timing of residential construction, and thus the timing of children entering the school system; gives a community time to prepare for building a new school or other related infrastructure. Also paces development so that administration can handle increasing demands on town or city hall.

Purchase of Development Rights- similar to open space purchases; however the land is still owned by the property owner. Land conservationists such as a land trust or other vehicle, purchases only the development rights, or a conservation easement, which restricts what can be done on the property; it is a way to preserve active farmland as farmland, etc.

Property Tax Relief- property taxes can be perceived as a burden to large land owners, who may be pressured to sell off land for development in order to keep up with the taxes. Property tax relief can allow a large parcel to be taxed at a lower rate to reduce the burden on the land owner, and in the short term, ensure the parcel will not be developed. Current program in Rhode Island is called 'Farm, Forest, and Open Space Tax Act,' and temporarily (15 year program) locks property owners into a development freeze. Penalties are assessed to the property owner if land is developed before the 15 year expiration.

The results of the survey were analyzed using the frequencies of priorities for each category of planner, public official, old urban community, new urban community, established suburban community, and rural community. In addition, the SPSS Cross-tabs procedure was performed on the data in order to investigate the relationship between "Priorities," the dependent variable, and "Profession," "Type of community," and "Region," (or, "spatial zone") the independent variables.

A pilot survey was conducted in order to test the ease and clarity of the survey questions. The pilot survey was sent to three professionals in the planning field and the survey was adjusted according to their comments.

The finalized survey was sent out to all 39 communities in the Spring of 2001, one to the Chief Elected Official, including Mayors, Town Administrators, and Council Presidents; and one to the head person in planning, including Planning Directors and Planning Board Chairpersons. In a few instances, a community did not have a professional Planner, so the survey was forwarded to the Planning Board Chairperson, or other planning staff, such as Administrative Officer. A total of 78 surveys were sent out.

After three weeks, the surveys were sent out again to those who had not yet responded in order to increase response rate.

A total of 55 surveys were returned. Of these, 54 are considered valid. One was returned from a respondent who can not be classified as either a Chief Elected Official or a Planner. This is an overall response rate of 69.2 percent. From the Planners, 36 out of 39 surveys were returned, which is a response rate of 92 percent, and 18 out of 39 responses were received from the Chief Elected Officials, which is a response rate of 46 percent.

Respondents were asked to rank, in order of importance from 1 to 6, with 1 being the most important, what they feel is the most important “reason” for developing a growth management plan in their community, and to rank, from 1 to 7, what they feel is the most important “tool” for implementing a growth management plan in their community. They were then asked to rate, from “High,” “Moderate,” or “low,” the feasibility of basing a growth management plan on each of the stated reasons, and to rate the feasibility of applying each of the stated tools as part of a growth management strategy in their community.

Frequencies for each “reason” and “tool” were calculated by “position,” “type of community,” and “spatial zone.” (Cross-tabulation frequencies for type of community by position, and for spatial zone by position were also calculated; however these results were not analyzed and are included in Appendix C. for information only.)

Chapter 2: Results of the Survey

Overall Reasons

Overall, 46.3 percent of the respondents ranked “preserve community character” as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community. (see Table 2. and Chart 1.) The second most frequent response for the most important reason was “Stabilize tax base and municipal budget,” which was ranked by 18.5 percent of the respondents, however, this response was ranked relatively even across each priority ranking (see Chart 2.). Very few respondents marked “reduce traffic congestion” or “maintain property values” as the most important option (1.9% each).

Table 3. Top Reasons for Developing a Growth Management Plan (Overall)

Rank	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percent of Total Responses
Most Important (1 out of 6)	1	Preserve character	25	46.3%
	2	Stabilize taxes	10	18.5%
	3	Contain sprawl	9	16.7%
Second most important (2 out of 6)	1	Protect resources	17	31.5%
	2	Preserve character	12	22.2%
	3	Contain sprawl	9	16.7%
Least Important (6 out of 6)	1	Reduce traffic	21	38.9%
	2	Maintain property values	16	29.6%
	3	Contain sprawl	12	22.2%

Chart 1.

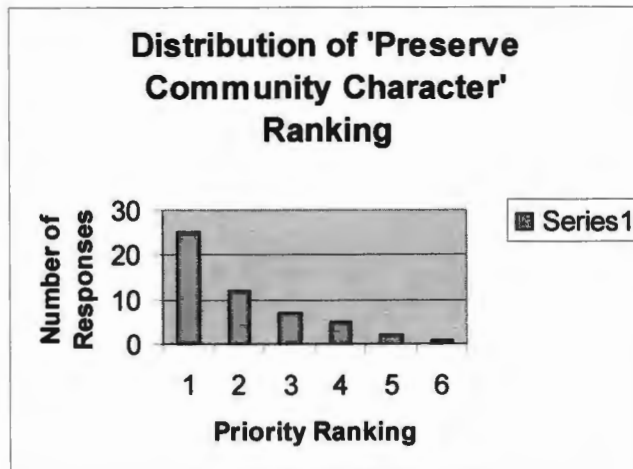
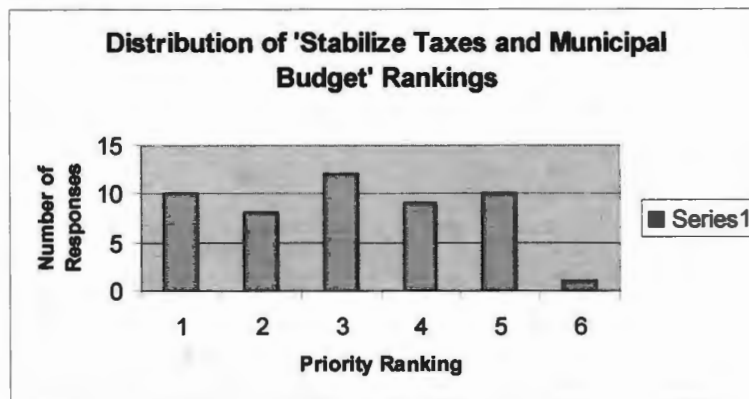


Chart 2.



In accordance, the highest number of respondents, 38.9 percent, ranked “reduce traffic congestion” as the least important reason of the six options to develop a growth management plan, and 29.6 percent ranked “maintain property values” as the least important. These two options also received the most responses for the second to least most important (ranked 5th out of 6 choices) reasons, 27.8 percent and 33.3 percent respectively.

Chart 3.

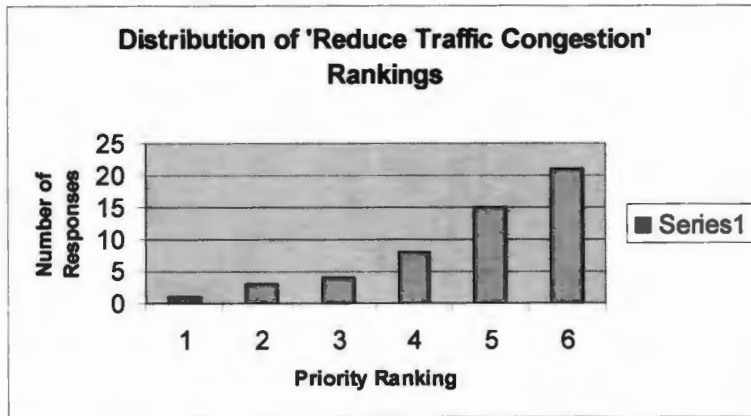
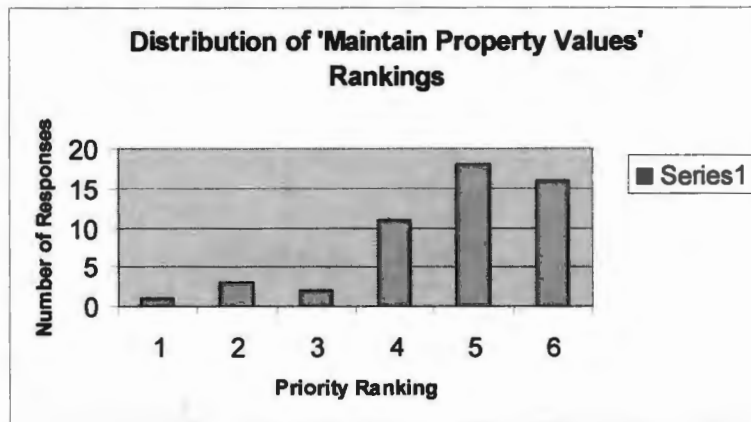


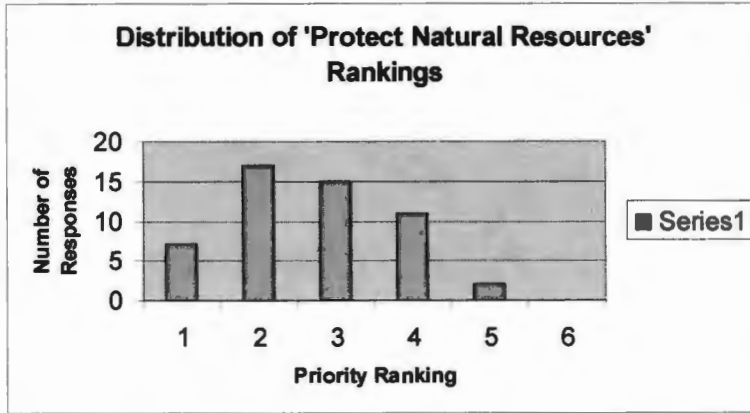
Chart 4.



None of the respondents ranked “protect natural resources” as the least important reason, and a very small percentage ranked “preserve community character” and “stabilize tax base and municipal budge” as the least important reason (each with 1.9 percent of the respondents choosing this option.)

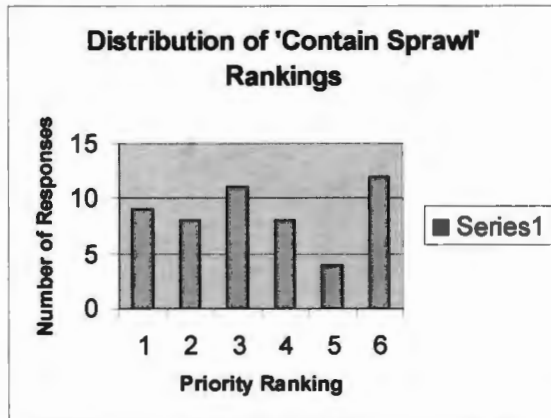
The most frequent reason ranked as the second most important reason for developing a growth management plan was “protect natural resources” (31.5%), which was closely followed by “preserve community character” (22.2%).

Chart 5.



It is interesting to note that “contain sprawl” was ranked both high and low by the respondents. Looking at the distribution of frequency for this reason over each ranking, it is relatively spread even throughout the distribution (See Chart 2).

Chart 6.



Of the respondents who ranked ‘preserve community character’ as the first priority, 48 percent of them ranked ‘protect natural resources’ as the second most important reason for growth management.

Overall Tools

Most of the respondents (63.0%) ranked “zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and comprehensive plan,” (or, “land development regulations” for short) as

the most important tool for implementing a growth management plan in their community.

The next most frequent response for the most important tool was “land trust / open space purchases” with 14.8 percent of the responses. (see Table 4. and Chart 7.)

Table 4. Top Tools for Implementing a Growth Management Plan (Overall)

Rank	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percent of Total Responses
Most Important (1 out of 7)	1	Land development regulations	34	63.0%
	2	Open space	8	14.8%
	3	Limit building permits	5	9.3%
Second most Important (2 out of 7)	1	Open space	17	31.5%
	2	Capital improvement plan	10	18.5%
	3	Land development regulations	8	14.8%
Least Important (7 out of 7)	1	Property tax relief	16	29.6%
	2	Impact fees	11	20.4%
	3	Limit building permits	11	20.4%

Chart 7.

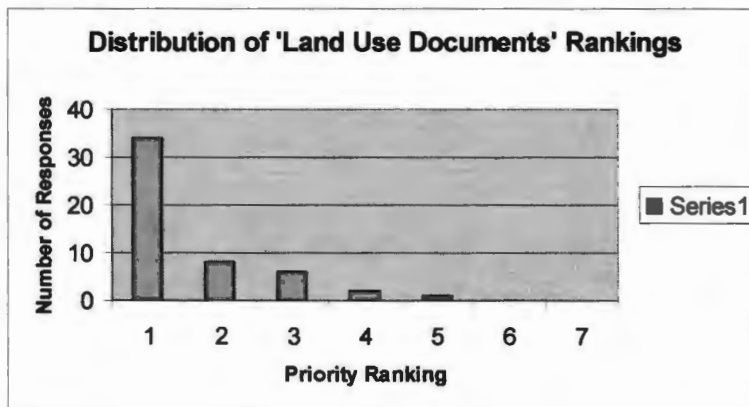
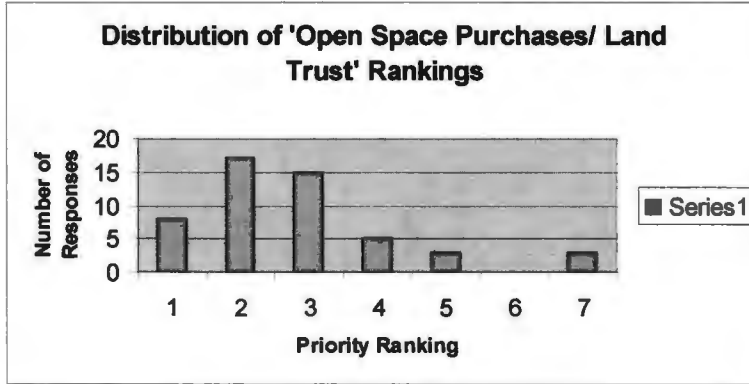


Chart 8.



Very few respondents ranked either “capital improvement plan,” “impact fees on new construction” or “purchase of development rights” as the most important tool (each had only 1.9 percent of the respondents choosing from these choices). These tools did not rank strongly for any of the seven rankings (see Charts 9., 10., and 11.)

Chart 9.

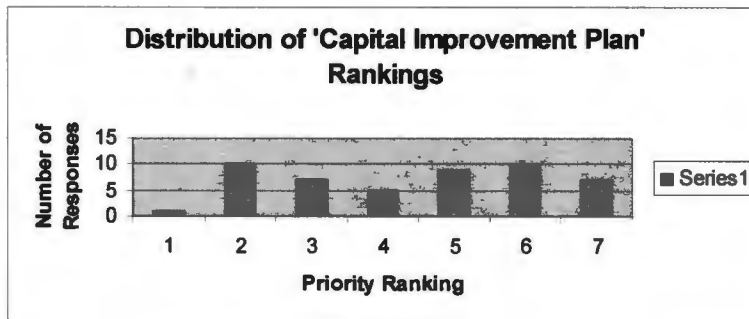


Chart 10.

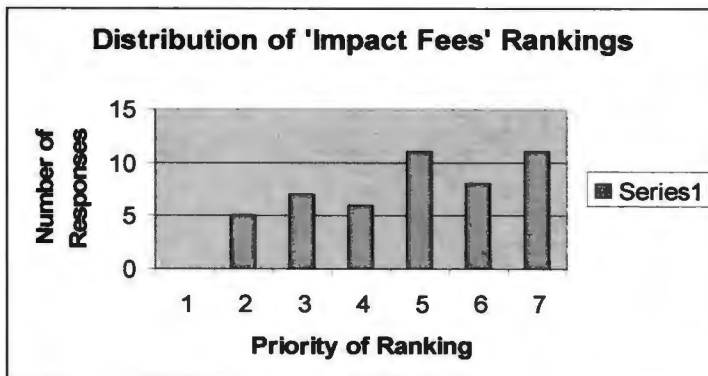
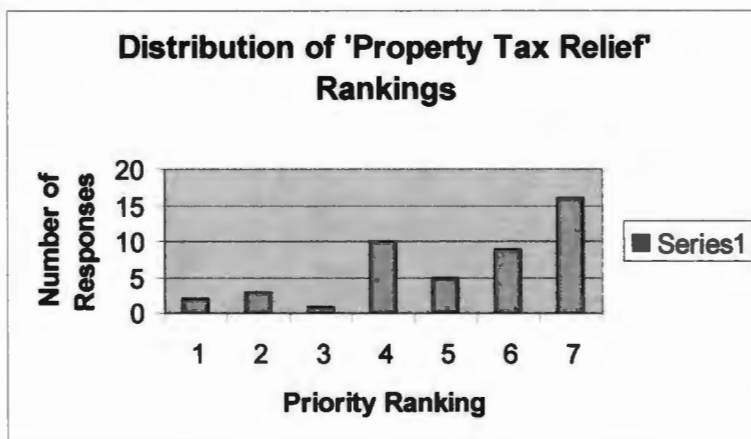


Chart 11.



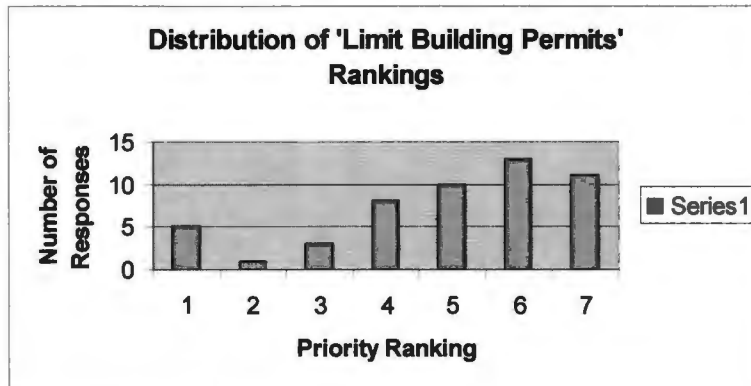
However, of the choices ranked as the least important (ranked 7th out of 7) tool for implementing growth management, “property tax relief” received the most responses, at 29.6 percent. The next most frequent choices for the least important tools for implementing growth management were “impact fees on new construction” and “limiting building permits issued each year,” with 20.4 percent of the responses each. None of the respondents ranked “land development regulations” as the least important tool, and only a few ranked “land trust / open space purchases” and “purchase of development rights” as the least important (each received 5.6 percent of the responses.)

Chart 12.



The tool with the most responses (24.1%) for the second to least most important tool (ranked 6th out of 7) was “limiting building permits issued each year.” “Capital improvement plan” and “purchase of development rights” followed with 18.5 percent each of the survey respondents ranking these tools as sixth out of seven tools. None of the respondents chose “land development regulations” for the sixth or seventh ranking.

Chart 13.



Of the respondents who ranked ‘land use documents’ as the first priority, 44 percent of them ranked ‘open space purchases/ land trust’ as the second most important tool for implementing growth management.

Planner versus Chief Elected Official

Reasons

In order to see how the Planner and the Chief Elected Official compares to the overall rankings, frequencies of ranking were counted with the SPSS Crosstabs procedure for each “reason” and “tool” by Planner and Chief Elected Official. Each position had the most respondents ranking “preserve community character” as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan. Of the 36 Planners who responded, 54.3 percent ranked “preserve community character” as number one, and six out of the 18 Chief Elected Officials, or 33.3 percent, ranked “preserve community character” as number one. (see Table 5. and Chart 14.)

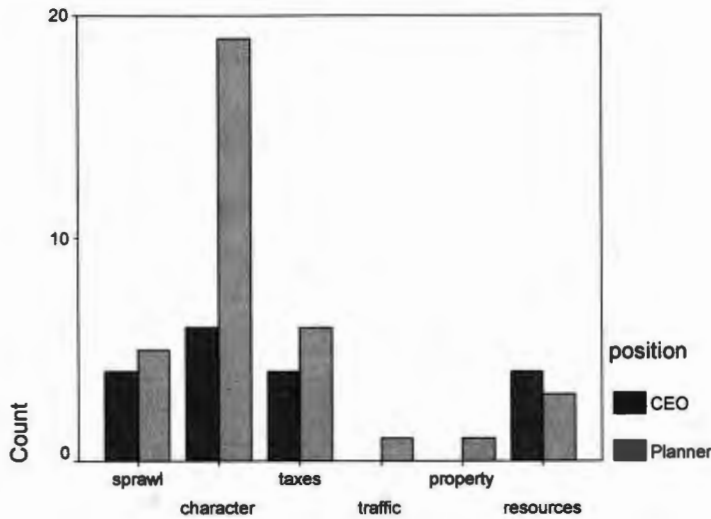
Table 5. Top Reasons by Planner and Chief Elected Official

Position	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percentage within Position
Planner	1	Preserve character	19	54.3%
	2	Stabilize taxes	6	17.1%
	3	Contain Sprawl	5	14.3%
	4	Protect Resources	3	8.6%
Chief Elected Official	1	Preserve character	6	33.3%
	2	Contain sprawl	4	22.2%
	2	Stabilize taxes	4	22.2%
	2	Protect resources	4	22.2%

The second most frequent (17.1 %) reason ranked number one by Planners was “stabilize tax base and municipal budget.” There was a three way tie for the second most frequent ranking of number one for Chief Elected Officials between “contain or prevent

sprawl,” stabilize tax base and municipal budget,” and “protect natural resources,” (each with four responses ranked as number one). None of the CEO’s ranked “reduce traffic congestion” or “maintain property values” as number one. These two reasons were also not frequently chosen by the Planners as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan, as they were each ranked number 1 by only one Planner.

Chart 14. Bar Graph of Top Reasons by Planner and Chief Elected Official



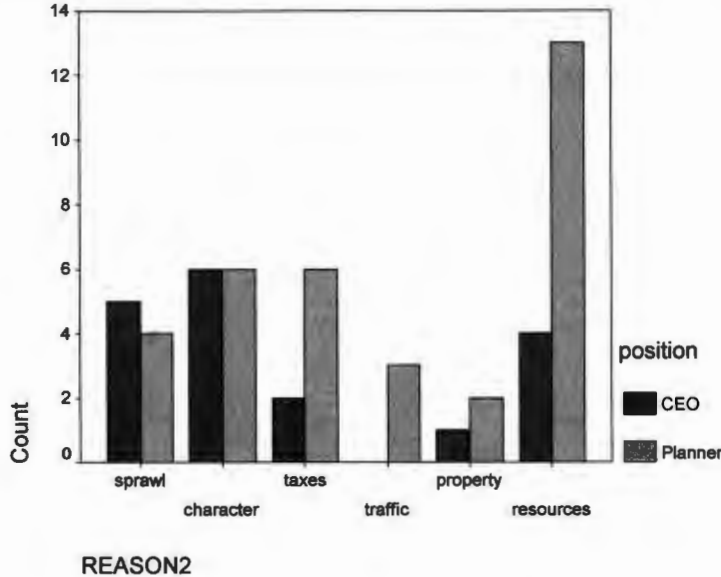
REASON1

Most Planners (38.2 percent) ranked “protect natural resources” as the second most important (ranked 2) reason to develop a growth management plan, while CEO’s ranked “preserve community character” as the second most important (again, 6 out of 18, or 33.3 percent). (see Table 6.)

Table 6. Second Most Important Reasons by Planner and Chief Elected Official

Position	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percentage within Position
Planner	1	Protect resources	13	38.2%
	2	Preserve character	6	17.6%
	2	Stabilize taxes	6	17.6%
Chief Elected Official	1	Preserve character	6	33.3%
	2	Contain sprawl	5	27.8%
	3	Protect resources	4	22.2%

Chart 15. Bar Graph of Second Reason by Planner and Chief Elected Official

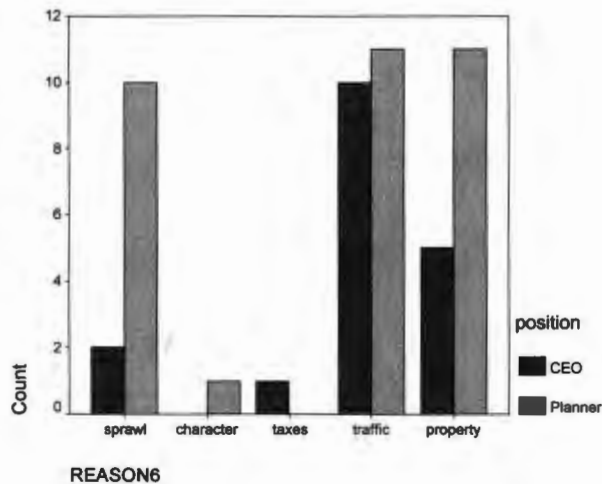


Most Planners (33.3% each) ranked both “reduce traffic congestion” and “maintain property values” in sixth place, or the least most important reason to develop a growth management plan. Over 55 percent of CEO’s ranked “reduce traffic congestion” as the least important reason. (see Table 7. and Chart 16.)

Table 7. Least Important Reasons by Position

Position	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percentage within Position
Planner	1	Reduce traffic	11	33.3%
	1	Maintain property values	11	33.3%
	2	Contain sprawl	10	30.3%
Chief Elected Official	1	Reduce traffic	10	55.6%
	2	Maintain property values	5	27.8%
	3	Contain sprawl	2	11.1%

Chart 16. Bar Graph of Least Important Reasons by Planner and Chief Elected Official



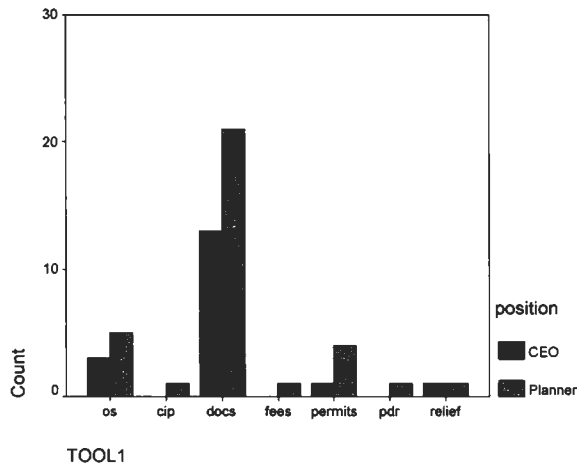
Tools

An overwhelming majority of both Planners (61.6%) and CEO's (72.2%) ranked "zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and comprehensive plan" ("land development regulations") as the most important tool for implementing a growth management plan in their communities (see Table 8. and Chart 17.). The next most frequent tool ranked number one by both Planners (14.7%) and CEO's (16.7%) was "land trust / open space purchases."

Table 8. Top Tools by Position

Position	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percentage within Position
Planner	1	Land development regulations	21	60.0%
	2	Open space	5	14.7%
	3	Limit building permits	4	11.8%
Chief Elected Official	1	Land development regulations	13	72.2%
	2	Open space	3	16.7%
	3	Limit permits	1	5.6%
	3	Property tax relief	1	5.6%

Chart 17. Bar Graph of Top Tool by Planner and Chief Elected Official



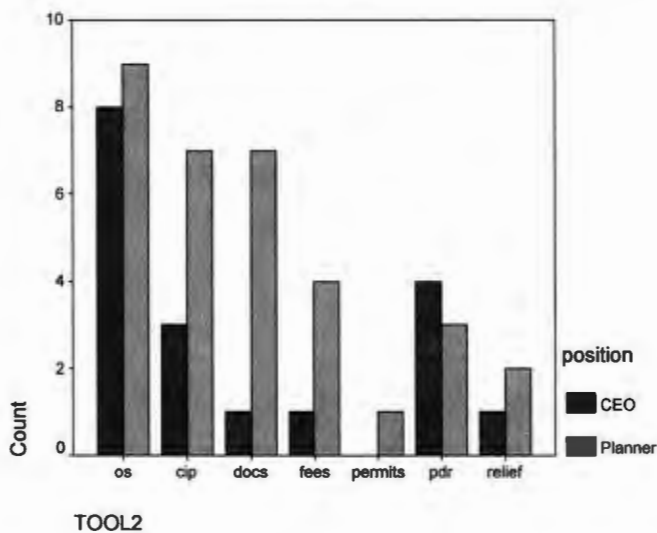
None of the CEO’s ranked “capital improvement plan,” “impact fees on new construction,” or “purchase of development rights” as the most important tool for implementing a growth management plan. These were also the least frequent number 1 ranking for Planners, each with only one Planner choosing these, and “property tax relief” as the most important tool.

Most Planners (27.3%) and CEO's (44.4%) ranked "land trust / open space purchases" as the second most important tool for implementing a growth management plan. (see Table 9. and Chart 18.)

Table 9. Second Most Important Tools by Position

Position	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percentage within Position
Planner	1	Open space	9	27.3%
	2	Capital improvement plan	7	21.2%
	2	Land development regulations	7	21.2%
Chief Elected Official	1	Open space	8	44.4%
	2	Purchase of development rights	4	22.2%
	3	Capital improvement plan	3	16.7%

Chart 18. Bar Graph of Second Most Important Tool by Planner and Chief Elected Official

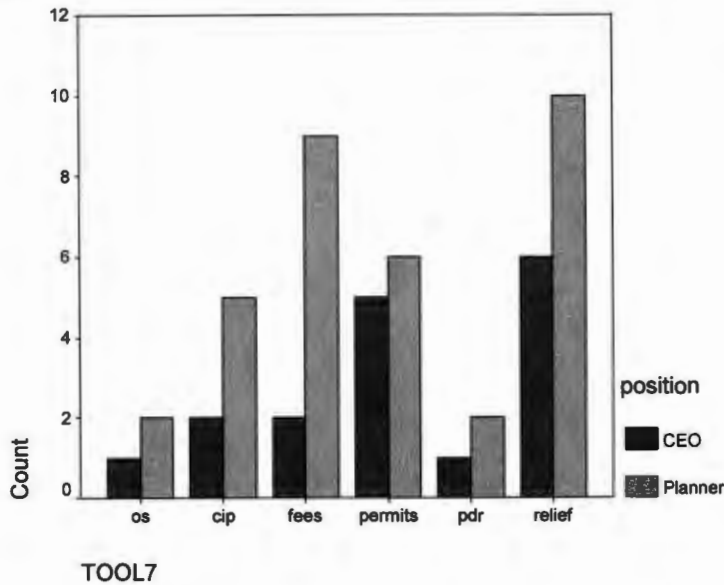


“Property tax relief” was the most frequent choice for the least important tool ranked by both Planners (29.4%) and CEO’s (35.3%) (see Table 10. and Chart 19). The next most frequent tool ranked 7 out of 7 was “impact fees on new construction” for Planners (26.5%) and “limiting building permits issued each year” for Chief Elected Officials (29.4%).

Table 10. Least Important Tools by Position

Position	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percentage within Position
Planner	1	Property tax relief	10	29.4%
	2	Impact fees	9	26.5%
	3	Limiting building permits	6	17.6%
Chief Elected Official	1	Property tax relief	6	35.3%
	2	Limiting building permits	5	29.4%
	3	Capital improvement plan	2	11.8%
	3	Impact fees	2	11.8%

Chart 19. Bar Graph of Least Important Tool by Planner and Chief Elected Official



Spatial Zone

The spatial zone categories are taken from the Statewide Planning Program Technical Paper Number 149 and are used to group communities by their similar spatial location within the State. It is assumed that regions within the State are politically similar and under similar development pressures due to unique spatial locations, such as “coastal region,” “western region,” and “older central city.” (For a list of the municipalities included in each Spatial Zone, see page 7.)

Five responses were received from communities designated Older Central Cities, eight from Inner Ring, twelve from Outer Ring, sixteen from Western, and twelve from Coastal. (see Table 11.)

Table 11. Spatial Zone Response Rate

Spatial Zone	Old Central Cities	Inner Ring	Outer Ring	Western	Coastal
Number of Communities	5	7	11	9	7
Total Possible Responses	10	14	22	18	14
Responses	5	8	12	16	12
Response Rate	50%	57%	55%	89%	86%

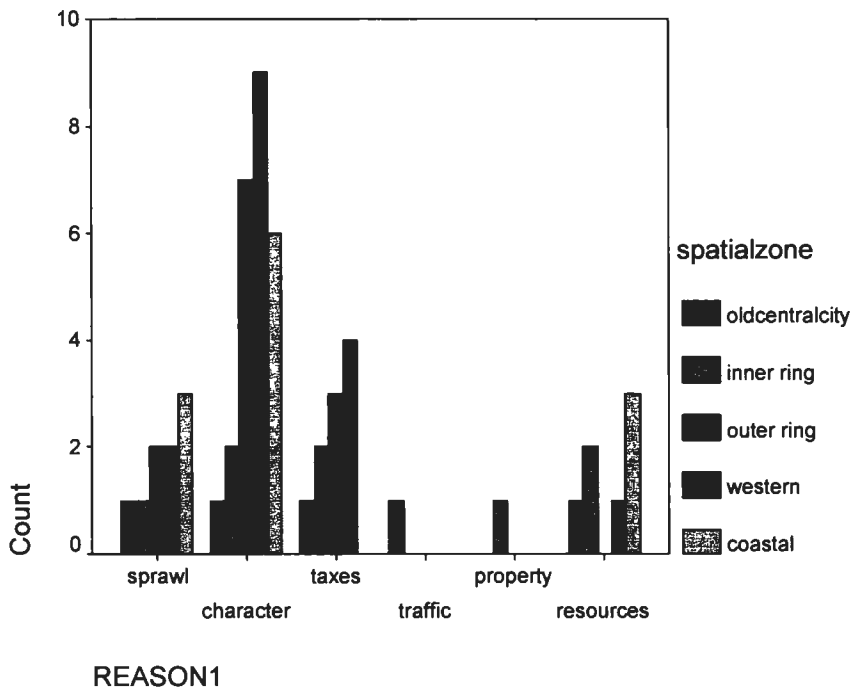
Reasons

Reason 1 (refer also to Table 12. in Appendix A)

Of the five respondents from the Older Central Cities, each ranked a different reason out of the six choices as number one. None of the respondents chose “maintain property values” as the most important reason for developing a growth management plan (see Chart 20.).

Of the eight respondents from the Inner Ring, none ranked “reduce traffic congestion” as the most important reason, and “preserve community character,” “stabilize tax base and municipal budget,” and “protect natural resources” were ranked number one by two respondents each.

Chart 20. Bar Graph of Top Reasons by Spatial Zone



Most of the respondents from the Outer Ring (58.3%) ranked “preserve community character” as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan.

“Preserve community character” was the most frequent choice ranked number one for the Western communities, and for the Coastal communities, also.

The Coastal communities were more likely to choose “contain or prevent sprawl” as the number one reason to develop a growth management plan than any other Spatial zone community. Of the communities choosing “preserve community character,” the most, 36.0 percent, were from Western communities. Western communities were also more likely to choose “stabilize tax base and municipal budget” as the most important reason than any other Spatial zone community. The only response ranking “reduce traffic congestion” as the most important reason came from an Older Central City, and the only

response ranking “maintain property values” as the most important reason came from the Inner Ring. Coastal communities were also more likely to choose “protect natural resources” as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan than any other Spatial zone.

Reason 2 (refer also to Table 13. and Chart 21. in Appendix A)

The most frequent response from the Older Central Cities for the second most important reason to develop a growth management plan was “preserve community character.”

Communities from the Inner Ring ranked “contain or prevent sprawl” as the second most important reason more frequently (37.5%) than any other reason.

The most frequent responses for the second most important reason (ranked 2) to develop a growth management plan for the Outer Ring communities was tied between “stabilize tax base and municipal budget” and “protect natural resources.”

The Western communities ranked “preserve community character” and “protect natural resources” as the second most important reason to develop a growth management plan, each reason with 31.3 percent of the Western community respondents ranking it as number 2.

The Coastal communities had the most frequent response for “protect natural resources” as the second most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

The Coastal communities and the Inner Ring communities were more likely to choose “contain or prevent sprawl” as the second most important (ranked number 2) reason to develop a growth management plan. The Western communities were more

likely than any other spatial zone community to rank “preserve community character” as the second most important reason. The Western communities were also more likely to choose “stabilize tax base and municipal budget” as the second most important reason to develop a growth management plan than any other Spatial zone community. Three different Spatial zone communities, Older Central Cities, Inner Ring, and Outer Ring, each had one respondent choosing “reduce traffic congestion” as the second most important reason to develop a growth management plan. Communities from the Outer Ring were more likely than any other Spatial zone community to choose “maintain property values” as the second most important reason. Coastal communities were more likely than any other Spatial zone community to choose “protect natural resources” as the second most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

Reason 6 (refer also to Table 14. and Chart 22. in Appendix A)

The Older Central Cities ranked “contain or prevent sprawl” more frequently than any other reason as six out of six, or the least important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

The Inner Ring communities ranked a tie between “contain or prevent sprawl” and “maintain property values” for the least important reasons to develop a growth management plan in their community.

The most Outer Ring communities (50.0%) ranked “reduce traffic congestion” as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community, as did the Western communities (68.8%).

The Coastal spatial zone communities ranked “maintain property values” more frequently than any other reason as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

No community ranked “protect natural resources” as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

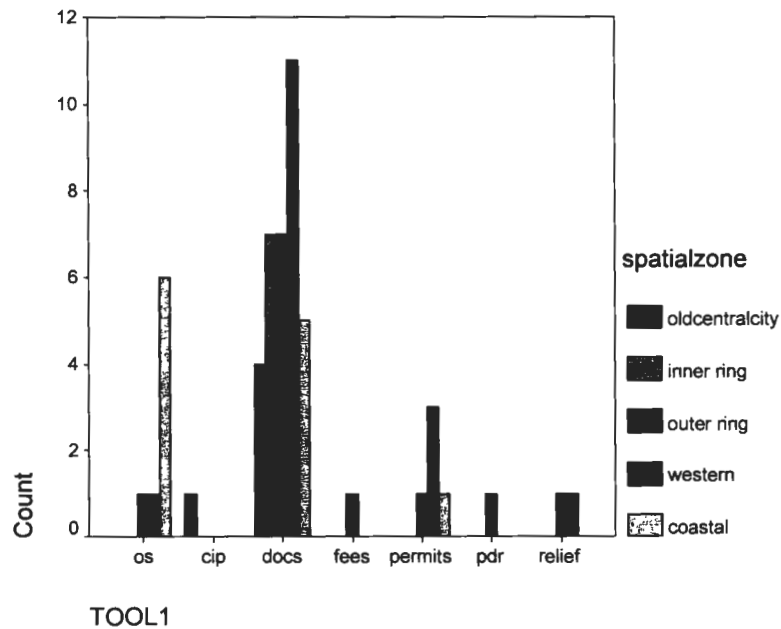
Of the Spatial zone communities choosing “contain or prevent sprawl” as the least important reason, the Older Central Cities, the Inner Ring, and the Outer Ring were more likely to choose this reason than the Western or Coastal communities. Only one community, from the Inner Ring, ranked “preserve community character” as the least important reason, and only one community, from the Coastal Spatial zone, ranked “stabilize tax base and municipal budget” as the least important reason. The Western communities were more likely to rank “reduce traffic congestion” as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community than any other Spatial zone community. Coastal communities were more likely to choose “maintain property values” as the least important reason than any other Spatial zone community.

Tools

Tool 1 (refer also to Table 15. in Appendix A)

The most frequent response for the most important tool to implement a growth management plan for the Older Central Cities, the Inner Ring, the Outer Ring and for the Western communities was “zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and comprehensive plan” (land development regulations, for short) (see Chart 23.). Only the

Chart 23. Bar Graph of Top Tools by Spatial Zone



Coastal communities ranked “land trust / open space purchases” as number one more frequently than “land development regulations,” which was their second most frequent tool ranked as number one.

The only other choice that the Older Central Cities ranked as the number one tool, with one response, was “capital improvement plan.” The Inner Ring communities only ranked “land development regulations” as the most important tool out of all 7 choices. The Outer Ring had one response for each of the other choices, except for “capital improvement plan,” which none of the Outer Ring communities chose as the most important. The second most frequent response for the Western communities was “limiting building permits issued each year.”

Only one response was received for each of “capital improvement plan,” (by an Older Central City) “impact fees on new construction,” (by an Outer Ring community) or “purchase of development rights” (also by an Outer Ring community).

Tool 2 (refer also to Table 16. and Chart 24. in Appendix A)

The most frequent response for the second most important tool for implementing a growth management plan was “capital improvement plan” for the Older Central Cities (40.0%), and for the Western communities (25.0%). The Inner Ring communities (57.1%) more often chose “land trust / open space” as the second most important tool, as did the Outer Ring communities (72.7%). The Coastal communities more often chose “purchase of development rights” as the second most important tool to implement a growth management plan in their communities.

Tool 7 (refer also to Table 17. and Chart 25. in Appendix A)

The Older Central Cities ranked “impact fees on new construction” most frequently (60.0%) as the least important tool for implementing a growth management plan, as did the Western communities (25.0%).

The Inner Ring communities (37.5%) and the Coastal communities (63.6%) ranked “property tax relief” most frequently as the least important tool.

The Outer Ring communities ranked “limiting building permits issued each year” most frequently as the least important tool for implementing a growth management plan.

No Spatial Zone community ranked “land development regulations” as the least important tool for implementing a growth management plan in their communities.

Only one respondent from each of the Inner Ring, Outer Ring, and Western communities ranked “land trust / open space purchases” as the least important tool (rank 7 out of 7) for implementing a growth management plan in their communities. “Capital improvement plan,” “impact fees on new construction,” and “purchase of development rights” were more likely chosen by the Western communities as the least important tools

than by the other Spatial zone communities. The Outer Ring communities ranked “limiting building permits issued each year” as the least important tool more frequently than the other Spatial zone communities. The Coastal communities more frequently ranked “property tax relief” as the least important tool (43.8% of those communities choosing “property tax relief”) for implementing a growth management plan in their communities.

Community Type

Communities have been categorized according to Statewide Planning Technical Paper Number 149 based on population density and amount of developed land. It is assumed that urban communities have similar non-growth issues, that rural areas are facing the most rapid development pressure, and that growth management priorities would be different for each community type.

Five responses were received from communities designated Older Central Cities, seven New Urban Communities, seventeen from Established Suburbs, and 24 from Rural Communities. (see Table 18.) (For a list of municipalities included in each Community Type, see page 6 .)

Table 18. Community Type Response Rate

Community Type	Older Central Cities	New Urban Communities	Established Suburbs	Rural Communities
Total Possible Responses	10	10	28	30
Responses	5	7	17	24
Response Rate	50%	70%	60%	80%

The community type Older Central Cities is the same as the spatial zone Older Central Cities, which was analyzed in the previous section. (see analysis above).

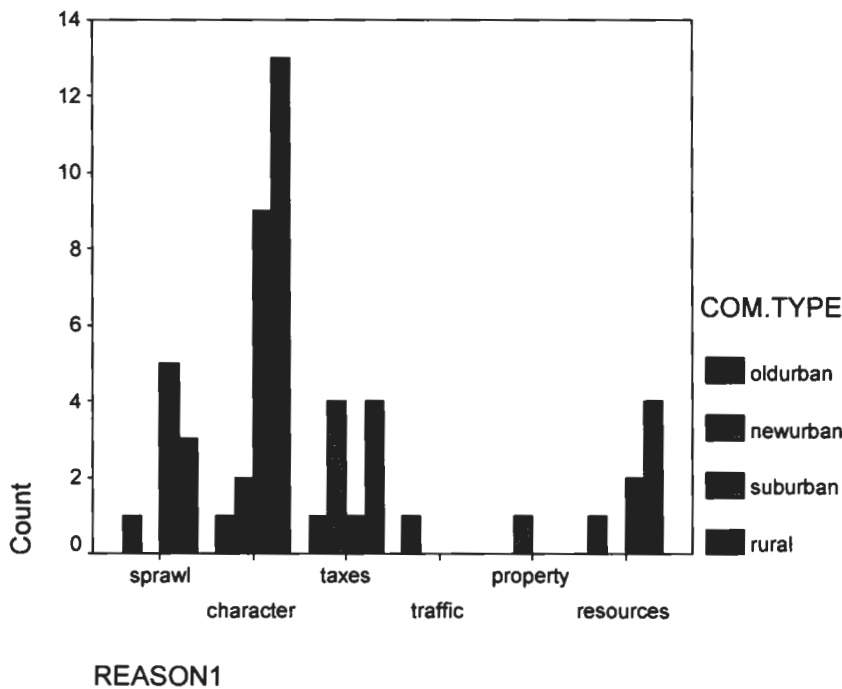
Reasons

Reason 1 (refer also to Table 19. in Appendix A)

The most frequent response (57.1%) for the New Urban communities for the most important reason to develop a growth management plan was “stabilize tax base and municipal budget,” and the second most frequent response (28.6%) was “preserve community character.” (see Chart 26.)

Of the Suburban respondents, the most frequent (52.9%) ranking of number 1 was “preserve community character,” and the second most frequent (29.4%) was “contain or prevent sprawl.”

Chart 26. Bar Graph of Top Reason by Community Type



The Rural communities also had the most respondents (54.2%) choosing “preserve community character” as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community, followed by a tie between “stabilize tax base and

municipal budget” and “protect community resources,” each with 16.7 percent of the respondents ranking number 1.

None of the New Urban communities chose “contain or prevent sprawl,” “reduce traffic congestion,” or “protect natural resources” as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

None of the Suburban or Rural communities chose “reduce traffic congestion” or “maintain property values” as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their communities.

Suburban communities were more likely than the other community types to choose “contain or prevent sprawl” as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community. “Preserve community character” was more likely ranked number one by Rural communities, and “stabilized tax base and municipal budget” was chosen as number one more frequently by the New Urban communities and the Rural communities than the other two community types. The only Community Type to choose “reduce traffic congestion” as the most important reason was one Old Urban community, and the only Community Type to choose “maintain property values” as the most important was a New Urban community. Rural communities were more likely than the other Community Types to rank “protect natural resources” as the most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

Reason 2 (refer to Table 20. and Chart 27. in Appendix A)

New Urban communities most frequently ranked both “contain or prevent sprawl” and “maintain property values” as the second most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

Suburban communities ranked “protect natural resources” most frequently as the second most important reason.

Rural communities ranked both “preserve community character” and “protect natural resources” most frequently as the second most important reasons to develop a growth management plan in their community.

“Contain or prevent sprawl,” “preserve community character,” and “stabilize tax base and municipal budget” were more frequently chosen as the second most important reasons to develop a growth management plan by Rural communities than by any other Community Type. Rural communities were the only Community Type that did not rank “reduce traffic congestion” as the second most important reason to develop a growth management plan. “Maintain property values” was more likely chosen by New Urban communities than by any other community as the second most important reason, and “protect natural resources” was most frequently ranked by Suburban communities as the second most important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community. Reason 6 (refer also to Table 21. and Chart 28. in Appendix A)

New Urban communities (42.9%) most frequently ranked “contain or prevent sprawl” as the least important reason (ranked 6 out of 6) to develop a growth management plan in their community.

Suburban communities tied (each with 33.3%) between ranking “contain or prevent sprawl” and “maintain property values” as the least important reasons to develop a growth management plan in their community.

Rural communities (58.3%) more frequently ranked “reduce traffic congestion” as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

“Contain or prevent sprawl” was more frequently ranked as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan by Suburban communities than by any other Community Type. “Preserve community character” was only chosen by one New Urban community as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan, and “stabilize tax base and municipal budget” was only chosen by one Suburban community as the least important reason. Rural communities were more likely to rank “reduce traffic congestion” as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan than any other Community Type. Rural communities chose “maintain property values” more frequently than any other Community Type as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan. None of the Community Types ranked “protect natural resources” as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan in their community.

Tools

Tool 1 (refer also to Table 22. in Appendix A)

Every Community Type ranked “land development regulations” as the most important tool for implementing a growth management plan in their community. (see Chart 29.)

The second most frequent most important tool for the New Urban communities was a tie between “impact fees on new construction,” and “property tax relief.” The second most frequent tool ranked number 1 by Suburban communities and Rural communities was “land trust / open space purchases.”

None of the New Urban communities ranked “land trust / open space purchases,” “capital improvement plan,” “limiting building permits issued each year,” or “purchase of

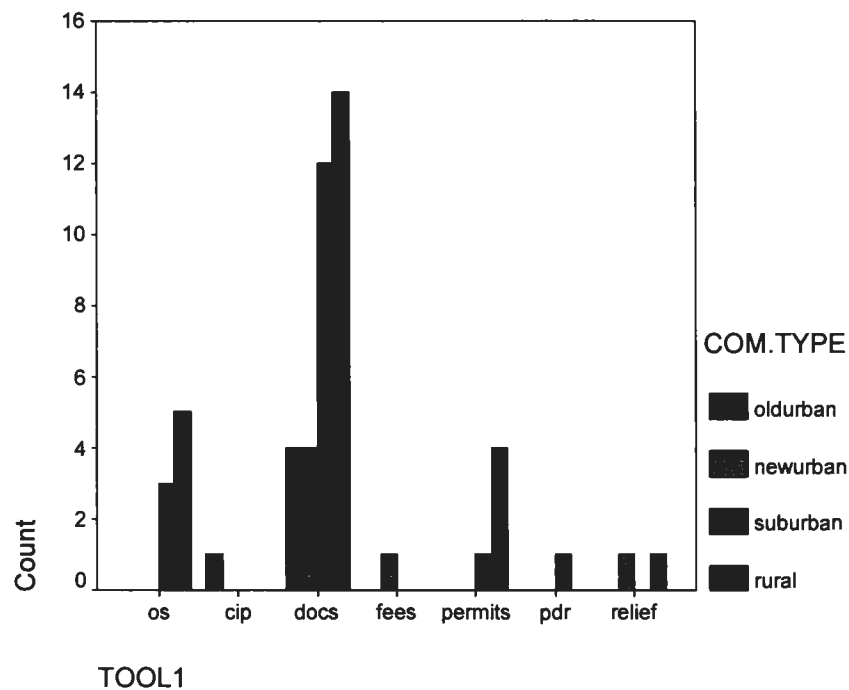
development rights as the most important tools for implementing a growth management plan in their community.

None of the Suburban communities ranked “capital improvement plan,” “impact fees on new construction,” or “property tax relief” as the most important tools.

None of the Rural communities ranked “capital improvement plan,” “impact fees on new construction,” or “purchase of development rights” as the most important tools for implementing a growth management plan in their community.

“Land trust / open space purchases” was most frequently chosen by Rural communities as the most important tool than by any other Community Type. The only Community Type to choose “capital improvement plan” as the most important was an Older Central City.

Chart 29. Bar Graph of Most Important Tool by Community Type



While every Community Type chose “land development regulations” as the most important tool, the most frequent responses were from Rural communities; however, this is largely because there were so many more Rural communities in general, and more responses received. Looking at percentage within Community Type, Older Central Cities has a larger percentage (80%) of its respondents who chose this tool than the other Community Types. In fact, Rural communities may have had the most respondents (14) choosing this tool, but they had the lowest percentage (58.3%) of communities within their Community Type choosing this tool. In any case, over 50 percent of each Community Type ranked “land development regulations” as the most important tool for implementing a growth management plan in their community.

The only Community Type to rank “impact fees on new construction” as the most important tool was a New Urban community. More Rural communities ranked “limiting building permits issued each year” as the most important tool than any other Community Type. The only Community Type to choose “purchase of development rights” as the most important tool was a Suburban community. A New Urban community and a Rural community each were the only respondents to rank “property tax relief” as the most important tools for implementing a growth management plan in their communities.

Tool 2 (refer also to Table 23. and Chart 30. in Appendix A)

The tool most frequently ranked second most important by the New Urban communities (50.0%) and the Suburban communities (56.3%) was “land trust / open space purchases.” Rural communities more frequently ranked both “capital improvement plan” and “purchase of development rights” as the second most important tools, each with 20.8 percent.

“Land trust / open space purchases” and “capital improvement plan” were more frequently chosen by Rural communities as the second most important tool for implementing a growth management plan in their community than any of the other Community Type.

“Land development regulations” was more frequently ranked as the second most important tool by both Suburban and Rural communities, however, Older Central Cities (20.0%) and Suburban communities (18.8%) each had a higher percentage of its respondents choosing this Tool than the Rural communities (12.5%).

“Impact fees on new construction” was more likely ranked by Rural communities (80%) than by any other Community Type as the second most important tool for implementing a growth management plan in their community. “Limiting building permits issued each year” was only chosen by a Suburban community as the second most important tool. “Purchase of development rights” was more frequently chosen by Rural communities as the second most important tool for implementing a growth management plan, and the only Community Type to choose “property tax relief” as the second most important were the Rural communities.

Tool 7 (refer also to Table 24. and Chart 31. in Appendix A)

The New Urban communities more frequently ranked both “land trust / open space purchases” and “limiting building permits issued each year” (each 28.6%) as the least important tools for implementing a growth management plan in their community.

Suburban communities and Rural communities more frequently ranked “property tax relief” as the least important tool (ranked 7 out of 7) for implementing a growth management plan in their communities.

None of the New Urban communities ranked “land development regulations” or “property tax relief” as the least important tools. None of the Suburban communities ranked “land trust / open space purchases,” “capital improvement plan,” “land development regulations” or “purchase of development rights” as the least important tools for implementing a growth management plan in their community. None of the Rural communities ranked “land development regulations” as the least important reason.

New Urban communities more frequently ranked “land trust / open space purchases” as the least important tool than any of the other Community Types. “Capital improvement plan” was more likely ranked by Rural communities as the least important tool than any of the other Community Types.

None of the Community Types ranked “land development regulations” as the least important tool for implementing a growth management plan.

“Impact fees on new construction” was more frequently ranked by Rural communities (5 responses) as the least important tool for implementing a growth management plan, however, a greater percentage of the Older Central Cities (60.0%) ranked this tool as the least important.

“Limiting building permits issued each year” was more frequently ranked by Suburban communities as the least important tool for implementing a growth management plan. “Purchase of development rights” was more frequently ranked by Rural communities as the least important tool, however New Urban communities had a greater percentage (14.3%) within its Community Type ranking this tool as least important than did the Rural communities (8.3%). “Property tax relief was most frequently ranked the least important tool by the Suburban communities.

Chapter 3: Findings and Implications

Findings

Overall

In general, “preserve community character” is perceived as the most important reason in Rhode Island to develop a growth management plan. It also ranked strongly (by 84% of the respondents), along with “protect natural resources,” (48% of the respondents) in the top two most important reasons to develop a growth management plan. “Reduce traffic congestion” and “maintain property values” ranked strongly in the bottom two, or least important reasons to develop a growth management plan.

“Zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and comprehensive plan” (or “land development regulations”) was ranked strongly overall as the most important tool for implementing a growth management plan, followed by “land trust/ open space purchases.” “Property tax relief” ranked overall as the least important tool for growth management.

Differences or Similarities between Planners and Chief Elected Officials

There is not much difference between the perceived most important reasons for growth management between Planners and Chief Elected Officials (CEO’s). Both positions had the highest percentage of respondents choosing “preserve community character” as the most important reason. “Stabilize tax base and municipal budget,” “contain or prevent sprawl,” and “protect natural resources” were also ranked highly by both Planners and CEO’s as important reasons.

Both CEO's and Planners also perceive "reduce traffic congestion," "maintain property values," and "contain or prevent sprawl" as the least important reasons for developing a growth management plan.

Perceptions on the most important tool for implementing growth management were also not very different between Planners and CEO's. Both positions overwhelmingly ranked "land development regulations" as the most important tool. "Land trust / open space purchases" were also perceived as an important tool by both Planners and CEO's. Planners and CEO's similarly perceive "property tax relief" as the least important tool for implementing a growth management plan.

Planners and CEO's differ, however, on how strongly they perceive between "impact fees on new construction" and "limiting building permits issued each year" as the least important tools for implementing a growth management plan. Planners more often ranked "impact fees" as least important, lower than "limiting building permits," whereas CEO's tended to rank "limiting building permits" as least important, lower than "impact fees."

Differences or Similarities between Spatial Zones

The Older Central Cities varied greatly on what they perceive is the most important reason for developing a growth management plan in their communities. No two of the five respondents chose the same reason as the most important, and none of the respondents chose "maintain property values" as the most important reason. Sixty percent of the Older Central Cities, however, ranked "preserve community character" in the top two reasons for growth management. Sixty percent of the Older Central Cities

also perceive “contain or prevent sprawl” as the least important reason for developing a growth management plan.

The Inner Ring communities differ in what they perceive as the most important reason, splitting between “preserve community character,” “stabilize tax base and municipal budget,” and “protect natural resources.” While these reasons may have ranked highly as the most important, fifty percent of the Inner Ring respondents ranked “contain or prevent sprawl” in the top two reasons, and fifty percent of the respondents ranked “protect natural resources” in the top two reason, whereas only thirty-eight percent ranked “preserve community character” in the top two reasons and only thirty-eight percent ranked “stabilize tax base and municipal budget” in the top two. None of the Inner Ring respondents ranked “reduce traffic congestion” as the most important reason for growth management in their community. Also, the Inner Ring respondents tended to perceive “contain or prevent sprawl” and “maintain property values” as the least important reasons for growth management.

Most Outer Ring, Western, and Coastal respondents all ranked “preserve community character” as the most important reason for developing a growth management plan in their communities. Of these, the Outer Ring and Western respondents ranked “stabilize tax base and municipal budget” in the top two reasons, while the Coastal respondents tended to rank “protect natural resources” in the top two reasons. Also, the Outer Ring and Western communities were similar in that they ranked “reduce traffic congestion” more frequently as the least important reason, while the Coastal respondents tended to rank “maintain property value” as the least important reason to develop a growth management plan.

The Older Central Cities ranked “land development regulations” as the most important tool for implementing growth management, as did the Inner Ring, Outer Ring, and Western communities. Only the Coastal communities differed by ranking “open space purchases” over “land development regulations” as the most important tool. However, the Coastal communities’ second most frequent response for the most important tool was “land development regulations.”

The Older Central Cities were the only respondents who ranked “capital improvement plan” in the top two most important tools for implementing growth management. “Impact fees” was ranked as the least important tool for Older Central Cities.

The Inner Ring and the Outer Ring Communities ranked “open space purchases” after “land development regulations” as one of the top two tools for implementing growth management. “Property tax relief” was ranked the least important tool for the Inner Ring Communities and the Coastal communities, while “Limit building permits” was ranked by most respondents from the Outer Ring communities as the least important tool.

The Western Communities ranked “property tax relief” and “capital improvement plan” in the top two after “land development regulations” as the most important tools for implementing growth management. “Impact fees” was ranked by 25 percent as the least important tool.

Differences or Similarities between Community Types

The Older Central City community type is the same as the Older Central Cities spatial zone. See above section for analysis.

The New Urban Communities ranked “stabilize tax base” as the most important reason for developing a growth management plan in their communities. After “stabilize tax base,” the New Urban Communities ranked “maintain property values” as one of the top two reasons for growth management. The least important reason for growth management to the New Urban Communities was “contain sprawl.”

The Suburban and Rural Communities both ranked “preserve character” as the most important reason for growth management. They also both ranked “protect natural resources” in the top two most important reasons. The Suburban communities ranked equally both “contain sprawl” and “maintain property values” as the least important reasons for developing a growth management plan. The Rural communities (58.3%) ranked “reduce traffic” as the least important reason for growth management.

Each of the four Community Types ranked “land development regulations” as the most important tools for implementing a growth management plan.

The New Urban, Suburban, and Rural Communities ranked “open space purchases” after “land development regulations” in the top two tools for growth management. The Suburban and Rural communities both ranked “property tax relief” as the least important tool for implementing growth management. The New Urban communities equally ranked “Open space purchases” and “limit building permits” as the least important tools for growth management, however it is interesting to note that “Open space purchases” was more frequently ranked in the top two reasons (50%) than as the least important (28.6%).

Implications from the Study

The best way to spatially plan for the future of a community is through zoning. Since the majority of the respondents ranked “preserve community character” as the most important reason for growth management, and also chose “land development regulations” as the most important tool, the respondents have chosen appropriate tools to match their goals for growth management. Also, “protect natural resources” ranked highly as a reason for growth management, and “open space purchases” ranked highly as a tool. Both open space purchases and the land development documents can be used to preserve character and resources.

The New Urban Community type was the only group to deviate from this trend. They ranked “stabilize tax base,” followed by “maintain property values” as the most important reasons. These reasons are not tied to the visual appearance of the community, but rather the financial management of the community. They also ranked “land development regulations” as the most important tool, followed by “open space purchases.” Both of these tools do affect the ratio of taxed sectors in a community. The “land development regulations” can be used to influence economic development in a community, which can generate tax revenue. Also, “open space purchases” if focusing on residential zones, reduces the number of residential dwellings in a community, which, as investigated in the report, “Cost of Community Services in Southern New England” by Commonwealth Research Group, Inc. (1995), costs a community more in services than it takes in from taxes. This would have an affect on the financial management of a community. The New Urban Communities have also matched appropriate tools to implement their reasons for growth management.

One of the biggest factors contributing to the financial management and budget of a community is schools. Growing communities are faced with pressure to expand existing school infrastructure and services. One way to pace this pressure is to limit the number of school children entering the system, which can be achieved through limiting the number of building permits on new homes. However, “limit building permits” was ranked one of the least important tools by the New Urban communities. Similarly, imposing impact fees can help to recoup, or catch up, with increasing fiscal demands caused by new development. However, “impact fees” was not ranked highly by the New Urban communities.

Rhode Island communities, in general, appear to be well prepared with the knowledge of growth management issues and strategies. This survey has additionally revealed that, while building permit caps and impact fees receive a lot of attention in the media, these tools are not perceived as the most important by Rhode Island communities that are trying to manage growth.

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Appendix A.

Table 12. Top Reasons by Spatial Zone

Spatial Zone	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percentage within Spatial Zone
Older Central Cities	1	Contain sprawl, Preserve character, Stabilize taxes, Reduce traffic, Protect resources	1 each	20.0% each
Inner Ring	1	Preserve character, Stabilize taxes, Protect resources	2 each	25% each
Outer Ring	1	Preserve character	7	58.3%
	2	Stabilize taxes	3	25%
	3	Contain sprawl	2	16.7%
Western	1	Preserve character	9	56.3%
	2	Stabilize taxes	4	25.0%
	3	Contain sprawl	2	12.5%
Coastal	1	Preserve character	6	50.0%
	2	Contain sprawl	3	25.0%
	2	Protect resources	3	25.0%

Table 13. Second Most Important Reasons by Spatial Zone (move to Appendix)**

Spatial Zone	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percentage within Spatial Zone
Older Central Cities	1	Preserve character	2	40.0%
Inner Ring	1	Contain sprawl	3	37.5%
Outer Ring	1	Stabilize taxes, Protect resources	3 each	27.3% each
Western	1	Preserve character, Protect resources	5 each	31.3% each
Coastal	1	Protect resources	6	50%

Chart 21. Bar Graph of Second Most Important Reason by Spatial Zone

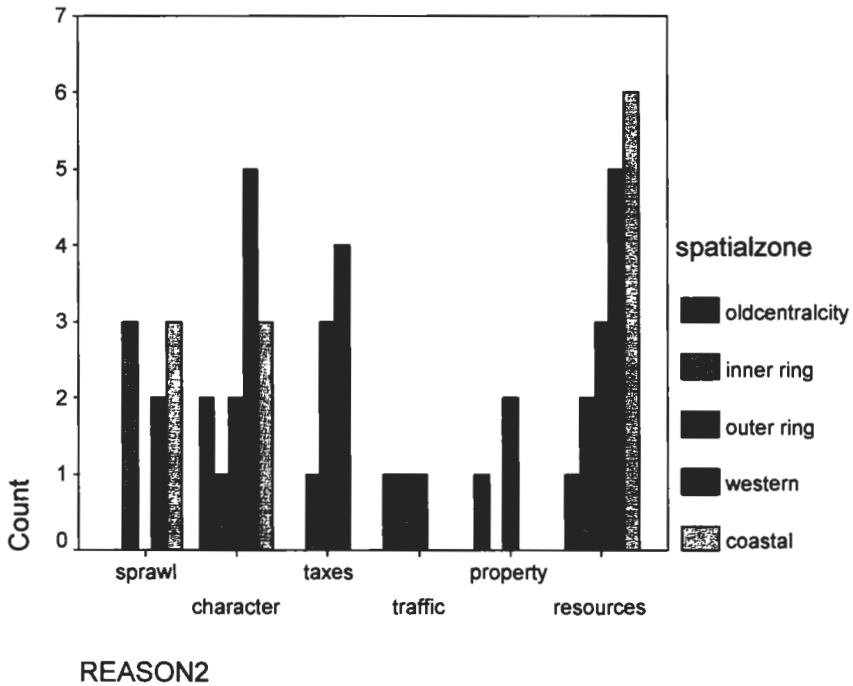


Table 14. Least Important Reasons by Spatial Zone

Spatial Zone	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percentage within Spatial Zone
Older Central Cities	1	Contain sprawl,	3	60.0%
	2	Reduce traffic, Maintain property values	1 each	20.0%
Inner Ring	1	Contain sprawl, Maintain property values	3 each	37.5% each
	2	Preserve character, Reduce traffic	1 each	12.5%
Outer Ring	1	Reduce traffic	5	50.0%
	2	Contain sprawl	3	30.0%
Western	1	Reduce traffic	11	68.8%
	2	Maintain property values	4	25.0%
Coastal	1	Maintain property values	6	50.0%
	2	Reduce traffic	3	25.0%

Chart 22. Bar Graph of Least Important Reason by Spatial Zone

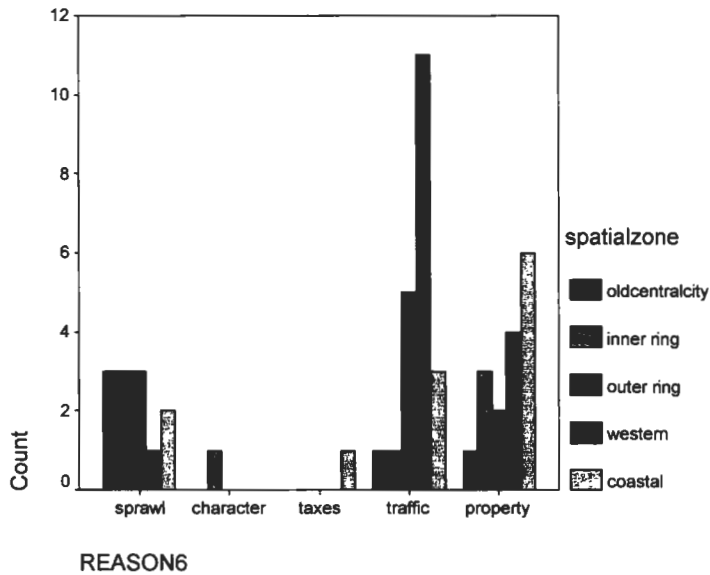


Table 15. Top Tools by Spatial Zone

Spatial Zone	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percentage within Spatial Zone
Older Central Cities	1	Land development regulation	4	80.0%
	2	Capital improvement plan	1	20.0%
Inner Ring	1	Land development regulation	7	100.0%
Outer Ring	1	Land development regulation	7	58.3%
	2	Open space, Impact fees, Limit permits, PDR's, Property Tax Relief	1 each	8.3%
Western	1	Land development regulation	11	68.8%
	2	Limit building permits	3	18.8%
	3	Open Space, Property tax relief	1 each	6.3%
Coastal	1	Open Space	6	50.0%
	2	Land development regulation	5	41.7%
	3	Limit building permits	1	8.3%

Table 16. Second Most Important Tools by Spatial Zone

Spatial Zone	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percentage within Spatial Zone
Older Central Cities	1	Capital improvement plan	2	40.0%
Inner Ring	1	Open space	4	57.1%
Outer Ring	1	Open space	8	72.7%
Western	1	Capital improvement plan	4	40.0%
Coastal	1	Purchase of development rights (PDR's)	4	33.3%

Chart 24. Bar Graph of Second Most Important Tool by Spatial Zone

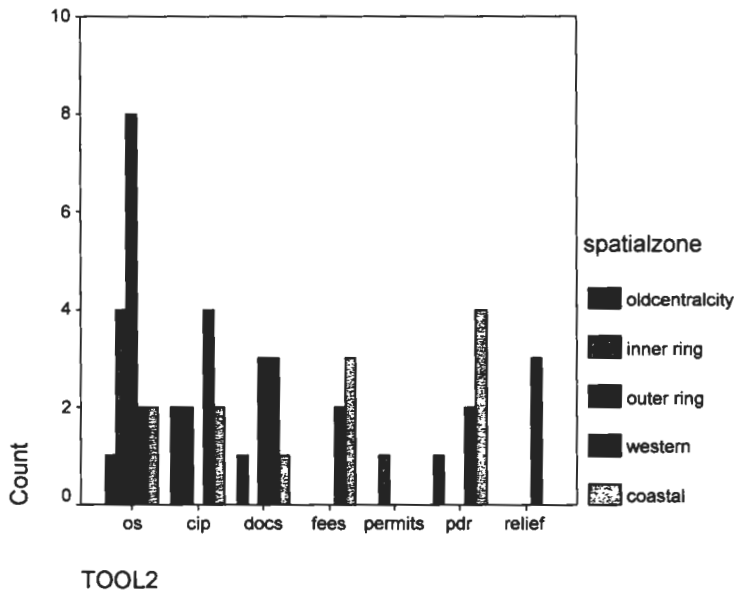


Table 17. Least Important Tools by Spatial Zone

Spatial Zone	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percentage within Spatial Zone
Older Central Cities	1	Impact fees	3	60.0%
	2	Capital improvement plan, Property tax relief	1 each	20.0% each
Inner Ring	1	Property tax relief	3	37.5%
	2	Limit building permits	2	25.0%
Outer Ring	1	Limit building permits	4	36.4%
	2	Capital improvement plan, Property tax relief	2 each	18.2% each
Western	1	Impact fees	4	25.0%
	2	Capital improvement plan, Limit building permits, Property tax relief	3 each	18.8% each
Coastal	1	Property tax relief	7	63.6%
	2	Impact fees, Limit building permits	2 each	18.2% each

Chart 25. Bar Graph of Least Important Tool by Spatial Zone

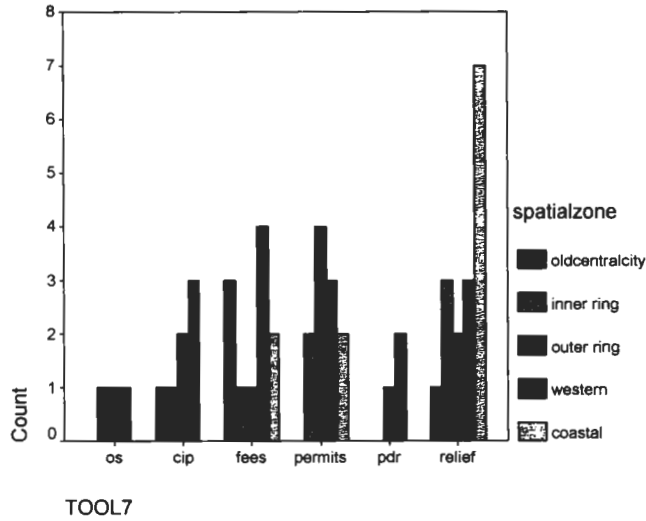


Table 19. Most Important Reasons by Community Type

Community Type	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percentage within Community Type
Older Central Cities	1	Contain sprawl, Preserve character, Stabilize taxes, Reduce traffic, Protect resources	1 each	20.0% each
	1	Stabilize taxes	4	57.1%
	2	Preserve character	2	28.6%
Established Suburbs	1	Maintain property values	1	14.3%
	1	Preserve character	9	52.9%
	2	Contain sprawl	5	29.4%
Rural	3	Protect resources	2	11.8%
	1	Preserve character	13	54.2%
	2	Stabilize taxes	4	16.7%
	2	Protect resources	4	16.7%

Table 20. Second Most Important Reasons by Community Type

Community Type	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percentage within Community Type
Older Central Cities	1	Preserve character	2	40.0%
New Urban	1	Contain sprawl, Maintain property values	2 each	28.6%
Established Suburbs	1	Protect resources	8	50.0%
Rural	1	Preserve character, Protect resources	7 each	29.2% each

Chart 27. Bar Graph of Second Most Important Reason by Community Type

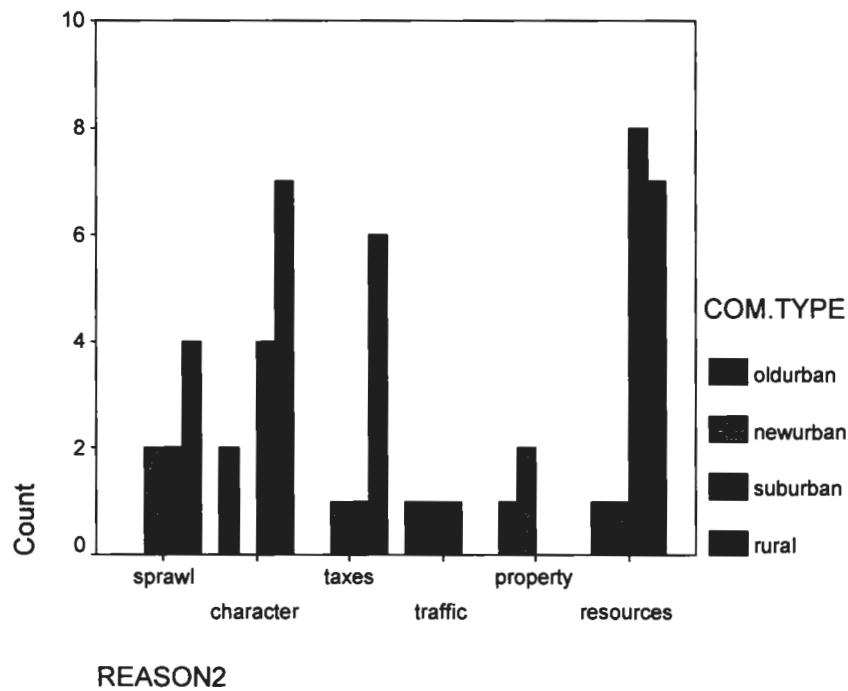


Table 21. Least Important Reasons by Community Type (move to appendix)

Community Type	Frequency Ranking	Reason	Number of Responses	Percentage within Community Type
Older Central Cities	1	Contain sprawl	3	60.0%
	2	Reduce traffic, Maintain property values	1 each	20.0%
New Urban	1	Contain sprawl	3	42.9%
	2	Reduce traffic	2	28.6%
Established Suburbs	1	Contain sprawl, Maintain property values	5 each	33.3% each
	2	Reduce traffic	4	26.7%
Rural	1	Reduce traffic	14	58.3%
	2	Maintain property values	9	37.5%

Chart 28. Bar Graph of Least Important Reason by Community Type

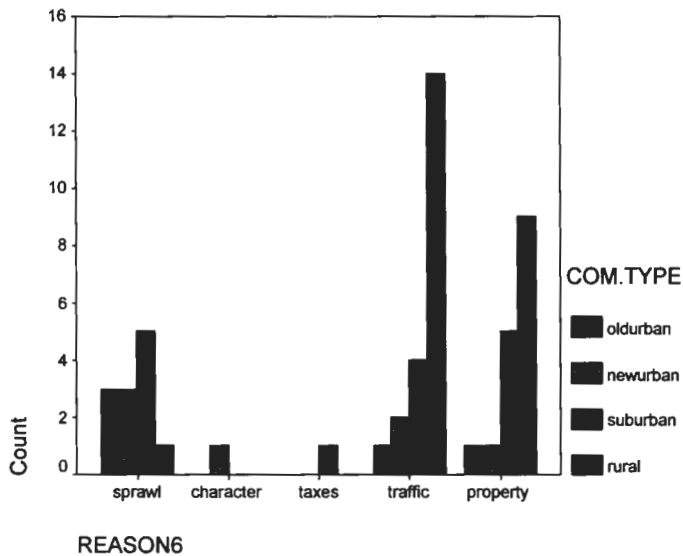


Table 22. Most Important Tool by Community Type

Community Type	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percentage within Community Type
Older Central Cities	1	Land development regulation	4	80.0%
	2	Capital improvement plan	1	20.0%
New Urban	1	Land development regulation	4	66.7%
	2	Impact fees	1	16.7%
	2	Property tax relief	1	16.7%
Established Suburbs	1	Land development regulation	12	70.6%
	2	Open space	3	17.6%
	3	Limit building permits, PDR's	1 each	5.9%
Rural	1	Land development regulation	14	58.3%
	2	Open space	5	20.8%
	3	Limit building permits	4	16.7%

Table 23. Second Most Important Tool by Community Type (move to appendix)

Community Type	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percentage within Community Type
Older Central Cities	1	Capital improvement plan	2	40.0%
New Urban	1	Open space	3	50.0%
Established Suburbs	1	Open space	9	56.3%
Rural	1	Capital improvement plan, PDR's	5 each	20.8%

Chart 30. Bar Graph of Second Most Important Tool by Community Type

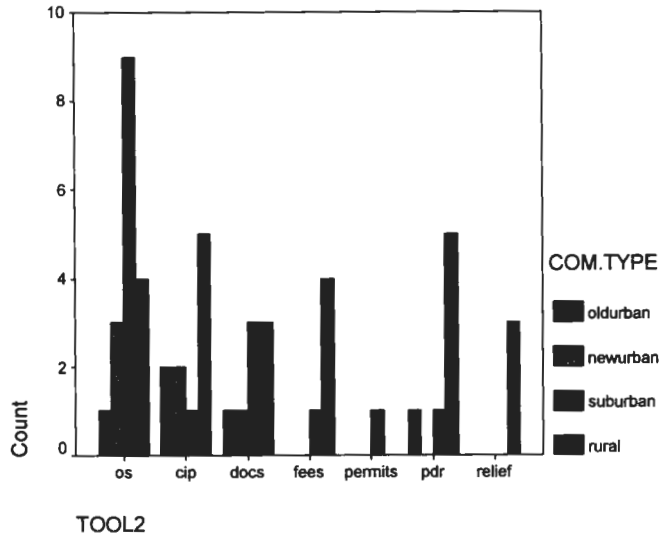
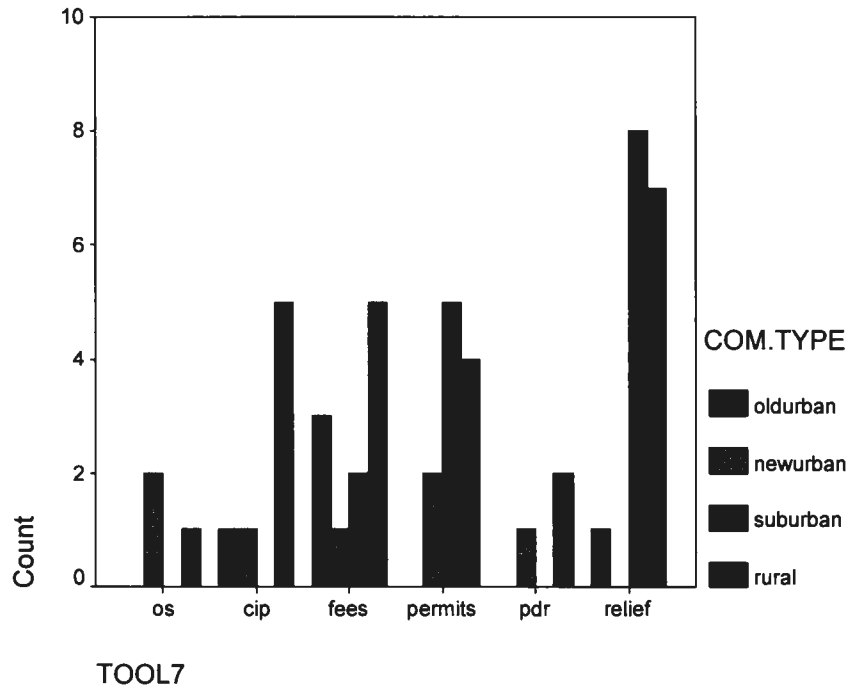


Table 24. Least Important Tool by Community Type (move to appendix)

Community Type	Frequency Ranking	Tool	Number of Responses	Percentage within Community Type
Older Central Cities	1	Impact fees	3	60.0%
	2	Capital improvement plan, Property tax relief	1 each	20.0% each
New Urban	1	Open space, Limit building permits	2 each	28.6%
	2	Capital improvement plan, Impact fees, PDR's	1 each	14.3%
Established Suburbs	1	Property tax relief	8	53.3%
	2	Limit building permits	5	33.3%
Rural	1	Property tax relief	7	29.2%
	2	Capital improvement plan, Impact fees	5 each	20.8%

Chart 31. Bar Graph of Least Important Tool by Community Type



Appendix B.

A Survey of Growth Management Priorities in Rhode Island

This growth management survey is being conducted as part of a master's research project in the Department of Community Planning and Landscape Architecture at the University of Rhode Island. Please fill out this survey based on your own beliefs, as it is an opinion survey. **Please answer the survey regardless of whether your community does or does not have a growth management strategy.**

Please circle the choice that applies to your community.

Type of community: urban / suburban / small town / rural

Please indicate size of professional planning staff.

Full time: _____ Part time: _____

1) How important is it to your city or town to have a growth management strategy? (circle)

High

Moderate

Low

2) What do you feel is the most important reason for developing a growth management plan in your community? (Rank, in order of importance from 1 to 6, with 1 being the most important.) Please rank all.

___ **Contain or prevent sprawl**

___ **Preserve community character**

___ **Stabilize tax base and municipal budget**

___ **Reduce traffic congestion**

___ **Maintain property values**

___ **Protect natural resources**

CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL

3) What do you feel is the most important tool for implementing a growth management plan in your community? (Rank, in order of importance from 1 to 7, with 1 being the most important.) Please rank all.

___ Land trust / open space purchases

___ Capital improvement plan

___ Zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and comprehensive plan

___ Impact fees on new construction

___ Limiting building permits issued each year

___ Purchase of development rights

___ Property tax relief

4) Rate the feasibility of enacting a growth management plan in your community based on each of the following reasons:

	Feasibility (circle)		
	High	Moderate	Low
Contain or prevent sprawl			
Preserve community character			
Stabilize tax base and municipal budget			
Reduce traffic congestion			
Maintain property values			
Protect natural resources			

CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL

5) Rate the feasibility of applying each of the following tools in your community as part of a growth management strategy:

	Feasibility (circle)		
	High	Moderate	Low
Land trust / open space purchases	High	Moderate	Low
Capital improvement plan	High	Moderate	Low
Zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and comprehensive plan	High	Moderate	Low
Impact fees on new construction	High	Moderate	Low
Limiting building permits issued each year	High	Moderate	Low
Purchase of development rights	High	Moderate	Low
Property tax relief	High	Moderate	Low

Would you like a copy of the results from this survey? (circle) Yes No

Any additional comments are welcomed.

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