

**AN ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE III OF THE ORDINANCES
OF THE TOWN OF GLOCESTER**

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act, Title 45, Chapter 22.2-2 requires that all Rhode Island communities adopt a Comprehensive Plan to be in conformance with the Act, and

WHEREAS, the Gloucester Planning Board held the necessary public hearing with the required advertising, and forwarded the plan amendment with a recommendation to the Town Council; and

WHEREAS, the Gloucester Town Council held the necessary public hearing with the required advertising;

IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED by the Town Council of the Town of Gloucester, Rhode Island, that the Code of Ordinances, of the Town of Gloucester, Rhode Island, is hereby amended as follows:

Chapter 1. General Provisions
Article III. Comprehensive Community Plan

Section 1-20. Comprehensive Plan update and/or amendment.

The Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Gloucester, originally adopted on June 16, 1994 and duly amended and/or updated from time to time, and as most recently adopted by the Gloucester Town Council (per R.I.G.L. 45-22.2-8), on April 19, 2018, amended on October 1, 2020, ~~and~~ May 6, 2021, **and November 21, 2024** entitled “Gloucester 2040,” is hereby incorporated, by reference, in the Gloucester Code of Ordinances.

Section 1-21. Effective Date.

The Comprehensive Plan, as amended, shall take effect for the purpose of conforming municipal land use decisions and for the purpose of being transmitted to the Rhode Island Director of Administration for state review as of the date of adoption by the Town Council.

LAND USE

The Land Use Plan is the cornerstone of the comprehensive plan and connects all other elements of the plan. It provides an overview of how the Town plans to protect, develop, use and manage its finite land resources. As defined by the State Planning Council's Guidance Handbook #13, Planning for Land Use, planning for land use implies creating a balance of uses that is appropriate for achieving the community's goals and is reflective of the natural characteristics of the land, its suitability for use, and the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities. Land use planning must also be consistent with available resources and the need to protect public health, safety and welfare.¹

The land use plan is an opportunity to look at the existing land uses in Town, assess the future development capacity based on the existing zoning and create a future land use map based on these findings. The Town must then address any inconsistencies between the existing zoning districts and not only the Town's future land use map but for neighboring municipalities as well.

Existing Conditions

Prior to 1965 when Gloucester adopted its first zoning ordinance, land use, intensity and location were primarily determined by matters of commerce and personal choice. Villages grew near areas of manufacturing activity and/or transportation systems. Farms were scattered throughout the remainder of the community. Most of the land remained fallow or unimproved due to its physical limitations for farming or community development. High water tables, wetlands, slope and stoniness were the dominating features characteristic of Gloucester's land that constrained and directed development activities.

The first zoning effort sought to establish a logical assembly and order of land uses. Due to the low-intensity development and rural nature of the Town's historical development, the land area was zoned for low-density residential use with a small allowance for commerce uses around the village centers. Several evolutionary amendments were made to this original zoning ordinance, however, the historical pattern of low density and agricultural development has been carried forward into the current zoning ordinance. The table below outlines the current land uses in Gloucester. Refer also to Map 1 – Existing Land Use.

¹ Guidance Handbook Number #13, Planning for Land Use, RI Comprehensive Planning Standards, January 2016.

Table 7 – Existing Land Use, 2017

Land Use	Acres	% of Area
Active Recreation	170.32	0.47%
Cemeteries	88.43	0.24%
Commercial	439.64	1.21%
Industrial	540.98	1.48%
Institutional	1,211.63	3.32%
Mixed Use	355.96	0.98%
Protected Open Space	5,516.12	15.13%
Residential < 1 acre*	765.28	2.10%
Residential 1-2 acres*	728.92	2.00%
Residential >2 acres*	15,594.91	42.76%
Right-of-way	473.82	1.30%
Undeveloped	8,882.57	24.36%
Water	1,700.50	4.66%
Total	36,469.10	100.00%

Source: Town of Gloucester GIS, 2018. * Includes agricultural uses.

Existing Zoning

Table 8 - Existing Zoning Districts

Zoning District	Use	Description
A-4	Agricultural – Residential	This district is intended for agricultural use and low-density single family dwellings, detached structures, located on lots containing a minimum lot area of 4 acres.
A-3	Agricultural – Residential	This district is intended for agricultural use and low-density single family dwellings, detached structures, located on lots containing a minimum lot area of 3 acres.
R-2	Residential	This district is intended for single family dwellings, detached structures, located on lots containing a minimum lot area of 2 acres.
B-1	Neighborhood Commercial	This district is intended for commercial uses that primarily serve local neighborhood market needs for convenience retail, services and professional office establishments.
B-2	Highway Commercial	This district is intended for commercial uses that serve Town-wide or regional market needs for

		retail, services and professional office establishments.
I	Industrial	This district is intended to provide for general manufacturing and industrial uses.

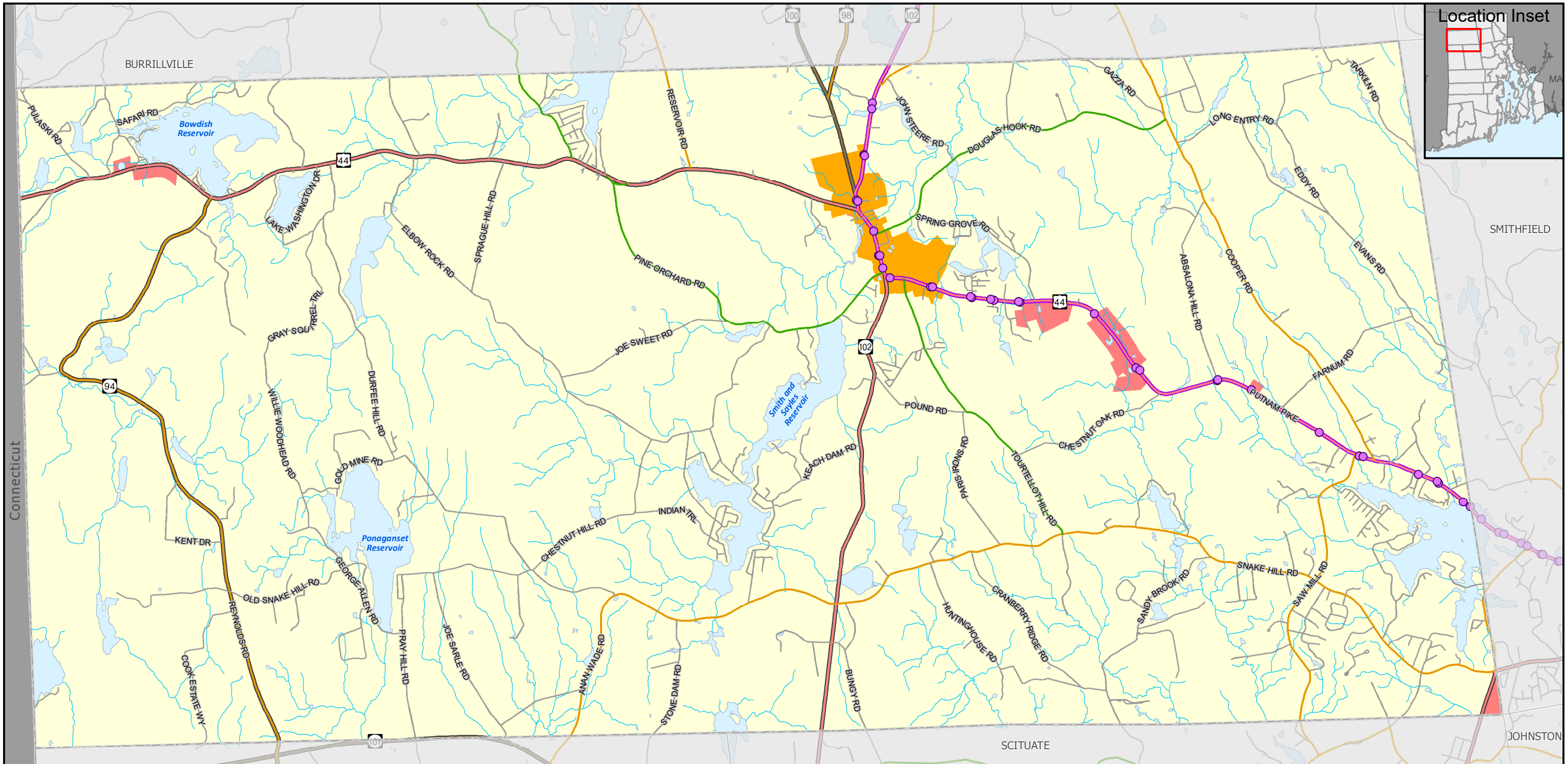
Source: Gloucester Zoning Ordinance, 2018.

In addition, the Town has several overlay, floating, or special-purpose designations that are superimposed on existing zoning district(s) or portion(s) thereof, providing specific requirements and standards, in addition to or in place of the otherwise applicable and/or existing regulations. Refer also to Map 2 – Existing Zoning. These districts exist as follows:

- Historic District - This district is structured in accordance with Title 45, Chapter 24.1, of the Rhode Island General Laws, as amended, to preserve districts and specific buildings of the Town of Gloucester which reflects elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history, to stabilize and improve property values in the historic districts, to preserve specific buildings, to foster civic beauty, to strengthen the local economy and to promote the use of such districts and specific buildings for the education, pleasure and welfare of the residents of the Town of Gloucester.
- Flood Hazard Area - This district is established to govern the development and use of land subject to flood hazards, as defined as wholly or partly within Zone A and Zones A1-A30 as identified on the Flood Insurance Rate Map as part of the Flood Insurance Study, which also includes the Flood Boundary and Floodway Map, compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- Planned District - This district is intended to encourage and provide a means for effectuating desirable residential, industrial and commercial development, and conservation in the Town of Gloucester. It permits variations in siting mixed land uses and/or varied dwelling types; to preserve open space for community facilities and aesthetic considerations; and to provide more efficient and economical services and facilities to the residents of the area.
- Village Overlay District - This district is intended to provide flexibility for housing, new business and business expansion with the need for minimal variances or special use permits. The Village Overlay District unifies under one district the current zoning in the existing commercial, agricultural and residential districts and provides for revitalization of the village center. The Village Overlay District is intended to promote walkability within the village and the development of pedestrian scale mixed uses that would complement the existing village fabric.

In addition, the Town has designated growth centers which are illustrated on Map 16. There are two (2) types of growth centers as defined below:

- 1. Growth Center – Commercial. Concentrating land uses in well-designed centers is a tenet of good planning and a basic recommendation of the State’s Land Use Guide Plan. In rural areas, these centers should be surrounded by natural areas, farmland, or open spaces and have a commercial area in the core for neighborhood scale goods and services. These centers are generally vehicle focused.**
- 2. Growth Center – Mixed Use. This district is intended to provide for mixed use development including housing, new businesses and business expansion. This growth center promotes walkability and the development of pedestrian scale mixed uses that would complement the existing village fabric.**



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

This map is not the product of a Professional Land Survey. It was created by the Town of Glocester for general reference, informational, planning or guidance use, and is not a legally authoritative source as to location of natural or manmade features. Proper interpretation of this map may require the assistance of appropriate professional services. The Town of Glocester makes no warranty, express or implied, related to the spatial accuracy, reliability, completeness, or currentness of this map.

Town of Glocester, 9/2/2024
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Map Legend

Growth Center - Commercial	Principal Arterial - Other	Features
Growth Center - Mixed Use	Minor Arterial	Water
Transportation Features	Major Collector	Rivers and Streams
RIPTA Bus Stops	Minor Collector	Boundaries
RIPTA Bus Routes	Local	Glocester
Roadway Functional Class		RI Municipal
Interstate		Other States
Principal Arterial - Other Freeways and Expressways		

MAP 16

GROWTH CENTER

TOWN OF GLOCESTER

RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2024