



## **SECTION 11      POLICIES SUMMARY and IMPLEMENTATION**

This Policies Summary section concludes The Plan, outlining the land use goals and objectives that are recommended throughout each chapter. As a first step in implementation of the Plan, Windsor Locks is encouraged to create a voluntary "Community Plan Implementation Committee" (CPIC), composed of one representative from each department or agency that assisted with tasks in the review of the 2007 Plan and the creation of this Plan, including special workshops and studies conducted by the Town. It will be up to each agency to move recommendations from the Plan forward unless community need or sentiment shifts. The formation of a CPIC is an opportunity for all involved residents, community organizations and departments to keep community goals on the "front burner". Members should meet and review the Plan regularly, create a work plan, timeline and report annually on progress toward goals and objectives or needs for revisions.

Policies are summarized below by Section:

### **Goals and Policy Objectives from Section III: Community Livability**

**Goal: To maintain and improve health outcomes for the residents of Windsor Locks.**

#### **Objectives:**

1.    Develop a list of potential departments and partners to include in a health outcome improvement effort.
2.    Create a committee of staff, residents, local leaders and health professionals to review the most recent Windsor Locks Health Index prepared for North Central Health District.
3.    Develop a list of evidence-based, short-term and long-term tasks which are known to improve the specific low scoring health outcomes.
4.    Develop a strategy for implementation using a multi-disciplinary and intergenerational approach, building on existing programming.

5. Consider the goals and objectives throughout this Plan that might satisfy #3 above, calling them out as priority.
6. Provide a means of tracking and assessing improvements in health outcomes and work closely with the North Central Health District to do so.

**Goals and Policy Objectives:**

**Goal: To maintain and create beautiful, safe, clean, vibrant and welcoming neighborhoods for Windsor Locks residents of all ages, abilities and income levels.**

**Objectives:**

1. Further analyze the current zoning and density of residential neighborhoods, especially those called out in the body of this section of the Plan. Consider amending zones as appropriate in order to allow growth and maintain current residential character where it already exists. Consider writing a consolidated regulation that incorporates the multiple avenues for approval of residential development, infill and redevelopment opportunities including “pocket neighborhoods”.
2. Inventory vacant lands to be considered for development and preservation.
3. Review and consider implementation of recommendations made in the following studies as they relate to housing, density, form based code and future development:
  - a. Incentive Housing Zone Study prepared by Milone and Macbroom (2015).
  - b. Main Street Study (2008) prepared by Ferrero and Hixon
  - c. Transit Oriented Development Study (2011-2013) prepared by Fuss & O'Neil
  - d. Zimmerman / Volk Associates, Inc. (2012)
4. Incorporate low impact development, lifespan planning (accessory dwelling units, “granny flats”), affordability and inclusive design standards into residential regulations as appropriate.

5. Review and revise this section of the plan as required from time to time per Connecticut General Statutes Section 8 – 30g.
6. Conduct neighborhood visual preference survey, incorporate design guidelines for residential development community wide utilizing survey outcomes.

**Goals and Policy Objectives from Section IV: Public School and Town Wide Goals and Objectives**

**Goal: To continue to provide quality education and varied learning and personal growth opportunities for all Town residents at any age.**

**Objectives:**

**Public School Community and Facility Goals**

1. To continue to implement school policies and curriculum which supports every student
2. To reconfigure space or perform renovations to the interior of existing buildings to accommodate the growing need for Pre – Kindergarten classes as the Town has a continuing commitment to early education.
3. To upgrade the district's building entrances to meet current accessibility and safety codes.
4. To assess various facilities for roof replacement (either partial or full).
5. To assess the need for upgrades to athletic fields to meet both competitive standards and present-day usage expectations, such as rubberized tracks and proper irrigation.

**Town Wide Goals which can Support the Academic / Lifelong Learner Experience and Provide a Sustainable Community**

1. To generally assess Windsor Locks neighborhoods for new opportunities to strengthen families and foster growth and development for young people
2. To inventory current housing units, making particular note of sustainable redevelopment and

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- infill opportunities near nodes of activity, near schools, parklets, places of worship, grocery/markets, coffee shops and transit.
3. To introduce sustainable pocket neighborhoods and infill regulations at appropriate nodes throughout town to incentivize redevelopment, improve community health and character and provide connectivity for residents.
  4. To allow and encourage community/hobby gardens and front yard produce stands
  5. To support and when possible construct / install multiple modes of transportation including bicycle accommodations, sidewalks, increased shuttle services
  6. To develop an arts and culture program inspired by both the historical and current demographics of the town
  7. To seek vibrant uses of public spaces; include games, music, theater, sculpture
  8. To create story walks and educational wayfinding throughout town
  9. To preserve natural resources, expand greenways, add street trees and enhanced public spaces
  10. To maintain parks and play spaces in proximity to all neighborhoods
  11. To initiate beautification and community policing programs, enforcing blight laws
  12. To think "outside the box" when it comes to community outreach, go into the schools, bring the schools out into the community, think beyond the public notice in the newspaper
  13. To bring in new more diverse groups of people to be participants in planning projects or members of Planning and Zoning Commission, Economic Development Commission, including student liaisons. Building on the current Meeting on Main student/local government relationship.
  14. To encourage adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings for educational purposes, training centers and higher education facilities
  15. To generally assess Windsor Locks neighborhoods for new opportunities to strengthen families and foster growth and development for young people

**Goals and Policy Objectives from Section V: Environment, Land and Natural Resources**

**Goal: Continue to identify and protect, for future generations, the Inland Wetland soils and floodplain areas of the Town of Windsor Locks.**

**Objectives:**

1. Explore the establishment of increased regulated areas in the Town wetland regulations particularly associated with the Town's major watercourses and their associated wetlands. Specifically, consider increasing the activity review area to one hundred feet (100') from the top of the bank of a watercourse.
2. In all new development proposals, establish and enforce a. a no net loss policy of inland wetland soils, and/or b. alternative enhancement opportunities policy to create higher value wetland areas where streams have been urbanized or where wetland soils have historically been disturbed.
3. Seek opportunities with the Conservation Commission, Department of Public Works, Parks Department and possibly with the Board of Education to provide educational markers, kiosks and signs along not only watercourses, but significant wetland areas, natural features, conservation easements, open space areas and within the Town Parks. Consider requiring natural resource identification markers or signs as part of future land use approvals, via amended zoning, subdivision and wetland regulations, by the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission.
4. Continue to require the dedication of open space as part of new development projects to preserve and protect the town's wetland systems.

**Goal: Protect areas of steep slopes and leave them to the extent possible in their natural condition to minimize adverse impacts to surrounding natural systems.**

**Objectives:**

1. Develop specific regulations in the Zoning and Subdivision regulation to protect slopes over 15%.
2. Monitor new development plans to avoid impacts on the town's steep slopes and seek to preserve them in their natural state.

**Goal: Support the protection of the Town's Natural Diversity areas as identified by the State of Connecticut.**

**Objectives:**

1. Continue to review the Natural Diversity Data Base maps with all new development proposals and seek State DEEP assistance if development impacts such areas.
2. Continue to share the Natural Diversity Data Base map with prospective developers and property owners within Windsor Locks.
3. Adopt amendments to the Zoning Regulations under Section 1102 A.4. Site Features and Subdivision Regulations Section 8.2 that places such a review into the required review process.

**Goal: Establish an agricultural land and farming preservation plan in order to ensure the availability of local fresh food, to support the local economy and to assist with preservation of land and culturally significant community assets.**

**Objectives:**

1. Continue to work with the State of Connecticut to map/formally recognize the Town's agricultural soils.
2. Create an updated inventory of agricultural and farm lands.

3. Survey property owners to understand what their needs and wants are for the future of their lands and identify which properties are ripe for preservation.
4. Utilize the recently established ranking system to score identified parcels.
5. Consider annual appropriations to grow the recently established Agricultural Land Preservation Fund.
6. Review and amend the zoning regulations and subdivision regulations to encourage and support the farm community.
7. Provide resources to the farm community regarding town policies, regional support and available grant funds.

**Goal: To enhance and establish permanent open space and greenway corridors within the community where opportunities exist that serve the multiple roles of natural resource and wildlife habitat preservation, celebration of heritage, providing opportunities to experience nature, creation or extension of non-motorized multi-use trails encouraging connectivity, physical fitness and healthy lifestyles.**

**Objectives:**

1. Continue efforts initiated during the previous planning period regarding the Windsor Locks Canal and Canal Park (now a State recognized 4.5 mile multi-purpose trail), including:
  - a. Strengthening partnerships with State of CT departments, Town of Suffield, Ahlstrom Corporation and the owner of the vacant mill building
  - b. Seeking funding to resurface and maintain the trail.
  - c. Constructing a new entry park at the head of the trail on the southern end in Windsor Locks.
  - d. Restoring, preserving and utilizing the canal and locks
  - e. Revisit past discussions regarding conducting a Hydropower feasibility study
2. Continue planning efforts to discover potential extensions and preservation of the Kettle Brook Greenway.

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3. Continue planning efforts to discover potential extensions and preservation of open space along Merrigan Brook.
4. Continue planning efforts to discover potential extensions of the Waterworks Brook Preservation Area Greenway (nearly 200 acres of town preserved land formerly known as the CT Water Company property) on South Center Street.
5. Amend the Windsor Locks zoning and subdivision regulations to strengthen the open space provisions by increasing the minimum amount of required open space with new development from 10% to a minimum of 20%. Also seek to encourage the preservation of open space greenways when lands within these corridors are proposed for development.
6. The Town has established a formal Open Space Land Acquisition Fund. The Town should request that this account be funded by annual appropriations from the Town's budget in addition to already established subdivision regulations which require "fees-in-lieu of open space" contributions from new development. Development opportunities for new subdivisions are minimal given the developed nature of the community.
7. The Conservation Commission, with input from the Planning and Zoning Commission and Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission should coordinate, plan, and seek implementation and funding methods, for potential greenways in Windsor Locks. This group should consider using the "Integrated Natural Resource Values Analysis" to identify high value areas for preservation efforts.
8. The Town should continue to inventory, and seek opportunities for acquiring, abandoned properties if they contain natural resources or provide opportunity to extend or connect greenways.



**Goal: To prioritize, as a community, the efficient use of all resources in order to better preserve available natural resources for future generations.**

**Objectives:**

1. Land Use - Create a program that incentivizes "green construction" or similar retrofitting projects throughout the planning and zoning process.
2. Land Use - Amend the Zoning Regulations to include Low Impact Development standards
3. Municipal – Develop a community wide policy committing to a Sustainability Plan
4. Municipal – Consider becoming a Sustainable CT member
5. Municipal - Review current Town Hall / Municipal Department recycling, office supply and equipment purchasing, digital filing programs for opportunities for eco-friendly improvement.
6. Municipal - Review current municipal services related to residential recycle programs to look for opportunities for improvement.
7. Municipal – Continue the discussion on the purchase of an electric vehicle fleet and charging station at Town Hall
8. Citizen - Create new ways to provide community education and outreach on changes that can be made at home. This can build on the current MS4 Stormwater Management best practices.

**Goal: Plan for intense weather patterns and the possibility of prolonged changes in our environment by exploring the idea of resiliency and prioritizing next steps for decision makers as they are presented with new predictions related to warmer air and land, mean sea level rise, frequency and intensity of storms**

**Objectives:**

1. Initiate a process for determining the community's resiliency
2. Identify the community's questions and concerns

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3. Assess the community's current development patterns against areas likely to be impacted
4. Understand and analyze risks
5. Review flood regulations
6. Communicate with property owners regularly to gain input and reduce losses
7. Write and implement low impact development and compact development regulations
8. Strengthen land preservation programs
9. Consider community wide goals such as reduced emissions and reduced energy consumption
10. Reassess the community's resiliency at least every 10 years in line with the State of Connecticut and University of Connecticut's recommendations and requirements per PA 1319

**Goal: To maintain and improve the quality and functions of the Town's watercourses, the waters of the State of Connecticut and beyond, and protect them from ongoing development activities.**

**Objectives:**

1. Continue to perform a regular inventory of each of the Town's major watercourses to evaluate their health.
2. Build on the current volunteer trail and watercourse "clean-ups" to establish a more formal annual schedule.
3. Continue to involve residents, school groups and other organizations in an education program about the importance of the Town's watercourses, including the function of upland areas and impacts from storm water runoff due to adjacent land uses.
4. Seek new opportunities to create additional public open spaces around the Town's watercourses to preserve their functions and create connectivity among the Town's open spaces areas.
5. Consider new opportunities for public paths and trails along open space corridors (Spring Park, Kettle Brook and Waterworks Brook, for example), along the Town's significant watercourses, as a unique recreational amenity and educational opportunity for Town residents.

6. Develop low impact development land use regulations, requiring site specific stormwater management plans which mitigate polluted runoff and maximize green, open and pervious spaces to minimize impacts to waterways.
7. Evaluate various types of green infrastructure and consider establishing local policies which encourage or require green infrastructure use within the community's roads and development projects.
8. Establish a formal interdepartmental Stormwater Management Plan in order to identify, mitigate and prevent pollution to the waters of the community, the region and the State of Connecticut.

#### **Section VI: Traffic and Transportation**

**Goal: To provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the Town of Windsor Locks.**

#### **Community Transportation System Objectives:**

1. To evaluate, plan and budget for necessary and desired roadway and associated utility upgrades
2. To inventory middle neighborhoods community-wide for gaps in the sidewalk system and create a plan and budget for increased connectivity. For example, community members routinely have expressed interest in sidewalk extensions on North Street and West Street
3. To evaluate, plan and budget for needed accessibility improvements in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
4. To integrate Complete Streets policies where possible in each five year roadway plan
5. To coordinate with the ConnDOT regarding engineering and construction of roadway safety improvements on Ella Grasso Turnpike
6. To work with businesses and developers on projects up on Ella Grasso Turnpike to consolidate driveways to provide for safer traffic access

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7. To evaluate, plan and budget for transportation needs on Old County Road, in particular where the industrial uses transition to mixed use and residential uses, including minimizing truck traffic
8. To continue to work toward construction of the new rail station on Main Street
9. To ensure connectivity between new rail station and the airport
10. To continue to explore opportunities for Route 75 Back Access Roads / Multi-Use Pathways.
11. To further develop concept for Route 20 Corridor Multi-Use Path
12. To initiate construction of designed Main Street Complete Streets
13. To inventory and evaluate existing public parking and opportunities for new public parking.
14. To explore opportunities for designated parking at the Historic Station
15. To inventory and evaluate existing pedestrian connections between Main Street, Library, Middle School, and Town Hall and seek opportunities for improvements
16. To coordinate with State of CT DEEP, Ahlstrom and Friends of the Canal on resurfacing the State of Connecticut Canal Park Trail
17. To ensure canal pedestrian crossing is constructed connecting Main Street to Canal Bank, Montgomery Mill and the Canal Trail
18. To seek opportunities to improve connectivity on Bridge Street / Route 140 between Windsor Locks and East Windsor
19. To evaluate need and consider increased van and shuttle services if such need is demonstrated both in town and between towns as a shared service

**Section VII: Economic Development**

**Goal: Utilize economic development tools and Smart Growth practices to support a strong, diverse and connected Business and Industrial sector of the Windsor Locks economy which provides job creation, needed local services and tax revenues to the community.**

**Objectives - Industrial:**

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1. Maintain or increase mitigation measures on Old County Road to reduce impact of industrial uses or associated truck traffic.
2. Investigate whether other less valuable land can be used for the compost operation, freeing this parcel for a higher value use and eliminating permitting or development conflicts.
3. Review the zoning pattern along Old County Road from Halfway House Road south to encourage low intensity, optimal transitional uses that will support and connect the residential communities and business communities.
4. As the King Spring Road extension, referred to in the 2007 Plan, does not seem feasible, the Planning and Zoning Commission should revise the permissible uses in the remaining industrial district on North Street to exclude high traffic, and heavy truck traffic, uses.
5. Continue to utilize adaptive reuse regulations in order to provide flexibility in underutilized industrial buildings.
6. Continue to provide outreach to industrial businesses in order to understand workforce, growth strategy and supply chain needs.
7. Rezone River Road to permit residential uses and passive recreational uses.
8. Create a plan for future development or preservation for River Road and Lawnacre Road that incorporates resiliency planning and natural resource protection due to proximity to the Connecticut River and flood waters.

**Objectives - Commercial:**

1. Continue efforts to require frontages along Ella Grasso Turnpike to be used for more intense uses than valet parking. Additionally the town should work closely with the Connecticut Airport Authority to understand how much frontage could open up along Ella Grasso Turnpike if some parking uses are moved onto the airport proper.
2. Continue to work toward developing a back access road or multi-use trail parallel to Ella Grasso Turnpike from Route 20 to Loten Drive.

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3. Evaluate a rezone for the intersections of Ella Grasso Turnpike, Elm Street and Old County Road as well as Halfway House Road and Concorde Way.
4. Consider public-private partnerships for redevelopment of the Windsor Locks Commons site and station site and continue to move the train station relocation project into a construction phase.
5. Continue to implement recommendations made in the Main Street Study and Once and Future TOD Study.
6. Pursue a rail crossing and bridge over the canal to connect Main Street to the canal bank, Montgomery Mill and Canal Trail.
7. Coordinate a plan with Ahlstrom Munksjo, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Friends of the Canal for resurfacing and enhancing the Canal Trail State Park.
8. Encourage development of new housing units within a 10 minute walk from the train station.
9. Seek funding to complete the Historic Station restoration, fit out and associated parking for future uses.
10. Work with property owner of Dexter Plaza to further enhance the site in the short-term and explore rethinking and reconfiguration of buildings on the parcel in the future.
11. Support the Windsor Locks Housing Authority as they explore new mixed use development along the frontage of 11 Grove Street that is connected and in harmony with the Main Street Overlay Zone and with adjacent parcels.
12. Continue to pursue excellence in coordination and site design for 255 Main Street, the relocated train station and the historic train station.
13. Encourage and support the successful reuse of the Historic Station as a Welcome Center, “grab and go” café, tourist destination and meeting house.
14. Complete site preparation for the properties on the corner of Chestnut Street and Main Street and continue to incentivize mixed-use redevelopment.
15. Work closely with the Town of East Windsor in a joint effort to enhance the bridge, gateways and active transportation amenities between the towns.

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16. Finalize and implement the Small Business Microloans Program as part of the Downtown TIF District.
17. Continue to prioritize a food resource program, including farmers market, fruit trails, community gardens and a Public Market as part of an overall plan for sustainability, community wellness and economic strength.
18. Continue to utilize the Airport Interchange Overlay Zone as plans are created for vacant properties along the Route 20 corridor.
19. Conduct Corridor Studies for Route 20 and Ella Grasso Turnpike to understand development or redevelopment scenarios to include utility need, broadband, desired uses, function, shape and configuration of buildings as well as their relationship to streets, sidewalks, trails and open spaces.
20. Establish clear policies on what improvements are expected for new commercial development and redevelopment of business districts town wide, similar to the applicability standards developed in the Main Street Overlay Zone.
21. The Planning and Zoning Commission should review and upgrade standards for new hotel construction in Windsor Locks. The market need for additional hotel rooms should be studied prior to new hotel development so as to avoid over saturation of this use throughout Town but particularly in the Route 75 corridor.
22. Consider a rezone for the western Section of Spring Street in order to accommodate desired uses, investigate the cost and benefit of extending the water line to properties that aren't connected, and encourage aesthetic improvements through enforcement and economic incentives.
23. Analyze zoning patterns, host a community workshop and develop a master plan for South Center Street and Oakridge Drive in order to create an attractive, village like, mixed-use gateway to town and to the Woodridge and Oakridge condominium communities.
24. Consider adopting similar standards for all business and industrial districts. The Town should then decide whether to establish a formal Design Review Commission that would be comprised of design professionals that would serve to advise both applicants and the Commission.

### **Economic Development Objective – Community Wide**

Building off of the previous work done as part of the Main Street Study, develop a branding, marketing and wayfinding plan to communicate assets, boost economic development, tourism and create the sense of community that residents and visitors will enjoy.

### **Section VIII: Parks and Recreation**

**Goal: To continue to provide a safe, convenient and enjoyable Parks and Recreation system that encourages residents of all ages to be active, learn, socialize, experience the outdoors and feel a sense of community.**

#### **Objectives:**

1. To continue to support, with the Town's annual Capital Improvement Program on a yearly basis, the funds needed to properly maintain, make safe and improve the Town's park system, including the enhancement of underutilized spaces as identified in the Park Inventory or in future needs assessments.
2. Survey residents in proximity to underutilized park areas to understand the neighborhood needs and desires in order to improve and better utilize the space.
3. Seek out available grant opportunities to 1) assess community strengths and needs related to recreational programs and (indoor and outdoor) park spaces, 2) help fund needed improvements in the existing Town park system.
4. Establish a plan for consistent improvements to the Town park's system such as: improve outdoor basketball facilities, establish a boat launch facility to the Connecticut River, preserve and maintain the Canal Trail, Canal and Locks, establish a multi-use path along the Route 20 corridor, enhance walking trails at Spring Street Park the Waterworks Brook Preservation Area off of South Center Street.
5. Seek ways to increase safety in active recreation areas such as: neighborhood appropriate



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and low impact lighting, maintained pathways and landscaping, increased positive activity, community policing

6. Explore opportunities to establish a youth center space and increased programming for adolescent and teen youth.
7. Seek ways to install additional wayfinding and educational signage to direct and engage park users.
8. Continue to extend and establish town Greenways along several of the Town's watercourses, roadways or undeveloped areas and connect these to the Town Park system with access points and trails.
9. Seek opportunities to develop new trail connections and multi-use paths within new development sites understanding that both residents and local employers/employees may enjoy public trails and amenities.
10. Work with Property Owners, Developers and Town of Suffield and the State of Connecticut to expand, improve and maintain the Windsor Locks Canal State Park along the Connecticut River.