UPDATE SUMMARY

This 2000 Comprehensive Plan for the Village of Barrington is an update of the previous comprehensive plan, adopted in 1990. It is substantially similar in format, and addresses many of the same issues. Data regarding land use, demographics and so forth have been revised to reflect more recent information, and the findings of several planning studies undertaken in recent years have been incorporated where appropriate.

One of the most important tasks of town planning is to present an image of the community of the future. While there are varying opinions regarding the future use of specific parcels in Barrington, there is a consistent theme in the statements of citizens, public officials and even the news media about the desired overall character of the Village. It is the existing Village's character which attracts people to Barrington and which the majority of the people wish to preserve, enhance and perpetuate. The impacts of growth, its resultant congestion and density pressures have affected the Village, but much of its character has been maintained. Barrington's character results from efforts to maintain low density, its historic architecture and its landscape. As the Village attempts to meet residents' needs and realize new opportunities for its citizens, it must find ways to do so while protecting and enhancing the essential character.

The changes from 1990 to 2000 which challenge the Village include:

- The Village's inventory of vacant developable, and redevelopable, land consists of nearly 560 acres on 32 "special planning areas." If the Thunderbird Golf Course remains open space as recommended in this updated plan, the total developable area of special planning areas would be reduced to just under 437 acres.

- Residential Land Use is recommended on 15 of the 32 special planning areas, either entirely or as one aspect of mixed-use development. Ultimate population added from these recommended uses would be approximately 970 persons. This increase reflects approximately 92 new detached single family dwelling units and 270 new attached single family and multi-family dwelling units.

- The growth to full development may bring about a need for major new public facilities or spaces such as schools or parks. If the need for expansion does occur, it will be addressed by the responsible public bodies. Sites for new public facilities will be provided within areas planned for single-family land use.

- While Village tax revenues are increasing, Village tax revenues are increasingly provided by fewer categories of land use and fewer businesses. The opportunities to expand or diversify the employment and tax base are severely limited by the diminishing area of appropriately zoned commercial properties.

- Optimizing the use of non-residential land remains a key issue. Substantial land has been designated for office, research and industrial use. However, the market for these uses has been very weak for the last several years. The Village has some existing older industrial properties which are vacant or suffering from economic decline. Though these uses and properties produce real estate taxes, they produce no retail tax revenue. Given the growing reliance on auto dealers for supplying Village tax revenues, the emphasis of office uses rather than retail or mixed uses presents a limitation to the expansion and diversification of the economic base of the Village.

- There is actually more usable, accessible green space than reflected in the land use tables due to: 1) large areas of wetlands within private properties that fall within other land categories; 2) the low density of ORI development; and 3) the large areas of forest preserve lying beyond the Village boundaries.

- Control of density, protection of natural site features, limiting curb cuts, and generous setbacks and buffers are important criteria for the evaluation of development plans for special planning areas.

- The Village Center takes on added significance as the center of retail activity and community life for Barrington residents as the Village nears maturity and competing retail centers are constructed within the trade area. The edge of the Village Center should be carefully controlled so as not to intrude upon adjacent

residential neighborhoods. This is necessary in order to protect the critical mass and integrity of these neighborhoods and to avoid dissipation of the focus of commercial activities, which make for a lively and interesting center.

- Major street widening to accommodate additional capacity would encroach upon tree-lined parkways and, in fact, tend to induce more and faster traffic. Therefore, the focus of improvements should be to optimize flow within the existing arterial and collector roadways in order to reduce congestion, pollution and potential hazards on Hough and Main Streets. This can be achieved by imposing parking limitations, changes in signage, coordinated signalization and other operational improvements. Special design treatments should be implemented to enhance the character and identity of residential neighborhoods and the Village Center, while discouraging through traffic in these areas.

- The results of a 1999 study entitled the Healthier Barrington Needs recently confirmed that, for the most part, Barrington area residents are very satisfied with their community. Area residents expressed very little dissatisfaction overall. The problems most frequently mentioned were a lack of access to sufficient services and stores, reasonable traffic, public transportation, affordable housing and activities for the youth. The poorest ratings for community services occurred for the following: availability of services for the disabled and access to local government/decision makers.

- Two major concerns were voiced by a large number of area residents, namely improving traffic and controlling development/preserving open space. Far more detail is contained in the full report. These apparent weaknesses in the provision of community services to Barrington residents should be kept in mind as public policy decisions are made in the coming years. These weaknesses should be remedied where real, and alleviated through better communication and education where perceived.