

PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT
QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary 1.

Acknowledgements 3.

Introduction 4.

 Objective 4.

 Methodology 4.

 Data 5.

Part I: Demographic Composition of Residents. 6.

 Total Respondents 6.

 Household Size. 6.

 Defense Department Budget's Impact. 6.

Part II: Opinions on Land Use and Development in Ledyard 7.

 Land Use Types: Encourage or Discourage. 7.

 Housing Types 8.

 Preserving Historic Sites, Scenic Areas and Roads 9.

 Ledyard's Road Network. 10.

 Streets Needing Improvement 10.

 Sewer Policy. 11.

 Commercial Development Zones. 12.

 Spending Tax Dollars for Economic Development 13.

 Capital Improvements Ranked by Priority 14.

 Impact of Mashantucket Pequot casino. 15.

Part III: Written Opinions on Ledyard's Future Status. . 17.

 Items Liked Best About Ledyard 17.

 Items Liked Least About Ledyard. 18.

 Biggest Problem/Challenge Facing Ledyard 19.

 "Ideal" Ledyard. 20.

Conclusion. 22.

 Land Use 22.

 Economic Development 22.

 Mashantucket Pequot Casino 23.

References. 24.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Planning Commission distributed a questionnaire to 835 randomly selected Ledyard residents. The purpose of this survey is to involve citizens in establishing and prioritizing land use and growth management policies contained within the Plan of Development. This questionnaire serves as the base of the Plan of Development, which is currently being revised by the Planning Commission and Town Planner.

The questions within the survey dealt with three areas:

- demographic
- land use and development in Ledyard
- personal responses to Ledyard's future status

For the most part, the results were unalarming. For example, an overwhelming number of residents support preservation of open space, wetlands, the Saw Mill Park, and single family detached homes on large lots. These are, after all, Ledyard's trademarks.

However, there were several observed trends that provide insight into what may be in store for Ledyard's future. These are:

- strong support for additional commercial and retail activities, but little support for expansion of industrial or manufacturing enterprises.
- yet despite strong support for economic development, there is a virtually unanimous demand that the Town's rural character and wetlands be preserved.
- overwhelming support to spend tax dollars for economic development.
- support for the installation of a municipal water system in Gales Ferry.
- contradictory outlooks towards the Mashantucket Pequot Casino: There is a belief that the Town will be impacted negatively in terms of traffic and demands for services, but large support for developing the Route 2 corridor and the jobs to be created.

Overall, there is a strong consensus to keep Ledyard predominantly the way it is. There is hope that the Town can manage to do this even while actively pursuing economic development. It is recognized that Ledyard will never displace

Groton or Mystic for their diverse commercial base, but there is a call for the self-sustaining services and in town-shopping.

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The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations in this study are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect views of the Ledyard Planning Commission, the Town of Ledyard, or the University of Connecticut. Any mistakes, errors, or omissions are the sole responsibility of the author.

INTRODUCTION

In July, 1991, the Ledyard Planning Commission distributed a questionnaire to Town residents to assist preparing Ledyard's Plan of Development (POD). The survey was designed to measure three specific areas: demographic information (Part One), opinions concerning land use and development (Part Two), and opinions on Ledyard's future status (Part Three).

The Commission has sought the advice of residents regarding these issues to document and clarify prevailing positions and beliefs. "With effective dialogue and discussion and a better understanding of the facets of a problem, plan or proposal, a more informed and effective result can be achieved by the parties involved." Essentially, a successful Plan of Development must originate and emanate from those living in Ledyard. Views and opinions of Ledyard's residents will be expressed in the 1992 Plan of Development, and henceforth used as a guide to the Town's growth and management.

OBJECTIVE

Connecticut General Statutes require each municipality to devise and implement a Plan of Development (C.G.S. 8-23). When compiling data to develop a new Plan there are certain criteria that must be established and met. First, the POD must be representative of the needs and goals of the Town both now and in the future. Second, the POD must actually be used, and should not be left on a shelf to collect dust. This survey has been conducted with these two objectives in mind.

METHODOLOGY

When compiling a statistical database, the most essential objective is to obtain a random sample of the population being studied. The sample must also be large enough to be representative of the population. A large random sample allows valid conclusions and facts to be drawn about an entire population. However, if the sample is not random or is too small, the results will be inconclusive.

The sample population consisted of 835 households randomly selected from a computer database used by the Tax Collector's office. After the survey was prepared and officially adopted by the Planning Commission, the questionnaire was mailed out during the first week in July, 1991.

Survey return rates in the social sciences are generally in

the five to ten percent range. The Planning Commission, however, experienced an exceptionally high response rate of 43%, or 357 households responding as of August 21.

While surveys are still returning, we have experienced "closure" in the data. Response quotients have generally been stable since about the 200th response. Unchanging trends in the data are clear indicators the sample return rate is representative of the population, and has been of sufficient size and randomness.

THE DATA

All responses are considered to be nominal and/or ordinal data. Accordingly, statistical evaluation of these data levels are averages and percentages of agreement/disagreement. Conclusions are drawn from the observed trends, differentiation in responses, and the absence of responses to certain questions.

Results of Part One: Demographic Composition of Respondents

1. Total households responding: 357
As percentage of random sample: 43%

2. Question: Total number of persons living in your household?

Responses:

1 = 40	4 = 79
2 = 110	5 = 29
3 = 83	6+ = 16

Average Household Size = 2.99 people

Answers to this question reflect several demographic trends: 1) The Town's population is aging (i.e., "empty nesters" in one and two person households); 2) more single parents; and 3) a relatively smaller household size than in the past as reproduction is limited. For example, the 1970 U.S. Census reported an average Ledyard household size of 3.77 persons, while the 1980 Census reported a household size of 3.22 individuals. Given a current household size of 2.99 persons, it can be anticipated that further reductions in household size will occur in the future.

3. Question: Is your job/your spouse's job related to the defense industry/Defense Department budget?

Responses:

Yes:	135 (38%)
No:	219 (62%)

This information is very important because of the recent Defense Department decisions to cut spending and reduce personnel. This has the potential to directly affect 38% of the Town's households, either by layoffs or declining morale. Layoffs also mean less money circulating in the regional economy, affecting private-sector purchasing power. And layoffs may also result in an out-migration of Ledyard's population, reducing property values as more homes are placed on the market. These figures exemplify a clear need for diversification of the region's economy. Only a more resilient and diversified regional economy can continue the area's reputation as one of the most advanced high-technology working environments in the nation.

Results of Part Two: Opinions on Land Use and Development in Ledyard

A Plan of Development will have great impact on land use and development issues in Ledyard. Therefore, it is very important to evaluate opinions and attitudes of Ledyard's residents.

1. Question: The Town has regulatory authority to direct growth through its Zoning, Planning, and Wetlands Commissions. Which types of land use should be encouraged/discouraged in Ledyard by these boards?

Ranked Responses:

	<u>Encourage</u>	<u>Discourage</u>
-Protection of wetlands	276 (90%)	30 (10%)
-Open space preservation	271 (88%)	37 (12%)
-Commercial/retail/office	279 (85%)	50 (15%)
-Recreational facilities	241 (81%)	56 (19%)
-Residential/housing	221 (72%)	87 (28%)
-Industrial/manufacturing	191 (59%)	132 (41%)
-Other	*	

In the opinion of Ledyard residents, highest priority exists for protection of wetlands and preservation of open space, followed by a need for more commercial/retail/office development and additional recreational facilities. There is over 80% encouragement for each of these categories.

These categories characterize a certain duality of Ledyard resident's views on future development. Town residents love a rural landscape with large tracts of woods and open areas interspersed with protected wetlands. However, there is a realization that economic development (i.e., commercial, retail, and office space) is needed to diversify a residential property-tax base. The conclusion is that Ledyard must maintain its rural characteristics and heritage, while simultaneously expanding its tax base.

Only 72% of those surveyed favor residential and housing development. In a primarily residential municipality this figure is lower than anticipated. Other questions in this survey reflect both strong desires to maintain the current nature of town, and to seek economic development in pre-established zoning away from residential neighborhoods. One may conclude there is concern about Ledyard being "built-out." This could be the result of a fear of declining property values, as people move out of Town and "for sale" signs become common on all streets and

roads.

While less than 60% of respondents support industrial and manufacturing development, it should be noted that many of the supporters placed qualifications and restrictions on this type of land use. For the most part, people specifically requested that only "light" and "clean" industry be considered, or that they locate in hidden parts of Town far away from the respondents' homes. A lack of clear support, coupled with demands for quiet and non-polluting industry, may preclude further development of this nature in Ledyard.

There were fifteen separate write-ins under "other", but none received more than two votes.

2. Question: What types of housing would you like to see built in Ledyard? (Respondents could select more than one variety.)

Ranked Responses:

	<u># of</u> <u>Supporters</u>
-Single-family detached large lots	237 (66%)
-Elderly housing	179 (50%)
-Single-family clusters on small lots	130 (36%)
-Low & moderate cost family housing	113 (32%)
-Accessory apts in single-family houses	63 (18%)
-Condominiums	55 (15%)
-Rental apartments	49 (14%)

No more than two-thirds of respondents supported any form of new housing construction. This is in line with responses to Question 1 above. Clearly, a sizeable minority of residents believe the housing market is overbuilt. Amongst those who support construction of housing, there is an overwhelming belief Ledyard should remain a bedroom community known for its detached homes on large lots. Residents move here for single-family detached houses on large lots, and they apparently want it to stay this way.

Elderly housing received the second greatest amount of support. Half of those responding believe that more units of senior housing are needed. This is a belief strengthened by the fact that the Town's population is aging.

Only one-third of respondents support either residential cluster developments or low/moderate-income housing. Lack of support may be generated out of lack of understanding, or due to fear of increasing crime, or declining property values. Clearly, there is a need for educating Ledyard's current residents if

these types of housing are to be built in the community. For example, cluster developments could actually enhance open space and wetlands preservation, so strongly supported elsewhere in the questionnaire.

Minimal support was given to the three remaining categories: accessory apartments (17%), condominiums (15%), and rental apartments (14%). The proliferation of vacant condominiums and rental apartments and auctions of these residences in surrounding towns justifies the absence of a need. Accessory apartments, on the other hand, may have received more support were they adequately defined or described in the questionnaire.

3. Question: Are there any specific natural areas, historic sites, or scenic roads that should be preserved?

<u>Locations</u>	<u>Votes</u>
Saw Mill Park	43
Gales Ferry Historical Dist/Village	37
Nathan Lester House	33
Glacial Park	31
Lantern Hill Rd	23
Lambtown Rd	15
Shewville Rd	12
Geer Schoolhouse	9
Long Pond	9
cemeteries	7
Hiking/trails/woods	7
None	6
Thomas Road	6
historic homes	6
Avery Hill Rd	4
Long Cove Rd	4
Indiantown Rd	4

A majority of votes tended to focus on those areas already preserved by the Town (i.e., Sawmill Park, Nathan Lester House, Glacial Park, and cemeteries). However, a few other trends can be observed. There was considerable support for preserving the Gales Ferry Village and historic homes in general. Perhaps an official historic district designation should be sought for portions of Gales Ferry. Also, a number of roads were repeatedly identified as warranting preservation (i.e., Lantern Hill Road, Lambtown Road, Shewville Road, etc.). It is suggested that "scenic road" status be pursued, relying on an existing Town ordinance to accomplish this.

An additional point of interest is that Lantern Hill Road and Shewville Road are the two town roads most likely to be

impacted by casino-related development. This likely explains their repeated recognition as needing preservation.

4. Question: Evaluating Ledyard's road network, should the Town:

Responses:

-Make limited major improvements to increase safety at moderate cost.	236 (67%)
-Provide only routine maintenance to prevent further deterioration at limited cost.	96 (28%)
-Significantly upgrade existing roads at considerable cost.	17 (5%)

A clear majority of responses call for Ledyard's roads to be maintained at a mid-level effort at moderate cost. Roads are costly to maintain and have limited lifespans requiring constant attention. These results suggest that Ledyard continue its current program of modest-cost road improvements, focusing on streets identified in Question #5 below.

Only 28% of the respondents support a "bare-bones" road program of routine maintenance, and just 5% of the respondents are willing to commit significant funds to major road improvements. This is not surprising. It is far too costly to let roads age excessively. It is also far too costly, and probably unnecessary, for Ledyard to have a massive road improvement program.

5. Question: List streets needing improvement and/or problems needing correction:

<u>Roads</u>	<u>Votes</u>
Route 214	61
Whalehead Rd	27
Avery Hill Rd & Extn	20
Pumpkin Hill Rd	15
Christy Hill Rd	13
Shewville Rd	12
Gallup Hill Rd	10
Long Cove Rd	8
Anderson Dr	7
Spicer Hill Rd	7
Military Highway	7
King's Highway	6
Lantern Hill Rd	6
Hurlbutt Rd	5

Churchill Rd	5
Vinegar Hill Rd	4
Lambtown Rd	4

The largest vote recipient, Route 214, is one of the greatest concerns in Ledyard. Route 214 is a state road, which means it is the Department of Transportation's (DOT) responsibility to maintain. However, it has thus far no priority with the DOT, regardless of it being the single east-west arterial between Ledyard and Gales Ferry. Route 214 is a major physical barrier that complicates unifying the two main parts of Town.

Mashantucket Pequot casino growth will further complicate traffic patterns, pavement aging, and repair needs of Route 214 in the immediate future. The State Traffic Commission estimates that 15% of all arriving and departing vehicles from the Casino will use this roadway.

Eleven roads that follow Route 214 in numbers of votes are classified as "arterial" roads and accordingly have the highest average daily traffic counts. They facilitate transportation from one part of town to another. Their maintenance will always be a high priority by virtue of use and need, a fact recognized by Ledyard residents. In terms of future infrastructure improvements and repairs, this is where the priority should be.

Remaining responses received just a handful of votes. A majority of these can be characterized as either the actual road the respondent lives on, or an adjacent road. But this question is the perfect forum in which to be heard, and these people expressed their opinion, even if they were a minority of one.

6. Question: The 1982 Plan of Development established a policy of sewer avoidance, with all new developments instead served by on-site septic systems. Should this sewer avoidance policy be:

Responses:

-Continued throughout Ledyard in future	134 (42%)
-Drop, allowing construction of Thames River plant to serve Ledyard Center and Gales Ferry area	132 (41%)
-Partially amend to expand in Highlands area	55 (17%)

It is clear that there is only minority support for construction of a new sewage treatment plant designed to serve

un-sewered areas of Ledyard and Gales Ferry. When combining those supporting continued sewer avoidance with those supporting only a limited expansion of the existing Highlands treatment plant, 59% of the respondents oppose a greatly expanded sewer system. Accordingly, it is recommended that the sewer avoidance policy stated in the 1982 Plan of Development be continued.

7. Question: Where should additional commercial development be encouraged?

Responses:

	Best	Fair	Worst
-Route 12 corridor	216	64	41
-Route 2 corridor	166	86	49
-Ledyard Center Design Dist.	163	102	51
-Home business occupations in residential area.	60	95	109
-Route 117	22	8	1
-Ledyard Indl Park	14		
-Vality's	4		

Route 12, Route 2, and the Ledyard Center Design District are the regions of town already zoned for commercial growth. Most economic development would naturally occur in these three areas. Historically, development has focused on Route 12 in a strip-like fashion. In fact, 85% of people responding to the questionnaire consider this an appropriate place for continued development. However, strong support for development also exists for the Route 2 corridor and the Ledyard Center Design District. This can be interpreted as a desire to see commercial development contained within pre-existing zoning districts allowing these uses.

Responses for Route 2 were mixed. This corridor previously offered little encouragement for development because of the limited traffic and lack of infrastructure. The road is not a destination route leading to more frequented shopping areas, like Mystic or Groton. Likewise, it does not lead to major employment centers. However, opportunities that may develop due to the Mashantucket Pequot's casino have altered perceptions of this road and the surrounding land. This, coupled with a desire to reduce the Town's reliance on the residential property tax base has made Route 2 attractive in the eye's of many people.

There is also substantial support for the Ledyard Center Design District, although many people considered this area to have only a "fair" potential for economic development. This is perhaps attributable to the lack of a good mix of business and the fact that other than a small market, there is no grocery store. It is apparent that many people do not currently conduct

business in Ledyard Center. As a result, they may be hesitant to fully embrace such a change at this time.

Home occupations in residentially-zoned areas of Ledyard were strongly opposed by a 2:1 ratio. This is a very clear indication that people wish to prohibit activities, sights or sounds incompatible with a residential neighborhood. Such opinions should be considered by the Zoning Commission when evaluating home occupation permits.

There are also a few "honorable mentions" including Route 117 south of Ledyard Center and the Lorenz Commercial Industrial Park (CIP).

8. Question: Should local tax dollars be spent to encourage economic development?

Responses:

Yes	247	(75%)
No	82	(25%)

If yes, what should the money be spent on?

-extend water or sewer lines to comm/ind area	143	(58%)
-creation of industrial park	117	(47%)
-improvements to existing streets & drainage	93	(38%)
-construction of new streets in comm zones	53	(21%)
-other	18	(7%)
advertise	8	
tax breaks	6	
ease regulations	3	
hire econ. dev. director	2	

This is, by far, the largest surprise of the entire survey-- 75% of the responses support spending local tax dollars for economic development! It is apparent that respondents view this sort of expenditure as having a return on investment. In other words, people believe that benefits of economic development outweigh costs associated with infrastructure projects. This should assist the decision making process, and enable the Town to implement capital improvements necessary to attract business.

Leading all proposed capital projects to promote economic development is extending water or sewer lines to commercial areas-- 58% of those encouraging the Town to spend money for economic development associate water and sewer lines with economic development. Unfortunately, the format of the questionnaire did not allow respondents to differentiate between water or sewer. Responses elsewhere in the questionnaire,

however, indicate quite a distinction between these two items in terms of support/lack of support. For example, responses to Question #6 indicate opposition to sewer expansion in Ledyard (further opposed by responses to Question #9). But, it can be seen below that installation of a public water supply system generated the second-highest support in terms of Ledyard's capital improvement needs.

Second, with 46% support, is the recommendation to build an industrial park. However, there currently exists a privately-owned industrial park in Ledyard. Efforts are being made to assist the owners in marketing this park, rather than the Town constructing its own. It does not seem to be in the Town's best interest to build a second park, when one considers that the existing one remains empty. Perhaps it is wiser to assist the existing park by underwriting costs of a water system or 3-phase electrical supply.

The remaining two responses garnered only minor support. Improving existing roads and drainage strictly for this purpose (38%), and building new streets (21%) for commercial areas are not perceived to be expenditures that would make Ledyard more attractive to business. Unfortunately, these are the "least cost" options, when compared to water/sewer expansion or building an industrial park.

Suggestions made under "other" ranged from tax breaks and advertising to easing development regulations. None received enough support to warrant further evaluation.

9. Question: Please rank capital improvement needs according to priority (1-2=highest priority; 3-4=next priority; 5-7=lowest priority; NP=not a priority.)

Responses:

	<u>1-2</u>	<u>3-4</u>	<u>5-7</u>	<u>NP</u>
-Repair existing rds & drainage	186	62	28	14
-Install water supply system	177	45	22	37
-Upgrading police/fire/ambulance	137	61	35	54
-School improvements	122	57	28	61
-Sewer system (not Highlands)	90	30	24	127
-Constr. of recreation facilities	70	40	47	111
-Purchase of open space properties	69	48	47	101
-Other	10	2	3	6

Citizen input is critical in prioritizing capital improvement needs because this type of information is often unavailable until an issue is up for a vote of approval or endorsement. Failure to adequately gauge public opinion has in

the past lead to resounding defeat of major projects.

The capital improvement need with highest priority is repair of existing roads and drainage systems. But comparing this response with similarly-worded questions elsewhere in the questionnaire, there are some contradictions. For example, improvements to existing streets and drainage in commercial areas to stimulate economic development is not viewed as a high priority. And people strongly believe that repair of existing roads and drainage systems should be limited to major improvements to increase safety at a moderate cost. But in response to this particular question, supporters outweigh opponents by nearly a 6:1 ratio.

The next greatest need is installation of a water supply system in areas with water quantity/quality problems. Recurring problems in the Gales Ferry/Route 12 area do much to contribute support for this capital improvement. The amount of support indicated by the questionnaire suggests that a bond issue proposed by the Water Pollution Control Authority has a fair chance of success. Supporters outweigh opponents by a 4:1 ratio.

Ranked fourth is a call for additional school improvements, with supporters outweighing opponents by a 2:1 ratio.

Support for all other suggested capital improvements declines markedly. Reflecting opinions elsewhere in the questionnaire, considerably more people oppose construction of a new sewer system (other than Highlands), adding further justification for continuance of the Town's existing sewer avoidance policy. There is also very limited support for construction of additional recreational facilities or spending tax dollars to purchase open space properties. Apparently, people believe there is sufficient existing recreational opportunities already available in Ledyard, and although there is considerable support for preservation of open space, do not want to spend any money to purchase it.

10. Question: What impact will the Mashantucket Pequot casino have on Ledyard?

Responses:

-Negative	145	(44%)
-Positive	124	(38%)
-Neutral/no impact	59	(18%)

Responses to this question were quite mixed, but the largest number of respondents believe the new casino will have a negative

impact on Ledyard. These negative responses fell into two categories. While some people opposed the casino on moral grounds, a far greater number believe the gambling facility will adversely impact Ledyard's rural lifestyle due to increased traffic on local roads, increased ground water pollution, and increased demands on the Town's ambulance, fire and police agencies. Those people supporting the casino do so primarily because of jobs to be created. They point out that the casino is not related to the defense industry, and represents a step towards economic diversification. These issues are explored further in Part III.

Results of Part III: Written opinions on Ledyard's future status.

In the final section of the questionnaire, the Planning Commission asked residents to write a sentence or two in response to the following questions. Responses of this sort are quantified and summarized below.

1. Question: What do you like best about Ledyard?

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Support</u>
-rural characteristic & charm (small town, wooded country, scenic, farmland)	182 (34%)
-school system	99 (19%)
-"decent": quiet, low crime, privacy	62 (12%)
-community: neighborly, friendly, raise family	34 (6%)
-residential town only; lack of business	31 (6%)
-proximity to other towns	31 (6%)
-parks & rec, family & youth activities	18 (3%)
-effective municipal government	11 (2%)
-open space	10 (2%)
-volunteers	9 (2%)
-Library	8 (2%)
-police	7 (1%)
-fire	6 (1%)
-ambulance	6 (1%)
-nothing	5 (1%)
-historic landsites, homesites	5 (1%)
-no traffic	5 (1%)

	529*

*A total of 529 responses were tallied for this question. As only 357 questionnaires were returned to the Planning Department, some people provided more than one answer. Similar circumstances hold true for other questions in Part III.

According to these results, the prevailing reason why people live in Ledyard is its rural nature and woodlands. This New England attribute is the Town's greatest characteristic and treasure. Maintaining this at a time when economic development is being stressed will be the most challenging prospect facing Ledyard's residents.

The second most positive characteristic is the Town's school system. Ledyard is known throughout the region and state as having an excellent school system and is a key factor why people settle in the community.

The next three characteristics reflect the "atmosphere" of Ledyard. Residents believe the community is friendly, quiet and safe, and is a good place to raise children. In addition, the predominantly residential nature of the Town, and proximity to other towns with commercial conveniences, are appreciated. Apparently not everyone opposes living in a bedroom community.

Parks and recreation, family and youth activities were cited as town favorites by several people. Likewise, the remaining positive attributes include specific town services and open space. These responses, however, could actually be grouped into the two larger categories above.

The responses for Ledyard's superlatives were generally uniform, reflecting the Town's homogeneous population. It is interesting to note that there were 529 responses to this question, while only 373 responses were recorded for the following question asking folks what they liked least about Ledyard. People are clearly upbeat about Ledyard!

2. Question: What do you like least about Ledyard?

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Dislikes</u>
-high taxes	85 (23%)
-ineffectiveness of municipal govt/lack of service	47 (13%)
-personal property tax base	27 (7%)
-lack of commercial/town center	23 (6%)
-Casino & related growth, need control	22 (6%)
-Town politics	19 (5%)
-school system	18 (4%)
-development, as in too much	16 (4%)
-Vality's & other bldgs vacant in Gales Ferry	14 (4%)
-water & sewer (general)	12 (3%)
-narrow/poor roads	11 (2%)
-negative attitudes about development	9 (2%)
-lack of parks, recreation	9 (2%)
-unwilling to pay for economic dev./plans	9 (2%)
-territorial & neighborhood arguments, NIMBY	9 (2%)
-lethargy: lack of speed/accomplishments	9 (2%)
-nothing	7 (2%)
-Highlands Water/Sewer System	7 (2%)
-no long range planning/vision	7 (2%)
-land use/zoning/restrictions: home business	7 (2%)
-growth in population	6 (1%)

	373

High taxes, a lack of municipal services, a reliance on a personal property tax base, and lack of commercial

development/town center are the four items liked least by Ledyard residents. But all four revolve around the same general issues: a bulk of Ledyard's taxes must currently be generated by residential property taxes because of the absence of commercial development. This burden creates the appearance of high taxes because they hit the homeowners directly. On the other hand, complaints about the lack of municipal services are also a reflection of that limited tax base - - the town simply cannot provide services found in municipalities like Groton or Waterford where there is a diverse and extensive commercial/industrial tax base. So there is a contradiction. People want more services from local government, but they complain that their taxes are too high. Yet, it is those taxes that pay for the services they demand.

However, taxes are relatively speaking, not that big an issue. Only 85 of 357 returned questionnaires (23%) referenced this issue. Many more people, for example, mentioned protection of wetlands or open space as a critical issue in other parts of this survey.

It is also noted that relatively few people dislike the public school system. While 99 respondents supported Ledyard's schools, only 18 dislike them - - a ratio of 5.5 to 1.

People are also split over development. While 16 respondents indicated there was too much development, 9 complained about negative attitudes towards development. This reflects an apparent dichotomy noted elsewhere in the questionnaire: some people want to preserve open space, wetlands and Ledyard's rural character while others want more economic and commercial development.

3. Question: What is the biggest problem/challenge Ledyard will face during the next decade?

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Support</u>
-lack of commercial development in Town/ rising tax burden on residents	93 (21%)
-Casino & related growth, wear on infrastructure	56 (13%)
-high taxes	49 (11%)
-reduced military budget	39 (9%)
-maintaining character	25 (6%)
-water & sewer	25 (6%)
-growth of municipal govt	22 (5%)
-maintaining services	21 (5%)
-maintaining schools	18 (4%)
-opportunity to overdevelop in Town	17 (4%)
-cost of school, growth, & high priced teachers	15 (3%)
-Casino: drugs, prostitution, crime	13 (3%)
-growing list of expensive capital projects/roads	10 (2%)

-need for water & sewer to attract business	8	(2%)
-no garbage service/lack of landfill	8	(2%)
-population growth will raise taxes	7	(2%)
-maintenance of stable property values	7	(2%)

433

The major challenge for Ledyard over the next decade is commercial development and a corresponding push to reduce the percentage of the tax burden placed on owners of residential property, while maintaining the Town's rural character and natural resources.

Not surprisingly, the second-rated challenge or problem for the decade is how the Town will react to the Pequot gambling casino and corresponding wear and tear on Ledyard's infrastructure and environment. There is a strong belief that the increased number of vehicles on Ledyard's roads leading to the casino must be addressed. And, again reflecting the morality of gambling, a number of people are concerned that the casino will generate drugs, prostitution, and crime.

A third major challenge for the Town is dealing with a reduced military budget. One of the first questions of the survey indicated over a third of Ledyard's population is directly affected by military spending. This exemplifies the need to expand the Town's commercial base, this time in the name of diversification.

Finally, it is interesting to note that about as many people are concerned about the growing list of capital projects facing the Town, as there are people who recognize that such capital improvements are needed to generate commercial development. Also, there is a rough balance between those concerned with maintaining the Town's character/fear of over-development, versus those who call for additional economic development. Clearly, maintaining a balance between these two issues is the challenge of the decade.

4. Question: In a couple of sentences, describe the "ideal" Ledyard in which you would like to live.

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Support</u>
-community balancing residents & commerce	70 (16%)
-quiet, rural, sense of community	56 (13%)
-continuation of same/as is	41 (9%)
-good school system	39 (9%)
-low taxes	35 (8%)
-restricted economic development	28 (6%)
-more parks&rec fac/community center	26 (6%)

-contained shopping district/Ledyard Center	22	(5%)
-more & better government services	20	(4%)
-water & sewer	12	(3%)
-safe, no crime, drugs	11	(3%)
-wide streets/good roads	11	(3%)
-low population/no growth	10	(2%)
-more affordable housing	10	(2%)
-increased citizen participation	7	(2%)
-improve Vality bldg/develop it	7	(2%)
-no development	7	(2%)
-preserve historic & rural treasures	7	(2%)
-Ledyard as it was "x" yrs ago	7	(2%)
-environmental approaches	6	(1%)

432

Folks responding to this question envision an "ideal" Ledyard having residential areas that are quiet and rural, served by conveniently located shopping and commercial areas. This vision received 70 votes, but 28 respondents called for more restricted development and 22 envision a shopping district and/or a functioning shopping village in Ledyard Center. Again, there is a strong dichotomy between preservation and development.

Two similar items are "quiet, rural, sense of community" and "a continuation of the same: leave as is." Combined they received ninety-seven votes. Ledyard is currently a quiet, rural place with a strong sense of community. This is what a majority of people envision as the "ideal" Ledyard of the future.

People also want to maintain a strong school system, more Parks and Recreation areas, and a community center. But all require capital investment, a factor balanced out by those whose "ideal" Ledyard includes low taxes.

Aside from the cases cited above, remaining answers only garner minimal support from the entire pool of respondents.

CONCLUSIONS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

LAND USE

There is overwhelming support for preservation of Ledyard's open spaces, wetlands and rural characteristics. Very few people believe Ledyard is an "over regulated" town and that opportunities for development are overly-restricted. Despite this support for open space preservation, however, Ledyard residents do not feel a need to spend tax dollars on its acquisition.

Results of the questionnaire provide unequivocal support for maintaining the basic premises of Ledyard's zoning, subdivision, and inland wetlands regulations. There is a belief that zoning should provide opportunities for commercial development along Route 2, Route 12, and in Ledyard Center, while keeping these potentially disruptive uses out of the people's backyards.

Most folks responding to the questionnaire actually like living in a bedroom community. Current subdivision regulations also complement demands of Ledyard's residents for single family homes located on large lots, located in developments with abundant open space. But there is also an impression that recent subdivision activity has led to a sufficient, if not over-supply, of new housing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Responses to the questionnaire signify considerable support for economic development. Indeed, residents overwhelmingly support using tax dollars to encourage economic development! With the regional economy in recession and the defense industry in decline, this support reflects calls for jobs and economic diversification. Residents also understand that commercial entities can generate taxes, and alleviate some of the burden on homeowners. Despite this, support is only lukewarm for additional industrial or manufacturing concerns, unless they happen to be "clean" or "light" and located far away from any homes.

Extending water and sewer to commercial and industrial areas is perceived to be the single most effective way to encourage economic development. Almost sixty percent of those supporting

spending tax dollars for economic development recommended this. But these are also the costliest forms of capital investments. There seems to be a recognition that an absence of basic services has hindered economic development, not restrictive zoning. The introduction of municipal water along Route 12 would be a proactive step to attract business, and also is supported by a large number of residents concerned about existing water quality/quantity problems.

Installation of a water system received 222 favorable votes, or 62% of those responding to the questionnaire.

THE CASINO

The Mashantucket Pequot casino remains a mystery to many in Ledyard. But a majority of residents fear the casino will have a negative impact on the Town. It appears the greatest reason is because of growth and traffic that will occur in a portion of Ledyard noted for its rural, farmland nature.

Yet 252 people said the Route 2 corridor was a "fair" to "best" location for economic development. So there exists a contradiction in people's feelings.

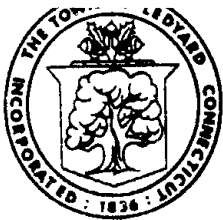
An examination of Ledyard's land ownership patterns shows that the Mashantucket Pequots own all but two parcels of land on Route 2. This part of Ledyard is clearly going to be developed in conjunction with the gaming operations. There seems to be an underlying notion that Ledyard will benefit from jobs and employment from this enterprise. Ironically, only a handful of respondents also indicated there should be an effort to keep tourism dollars in town.

But again, folks responding to the questionnaire ask whether Ledyard's emergency services are capable of handling these numbers.

Based on survey results, it appears that problems with drugs, crime, prostitution, and other perceived gambling ills, received only minimal recognition.

REFERENCES

1. Colorado Chapter American Planning Association.
Principles of Planning. 1986, p. 15.



PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

PLANNING COMMISSION
LEDYARD TOWN HALL
Post Office Box 38
LEDYARD, CONN. 06339

The Ledyard Planning Commission is revising the Town's long-range Plan of Development, last updated in 1982. Ledyard has grown and changed in many ways since then. New residential subdivisions, reconstruction of Routes 12 and 117, and creation of an Indian reservation and casino have made our Town a different place from what it was a decade ago. We now need your assistance in making a new blueprint that will guide Ledyard's future development. Please help us by filling out this questionnaire and by returning it to us. But you don't have to answer every question if you don't want to; we will happily accept questionnaires with some blank spots. Your answers will have a strong bearing on policies and programs to be recommended in Ledyard's updated Plan of Development. Thank you!

Sam Kilpatrick, Chairman

PART ONE: Please tell us something about yourself (names are not requested, so your privacy is protected).

- 1. Name of road you live on?
2. How long have you lived in Ledyard? years
3. What type of home do you live in? (circle only one)
a. detached single-family house
b. condominium/apartment
c. mobile/manufactured home
4. Total number of persons living in your household?
5. Is your job/your spouse's job tied to the Navy or to the defense industry/defense department budget? Yes No

PART TWO: What are your opinions on land use/development in Ledyard?

1. The Town has regulatory authority to direct growth through its Zoning, Planning, and Wetlands Commissions. Which types of land use should be encouraged/discouraged in Ledyard by these boards?

Table with 3 columns: Land Use Type, Encourage, Discourage. Rows include residential/housing, commercial/retail/office, industrial/manufacturing, open space preservation, recreational facilities, protection of wetlands, and other.

2. What types of housing would you like to see built in Ledyard? (please circle only those you support)

- a. single-family detached houses on large lots
b. low and moderate cost family housing
c. accessory apartments in single-family houses
d. single-family cluster housing on small lots preserving open space
e. rental apartments
f. condominiums
g. elderly housing

3. Are there any specific natural areas, historic sites, or scenic roads in Ledyard that should be preserved? (locations)

4. Evaluating Ledyard's road network, should the Town: (circle only one)

- a. Significantly upgrade existing roads at considerable cost
b. Make limited major improvements to increase safety at moderate cost
c. Provide only routine maintenance to prevent further deterioration at limited cost

5. List streets needing improvement and/or problems needing correcting:

6. The 1982 Plan of Development established a policy of sewer avoidance, with all new developments instead served by on-site septic systems. Should this sewer avoidance policy be: (circle only one answer)

- a. Continued throughout Ledyard in the future
- b. Partially amended to allow limited expansion of sewers in vicinity of existing Highlands Sewage Treatment Plant
- c. Dropped, thereby allowing construction of a new treatment plant on the Thames River serving Ledyard Center and Gales Ferry areas

7. Where should additional commercial development be encouraged? (Rank: 1=best; 2=fair; 3=worst. You may use the same number more than once.)

- a. _____ Route 12 corridor
- b. _____ Ledyard Center Design District
- c. _____ Route 2 corridor
- d. _____ other locations _____
- e. _____ home business occupations in residential zones

8. Should local tax dollars be spent to encourage economic development? Yes _____ No _____ ; If yes, what should the money be spent on? (Please circle only those items you support)

- a. improvements to existing streets and drainage systems
- b. construction of new streets in commercial zones
- c. creation of an industrial park
- d. extend water or sewer lines to commercial/industrial areas
- e. other _____

9. Please rank capital improvement needs according to priority (Rank: 1=highest priority; 2=next highest, etc.; N/A = not a priority.)

- a. _____ repair existing roads and stormwater drainage systems
- b. _____ install municipal sewer system (other than Highlands)
- c. _____ install water supply system in areas with water quality or water quantity problems
- d. _____ school improvements
- e. _____ construction of additional recreational facilities
- f. _____ purchase of open space properties
- g. _____ upgrading police/fire/ambulance services
- h. _____ other _____

10. What impact will the Mashantucket Pequot casino have on Ledyard?

- a. _____ Positive
- b. _____ Negative
- c. _____ Neutral/no impact

PART THREE: In this final section, we ask you to respond with just a sentence or two to the following questions:

1. What do you like best about Ledyard?

2. What do you like least about Ledyard?

3. What is the biggest problem/challenge Ledyard will face during the next decade?

4. In a couple of sentences, describe the "ideal" Ledyard in which you would like to live.