

Town of Windsor Locks Connecticut



Plan of Conservation and Development

2007

Plan of Conservation and Development

Town of Windsor Locks, Connecticut

2007

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Preface:

This update of the “Plan of Conservation and Development” has been a multi-year effort of the Windsor Locks Planning and Zoning Commission. The purpose of this effort was to take the 1996 “Plan of Development”, use that Plan as the basic format of the Update, and identify and include the relevant issues for today’s Plan of Conservation and Development based on the experience over the last ten years.

This effort has been the result of numerous meetings and extended research of the Commission and their staff. The Commission, in developing this Plan, sought the advice and input of other Town boards and commissions and the Town’s professional staff. All of this effort and input was invaluable in the production of the final document and the Commission extends its thanks and appreciation to all who contributed to this effort. The Plan has been crafted by those that will use it - the town boards and commissions that establish town policies and those that govern the local land use process. As such, this Plan will be a useful and living document that will be used on an ongoing basis by Town citizens and decision-makers. It is the Commission’s hope that the Town will use this long range planning document to help guide the growth of the Town in a way that best serves the best interests of the residents of Windsor Locks.

Windsor Locks Planning and Zoning Commission

Alan Gannuscio, Chairman
Vincent Zimnoch, Vice Chairman
Marshall Brown, Secretary
Janet Ramsey
Kim Blackburn
Alternate Brian Michaud
Alternate Ralph Leiper
Alternate Jim Tatro

.....

Commission Staff

Michael K. O’Leary, AICP, Planning Consultant
Jennifer Rodriguez, Planning Coordinator
Dana Steele, P.E., J. R. Russo & Associates, Engineering Consultant

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION



Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that a planning and zoning commission “prepare, adopt and amend a plan of conservation and development for the municipality”. But, a plan of conservation and development is more than a State mandate, it is the Town’s way of assessing their current situation, understanding important issues, and setting goals and policies that will guide future growth.

The purpose of a town plan of conservation and development is to record the best thinking of a town as to its future growth and to give direction to both public and private development. The plan should encompass a long-term vision of the community but also offer guidance for short-term decision-making.

The plan of conservation and development reflects the goals and objectives of a community at one point in time, assesses present economic conditions, and identifies lifestyles and issues important to the community at that moment. In recognition of this, the State Statutes require that a plan be updated at least every ten years. It is imperative that the Plan reflects contemporary conditions and contemporary attitudes of the community.

In 1967, the Town of Windsor Locks developed a “Plan of Development”. Twenty years later the plan was updated under the title of “Comprehensive Plan – Update 1987”. The last Plan update was adopted in 1996 and titled “Plan of Development”. Each of these documents has had a positive influence on the orderly development of the Town.

This document is intended as a further update of the Town Plan, and is based on the work done by previous town planning and zoning commissions. This document takes newly acquired demographic data, new planning and development experiences of the last ten years and provides new goals and objectives based on this new data and recent experiences.

The standards for municipal plans of conservation and development in Connecticut are set forth in Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The statutes require that these plans must include the following:

- Recommendations for the most desirable land use within the community.
- Recommendations for the most desirable density of population in the several parts of the community.
- Acknowledgement of the State Plan of Conservation and Development.

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development

Section 1: Introduction, Cont.

- Promotion of the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multi-family dwellings consistent with natural and built capacities.
- Promotion of housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for low and moderate-income households.
- A statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality.
- Consideration of the need for affordable housing.
- Consideration for the need to protect existing and potential drinking water supplies.
- Promotion of the greatest efficiency and economy through the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people.
- Consideration for the use of cluster development to the extent consistent with the natural and built capacities of the town.

In addition to the above minimum requirements, the statute identifies the following areas where the plan may include recommendations:

- Systems of principal thoroughfares, highways, bridges, streets and other public ways.
- Airports.
- Parks, playgrounds, and public schools.
- General location, relocation and improvement of public buildings.
- General location and extent of public and private utilities and terminals.
- Transit.
- Plans for redevelopment and improvement of districts.
- Public housing.
- Recommendations for conservation and preservation of traprock ridges as defined in Section 8-1 aa.
- Recommend programs for the implementation of the Plan.
- A schedule of capital improvements.
- A plan for open space acquisition and greenway protection and development.
- Other recommendations, which in the Commission 's judgment are beneficial to the municipality.

The requirements of the State Statutes of requiring a plan, mandating its periodic updating, and specifying a public adoption process, highlight the fact that the plan is a public document. Without the broad knowledge of the public concerning the plan, its value is greatly diminished.

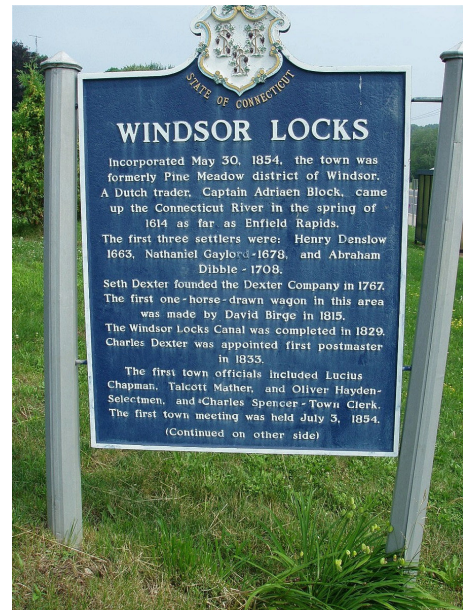
Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development Section 1: Introduction, Cont.

The plan is the town's document to help it plan for its future. This plan is intended to be used by both the public policy makers in the town and by its citizens to better understand the town and to best plan for its future.

The Plan of Development should be viewed as an advisory document to guide Town officials in its consideration of capital improvements. It also should be the guide in the adoption of new, and amendments of old codes and ordinances relevant to community development. It should assist the Planning and Zoning Commission in the acceptance or rejection of development proposals and zoning amendments.

The basic objective is to develop and implement land use policies that will preserve desirable qualities and enhance existing and proposed development. Such policies should reflect the desire of the Town to maintain a diversified tax base while striving to enhance existing development in accordance with upgraded standards as improvements are made.

Above all, the plan is a roadmap to where we all think the Town should be in the next 10 to 20 years. It is a document of the Town citizens and should reflect their best thinking for what the future of Windsor Locks should be.



SECTION II. AREA OF INFLUENCE

Windsor Locks is located in the Greater Hartford region of the State of Connecticut. Any serious review of the health, vitality and future growth and development of the Town must take the region, and the State as a whole, into consideration. In comparing the Town of Windsor Locks to other towns in the region, we can better determine what our strengths and weaknesses are and also what opportunities are there to grasp. No Town exists in a vacuum, as all are interdependent on each other to one degree or another. The Town must be viewed in relation to its “Area of Influence” and to the Region of which it is an integral part.



Region

The Hartford Region is a very diverse collection of cities and towns extending from Granby at the northwest corner to Somers in the northeast corner to Hebron in the southeast corner to Farmington at the southwest corner of the Region. The center of the Region is the city of Hartford. The region includes rural communities, suburban towns, fully suburban areas, and the urban city of Hartford. The following data shows some of the summary statistics of the growth, health, and demographic make-up of the region.

In **educational** attainment, the State of Connecticut, at the time of the 2000 Census, was the third highest of all the states, at 31.4%, for the proportion of its population with a college degree. The Hartford Region had an even higher percentage of the population with a college degree at 32.4%.

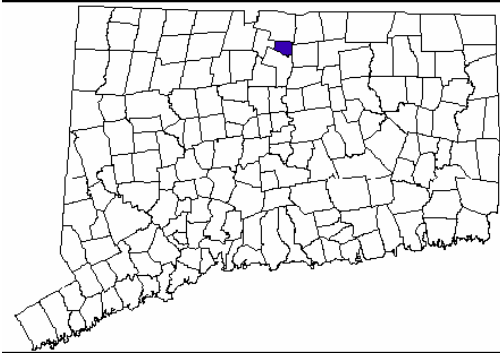
The region has an aging population and **workforce**. The percentage of population 35 and older increased from 49% in 1990 to 55% in 2000. There is a concern Statewide of the area's skilled workforce soon entering retirement years and the growing need of retaining and attracting the younger element of our workforce to meet the needs of area businesses. The State has identified that an effort is needed to retain the younger age workforce within the State as a whole. The presence of this sector of the workforce, the 20-to-30-year old age group, is important to attract new businesses and the State has recognized their inclination to move to other parts of the country.

Overall population in the Hartford Region grew at a modest pace in the 1990-2000 decade (+1.7%), but the number of **jobs** declined in the same period by 5.9%. This is systematic of the movement of population and jobs away from the urban core. As jobs have moved further away, the average travel-to-work time of the Hartford region work force increased by 6% during the decade. Also, the

Town of Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development

Section II. Area of Influence; Cont.

number of the region's workforce who worked in their town of residence decreased from 31% in 1990 to 25% in 2000.



The average **age** of the Hartford area population is increasing. The largest percentage of the region's population has moved from the 25 – 35 year old age group in 1990 to the 35 – 45 year old age group in 2000. This suggests different evolving impacts on town and regional services as this bulge in the population continues to age. This “baby-boomer” bulge in the population, as it has aged, has always had a dramatic impact on services from day

care, to schools to housing starts, jobs, and soon into retirement and senior living needs. It is interesting that this bulge in the population profile has also created what's called an “echo” of the baby boom with a small, but significant, growth in the number of school age children in many towns.

The **location** of the Region's population has shifted over the past several decades. In the last 50 years the share of the region's population living in rural and suburban areas more than doubled, from 18% to 38%. And the share of the region's population residing in fully suburban and urban communities declined from 83% to 62%. The overall pattern of rapidly increasing population in the Region's fringe areas and the declining population in the urban core are totally related issues.

These growth and development trends are not unique to CT, as they can be seen in many metropolitan areas throughout the country. Many urban planners have raised concerns about the trends of population moving away from the built up infrastructure requiring new infrastructure to be built in the suburban and rural portion of the regions. This puts a strain on the ability of the local governments to support ever expanding, less dense, growth patterns. This also uses a greater portion of our remaining open space and agricultural areas, far in excess of the actual population growth would suggest. It also impacts on the vitality of the central city, creates disinvestments in the built-up environment, and makes the automobile-dependent patterns of development more and more difficult to serve by mass transit. While many of these issues expand beyond the boundaries of Windsor Locks, it is important to recognize them and to participate in regional solutions to some of these common regional problems.

Area of Influence

As stated in the last two Plans (1987 and 1996) the term “Area of Influence” refers to a smaller “region” which represents communities that exert a relatively direct influence on or impact on Windsor Locks. The towns of East Granby, East

Town of Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development

Section II. Area of Influence; Cont.

Windsor, Enfield, Suffield, and Windsor and the City of Hartford are the most directly involved. Windsor Locks reciprocates that influence, particularly as a provider of employment opportunities to the region and beyond.

Each recent Plan of Development included a review of population growth in the Area of Influence. The information included below is taken from the decennial U.S. Census data beginning in 1970. Table 1 "Population Trends: Windsor Locks and Its Area of Influence" is an updated version of that table incorporating the most recent, 2000 year, census data.

Population Trends: Windsor Locks and Its Area of Influence

Town	1970	1980	1990	2000	Increase 1970-2000		Increase 1990-2000	
East Granby	3,532	4,102	4,302	4,745	+1,213	+34%	+443	+10%
East Windsor	8,513	8,925	10,081	9,818	+1305	+15%	-263	-3%
Enfield	46,189	42,695	45,532	45,212	-977	-2%	-320	-1%
Hartford	158,017	136,739	139,739	124,121	-33,896	-21%	-15,618	-11%
Suffield	8,634	9,294	11,427	13,552	+4,918	+57%	+2,125	+19% *
Windsor	22,502	25,204	27,817	28,237	+5,735	+25%	+420	+2%
Windsor Locks	15,080	12,190	12,358	12,043	-3,037	-20%	-315	-3%

*Note: A portion of this growth is attributed to the expansion of the Mac-Dougal-Walker Correctional Institution during the 1990s.

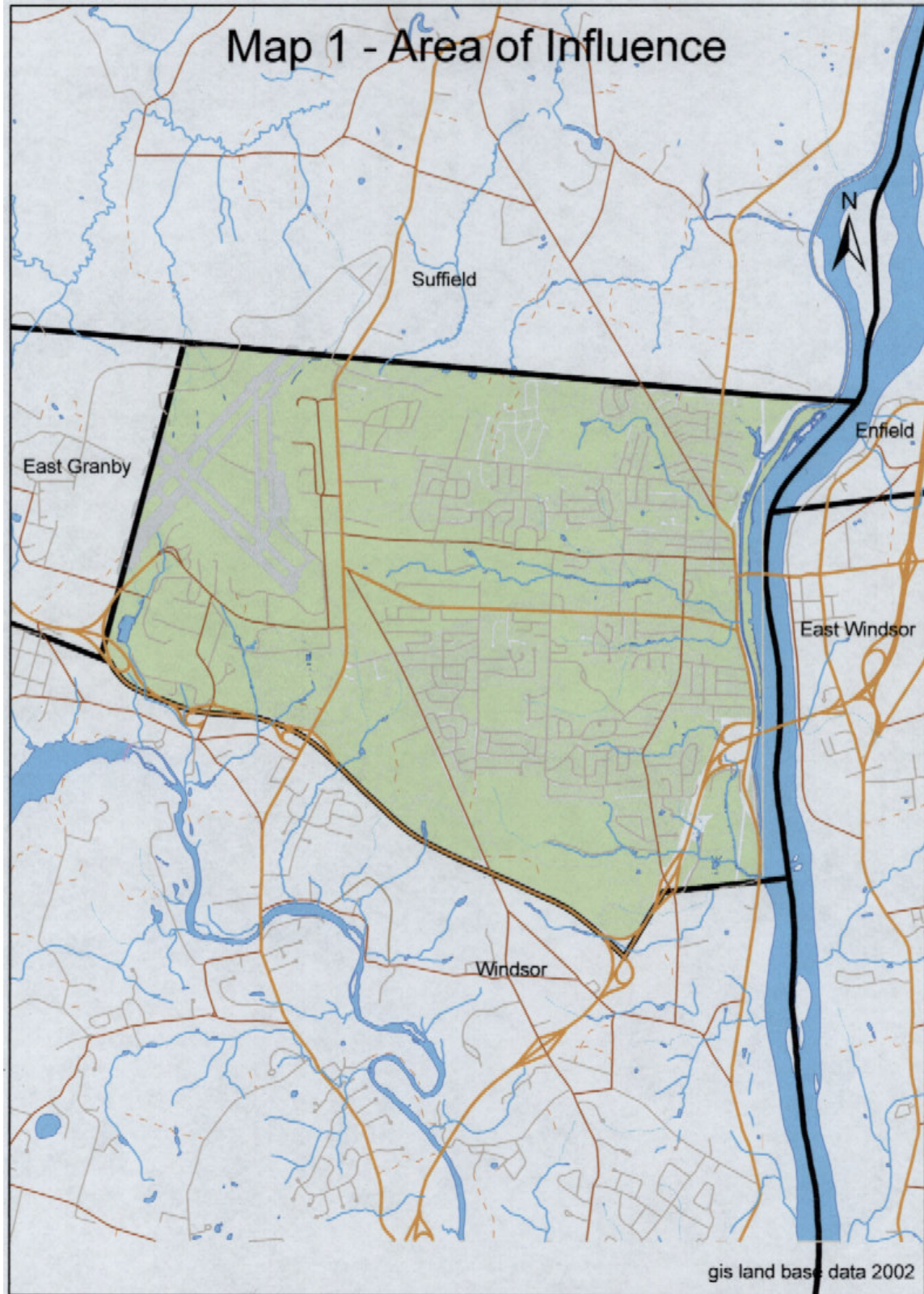
It is interesting to note the overall population trends in a thirty-year period for the towns immediately surrounding Windsor Locks. As noted in the preceding discussion of the Hartford region, the type and character of Towns in the above table differ tremendously. These communities range from the State of Connecticut's urban core, the City of Hartford, to rural bedroom towns. It is interesting to note that during the decade from 1980 to 1990 all communities in the above table had an increase in population. From 1990 to 2000, four of the seven communities lost population. East Granby and Suffield had healthy increases in population. These towns are somewhat similar in that they have ample supply of developable land, are much more rural in character, and attractive to most consumers seeking new single family homes in today's housing market. Windsor had a modest gain in population in the last 10 years; however, most of the town's older areas had a loss in population with the only strong growth rate in the western edge of town, an area similar to East Granby. The other communities shown in the above Table are more mature, or fully suburban, communities that have not had a tremendous amount of new housing and have populations that are aging. Their demographic patterns reflect Statewide and regional trends of new housing and population growth moving to the fringe of the region rather than in the more mature suburban areas.

Windsor Locks statistics also reflect the natural growth restrictions, which have been in place for some time. The Town is the smallest in land area, at 9.2

Town of Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section II. Area of Influence; Cont.

square miles, of all communities in the above Table. Bradley International Airport consumes a large percentage of the Town's land area and had a great influence on the Town. The State owned airport facility encompasses 1080.5 acres or 19.8% of the Town. With its strong growth during the past several decades and its plans for continued substantial growth, it is clear that this facility will continue to have a powerful influence on Windsor Locks and throughout the area.

This summary look at the region and at our Area of Influence can give local policy makers a framework for establishing policies for Windsor Locks. Viewing our community as a part of the regional whole can allow us to better plan for our future growth.



SECTION III. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Introduction

This section of the Plan is intended to provide a description of the Town and its past growth, and then utilize this information to project future trends. As the character of Windsor Locks is different and unique from other towns, the same is true for its history and past growth patterns. Important functions of the Plan of Conservation and Development are to see how the Town has developed, why it has developed the way that it did, and understand the rate and type of past growth. Only with this understanding can we properly plan for and guide future growth.

This section of the Plan is divided into several sections as follows: Introduction; A. Community Description; B. Housing Profile; C. Population Profile.

The demographic data in this section will assist and serve as the foundation of all subsequent sections of the Plan.

Community Description

The Town of Windsor Locks, incorporated in 1854, is located in north-central Connecticut, approximately halfway between Hartford, Connecticut and the City of Springfield, Massachusetts. The Town is the home of Bradley International Airport, serving the greater Hartford, CT / Springfield, MA metropolitan area. Windsor Locks is located on the west bank of the Connecticut River.

The Town contains 9.2 square miles of land area (approximately 5,888 acres of land). It has a population density of approximately 578 persons per square mile. The topography within Town is primarily flat to gentle topography, typical of Connecticut River Valley towns.

The terrain in Windsor Locks ranges in elevation from approximately 20 feet above sea level in the eastern edge of Town, adjacent to the Connecticut River, to 180 feet above sea level in the western portion of Town, at the beginning of the higher elevations situated west of Windsor Locks in the Litchfield / Berkshire region of western Connecticut. The landscape of the Town contains several streams generally running west to east toward the Connecticut River.

As of the 2000 U.S. Census, the Town had a population of 12,043 people. Largely a built-up, mature community town, Windsor Locks has had relatively stable population growth during the past two decades.



Housing Profile

Number of Housing Units

Windsor Locks housing stock is a mix of single-family and multi-family dwelling units primarily consisting of single-family housing. As of the 2000 U.S. Census, 76.8% of the town's 5,101 housing units were single-family housing units.

Windsor Locks has experienced some decades of significant expansion in the number of housing units and some decades of rather limited growth. The limited amount of available residential land for new residential development is one factor in the limited rate of new housing units. The last decade showed a modest 3.5% gain in the number of housing units or only 172 new units. Only five towns in the 29-town Hartford region had a smaller growth rate of new housing units in the 1990's.

**Total Housing Units in Windsor Locks
1960 - 2000**

Year of US Census Data	Total Number of Housing Units	% Change in Housing Units from Previous Decade
1960	3100	-
1970	4229	36.4%
1980	4232	0.1%
1990	4929	16.5%
2000	5101	3.5%

The number of new housing units in the Hartford region also had a modest growth rate during the 1990s. The overall growth rate of all 29 towns was a positive growth of 4.4%. The range of growth rates varied significantly across the region with Hebron having the largest rate of growth of 24.9% and Hartford having a negative growth rate of -9.7%. It is useful to compare the rate of housing unit growth with towns in our immediate Area of Influence.

Housing Unit Growth of Area Towns – 1990s

Town	New Housing Units During 1990s	Rate of Housing Unit Growth During 1990s
Enfield	429	2.6%
Windsor Locks	172	3.5%
East Windsor	241	5.9%
Windsor	667	6.5%
Suffield	469	10.7%
East Granby	218	12.9%

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section III. Population and Housing; Cont.

Since the 2000 U.S. Census (to the end of 2005), the town has added another 242 housing units, a 4.7% increase since 2000. The growth of housing by year since the 2000 Census, and based on the Windsor Locks Building Department Building Permit data, is shown in the Table below.

**New Windsor Locks Housing Units
2000 - 2004**

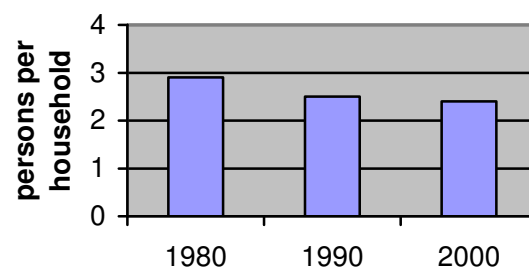
Year	New Housing Units	Total Housing Units
2000	47	5148
2001	25	5173
2002	17	5190
2003	53	5243
2004	59	5302
2005	41	5343

As shown on the above chart, the Town experienced a healthy growth in the number of new dwelling units since 2000. The growth of new residential construction has averaged approximately 40 new housing units per year. The number of total housing units at the end of 2005 is now estimated at 5,343. This rate of new construction, if continued through the remainder of the decade, would result in a growth rate in new housing units of almost 8% and a total housing unit inventory of approximately 5,500 by the year 2010. Some of this housing unit growth is in the area of age-restricted housing, housing for the 55-years and older population. Earlier demographic analysis had demonstrated that the aging Town population would place demands on this type of housing need. Also, based on recommendation from the last Plan, areas of Industrial zoning north of North Street have been rezoned to residential use. New single-family subdivisions have been developed in these areas and this is reflected in new housing starts during this decade.

Household Size

The continuing decrease in the average household size has been a significant national trend since the post World War II period. Windsor Locks average number of persons per household has dropped from 2.93 in 1980 to 2.51 in 1990. The 2000 census reported the current persons per household size to be 2.43. This represents a 17% decrease in household size over this 20-year period.

**Persons Per Household
Windsor Locks, 1980 - 2000**



Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development

Section III. Population and Housing; Cont.

This drop in the average size of households is a national and state demographic trend and is attributed to a number of factors including lower birth rates, high divorce rates, later marriages, increased longevity and a generally higher number of single person households. This is a significant factor for forecasting future populations based upon growth in the town's housing inventory.

These national trends can be seen in some recent U.S. Census statistics for the Town of Windsor Locks. Between 1990 and 2000, while the total number of households increased by 3.7%, the number of single person households has increased by almost 31%.

Population Profile

Population statistics and the analysis of that data are extremely important in the study of a community. Factors such as age groups, education, employment, income, births, deaths, etc., have a bearing on the needs and desires of the community. Proper allocation of land and resources to satisfy the public is crucial to the implementation of policies to meet the needs of long range planning goals. It is also imperative that flexibility be made a physical attribute of the document due to the fact that our population makeup is ever changing.

Population projections for Windsor Locks, in the past, have estimated increases of up to 20,100 by the year 2000. However, such growth has not materialized through the present time nor can we expect anything of such magnitude in the foreseeable future. According to the 1970 census, the Town was home to some 15,080 people that year, reflecting a period of rapid growth during the 1960's. This was followed by a rapid decline in the 1970's. However, the 1980's and the 1990's have proved to be a period of slower change. See Table 2

Table: 2 Population Growth, Windsor Locks, Connecticut

Year	Population	Ten Year Increases	
1950	5,221	-	-
1960	11,411	6,190	118.5%
1970	15,080	3,669	32.2%
1980	12,190	-2,890	-19.2%
1990	12,358	168	1.4%
2000	12,043	-315	-2.5%
2005	12,511 (est.)	-	-

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development

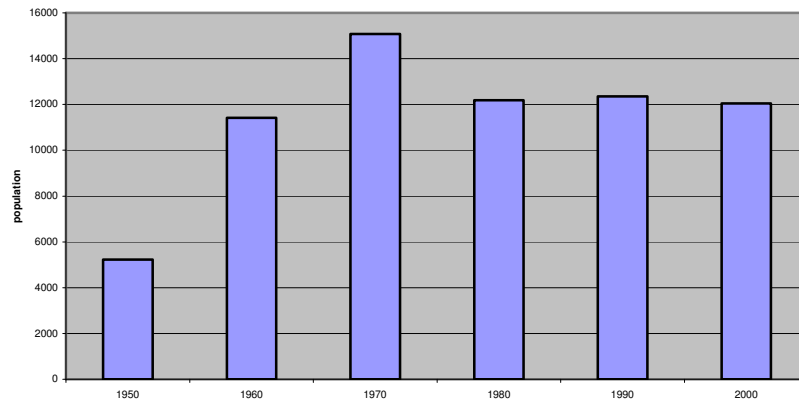
Section III. Population and Housing; Cont.

The changes in the population of Windsor Locks can also be seen in the following bar chart.

What the Table and the Chart clearly show is that after two decades of significant growth, and a decade of substantial population loss, there have been two decades of relatively no growth in the population of Windsor Locks.

The significant drop in population during the 1970s is possibly a result of two significant factors: the elimination of units within the downtown redevelopment area during this decade and the substantial decline in the overall persons per household as discussed previously.

Chart 2: Population Growth in Windsor Locks 1950 - 2000

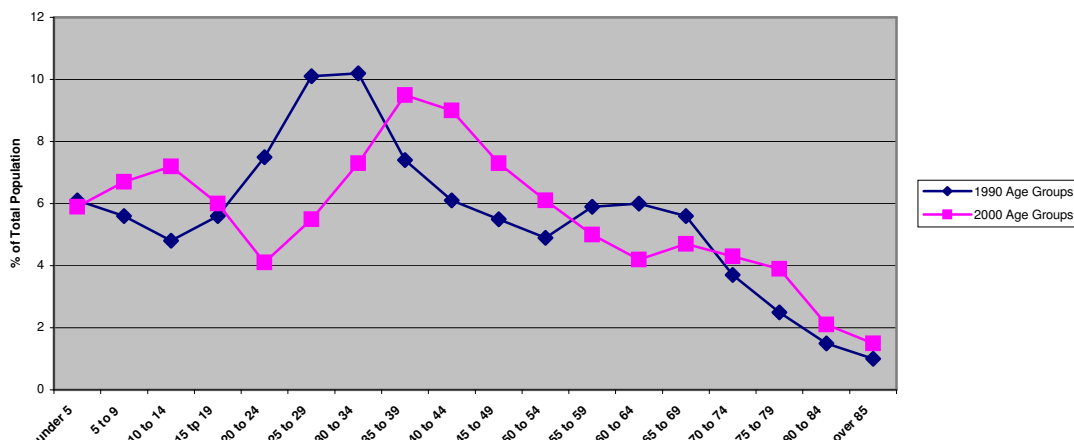


Age Changes Within the Population

While overall changes to the Town's population are important to document, age changes within the Town's population are equally significant to understand. The 2000 Census data has shown significant developments within specific age groups that have impacts on the character of the community as well as on public policy and community services.

The following table graphically shows these changes.

Age Distribution of Population
1990 vs 2000

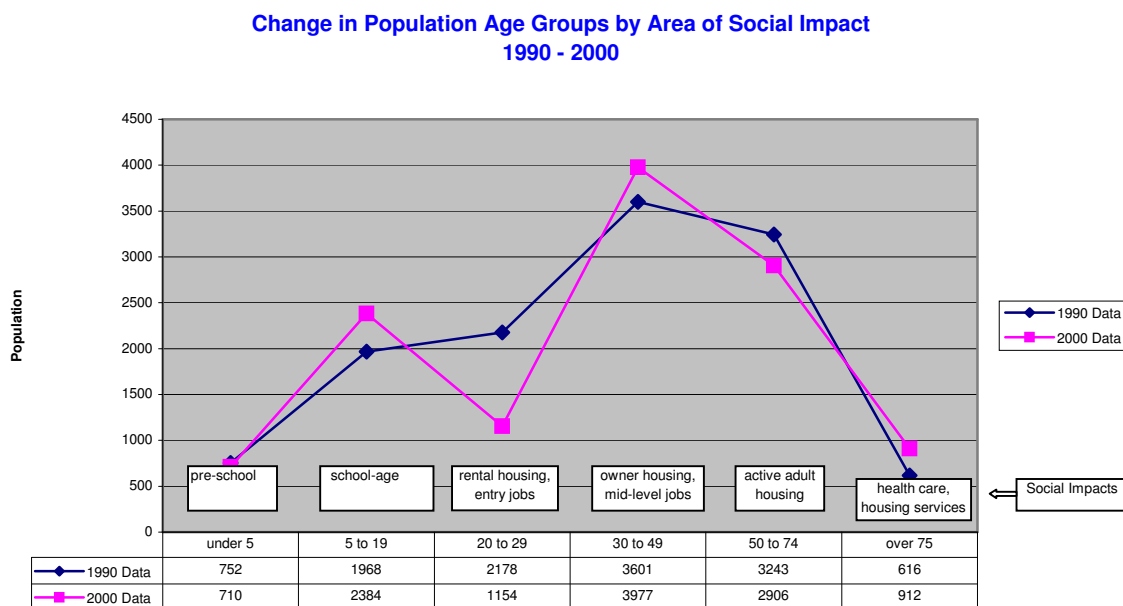


Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development

Section III. Population and Housing; Cont.

First, the above Chart shows the general aging of the Town's population. The largest age group in the 1990s, the 25 to 35 year olds, has aged into the 35 to 45 age group in 2000. This is typical of all towns as the baby boomer population moves through the population profile. Secondly, the Chart shows an increase in the most elderly population categories, the 75 and older age groups. And, finally the Chart shows the "echo" of the baby boom with the increased school age population age group. As the baby boom population moved through the prime child bearing age, this group itself caused a small baby boom that is seen in many communities across the State. The beginning of this could be seen in the last Plan update where the percentage of population under 5 years of age rose from 4.5% of the population in 1980 to 6.6% of the population in 1990. This age group has now moved into the school age category.

As noted previously, these changes in the profile of the population suggests a certain change in the needs of the changing population. The different age groups demand different services and towns must react differently to accommodate these needs. Proper planning also looks at what services will be needed in the next planning period as the population continues to age. The following Chart shows the 1990 and 2000 population in categories defined by different areas of social impact.



As can be seen in the Chart, the changes over the past ten years are that there is a more pronounced impact on the Town's school facilities in the community, on the need and demand for owner occupied housing (not starter or rental housing), and a growing need for services to care for the growing elderly population. As the population continues to age, there would be an indisputable need for housing for the "active adult" population as the largest population group moves into the 50 years and older population category.

IV. NATURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

This section of the Plan of Conservation and Development will explore and identify a range of natural resources within the Town of Windsor Locks. These are valuable features that are important to be identified, understood, and preserved to the extent possible even in a generally built up Town such as Windsor Locks.



These natural features perform valuable natural functions, which require that they be understood and preserved. They contribute to the uniqueness and livability of the Town, and contribute greatly to the beauty of the Town's landscape. As such they are irreplaceable resources that should not be taken for granted.

This section of the plan will explore the following natural resources:

- a. **Drainage Basins and Watercourses**
- b. **Wetlands and Floodplains**
- c. **Aquifer Protection Area**
- d. **Topography and Slopes**
- e. **Natural Diversity Database**
- f. **Open Space**

Each subsection as identified above will contain goals and objectives for the Town to be guided in its future actions. These are Town wide objectives that should be the guiding principles for not only the Planning and Zoning Commission, and not only for all land use commissions but for all the governing bodies of the Town.

Drainage Basins and Watercourses

Drainage Basins

To understand the importance of the Town's watercourses, and the natural systems that they have carved out of the landscape, it is best to understand the drainage basins in which they lie. There are numerous drainage basins in the State of CT and several basins which lie in the Town of Windsor Locks.

The entire State of CT is divided into major watershed basins. All these major drainage basins flow toward Long Island Sound. These do so directly or through major river systems that pass through the State. A large swath of the center portion of the State is located within the CT River Major Drainage Basin, as is the case for the Town of Windsor Locks. These Major Drainage Basins are further divided into Regional Drainage Basins and Subregional basins. These are subsets of the major drainage basins. These basins either flow directly into the major river associated with the basin, or more often, through tributaries to the major rivers. There are 337 subregional basins in the CT drainage pattern.

Three such subregional basins are located in the Town of Windsor Locks. These are depicted on the map at the end of this subsection.

Connecticut River Basin

This map shows that the largest area of Town flows directly east into the CT River and is part of the Connecticut River Basin. This subregional basin extends from the CT River west to approximately Old County Road and Ella Grasso Turnpike. The northern edge of this basin is approximately located along North Street. Areas to the north and west of these boundaries flow into tributaries rather than directly into the CT River.

Stony Brook Basin

The area of Town located generally north of North Street and the northern half of the airport property flows to the north and northwest into the towns of Suffield and East Granby. This is part of the Stony Brook Subregional Basin, and is the smallest basin in Windsor Locks.

Farmington River Basin

The third Subregional basin is located west of Old County Road and includes the south half of the airport property. This is part of the Farmington River Subregional basin that flows south through the Town of Windsor and into the Farmington River. Both of these two small basins eventually flow to the CT River through their basin's tributary rivers and streams.

Watercourses

Most of the Town's named and significant watercourses are located in the largest basin, the Connecticut River Basin, and as described above drain generally from west to east into the Connecticut River.

These watercourses are, from north to south in the Town, as follows:

Seymour Hollow Brook
Merrigan Brook
Paper Mill Brook
Kettle Brook
Adds Brook
Dibble Hollow Brook
Waterworks Brook

The health of these watercourses are of substantial interest to the Town as they travel through many of the Town's residential neighborhoods, are located within a number of the Town's parks and recreation areas, and perform many significant natural functions. These functions include: safely transporting stormwater flows; storing floodwaters; performing a cleansing function to stormwaters that flow to them; providing for wildlife habitat; and providing aesthetic and recreational opportunities for the Town's residents.

One of the longest brooks in Town, **Kettle Brook**, flows generally through the center of the community, west to east, from Ella Grasso Turnpike to the Connecticut River. It is the centerpiece of several Town parks and open spaces flowing extensively through Spring Park, along the Public Safety Complex property and through the Town's middle school property.

Another significant brook is **Merrigan Brook** with headwaters near the Suffield Town line. It is characterized by substantial areas of wetlands and steeply sloped banks. From an open natural watercourse it then travels through some of the more dense neighborhoods in Town before entering the Connecticut River. The Town has an opportunity to preserve the natural headwaters of Merrigan Brook, form open space connections with other established open space in this area of Town such as Circle Park and the new open space parcels required as part of the developing subdivision near Acorn Drive.

Waterworks Brook is located in the southeast corner of Town. The majority of its length is located within the bounds of the Connecticut Water Company wellsfields property located on the west side of South Center Street. This 225 acre parcel of property is essentially undeveloped and provides protection to this waterway and its associated wetlands. The

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section IV. Natural Resources; Cont.

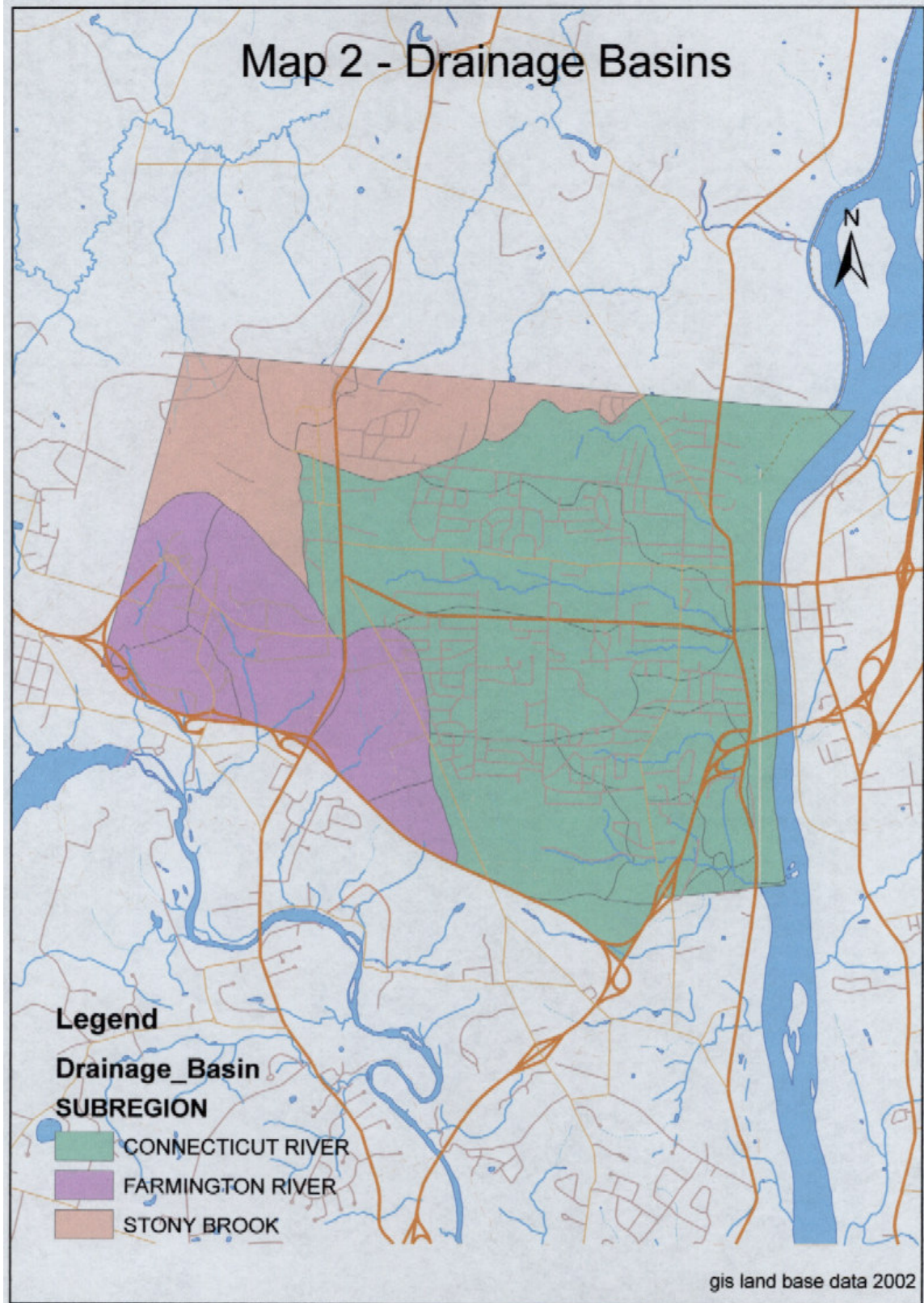
upper reaches of Waterworks Brook are also associated with steep slopes in the terrain surrounding several of its tributaries located within this property. As one of longest, undisturbed and natural waterways left in the Town of Windsor Locks, the preservation of this waterway, its associated wetlands, steep slopes, and surrounding environs should be a priority.

Goals and Policies:

Goal: To maintain and improve, as needed, the quality and functions of the Town's watercourses and protect them from ongoing development activities.

Objectives:

1. Perform an inventory of each of the Town's major watercourses to evaluate their health and open space opportunities.
2. Involve school groups and other organizations in an education program about the importance of the Town's watercourses.
3. Seek other opportunities to create additional public open spaces around the Town's watercourses to preserve their functions and create connectivity of the Town's open spaces.
4. Consider opportunities for public paths and trails along open space corridors, along the Town's significant watercourses, as a unique recreational amenity and educational opportunity for Town residents.
5. Strengthen land use regulations to require Stormwater Management Plans to improve water quality discharges within the Town's Stormwater drainage systems.



Wetlands and Floodplains

The Town's Inland Wetland soils and floodplains are an inter-related system that serves an important natural function, which is protected under State and Town laws and regulations.

Inland Wetland Soils

State laws protecting inland wetland soils began in 1974 with a substantial strengthening in 1987. As required by State law the Town of Windsor Locks has adopted Inland Wetland Regulations and has established an Inland Wetland Commission.

The Town's primary wetland corridors are formed along the Town's watercourses and streams. The following map shows this system of wetland corridors connected to the system of streams and watercourses.

Wetland soils are defined by State law as poorly drained, very poorly drained and floodplain soils. These soils are an important part of the natural system of slowing down, storing and filtering stormwater. Wetland soils, left in their natural state, are the most cost effective stormwater management system that a municipality can employ. Failure to preserve these natural systems, or overly taxing these natural systems, can lead to the need to employ expansive and expensive stormwater control and flood control projects. Wetlands are also a natural habitat for wildlife and form important wildlife corridors for a wide variety of plants and animals.

Floodplains

Windsor Locks has a limited area defined as floodplain. Regulatory floodplains are defined as areas having a one percent chance of flooding in any one year; also known as the 100-year floodplain. These floodplain areas in Town are primarily associated with the immediate banks of the Connecticut River. Also, in the extreme southeast corner of Town between I-91 and the Connecticut River, is probably the largest area designated as floodplain. There are also mapped floodplains associated with portions of Kettle Brook and Merrigan Brook. Although limited in area, these floodplain areas are the third natural system that have been identified in this Plan as a stormwater and floodwater storage system that needs to be recognized and protected so that their functions can continue.

Inland Wetland Soils and the Town's Floodplains are a large interrelated system that deserves protection and monitoring so that

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
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it can be enjoyed by future generations. The following goal and objectives are established to provide guidance for Town officials and residents to continue to improve on past preservation efforts.

Goal:

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

Objectives:

- 1. Seek to update the Town's Inland Wetland Regulations consistent with the latest CT DEP model regulations.**
- 2. Consider the establishment of increased regulated areas in the Town wetland regulations particularly associated with the Town's major watercourses and their associated wetlands.**
- 3. Establish a no net loss policy of inland wetland soils as the result of new development.**
- 4. Seek opportunities with the Conservation Commission and the Parks Department and possibly with the Board of Education to provide educational markers and signs along significant wetlands and other natural features within the Town Parks and Open Spaces.**
- 5. Encourage the dedication of open space in new residential development to preserve and protect the town's wetland systems.**

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
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Aquifer Protection Area

On February 2, 2004 the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) adopted new Aquifer Protection Regulations to help protect major public water supply wells from contamination. The regulations prohibit development of new high-risk land use activities (those that use hazardous materials) and require existing high-risk land use activities to register and follow best management practices.

Connecticut's Aquifer Protection Program protects major public water supply wells in sand and gravel aquifers to ensure a plentiful supply of public drinking water for present and future generations. Aquifer Protection Areas will be designated around the state's 122 active well fields in sand and gravel aquifers that serve more than 1000 people. Land use controls will be imposed in those areas to minimize the potential for contamination of the well field.

Windsor Locks has one area identified under the Aquifer Protection Program. This area is generally centered around the Connecticut Water Company's wells located in the southern area of Town.

The program identifies responsibilities of the state DEP, the municipalities and the water companies under the new program.

DEP is responsible for overall program administration, establishing state land use regulations and standards, approving aquifer protection area maps and local regulations, and developing guidance materials.

Municipalities in the program are responsible for appointing an aquifer protection agency, inventorying land uses within the aquifer protection area, designating an aquifer protection area boundary, and adopting local land use regulations. Municipalities are required to pass an ordinance appointing an existing board or commission to serve as the aquifer protection agency. Windsor Locks has identified the Conservation Commission as the local aquifer protection agency.

Water companies are required to map the critical portions of the aquifer which provide water to the well fields. The preliminary (Level B) mapping has been completed for the CT Water Company well in Windsor Locks. This preliminary mapping will be refined using extensive, site-specific data and ground-water modeling to determine the final (Level A) mapping area. The final mapping will define the regulatory boundaries for the land use regulations.

Goal:

Support the intent of the State law which is to protect the drinking waters of the State of CT.

Objective:

- 1. The Aquifer Protection Agency should proceed to adopt regulations based on the State model regulations.**
- 2. All land use agencies should review their regulations to ensure that they provide the maximum protection to aquifer areas.**
- 3. Work closely with the CT Water Company to protect the existing aquifer area in Windsor Locks.**

Topography and Slopes

As a Connecticut River Valley Town, Windsor Locks does not generally have dramatic topographic changes or large areas of steep slopes. As discussed earlier in the drainage basin section, the majority of the Town slopes from west to east toward the Connecticut River.

The airport property occupies the Town's highest elevation at approximate elevation of 180 feet above sea level. The central portion of Town, between Ella Grasso Turnpike east to South Elm Street, is relatively level and is located at elevations of approximately 140 to 160 feet above sea level. This area contains the majority of the Town's single-family homes.

Some steep slopes and more dramatic elevation changes occur in the eastern portions of Town, and in close proximity to the Town's watercourses. From approximately South Elm Street to South Center Street, the general topography descends from about 140 feet above sea level to about 90 feet above sea level. The topography then descends to approximately 25 feet above sea level along Main Street and the Rt. 159 corridor.

Although the areas of steep slopes in Town are limited, these areas are most sensitive to grading and significant modifications. Erosion impacts on streams and water bodies generally result. Therefore these areas of moderate to steep slopes should be protected as land around these areas becomes developed. These are natural, generally wooded, buffers around wetlands and watercourses and are best left in their natural state.

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.

Objective:

- 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.**

Natural Diversity Data Base

The State of CT has identified specific areas that contain endangered or threatened species and species of special concern. This information is contained in the Natural Diversity Data Base

The Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDB) is the central repository for information on the biology, population status and threats to the elements of natural diversity in the state of Connecticut. Information on rare plant and animal species and significant natural communities is compiled, stored and made available through the Data Base.

The Connecticut DEP, Natural Diversity Data Base initiated an Endangered Species Mapping for Municipalities project in 1996 to help Connecticut towns protect their share of the state's biodiversity. This project has provided each town with a map of the generalized locations of listed species and significant natural communities, based on NDDB records. A copy of the map for the area around Windsor Locks is on file with the Town.

The general locations of species and communities are depicted as gray-shaded areas on the maps. These shaded areas represent a buffered zone around the known species or community location. Because these sites have been buffered, listed species and significant natural communities will generally occupy only a portion of the land represented as a shaded area on the map. The exact location of the species or community is located somewhere within the shaded area, not necessarily in the center. Representing the information this way maintains the confidentiality of the precise species and community locations. Confidentiality provides protection from collection and disturbance for sensitive species and protects landowner's rights wherever species occur on private property.

Although the relevant laws generally prohibit the destruction of endangered or threatened species from projects using State or Federal monies, Towns have used this mapping resource to ask DEP staff for input when a private project is proposed in these areas. Generally most land use changes can co-exist with these natural communities with little or no significant changes. The use of this technique by the Town of Windsor Locks could enhance the preservation of these important natural resources.

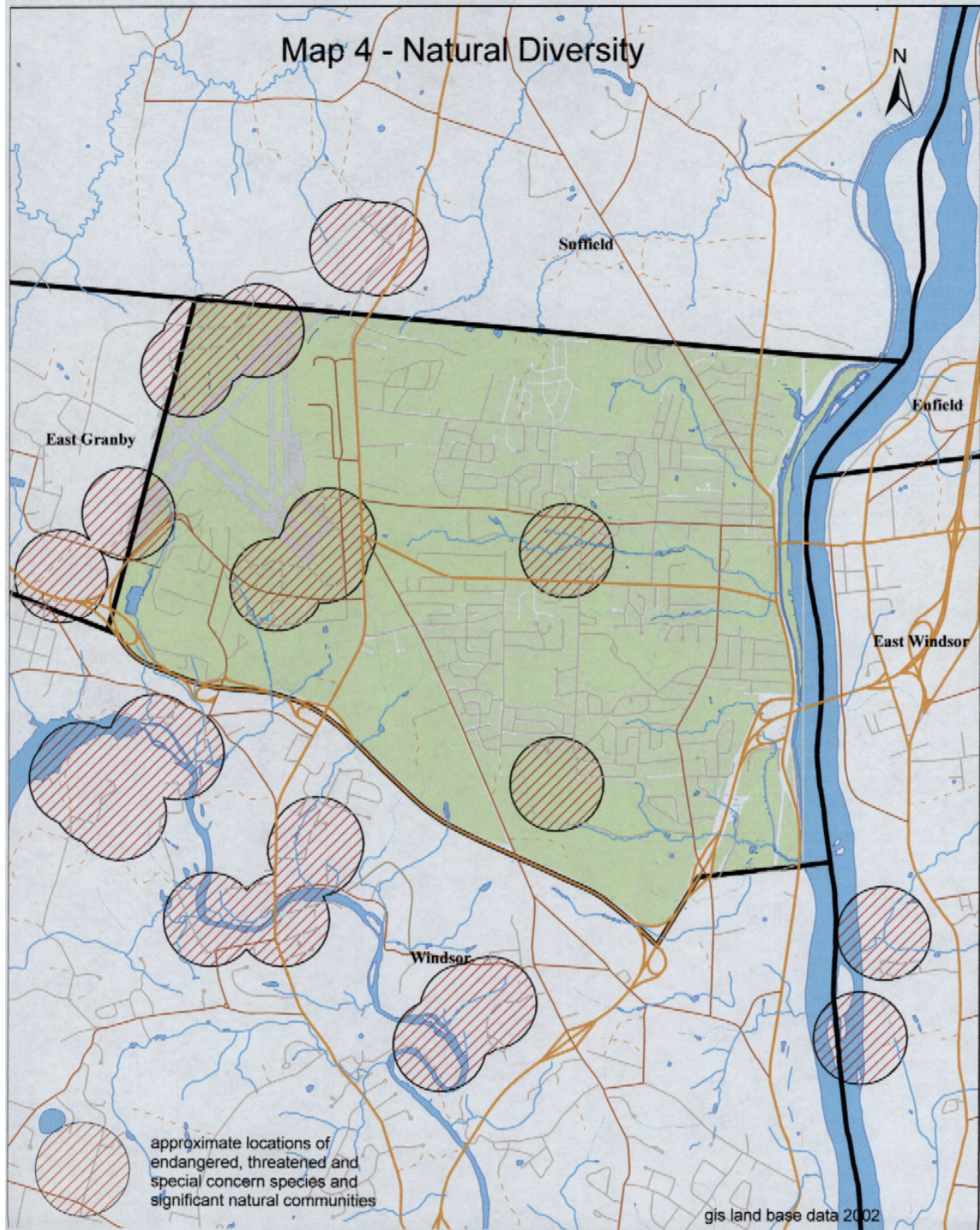
Goal:

Support the protection of the Town Natural Diversity areas as identified by the State of CT.

Objective:

- 1. Review the Natural Diversity Data Base maps with all new development proposals and seek State DEP assistance if development impacts such areas.**
- 2. Make the Natural Diversity Data Base map for Windsor Locks publicly available to prospective developers and property owners within Windsor Locks.**
- 3. Adopt amendments to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations that places such a review into the required review process.**

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Open Space

The Town has an established system of open spaces and neighborhood parks. These are identified and discussed in the Parks and Recreation Section of the Plan. This section of the Plan will discuss the broader Open Space / Greenway concepts and opportunities in Windsor Locks.

Passive Open Space / Future Greenways

There appears to be only one area in Town where some effort has been made to extend an area of municipal open space along a natural feature. These are known as greenways. Greenways provide a much enhanced open space experience superior to a Town owning small, disconnected parcels of Town owned land. They hold the potential of containing a system of hiking trails and interconnected public spaces available to Town residents. They generally better preserve the natural feature it surrounds, generally a watercourse or wetlands, and they also provide a permanently protected wildlife corridor.

This Section of the Plan identifies where there are real possibilities to expand existing open space Greenways or to establish future Greenways. There are a variety of ways that these open space objectives can be achieved. Open space can be required as part of future subdivision and clustered residential development approvals by the Planning and Zoning Commission. In order to achieve these important objectives, the Commission should increase the percentage of open space required through such approvals. The amount of required open space in subdivisions should be increased to 20% as is common with many surrounding communities and larger percentages in clustered residential developments allowed by Special Permits. Also, the Town should consider establishment of an Open Space Land Acquisition Fund. This could be funded by contributions through “fees in-lieu of open space” from new development and from annual contributions from annual budget appropriations. Finally, open space grants should be aggressively pursued by the Town to achieve its open space goals.

During the development of this section of the Plan of Conservation and Development, the Commission reviewed a tool known as the “Integrated Natural Resource Values Analysis” as a mechanism to identify key natural resource systems that are worthy of preservation. This is a very useful method and it should be further utilized in open space / greenway planning efforts in Windsor Locks. A varied group of open space interests in the town should

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be formed to work with this tool and develop a Greenway Action Plan for future implementation.

Spring Park / Kettle Brook - The existing town open space, consisting of Spring Park along an expanse of Kettle Brook form a modest greenway in the center of the community. There are opportunities in Town to expand the concept of connecting open space along this natural feature.

Merrigan Brook – The area around Merrigan Brook provides a Greenway opportunity. The headwaters of Merrigan Brook are generally undeveloped, although the downstream portion of the brook has experienced significant development. Near the upper reaches of this brook lies Circle Drive Park, and further to the west is the open space secured during the development of the new subdivisions near Acorn Drive. There is an opportunity to connect these areas with open space as the surrounding land develops. This could create a greenway along Merrigan Brook and the surrounding wetlands and provide protection for this natural feature and provide an excellent open space and recreational opportunity.

Waterworks Brook Greenway – This waterway is one of the longest undeveloped watercourse corridors within the Town of Windsor Locks. The majority of this watercourse lies within the Connecticut Water Company's wellfield site in the southeast corner of Windsor Locks. The brook continues under I-91, through mostly undeveloped properties, to the Connecticut River. The CT DEP's Natural Diversity Data Base (see above) shows an Area of Concern within the upper reaches of Waterworks Brook. The open space opportunities, recreational potential and existing wildlife habitat should be preserved. This provides the Town with a unique opportunity to maintain a large expanse of a major watercourse as part of its future Greenway system. The Town should work with the water company to maintain this site in its present condition, or take other steps to preserve this unique natural resource opportunity for the citizens of Windsor Locks.

Connecticut River Greenway - The State of Connecticut has a long standing, yet conceptual, plan to establish a Greenway along the Connecticut River highlighting the agricultural heritage within Suffield and the canal and mill history of the Windsor Locks riverfront land. The Windsor Locks Canal State Park is a conceptual plan that shows potential park features, access points and opportunities. This Greenway has already had the beginnings of a bikeway established along a portion of the riverfront area through easements secured with the State of CT. There is

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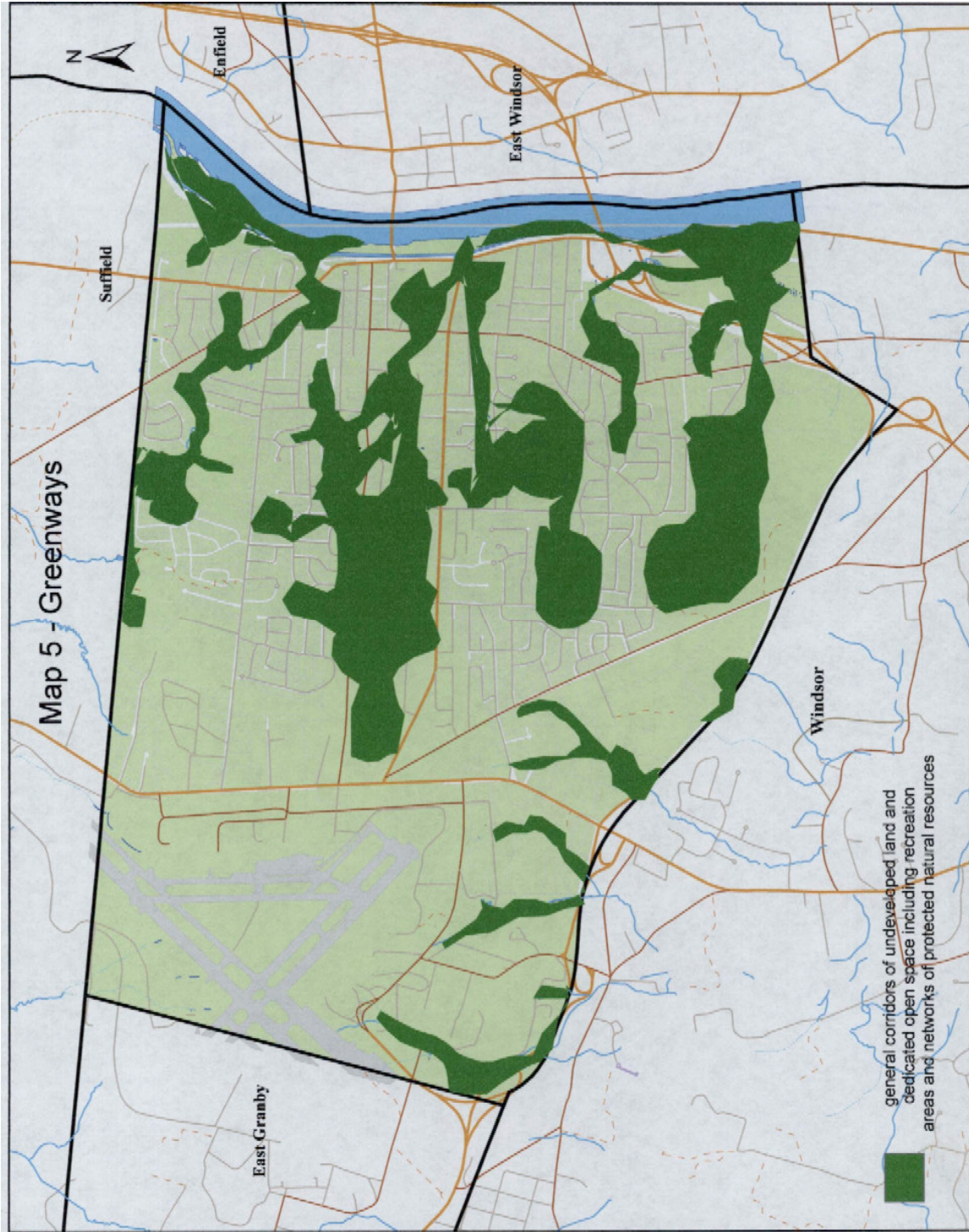
continued interest by both Towns and the State in moving this Greenway plan into reality. This could be a tremendous recreational, tourism and economic asset to the community and its residents. The Town should re-energize its efforts to work with the State of CT to find ways to achieve this Greenway plan.

Goal: To establish permanent Greenway open space corridors within the community where opportunities exist that serve the multiple roles of natural resource preservation, wildlife corridors, and recreational opportunities.

Objectives:

1. Initiate planning efforts with Suffield and the State of CT to move forward with the implementation of the Windsor Locks Canal State Park.
2. Initiate planning efforts to discover potential extensions and preservation of the Kettle Brook Greenway.
3. Initiate planning efforts to discover potential extensions and preservation of the Merrigan Brook Greenway.
4. Work with the Connecticut Water Company to preserve the existing 225 acre wellfield site, containing Waterworks Brook, on South Center Street. If the company determines that a sale of the site is in its best interests, the Town should seek open space funding opportunities to permanently preserve the site as an addition to the Town open space system.
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 to a minimum of 20%. Also seek to encourage the preservation of open space greenways as lands within these corridors are proposed for development.
6. The Town should seek to establish a formal Open Space Land Acquisition Fund. This would be funded by annual appropriations from the Town's budget and from "fees-in-lieu of open space" contributions from new development.
7. Form a planning group within the Town to 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.

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SECTION V. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

The transportation section of a plan of conservation and development is one of the most traditional components of any community's master plan. It is in large part, a framework of the community upon which the town's utility and land use systems are based.



There is a strong linkage between the town's land use system and its plan for streets, each necessarily must support the other. The town's plan for circulation is a plan that relies on an integrated network of arterial, collector, and residential streets needed to safely and efficiently distribute traffic throughout town.



This section of the Plan of Conservation and Development is divided into several sections as follows: Introduction; Roads and Streets; Traffic; Bradley Area Transportation Study; Sidewalks; Needed Improvements; Implementation; and, Goals and Objectives.

Roads and Streets

- **Inventory**

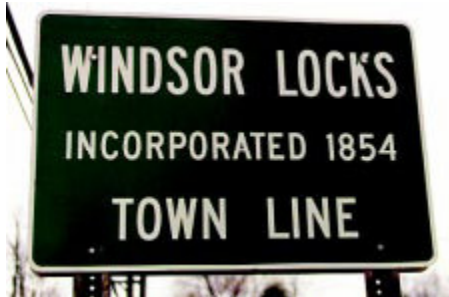
As of December 31, 2002, there were 60.39 miles of public roads in Windsor Locks. Of this amount, the State of Connecticut maintains 10.4 miles (17.2 percent), and the town maintains 49.99 miles (82.7 percent). The Town Streets Map shows an updated map of all streets in Windsor Locks.

Since the 1996 Plan of Development, the number of miles of local roads has increased by 1.4 miles.

Town of Windsor Locks Local Streets		
Year	Total Miles	Improved Miles
1955	20.6	20.6
1966	39.64	39.64
1976	45.52	45.52
1986	46.92	46.92
1994	48.55	48.55
2002	49.99	49.99

The amount of new local streets has been limited in the past few decades as the amount of residential land ready for new subdivision development has been limited. The newly approved subdivisions north of North Street will add to the local street inventory as they become completed and accepted by the Town.

- **A System of Roads**



The various functions of a street affect its classification. Local residential streets function to provide access to abutting properties. Collector Streets serve primarily to funnel traffic from residential areas to arterial streets. Arterial streets are designs to efficiently distribute local and regional traffic through Town or onto the surrounding

expressway and interstate highway system. The following is the system of streets in the Town of Windsor Locks.

- **Interstates and Expressways**

Windsor Locks fits into the northwest quadrant formed by I-91 and the Bradley Field Connector (Route 20), to the east and south respectively. These two expressways account for 4.6 miles of roadway abutting the Town. These roads have enhanced the Town's favorable position to attract business and industrial uses. The easy access to these expressways, particularly as a result of the most recent improvements made to add an interchange with Route 20 and Old County Road, has made industrial zoned properties highly accessible. The success of this program can be easily seen in the recent establishment of substantial, nationally known business and industrial firms to this area.

- **Arterials / Principal Thoroughfares**

The other State highways offer easy connections to the interstate and expressway systems, and are designed to service adjacent areas as well as connecting areas of traffic generation with the Town and between towns. Route 159 (Main Street) and Route 75 (Ella Grasso Turnpike) are local business arterial streets, while Route 140 (Elm Street) services a predominately residential area. These State maintained highways account for 5.8 miles of road and have been designated as principal thoroughfares in the Town Subdivision Regulations.



- **Collector Streets / Secondary Thoroughfares**

Streets that carry traffic from minor subdivision streets to principal thoroughfares are designated as secondary thoroughfares in the Town Subdivision Regulations. These streets carry traffic other than that of the immediate neighborhood as well as providing frontage and access to business and industrial land.

The following streets have been designated as secondary thoroughfares and account for 10.9 miles of the local street system: North Street; Spring Street; West Street; Center Street; Old County Road; Green Manor Terrace; South Elm Street; Suffield Street; Halfway House Road; and Southwest Avenue.

- **Private Streets**

There are several private streets in Town. The Town, like most other towns in the area, provides some of the various services needed to maintain these streets although they are privately owned and maintained. The private residential streets are Alma and Rachel Roads and Washington and Fourth Streets. Generally the policy is that for the Town to accept private streets they first have to be brought up to town standards.

There are also several private streets in the business areas. Some of these meet town standards but remain private. The Town does not maintain or service Corporate Drive or National Drive. Loten Drive was recently accepted as a Town road after it was brought up to Town standards. The Town should review such requests on a case-by-case basis. In approving any new private roadways in any new development, the Commission should require clear documentation requiring perpetual private maintenance and ownership

- **Town Aid Grants for Roads**

Although the above inventory of Town roads shown a slow but steady growth in the miles of Town roads, the history of the Town Aid Grants for Roads has not experienced a similar growth. State aid for roads steadily increased until the 1990's, but such increases have been reversed in more recent years.

Town of Windsor Locks Town Aid Grants for Roads	
1955	\$23,690
1966	\$40,953
1976	\$76,500
1986	\$114,104
1994	\$89,551
2006	\$86,141

- **Local Road Maintenance**

Another component for maintenance of Town roads is the Town's Public Works Department. Town roads are maintained by eight employees of the Windsor Locks Public Works Department. Responsibilities of the department include paving, snow plowing, brush removal, mowing, elimination of drainage problems, pavement overlays, pavement sealing, sidewalk repairs, replacing curbing and road construction projects.

The Town has, over a period of years, pursued a regular program to maintain and upgrade the local street system. This element of the Town's infrastructure is most visible to residents since they can readily observe the results of certain tax dollar expenditures. The Public Works Department is continuing to improve this segment of the infrastructure through its capital improvement requests. This requires substantial sums of money on a continuing basis. Planning of major projects and prioritizing needs is essential to the provision of a sound capital expenditure program. During fiscal year 2005 – 2006, a total of \$500,000 has been set aside in the Capital Improvement Plan for road repair. This allocation restored the CIP account for road work to funding levels of a few years ago. Sound planning and funding of this important program should be encouraged. The provision of safe, aesthetic and useful public facilities is a significant contributor to the quality of life in a community.

Traffic

Two major roadways associated with Bradley International Airport, Route 75 and Schoenphoester Road, are the most heavily traveled roads in the community.

Route 75, Ella Grasso Turnpike, is a major north-south arterial within a large commercial-industrial district developed along the eastern boundary of Bradley International Airport. This roadway services commuters, airline passengers, freight movement, and business traffic to nearby retailers, wholesalers and manufacturers. The CT Department of Transportation conducts periodic traffic counts on the State's major roads. Counts taken in 2001 show that



Route 75 in one area handles up to 24,500 vehicles per day, just north of the interchange with the Bradley Filed Connector. Schoephoester Road, an east-west roadway extending from Route 75 to the airport, handles up to 17,800 vehicles per day.

The Town's other major north-south State arterial roadway, Route 159, is the next busiest roadway in the community, handling 16,000 trips per day just north of the CT Route 140 bridge over the Connecticut River.

Other State and local streets also handle high traffic levels, such as Old County Road with 9,000 trips per day just north of Old County Circle. And, Spring Street and CT Route 140, Elm Street, handle over 6,000 trips per day.

- **Journey to Work**

A significant element in the traffic demands on the Town's State and local roads is the "journey to work" trends of Town residents. As the State continues to experience development away from the urban centers and away from the fully developed suburbs, job opportunities are increasingly located in diverse areas. This has resulted in a statewide trend of fewer residents living and working in the same town and has supported the trend of a longer typical journey to work.

In the Capital Region the average travel time to work increased 6% from 21.9 minutes to 23.2 minutes from 1990 to 2000. Windsor Locks residents experience a similar trend with the average travel time to work increasing from 18 to 19 minutes between 1990 and 2000.

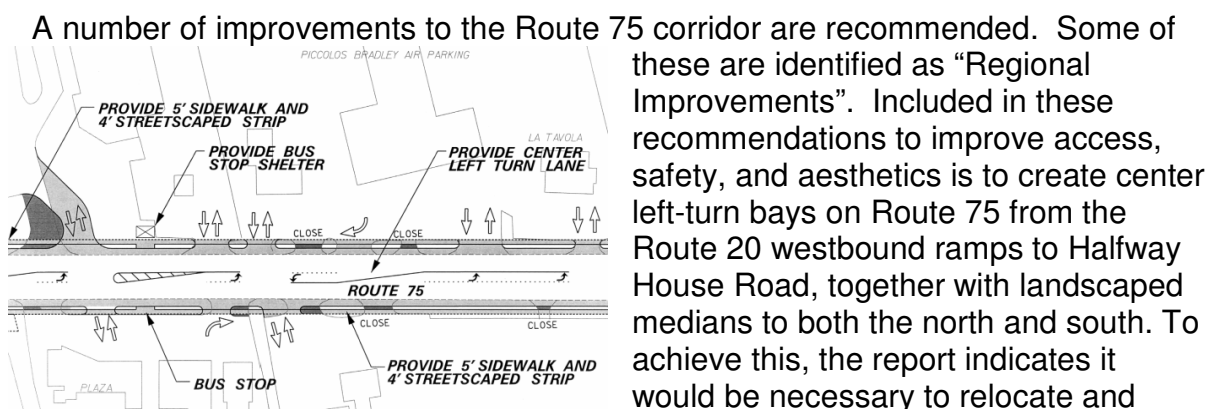
In 2000 an estimated 25.4% of town residents worked in their own towns, down from 31.1% from 1990. Windsor Locks residents followed this trend with the percentage of residence working in town dropping from 37.7% in 1990 to 24.4% in 2000, a 13.2% decline.

While many of the factors that drive these trends are beyond the control of local land use commissions or town governments, they are trends that local decision makers should be aware of. These trends should encourage towns to consider mixed used zoning opportunities, both residential and job creation developments, and work with the State in encouraging carpooling and vanpooling efforts.

Bradley Area Transportation Study



The Capitol Region Council of Governments completed the "Bradley Area Transportation Plan". The Bradley Area Transportation Study includes a comprehensive analysis of current and future traffic conditions and land use in the airport area. The study identifies transportation improvements that are needed to accommodate growth and to develop a strategic plan for maintaining safe and efficient access to the airport area.



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consolidate driveways to align them properly with left-turn bays. Intersection improvements at High Street, the Route 20 ramps, Halfway House Road, and Schoephoester Road are also proposed to alleviate congestion under existing and expected future conditions. Sidewalks, streetscaping, and bus stops (including bus stop shelters at selected locations) are included along both sides of the road, with crosswalks provided at signalized intersections. Some of these improvements are State improvements to complete and fund, but local actions can assist in these efforts. Another major recommendation is to develop a rear accessway on either side of Route 75. These roadways would provide access from the rear of businesses to Route 75 and Schoephoester Road at existing signalized intersections.

Other improvements identified in the Study are as follows:

Route 75 at Elm Street (Route 140)

- Implement access management plan to consolidate and better align driveways along Elm Street (Route 140) approach to Route 75.

Intersection of Route 75 and Schoephoester Road

- Provide a second northbound left turn lane from Route 75 to Schoephoester Road.
- Restrict traffic movements at southern bowling alley access to right in only, and provide a parking lot connection to National Drive, which has signalized access to Route 75.
- Recommend change of ownership of National Drive from a private road to town road.

Route 75 at Route 20 Westbound Ramps

- Provide a right turn on red restriction for Route 20 westbound off-ramp.
- Improve Route 75 southbound right-turn bay to Route 20 westbound.
- Provide service signs informing Route 20 motorists of services offered along Route 75.

Elm Street and North Street between Route 75 and Route 159

- Recommend that the Town Planning and Zoning Commission promote exploration of direct access to Route 75 for nearby potential development on the north side of North Street.
- Extend existing Elm Street and North Street sidewalks west to Route 75 and east to Route 159.
- Implement the *North Street Traffic Speed and Safety Study* (CRCOG 2001) recommendations.

The Study concludes with some overall recommendations that are applicable to Windsor Locks:

- Provide the Towns with Traffic Calming Strategies for possible implementation. Comments indicated that citizens perceived speeds were too high on Route 75, Spring Street, and Old County Road in Windsor Locks.
- Recommend all new construction and major reconstruction projects include standard shoulder widths whenever possible.

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- Recommend the installation of pedestrian facilities with all new construction, reconstruction, and major maintenance projects whenever possible.
- Review municipal regulations relative to access management and provide recommended regulatory changes.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks should be considered an integral part of a Town's circulation system as they provide the most basic circulation system for Town residents. There is an obligation on the part of the Town to provide a safe, convenient and useful sidewalk circulation system. Such a system can help to reduce reliance on the automobile for short trips as well as providing a system for recreation walks and healthful exercise. Sidewalk construction and sidewalks extensions and connections are a strong recommendation of CRCOG's Bradley Area Transportation Study.

The Town should establish a clear and concise policy on sidewalk construction. The Town Zoning Regulations requires sidewalks along all business frontages. However, this is a requirement that is often waived. A comprehensive sidewalk policy with a long-term view of a complete sidewalk system should be the basis for future decision on sidewalks.

Areas that are particularly appropriate for sidewalk construction are along streets that are within walking distance to town schools. Also, logical pedestrian connections between residential development and public uses, such as parks, open spaces, and other public uses, should be encouraged. Finally, busy business district should be one of the highest priorities for sidewalk construction. Business parcels along Route 75 are an ideal location for sidewalks providing an alternative for business travelers and tourists residing at local hotels to access retail, service and restaurant uses. All future business development along this, and other business areas, should include the requirement for sidewalk construction. While there will be a period of time where these new walks would not connect up with existing walks, good planning and consistent enforcement of the regulations will eventually result in a growing interconnected sidewalk system.

Rail

Windsor Locks has the advantage of having rail services in the form of an Amtrak railroad line located along the eastern edge of Town and a Rail stop located along Route 159 in the southeast corner of the community. Unfortunately the train stop, while functional, is a meager facility that is less than convenient to riders and does little to generate interest and incentives to encourage additional rail use. The Town still retains the historic rail station in the



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Main Street area of Town, which has seen recent efforts by local citizens to renovate and rehabilitate the building in a productive way.

Serious effort should be made to determine if there is the potential to reuse the historic train station for rail passenger use. If this cannot be used again for rail passenger service, there should be efforts made to see that this historic building is reused and preserved; and, additional efforts should be made to secure a safe, convenience and attractive rail stop facility in Windsor Locks. Recent objectives have been identified by the State of CT to reestablish passenger rail service between Springfield, MA and New Haven. The Town should be a leading advocate of such service. Improved express bus connections to Bradley International Airport should be incorporated into this effort.

Needed Improvements

The Town has a well established road system and most new roadways will be constructed as part of new residential or commercial development and be funded by private developers. However there are some improvements to the existing street network that will require municipal planning, regulatory changes, and / or local or grant funding. Some of these are:

- King Spring Road extension into the remaining industrial areas north of North Street;
- Construct and extend sidewalks on North Street to Route 75;
- Establish sidewalks in front of all business zoned parcels;
- Establish a continuous sidewalk system along Ella Grasso Turnpike;
- Work with businesses on Ella Grasso Turnpike and the State of CT to consolidate driveways to provide for safe traffic access; and,
- Seek ways to fund bus shelters on Route 75.

Implementation

The principal means of implementing the objectives of the circulation plan are either through Town Capital Improvement Projects or through private developments that are governed by the land use process.

Annual review of the Town's Capital Improvement Program should include a review of the goals and policies of the Town's transportation plan. Road improvements, roadway drainage improvements and sidewalk constructions are all logical elements of the Town CIP program.

Subdivision and Site Plan approvals also contain requirements of private developers to compete important elements of the circulation plan. Subdivision approvals contain the requirements of subdivision developers to complete portions of the Town local street systems. These layouts should be reviewed to complement existing roads, and provide for safe and logical roadway connections in the Town's neighborhoods. Both Subdivision and Site Plan approvals contain

the opportunity to require construction of elements of the Town sidewalk system. These decisions should be carefully considered looking at a long-range vision of a complete sidewalk plan for the community.

Goals and Objectives

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

Objectives:

1. To continue to fund the town's Capital Improvement Program budget on a yearly basis to fund needed roadway improvements.
2. To encourage the State of Connecticut and continue to seek grants to implement improvements as identified in the Bradley Area Transportation Study.
3. To encourage, to the extent possible, the use of common driveways, interconnection of parking lots, and limits on the number of curb cuts along the Town's major streets.
4. To plan for a safe and efficient street system to serve the town's business and industrial areas that does not impact on surrounding lower density uses.
5. To work with the Town's legislative body, the Economic and Industrial Development Commission and private property owners to investigate the possibility of re-establishing the King Spring Road connection to the North Street industrial area.
6. To require the construction of sidewalks along all business parcels during new construction or substantial reconstruction in order to begin a long term objective to form a connected sidewalk system along the town's busiest streets.
7. Review town land use regulations to require / encourage sidewalks construction for pedestrians within new and redeveloped business zoned parcels and between adjacent parcels and the adjacent street system.
8. Continue to develop and adopt a set of standards for the construction of Windsor Locks roads and other public improvements.
9. Establish bus shelters at logical locations along Route 75 and seek funding through the assistance of CROG.
10. Work with State and Amtrak officials to achieve an improved rail facility in Windsor Locks, either a reuse of the historic rail station or a new facility at the current rail stop.
11. Actively promote the concept of a full commuter rail service in the Springfield, MA / New Haven corridor.

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section V. Traffic and Transportation; Cont.



VI. Economic Development

Introduction

Windsor Locks is the present location of many nationally and internationally recognized corporate and business entities. These include Hamilton Sunstrand, the designer of much of the highly sophisticated equipment and systems for America's space program, as well as Ahlstrom/Dexter Corporation, the second oldest firm in continuous operation in the United States and a leading producer of composite nonwoven materials used in several consumer and business sectors.

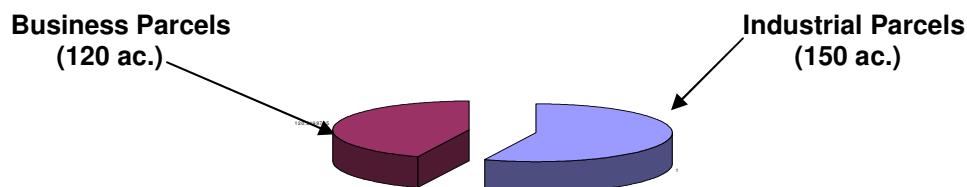


Since the last Plan of Development was completed in 1996, Windsor Locks has seen significant growth in its industrial sector. Federal Express, Watkins Motor Lines, Inc., Ford Motor Company and American Wood Molding have all made multi-million dollar investments in locating new facilities in the community. Internationally recognized companies such as these have chosen to locate in Town for numerous reasons including the presence of Bradley International Airport, an ideal location midway in the New York-to-Boston corridor, ideal transportation and freight capabilities, available industrial zoned land, and an attractive tax structure.

In addition to Windsor Locks Industrial sector, the Town's business districts have also seen significant changes in the last 10 years. Most noticeable, the business districts along Ella Grasso Turnpike have experienced substantial development, and redevelopment, primarily due to its proximity to the traffic, activity and visitors to Bradley International Airport. These districts have added restaurants, retail services, hotel rooms and other uses to serve the growing market in this corridor.

Windsor Locks has seen a significant amount of development in the last decade. And the remaining vacant land is limited. As the following chart shows, there are approximately 150 acres of vacant Industrial Parcels and 120 acres of vacant Business parcels.

Vacant Business and Industrial Parcels



Industrial Districts

I. Old County Road

One of the major industrial areas in Town is along Old County Road. As of the date of the last Plan, this area was identified as the area having the greatest potential for industrial development where four parcels contained over 160 acres of undeveloped property. These properties have since been largely developed with the Federal Express, Watkins Motor Lines, Inc., Ford Motor Company and American Wood Molding projects. These have been carefully developed to avoid any additional curb cuts onto Old County Road, direct all truck traffic to the south toward Route 20, and mandate significant landscaped buffers which when mature will mitigate impacts onto the residential area on the east side of Old County Road.

The Town-owned property in this area has been partially sold for the American Wood Molding project. The remaining portion of the Town land is used as the leaf dump but probably has a higher potential for a future industrial use. The Town should investigate if other less valuable land can be used for the leaf dump operation to free this parcel for a higher value use.



An area of this Industrial Zone should be reviewed for possible rezoning. The Commission rezoned a parcel north of the Fox Hollow residential development as Multi Family Special Development District (MFSD) to accommodate another cluster residential development. All the industrial zoned land north of this approved development should be considered for potential down-zoning to better reflect some existing land uses in this area and to arrive at an optimal transition of land uses.

II. North Street

Another major Industrial area is located on the north side of North Street south of the Suffield town line. This area has seen many changes since the last Plan of Development. A recommendation of the 1996 Plan was to reduce the amount of industrial zoning in this area and to minimize the industrial traffic onto North Street to reduce the potential impacts to residential uses along this residential collector street. The Commission rezoned significant areas from industrial to residential and from MFSD to residential. New residential neighborhoods, with a coordinated open space layout, are now being constructed in the areas east and north of the existing Acorn Drive neighborhood resulting in an improved land use pattern.

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A remaining vacant industrial property in this area is the Sluzinski Farm on the north side of North Street. The 1996 Plan recommended the extension of King's Spring Road to serve this industrial area bringing the industrial traffic directly to Route 75 rather than to North Street. The adopted Bradley Area Transportation Study also recommends this improvement to occur. Unfortunately the Town had not taken this recommendation seriously and the lack of action resulted in the rezoning of some of the industrial lands in the area to residential due to inadequate access.

This Plan again calls for a concerted effort to research the status of the former road right-of-way, initiate discussions with the affected property owners and to explore the potential extension of King Spring Road. This would require the support of the Board of Selectmen and the assistance of the Economic and Industrial Development Commission and the Town Attorney. Opportunities to find grant sources to fund right of way acquisition, if needed, and road construction costs, such as the Small Town Economic Assistance Program, should be investigated. This Plan continues to recommend that Windsor Locks officials coordinate with Suffield officials for potential joint access from the Suffield industrial lands to the north.

Although the amount of industrial zoned land in this area has been reduced since the 1996 Plan, access from King Spring Road, if possible, is still the better alternative particularly for any industrial use that has a high truck traffic demand. The Commission has also been made aware that certain parcels in Suffield may wish to access through Windsor Locks because of limited opportunities in that Town. However, the Town should be flexible in permitting some access from Northgate Drive for uses that have a small to moderate traffic demand.

If the Town determines that it is not feasible to extend King Spring Road to this industrial parcel due to ownership patterns or fiscal constraints, then the Planning and Zoning Commission should revise the permissible land uses within this industrial area to those types of uses that do not generate large amounts of truck traffic, such as office, research and development, and light assembly uses. This will reduce the potential impacts on North Street which would be the only remaining means of access. Sufficient buffers to the new residential development to the east should be required in such revised zoning district.

Other Industrial District Considerations

There is considerable undeveloped land in the southeast corner of Town adjacent to the Town garage and sewer treatment plant; however, this area is seriously impacted by wetlands and flood hazards. Extreme caution in consideration of land uses should be observed, especially in light of the fact that the area has already been included within a designated Conservation Area encompassing the Connecticut River floodplain.

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The Windsor Locks industrial areas may be close to build-out in the next decade. A new challenge will be to keep the existing buildings marketable. This will necessitate redevelopment. Redevelopment takes special skills in understanding environmental concerns and creative financing. Reinvestment in these areas is critical or the industrial/commercial buildings will begin to deteriorate. Tax breaks for rehabilitation of older commercial and industrial properties over fifty years old should be considered.

Finally, keeping older developed areas in acceptable and marketable condition will also take active code enforcement. The Town should consider the adoption of a property maintenance ordinance.

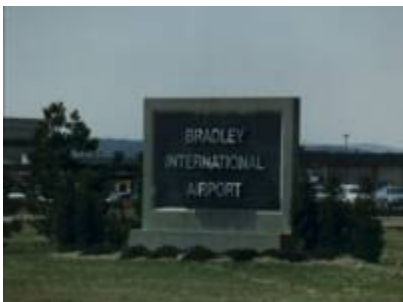
Business Districts

Commercially zoned land is not expected to increase appreciably from that which is currently indicated on the Official Zoning Map of the Town. Most of the land is developed, but there are still pockets of undeveloped acreage left adjacent to Ella Grasso Turnpike (Rt. 75). As these pockets are in-filled pressure will increase to maximize existing land uses in order to obtain the greatest possible economic return. The Town has recently seen tear-downs and redevelopment of older previous developed commercial properties. This in-fill development and redevelopment need to be carefully and thoughtfully managed to produce positive changes for the business districts, for business district customers and the Town residents as a whole.

There are approximately 570 acres, or nearly ten percent of the Town's land area, devoted to commercial uses of which the overwhelming majority are travel oriented—such as hotels, motels, car rentals, valet parking, auto service, and food service. With the planned growth of Bradley Airport these uses will intensify.

These 570 acres are divided among several unique business districts that have unique roles, opportunities and challenges. Each of these areas are described and discussed below.

I. Ella Grasso Turnpike Area



Substantial commercial development has recently occurred within the business districts along Ella Grasso Turnpike (Route 75). The majority of this commercial and retail development is directly or partially in support of the growing passenger and freight business associated with Bradley International Airport. This growth has been particularly strong in the service oriented sector such

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as hotel rooms and restaurants. Recently this corridor has experienced some tear down and redevelopments on older commercial sites and has been redeveloped with new commercial construction. This trend of maximizing commercial sites and redeveloping commercial buildings is likely to continue as these sites become more expensive and the number of vacant sites diminishes. These types of development offer great opportunities for the Town as new commercial services are created, new jobs are created and generally more aesthetic business sites are created with improved building architecture, better landscaped sites and improved traffic and circulation features. The Commission should establish clear policies on what improvements are expected for new commercial sites. Pedestrian sidewalks should be one of these improvements expected with new development, both along Route 75 and within and among commercial uses.

The Planning and Zoning Commission should look very closely at any new proposals for hotels beyond those already approved. Windsor Locks will have over 1600 hotel rooms following build out of those already approved. Developers should provide the justification that additional hotel rooms are needed in the market as the reuse of current hotel buildings may be a challenge in the future.

Valet parking lots have historically posed a unique problem for this area of Town. They occupy valuable frontage on Route 75. The Planning and Zoning Commission should continue its effort to allow these frontages to be developed more intensely with parking relegated to the rear of properties.

The Transportation section of the Plan includes a summary of the Bradley Area Transportation Study. These findings are equally applicable to this section and policies should be developed by the Commission incorporating that Study's findings as Commission policy.

II. Main Street Area

This District encompasses the historic downtown area of Windsor Locks. This area of Town experienced substantial urban renewal that removed much of the historic building forms that once stood in this area of Town. Over the years, new development has occurred in this area that has a somewhat higher density, and a slightly higher mixture of uses than other business districts, but still developed in a generally suburban, rather than downtown character.



The Planning and Zoning Commission in conjunction with the EIDC should push for a Strategic Master Plan for Downtown that looks at the relationship of buildings, public spaces, traffic, gateways, the pedestrian environment, lighting, signage and more. The Downtown has a

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tremendous number of assets: including, the Connecticut River, the Canal Trail, over seventy businesses, government center, ample housing and historic structures. The assets and challenges facing the Downtown should be addressed in a comprehensive fashion.

A significant parcel in the downtown area is the Dexter Plaza. This is a chronically underperforming retail development that is unfortunately developed in a suburban form rather than a traditional downtown development pattern. The Town should work with the property owner to encourage a rethinking and redevelopment of this parcel that looks at new uses, and a reconfiguration of building placement, that places new buildings at the streetline in a traditional multi-use and multistory downtown pattern.

a. Montgomery Building

The “Montgomery Building”, which is now vacant, has over the years been the subject of several meetings between officials of the Town and agents of the building’s owners. The main thrust of recent efforts is to convert this former industrial structure at the junction of Main Street and the Route 140 Bridge to Warehouse Point into a multi-purpose building or more recently into a completely residential building. Various problems have been discussed and are difficult but possible to resolve in respect to parking, flood plain, traffic control, accessibility and public safety. The building as it is today is not desirable for heavy industrial or retail purposes or any other use that would generate significant traffic or heavy truck deliveries and begs for creative solutions to survive. Cooperation with the CT DOT, Amtrak and town officials, and future building owners will be critical. A second full means of ingress and egress to the building from Main Street is a necessary improvement to a successful site reuse. This would provide the means to achieve sufficient traffic circulation and most importantly to allow proper access to the site in case of an emergency. Residential use demands that safe and accessible parking, free from flooding, in sufficient numbers be provided. This also will require thoughtful and imaginative solutions such as deck parking or other means of achieving this result.

b. Historic Downtown



The historic pattern of the Main Street area, although largely impacted by urban renewal, suggests certain actions for today. The State zoning statutes allow the establishment of Village Districts to best control future development. Towns can establish such districts that will control infill development, reviewing architecture and other issues, to ensure that it is compatible to the historic fabric of an area.

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Traditional zoning is very weak in controlling this aspect and bad examples can be seen throughout the downtown area.

Another tool that has been used by Towns across the country is a historic overlay zone. Such an overlay district imposes specific standards on development within the affected area while also preserving the requirements of the underlying zoning district. Such overlay districts have had successes in many towns and should be one of the available tools discussed for the Main Street area.

The Town should consider the development of a Local Historic District and / or seeking National Register of Historic Places designation. Such a designation is not an end to itself but will highlight the historic importance of certain buildings and areas in the Main Street area. The process, community involvement and discussions that take place can result in numerous good ideas on preserving the best of the past in these areas. It is important to understand that historic preservation is economic development.

One of the most significant historic structures remaining in the Main Street area is the historic train station. It has recently received some attention from local preservation groups. Many other area Towns have taken similar efforts to save, restore and reuse significant structure such as their old train stations. The Town should support this effort and similar efforts to preserve these older historic structures that are irreplaceable. Studies should explore reasonable uses for this structure



whether it is used again for rail passenger service, with the renewed interests in bringing commuter rail service back to this line, or for other compatible uses. Parking availability, grant opportunities and possible zoning regulation changes should all be utilized if needed to support this reuse.

III. AIOZ District

In the last few years the Planning and Zoning Commission took the initiative in creating a new mixed use business district. The Airport Interchange Overlay Zone was established at the northeast corner of the Bradley Field Connector (Route 20) and Old County Road. This land was previously zoned residential; and, the Commission recognized that there was a greater potential for this land than single family homes that would be more compatible to surrounding uses and offer a higher tax return to the community. This is particularly important as other Business Districts are getting closer to full build out. This District is unique in that it permits a mix of business and residential uses controlled by an overall Master Plan. This mixture of uses allow a transition of higher density uses near Route

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20, and across from the Old County Circle industrial park and cluster residential uses at the northern end of the District where it abuts existing residential neighborhoods. The residential portion of this District has already been developed; and, it is important to the integrity of the District to encourage and ensure the business development of the remainder of the District consistent with the approved master concept plan.

IV. Route 20 Corridor

There is a large undeveloped business-zoned parcel consisting of about 94 acres of land bordered by the Bradley Field Connector (Route 20) and Old County Road. This property is currently used for growing tobacco and is bordered on the north by Connecticut Water Company watershed land. Said property is accessed from Old County Road and it might be possible to provide a second access to Center Street at the I-91 off-ramp. Although this highly visible undeveloped property is the largest business-zoned property left in Town, serious consideration as to its potential use under present zoning needs to be addressed since the ultimate development could be a significant asset to Windsor Locks. The present zoning is Business-1 which provides for many uses, some of which may not add value to the community and may be inappropriate for such a high visibility site. Although retail shopping proposals have been considered for this site in the past, there are serious reservations for such small retail uses on this site. The subject area might be better suited to office and/or a campus industrial development. This area should have a unique zoning district for corporate office and high-end industrial, not to include distribution, due to its visibility from Route 20. Building should be of high quality design. An appropriate vision for this land needs to be created. The adjacent AIOZ zone may provide a good foundation for the type of zone and master planning approach that is needed here.

V. Spring Street

The west end of Spring Street is a unique business district that services both the surrounding Windsor Locks residential neighborhoods as well as some of the regional business district needs more centered along Ella Grasso Turnpike. Recent developments in this area have included new sidewalks, significant landscaping and improved architecture. The Planning and Zoning Commission should consider methods of improving the aesthetics and character of this area as it continues to develop into a unique and viable business district.

Architectural Guidelines

Architectural character and quality is as significant an issue as any other site design issue that are regulated by the Planning and Zoning Commission during review and approval of new land uses. The Town and its residents have a right to expect that new building construction is compatible with the existing fabric of

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the community and not simply a cheap out-of-the-box product from a national or international corporation. Quality commercial and industrial construction tends to yield a higher value product that increases the value of building construction, increases the grand list and encourages equal quality construction on nearby sites. The Planning and Zoning Commission should adopt strong architectural standards for all new business and industrial construction. 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.

Goals and Objectives:

Goal: To continue to support a strong Business and Industrial sector of the Windsor Locks economy which provides job creation, needed local services and tax revenues to the community.

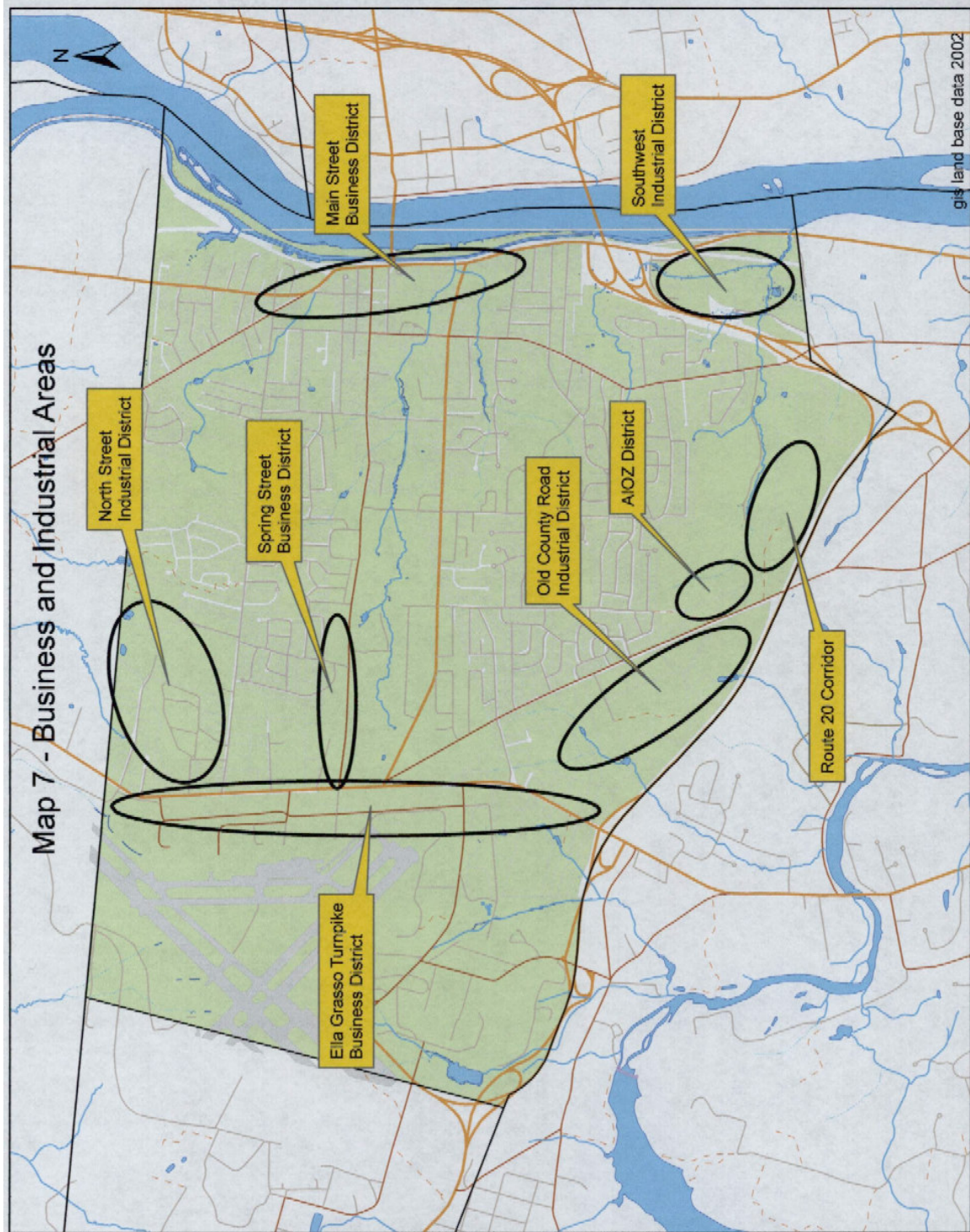
Objectives - Industrial:

1. Investigate if the Town owned parcel on Old County Road, now used as a leaf dump, could be put to more productive industrial use.
2. Review the zoning pattern along Old County Road from Halfway House Road south to determine a zoning district pattern that best reflects current uses and the most appropriate future uses.
3. In a coordinated effort with the Board of Selectmen, Town Attorney and affected property owners, seek a reasonable and effective method to extend King Spring Road from its present apparent terminus to the industrial area north of Northgate Drive. If this is not possible, 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.
4. Consider methods, such as tax incentives, to encourage owners to maintain the value of older industrial buildings so that they are kept productive and marketable into the future.
5. Consider ways to increase code enforcement efforts particularly for the older commercial and industrial areas of town.

Objectives - Commercial:

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission should establish clear policies on what improvements are expected for new commercial development and redevelopment in the Town's business districts.
2. Improved commercial development site plan design standards affecting lighting, landscaping, reasonable signage, circulation,

- proper driveway cuts, and pedestrian circulation should be continually researched and incorporated into the town's land use regulations.
3. Pedestrian sidewalks should be a mandatory improvement expected with new development, particularly along Route 75 and within and among commercial uses.
 4. 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.
 5. The Planning and Zoning Commission should continue to ensure that airport valet parking not overwhelm the commercially zoned areas of town near Bradley Airport. Regulations should require or provide incentives to have the frontage of these parcels presently used for valet parking along Rt. 75 used for traditional business purposes.
 6. The Planning and Zoning Commission in conjunction with the EIDC should seek funds for and complete a Strategic Master Plan for Downtown Windsor Locks.
 7. Work with property owners to encourage the productive reuse of the Montgomery Building that minimizes traffic impacts on Routes 140 and 159, provides safe circulation by incorporating a new two-way access to Main Street, creates sufficient parking unencumbered by the flood plain, produces increased tax revenues for the Town, provides open space access to the CT River, and produces an asset to the downtown.
 8. Consider Village District or Historic Overlay zoning in the Main Street commercial areas to encourage new development and redevelopment compatible to a downtown setting.
 9. Encourage and support the successful reuse of the Main Street Historic Train Station.
 10. Work with the owner of the Dexter Plaza to encourage redevelopment in a manner that encourages multi-use and multi-story development along the streetline in a traditional downtown development pattern.
 11. Study and implement planning and zoning solutions for the best use of the commercially zoned land along the Route 20 corridor.
 12. The Planning and Zoning Commission should adopt strong architectural standards for all new business and industrial construction. The Town should consider the benefits of establishing a formal Design Review Commission that would be comprised of design professionals that would serve to advise both applicants and the Commission.



Section VII. Introduction

Schools

The Town of Windsor Locks school system is made up of two elementary school facilities, a middle school and high school. These facilities have been updated and modernized over time to keep pace with the educational needs of the community.

Inventory

The Town's school system is housed in four schools located on four separate sites located throughout Town. The following are the school system's facilities and locations:



School	Classrooms	Grade Level	Land Area
North Street Elementary School 325 North Street	32	Pre K – Grade 2	13.25 ac.
South Elementary School 87 South Street	34	Grade 3 – Grade 5	24.13 ac.
Windsor Locks Middle School 7 Center Street	38	Grade 6 – Grade 8	13.11 ac.
Windsor Locks High School 58 South Elm Street	52	Grade 9 – Grade 12	61.6 ac.

School Population

As the table below shows, there was a significant decline in the K-12 school population from 1970 through 1990. During this time period the public school population declined by 2,622 students or 62%.

Public School Students/Housing Unit

	Number of Housing Units	Public K- 12 Enrollment	Public K-12 Students/Unit	% Change compared to previous line
1970	4229	4211	1.00	
1980	4232	2328	0.55	-44.8
1990	4929	1589	0.32	-41.4
2000	5101	2050	0.40	+25.0
2005	5332	2043	0.38	-05.0

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The decade of the 1990s reversed this trend with an increase of student population of 435, a 27% increase.

Typically, demographers look for trends between housing unit growth and the change in school population. The above chart provides information on these variables. The data shows an increase in the number of housing units during the



1990's of 172 units or only a 3.5% growth. Although the rate of housing unit growth was modest during this decade, and although the overall population change was a net loss (-2.5%), the public school age population (age 5 – 19) showed a 21% increase. This can be attributed to what demographers called the “echo” of the baby boom, which has particularly impacted this range in the Town's population profile as this age group moves through the population profile of the Town. This is a small, but noticeable bulge in the school age

population group due to the larger number of baby boomer adults moving through the child bearing age groups. However this bulge will be short-lived as will the impact on the school population. More information on this trend can be seen in the “Population and Housing” chapter of the Plan.

According to the Windsor Locks Central Office data, the school population since 2000 has been relatively stable with a reported school population in the 2005 – 2006 school year of 2043. This is a modest decline of 1.07% since 2000. This came at a time when the number of housing units expanded by 231 units, a 4.5% increase.

These statistics show that the relationship of the number of housing units do not necessarily dictate the number of public school enrollment. As noted in the “Population and Housing” section of this Plan, the number of persons per household has been decreasing consistently since the post World War II period. The 2000 census indicated that the average persons per household were 2.43. This is 17% decrease in the past 20 years.

As the bulge in the 5 – 19 age groups continues to age and pass through the school age population the average person per household numbers should continue to drop.

Although the town has rezoned significant areas from Industrial to residential zoning in the past five years, the impact on school populations has not been significant. This is not to say that this is a permanent relationship. As with all demographic trends and analysis, this relationship needs to be continually monitored and researched.

Births and Deaths

The following Table, "Windsor Locks Births and Deaths", provides figures from 1980 through 2004 grouped in five-year increments for live births and deaths. These have been combined in one table to illustrate the trends present in both categories. The excess of births over deaths had continually increased during the 1980s until the mid-1990s, but the actual number per year was minuscule in relation to the overall population. Since the mid-1990s a change has occurred. The average number of deaths has remained relatively constant but the average number of births has steadily decreased.

Windsor Locks Births and Deaths

Live Births to Residents			Deaths to Residents		
Year	Births	Average	Average	Deaths	Year
1980	124	135	108	113	1980
1981	150			92	1981
1982	133			107	1982
1983	124			109	1983
1984	145			116	1984
1985	167	152	113	101	1985
1986	134			111	1986
1987	128			112	1987
1988	165			131	1988
1989	165			108	1989
1990	168	164	119	112	1990
1991	167			130	1991
1992	194			114	1992
1993	165			113	1993
1994	127			125	1994
1995	127	133	114	125	1995
1996	130			97	1996
1997	141			115	1997
1998	146			111	1998
1999	120			123	1999
2000	125	113	118	117	2000
2001	119			136	2001
2002	122			112	2002
2003	107			102	2003
2004	94			121	2004

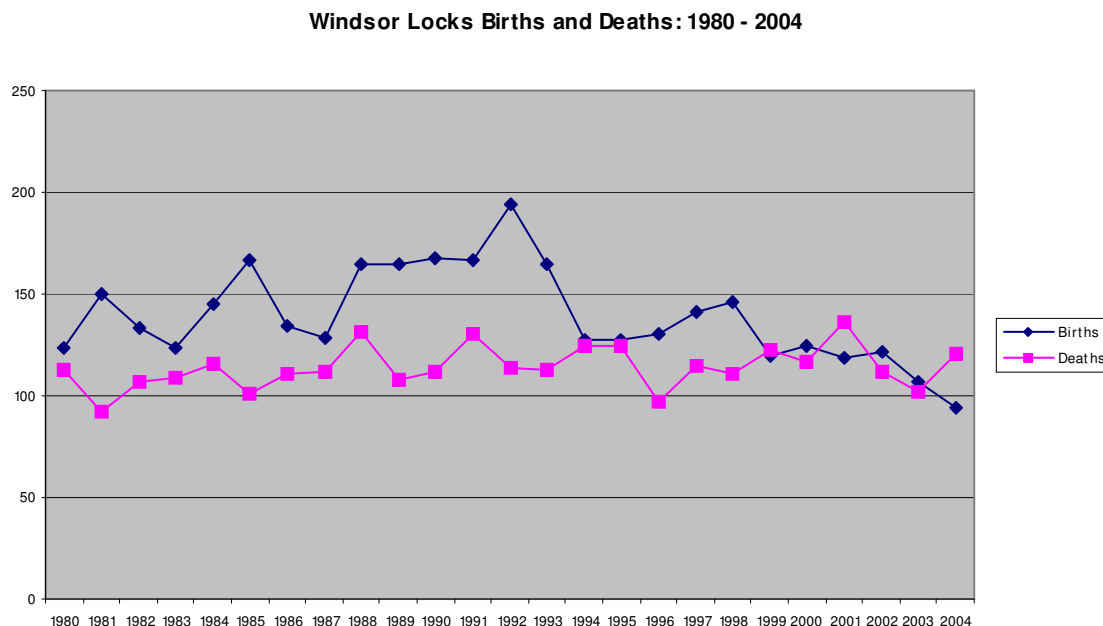
The number of live births in a municipality has always been regarded as an excellent indicator of school age population projections over the next five years. Future enrollment projects beyond this five year time frame should be used for

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general forecasting only and not be a basis for predicting future budget or facility needs with any certainty. Therefore the live-birth-to-death figures of the Town's population are always regarded as a useful short range town planning, and particular, school planning tool.

As noted earlier the significant drop and continuing decline in Town births is a dramatic demographic figure that cannot be ignored. Although the birth numbers had historically experienced variations with yearly fluctuations of highs and lows, the decline over the past ten years is demographically significant. The total number of live births had exceed the number of deaths without fail from 1980 through 1998; however, in the six years between 1999 and 2004, the number of deaths has exceeded the number of live births three out of these last six years. This can be clearly seen in the following chart.



As noted in the "Population and Housing" section of the Plan, the Town population is aging. From the 1990 census to the 2000 census there had been a shift in the largest population age groups in Town. The largest percentage of the Town population in 1990 was in the 25 - 34 year age groups. This large bubble in the population aged into the 35 - 44 year old age groups during the 2000 census. Another important indicator of population profiles and population composition is the percent of population in the childbearing age group, generally thought to be the 20 - 34 year age group. In 1990, the number of Town residents in this group was 3,435. In 2000, the number of Town residents in the child-bearing age group dropped to 2,034, a decrease of over 40%. The decline in the number of births over the past five years can easily be explained by the overall ageing of the population, a significant decline in the town's child-bearing age population, and a possible significant out migration of the 25 to 34 year age

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groups which is an unfortunate population trend throughout the region, the State and New England in general.

The Town has very little developable land left for residential use, even though the Town has rezoned new areas for residential use over the past few years. It is unlikely that large numbers of new homes will be built. Therefore, in order to have an increase in the school age population other than through substantial increases in the birth rate, it will be necessary to have an exodus of older people (empty nesters) with replacement by younger families with school-age children. These types of movement in the population make-up of the Town usually occur slowly over a long period of time.

In the 1996 Plan it was reported that the State wide long-range population projections from the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM) indicated that Windsor Locks would experience growth in the 5-19 age group (school age) peaking in about 10 years, after which a steady decline will take place. In light of the above noted substantial downturn in the Windsor Locks birth rate it may be that the projections of the OPM have proven to be quite accurate.

Future School-Age Population Projections

All school systems need to be aware of Town-wide demographic needs and the forecasts for future school age population projections. This is an important function for school officials and town officials as these factors determine school facility needs and staffing needs and it is best if these future forecasts and trends are understood as far in advance as possible.

The following Windsor Locks enrollment projections were provided by the State Department of Education and provide interesting and useful data for school planning purposes.

Windsor Locks School Enrollment Projections						
From CT Department of Education						
School Yr.	Birth Yr. And Births	Pre K – 2	Grd 3 – 5	Grd 6 – 8	Grd 9 – 12	Total
06-07	01 – 121	414	418	423	628	1883
07-08	02 - 115	394	413	407	607	1821
08-09	03 – 113	383	405	391	585	1764
09-10	04 – 112	365	382	401	560	1708
10-11	05 – 113	362	361	396	549	1668
11-12	06 – 113	362	350	387	525	1624
12-13	07 – 114	364	332	363	529	1586
13-14	08 – 114	365	329	342	524	1560
14-15	09 – 115	367	329	331	503	1530

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The above table shows projections that are compatible with what we have seen from many of the other factors previously described in the Plan including, current school age population trends, declining birth rates, aging population data and limited areas for new residential growth. This is that the school population is expected to experience a slow but somewhat steady decline in enrollment. The above data suggests an 18.7% decline in school population through the 2014-2015 school year. As previously noted, these projections need to be continually monitored for unexpected changes to currently perceived trends.

School Facility Needs

Recent improvements have occurred to both elementary schools. Other improvements are on-going or planned to the middle and high schools. An on-going window replacement plan is occurring at the middle school. And the high school is now undergoing a similar window replacement program and an upgrade to the original heating system is planned. In addition a Professional Library and Distance Learning Center is in the planning stages. No other major facility needs are envisioned by the Windsor Locks Public Schools Central Office.

Section VIII.

Parks and Recreation

Introduction

The Town of Windsor Locks, as a mature community, has obtained and developed, over a long period of time, a variety of park and recreation sites. Under the direct control of the Parks Department are 16 sites ranging in size from 0.3 acres to 54.1 acres. This inventory of Town Park and Recreation sites has been recently increased by the addition of a new park / open space site in the new subdivisions now being constructed north of North Street along Acorn Drive and Cody Way. This new park will contain natural wooded areas but will also contain a baseball field and another open area suitable for soccer.



Inventory

The current list of Town Park sites and recreational facilities are as follows:

<i>Park</i>	<i>Facilities</i>
Ahern Avenue Park	Playground
Barbara Drive Park	Wooded Area
Bal-Aire Park	Playground; Ballfield
Circle Drive Park	Basketball Court; Playground
Denslow Park	Basketball Court; Ballfield; Playground; Soccer
Green Manor Park	Playground; Baseball field
Juniper Drive Park	Basketball Court; Ballfield; Playground
Noden-Reed Park	Open Field
Pesci Park	2 Baseball Diamonds; Pool and Bathhouse; Lighted Basketball Court; Playground
Reed Park	Baseball Diamond; Softball Diamond; Playground; Basketball Court; Soccer
Southwest Family Park	Basketball Court; Playground; Softball Field; Soccer field
Spring Park	Pond with fish; Pavilion; Picnic Area; Basketball court; Playground
Sutton Park	Open Field
Veterans Memorial Park	Baseball Diamond; Lighted Softball Field; Playground; 2 Soccer Fields (one with lights); Football field
Woodland Street Park	Playground
Szapanski Park	Ballfield, soccer (under development)

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development

Section VIII. Parks and Recreation, Cont.

As noted in the above table, two sites are not developed: 1) Barbara Drive Park, 2.91 acres of wooded land which abuts Noden-Reed Park; and 3) Sutton Drive Playground, 1.0 acre of open land abutting school property. These sites provide some potential areas for expansion of active recreational facilities if needed. In addition, The Parks Department also shares facilities under the jurisdiction of the School Department, both indoor and outdoor.



Noden-Reed Park

Current and Future Needs

As noted in the “Population and Housing Section” of the Plan, the overall population of the Town has remained relatively steady over the past two decades. This overall demographic would seem to suggest that the demand for town services, such as park and recreation facilities have leveled off reducing the budgetary impacts of providing such surfaces. However the demographic analysis also pointed out a noticeable increase in the percentage of Town population within the school-age cohort (5 to 19 year olds) between 1990 and 2000. As this “echo” of the baby boom age group moves through the school age years it will have an impact on the parks and recreational services required by town citizens.

The number and distribution of Town park and recreation sites would suggest that the Town generally has adequate sites to meet known needs. Efforts such as made by the Planning and Zoning Commission in requiring appropriately located new parks and open space in newly developing residential areas are important efforts in maintaining adequate sites throughout town. Presently, the recreation program serves 400-500 youngsters up through middle-school age. Although there are programs for older individuals, the emphasis on the Town recreation efforts, as with all towns, is on the school-age population group. Outdoor activities such as soccer, Little League, softball, and summer swimming are much in demand while swimming and basketball are popular indoor activities. Scheduling for all activities is tight, but through cooperation of involved departments the programs generally meets the present demand.

There are a number of problems with the physical facilities that have been recognized and are being slowly addressed. The Town has addressed the issue of bringing water supply, either through locating new wells or by extending public water lines, to the various parks so that the fields can be properly maintained.

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development

Section VIII. Parks and Recreation, Cont.

The Parks Department has identified other long term needs to best serve the Town. There is a need for a full-length soccer field and the hope is that the new Szapanski Park can address this need. Also there is a need for a new baseball diamond, preferably lighted, to address the problems with the maintenance of the existing baseball diamond at Reed Park. In addition there are plans to light the baseball field at Pesci Park and the softball field at Reed Park. The Parks Department is in the process of providing for a new bathhouse facility at Pesci



Park, funded with a combination of grants and Capital Improvement Funds. Longer term facility improvements that are needed would include water-park facility at Pesci Park, a skateboard park, and a boat launch facility possibly at the southern edge of Town that could link to open space along the Connecticut River planned by the Town of Windsor. An Additional improvement includes the creation of a walking path with exercise stations

at Veterans' Memorial Park. Although there was work to extend the life of the pool At Pesci Park, there will be the need to replace this pool in the not too distant future.

Some other concepts, more long term, that have been discussed include the possibility for a separate complex for Little League. This would require a larger park area than now owned by the Town and therefore such an effort would have to begin with a search for an adequate size parcel of land and necessary funding. Also there has been some discussion concerning the need for a community center. This also involves a major expenditure for a building and possibly a site for this large capital project. Inclusion of these types of facilities in a comprehensive capital improvement program should receive serious consideration so that planning can be done in advance.

An effort that is worthy of some planning consideration is to initiate an effort at long range planning aimed at connecting parks and open space with greenways that may be possible in Town. This concept was touched upon in the Natural Resources section of the Plan. Areas where this effort might yield the most results are in the Kettle Brook and Merrigan Brook corridors where along these watercourses exist a number of public parks, institutional uses, and larger or undeveloped parcels. Also, if the Connecticut Water Company ever moves to sell its wellfield site in the southeast corner of Town, every effort should be made to secure this parcel as a large passive park facility for the residents of the entire Town.

State Recreational Facilities

Other than Town Parks and recreational facilities, there are present and potential future recreational facilities offered by State agencies that are significant, supplement Town facilities, and are worth of local support.

The New England Air Museum is a significant facility that offers a mix of educational and recreational activities that is unique in the State. This is operated by the State of CT and located at Bradley International Airport. This is a unique facility that can be enjoyed by local residents with no cost to the Town and also serves as a unique attraction that the Town offers to future residents and businesses looking for quality of life location decisions.



A future recreational facility of State-wide significance that has been in the planning stages for a number of years is the Windsor Locks Canal State Park.



The Town has a unique resource shared by a small percent of towns in the State, extensive frontage along the Connecticut River. The State has created a schematic master plan, which combines a recreational bike trail and highlights agricultural and the historic mill history of the area. The Town should take a more active role in organizing with Suffield in planning and seeking funding for this important recreation initiative.

Goals and Objectives

Goal: To continue to provide a safe, convenient and enjoyable Parks and Recreation system for use by all Town residents.

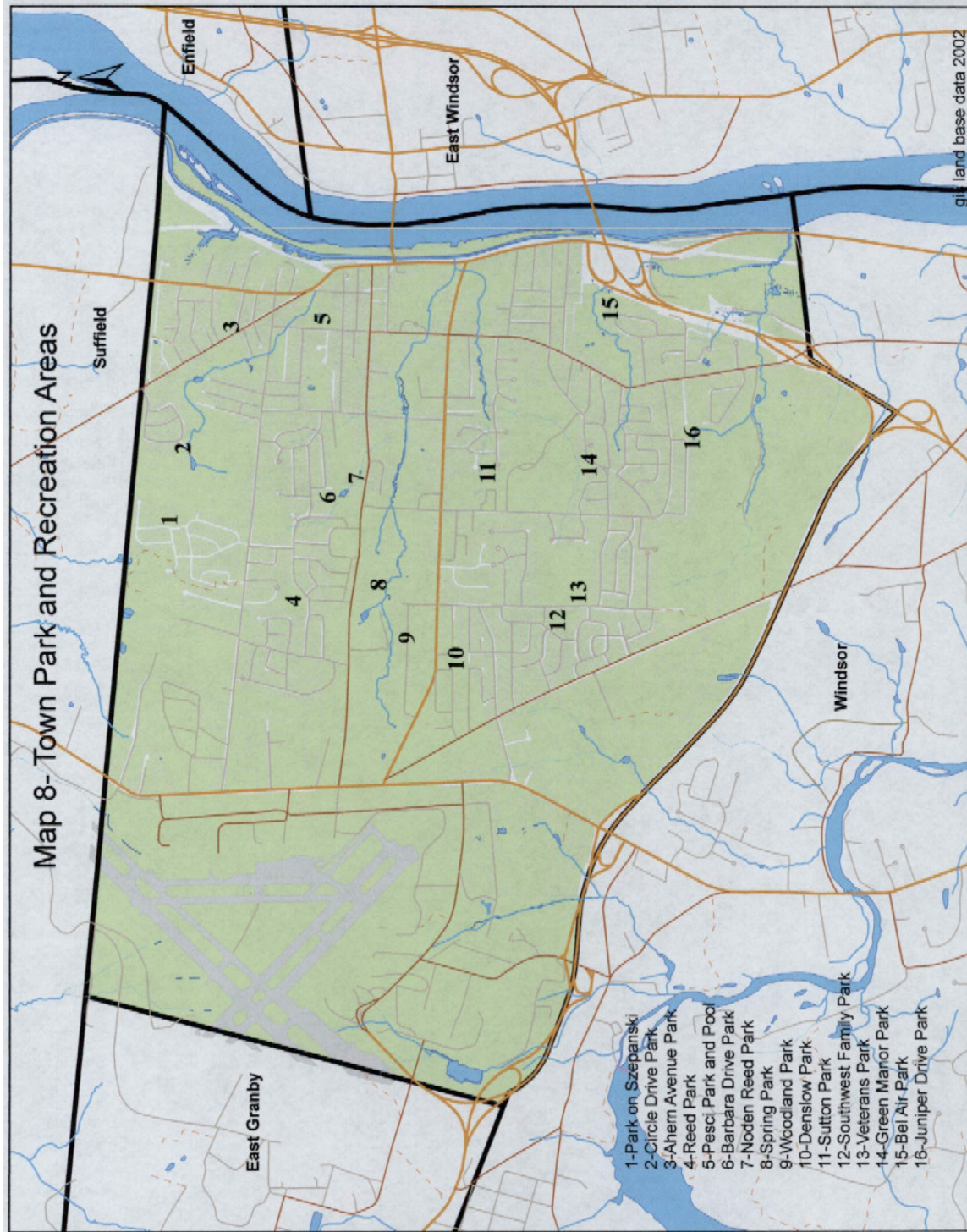
Objectives:

1. To continue to fund with the Town's annual Capital Improvement Program, on a yearly basis, the funds needed to properly maintain and improvement the Town's park system.
2. Seek any and all available grant opportunities to help fund needed improvements in the Town park system.
3. Establish a plan for consistent improvements to the Town park's system such as: establishing a new full length soccer field; establishing a new baseball diamond; a water park facility at Pesci Park; a skateboard park; and, a boat launch facility to the

Connecticut River.

- 4. Extend and establish town Greenways along several of the Town's watercourses and connect these to the Town Park system with access points and trails.**
- 5. If the Ct Water Company seeks to sell its wellfield site in the southeast corner of Town, look to acquire this site as a large Town passive park facility.**
- 6. Work with the Town of Suffield and the State of Connecticut to realize the Windsor Locks Canal State Park along the Connecticut River.**

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section VIII. Parks and Recreation, Cont.



Section IX. Capital Improvements

Introduction

Budget items that are high in cost and/or have lengthy life expectancies such as special equipment, buildings, school facilities, sewers, street reconstruction, parks improvements, fire equipment, emergency service vehicles, and public works vehicles and equipment are normally categorized in the Town budget as “Capital Improvement”. An annual capital improvement budget is supported by a capital improvement program of up to five years and is an essential part of town planning. Simply put, the “program” is financial planning and also provides for implementation of certain recommendations that may be found in the Plan of Conservation and Development.



A functioning Capital Improvement Program offers a way of joining land use planning and management with the Town budgeting process. This program helps town officials make better cost estimates, identify state and federal funding sources, establish priorities among different projects, and determine what improvements developers should contribute in the subdivision and site planning process.

The Capital Improvement Program is an important way of putting the Plan of Conservation and Development into action. As such the Planning and Zoning Commission should take an active role in suggesting and commenting on projects with this Program. Like the Plan of Conservation and Development, the Capital Improvement Program looks to meeting the needs of Town residents to maintain and improve the quality of life in the Town.

As part of the present update of the Plan of Conservation and Development it is not intended to include this element in detail. That should be addressed separately as a major undertaking that will require considerable time and effort by numerous boards, agencies, and departments of the Town. In addition, it should be recognized as an ongoing annual, never ending aspect of budgeting.

Windsor Locks has been addressing this subject for a number of years on a limited basis and there is a need to consolidate the efforts of the various departments and commissions involved. A single document that reflects all requests and the justification for each should be part of the program, but prioritized in such a way that the Town does not fall behind year after year in a cumulative fashion due to particular budget constraints. A backlog may also be caused by allocating items under the capital budget that rightly belong in the operating budget and financed out of current revenues. One result is that capital improvements appear to be given a greater share of the annual budget than is

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section IX. Capital Improvements, Cont.

actually the case.

Even though capital items have long life expectancies, they do eventually require updating or replacement. Building roofs, fire engines, street pavements, sewer lines, etc. all eventually require replacement. Sound fiscal planning demands that attention be given to establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive program.

The Town recently formulated a Capital Improvement Program committee. The Committee's function is review in a comprehensive way the capital improvement needs requests of the town departments and agencies and recommends the Town's annual CIP budget. The Town's 2006 / 2007 Capital Improvement Program contains a wide variety of projects, looks at funding opportunities over a five year period, and establishes priority between different projects. In this year's Program school projects, fire department projects, and Public Works projects consume the great majority of available funds.

Major School projects include:

- Computer replacement
- Repaving projects
- Renovating the auditorium
- Professional development room
- Furniture

Major Fire Department Projects include:

- Protective equipment replacement
- Radio dispatch console

Major Park and Recreation Projects include:

- Veteran's Park pavilion and Ice Rink
- Pesci Pool and Bathhouse project

Major Public Works Projects include:

- Sanitary sewer installation
- Drainage improvement projects
- Downtown reconstruction projects
- Paving projects
- Sidewalk installation

The Planning and Zoning Commission should take a more active role in the annual CIP budget process. This annual effort should involve reviewing the completed Plan of Conservation and Development and identifying which priorities identified in the Plan should be advanced and funded within the CIP process. The Commission needs to become active spokesmen for long range planning goals and objectives identified in the adopted Plan and seek their implementation.

Section X. Existing Land Use and Future Land Use Plan

Introduction

Studying the use of land in a community is one of the most important tasks in developing a physical plan for a town. Ordinarily, in a town with large areas of undeveloped land, it is possible to determine trends by observing emerging patterns of development. However, Windsor Locks is a mature community that has very little vacant land available for development. Therefore, future land use should be carefully structured and controlled to maximize benefits to the Town in general and to those areas specifically impacted by new development.



A Land Use Map is an overall, graphic inventory of the distribution and character of various land uses. Such uses are categorized and color coded for ease of comparison. In reviewing such maps, patterns of use can be determined for current and future activity. Such patterns are influenced by a variety of natural physical factors such as rivers and streams, wetlands, and topography. Man-made institutions can also have enormous impact on a community.

Land use patterns have been greatly influenced in Windsor Locks by the existence and growth of Bradley International Airport, a land use that dominates the western half of the Town. The impact of such a facility on a Town of only 9.2 square miles is tremendous. As mentioned previously, the airport area is over 1080 acres which is approximately 18.4 percent of the Town's land area.

Density of Development

Windsor Locks had 12,043 residents in 2000, according to the U.S. Census, representing a 2.5% decrease in population from 1990. This population lives in a Town with a total of 5888 acres (9.2 square miles). To determine density we divide the population figure by the acres and find that the density is a mere 2.05 persons per acre, also a slight decrease from 1990. In fact Windsor Locks has the lowest density of population of any of the "fully suburban" towns in the Capitol Region. This, however, is a misleading figure since Bradley Airport business and industry occupy more than one half of the Town's land area. If we exclude Bradley Airport's 1080 acres from this calculation, the population density rises to 2.5 persons per acre. If we remove the Airport and all Industrial zoning acreage (3,249 acres or 55% of the Town), the density figure rises to 4.56 persons per acre which is still a relatively low density for a built-up community. The latter figure could be refined further to come up with a net density figure, but the greatest influence on density is, by far, Bradley Airport. The relatively low density of the Town is also attributable to the fact that Windsor Locks' housing is

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section X. Existing Land Use and Future Land Use Plan; Cont

predominately single family. In 2000 there were 3,918 single family dwellings out of a total of 5101 housing units in the Town (76.8%).

Land Use Changes

Windsor Lock's past Plans of Development used an "Existing Land Use Map" color coded into nine general categories. They also used an "Existing Land Uses" Table that documented the total acres devoted to each land use category and the changes experienced during the last planning period. The same procedure has been employed for the current review so that comparisons can be made in respect to changes as contemplated by the 1996 Plan. Updated land use maps can be found on file in the Building / Planning office for public view.

Since the 1996 Plan of Development, three significant changes to the Land Use Plan were adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

North Street - One change came as a direct result of the studies and recommendation of the 1996 Plan. The area on the north side of North Street saw a significant change away from industrial zoning to residential zoning. The industrial zone had extended significantly east from Route 75. Because of a concern over land use compatibility and traffic impacts, particularly truck traffic, to the overall residential character of North Street, the Commission rezoned the land to the east of Acorn Drive to Residence-B. In addition, the Commission removed a higher density multifamily zone from a parcel of land on North Street. This parcel is severely impacted by steep slopes and wetlands and the Commission concluded that the MFSD district was inappropriate. The Commission has most recently approved a new flexible residential development provision of the Zoning Regulations that might be used on difficult parcels such as this. Another change in land use pattern in this area came as a result of a law suit and because of the lack of a solution to the King Spring Road extension to provide proper access into this area. The result was further rezoning to single family residential and an age-restricted development north of the Acorn Drive neighborhood. Land further to the west retains its industrial zoning; however, a solution to the King Spring Road extension still needs to be discovered and should remain a top priority.

Old County Road – Another significant change to the Town's land use pattern was the development of the Airport Interchange Overlay Zone (AIOZ). The Commission rezoned an area for the AIOZ along Old County Road near Route 20. This zone was developed to allow a transition in land uses from the single family homes on Old County Road to the Route 20 corridor governed by an overall Master Plan. The uses allowed by this new District are believed to be better able to take advantage of its exposure and proximity to Route 20.

Montgomery Mill – A new owner of the Montgomery Mill approached the Commission with an application to change the zone of this vacant and deteriorated building from Industrial to Residential-Downtown Renewal District.

The application was the first step in an effort to reuse the building for residential condominiums. In recognition that this type of building is not a likely location for industrial uses, the Commission approved the zone change although significant issues remain unresolved such as adequate access for emergency response vehicles by providing a direct connection to Rt. 159 and the ability of the site to provide for parking for future residents out of the 100 year floodplain.

In reviewing the overall land use inventories since the last Plan was completed it appears that during the past decade changes were mostly of the “in-fill” variety—that is, development of smaller vacant parcels of land. Most of this development was in accordance with the 1996 Plan Update.

Changes to the Town zoning districts, zoning regulations and land use pattern can have significant long term impacts on the Town, its character, its tax base and the quality of life of its citizens. These types of changes should only be done with the most careful planning, long term vision, and with the best interests of the citizens of Windsor Locks in mind. An individual property owner’s immediate plans or desires should not be a significant factor in these types of important land use decisions and the Commission should never shortcut a careful planning process to properly evaluate such changes and to develop a process that enlists the input of all Town agencies, and the general public, in arriving at the best decision for the community.

Land Use Inventory

The following Table contains the current inventory of land uses in Windsor Locks and shows the changes in land use over time.

Table 6: Land Use Analysis: 1986 – 2006
Windsor Locks, Connecticut

Land Use Category	1986		1996		2006	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Residential	1707	25%	1850	31%	1900	32%
Business	239	4%	571	10%	600	10%
Industrial	567	9%	522	9%	620	11%
Utilities / Transportation	1530	25%	1750	30%	1750	30%
Institutional	320	5%	327	6%	330	6%
Recreational	165	3%	149	3%	170	3%
Agricultural / Vacant	1596	26%	719	12%	530	9%

Future Land Use

This Plan has suggested a number of new planning policies and certain land use changes to guide the planning and development activities through the next planning period. One of the basic purposes of a Plan of Conservation and Development is to set forth a plan for future land uses in the community. The following summarize the land use and planning changes suggested in this Plan of Conservation and Development. The most significant changes are depicted on the Future Land Use map that follows.

North Street Industrial Area

Based on research by the Town Attorney, it is now apparent that it is not feasible to extend King Spring Road to this industrial parcel due to ownership patterns or fiscal constraints. The Planning and Zoning Commission should now revise the permissible land uses within this remaining industrial area north of North Street and Northgate Drive to those types of uses that do not generate large amounts of truck traffic. Uses such as office, research and development, and light assembly or light industrial uses might be most appropriate. This will reduce the potential impacts on North Street which would be the only remaining means of access. Sufficient buffers to the new residential development to the east should be required in such a revised zoning district.

Old County Road

An area of the Industrial Zone along Old County Road should be reviewed for possible rezoning. The Commission rezoned a parcel north of the Fox Hollow residential development as Multi Family Special Development District (MFSD) to accommodate another cluster residential development. All the industrial zoned land north of this approved development should be considered for potential down-zoning to better reflect some existing land uses in this area and to arrive at an optimal transition of land uses.

Ella Grasso Turnpike

Hotels: The Planning and Zoning Commission should look very closely at any new proposals for hotels beyond those already approved. Windsor Locks will have over 1600 hotel rooms following build out of those already approved. Developers should provide the justification that additional hotel rooms are needed in the market as the reuse of current hotel buildings may be a challenge in the future.

Valet Parking: Valet parking lots have historically posed a unique problem for this area of Town. They occupy valuable frontage on Route 75. The Planning and Zoning Commission should continue its effort to allow these frontages to be developed more intensely with parking relegated to the rear of properties.

Bradley Area Transportation Plan: The Capitol Region Council of Governments completed the “Bradley Area Transportation Plan”. The Bradley Area Transportation Study includes a comprehensive analysis of current and future traffic conditions and land use in the airport area. The study identifies transportation improvements that are needed to accommodate growth and to develop a strategic plan for maintaining safe and efficient access to the airport area.

Rt. 20 Corridor

The large undeveloped business-zoned parcel consisting of about 94 acres of land bordered by the Bradley Field Connector (Route 20) and Old County Road requires serious consideration as to its potential use under present zoning. The subject area might be better suited to office and/or a campus industrial development. This area should have a unique zoning district for corporate office and high-end industrial, not to include distribution, due to its visibility from Route 20. Building should be of high quality design. An appropriate vision for this land needs to be created. The adjacent AIOZ zone may provide a good foundation for the type of zone and master planning approach that is needed here.

Main Street Commercial Area

Strategic Master Plan: This Plan should be created for the Downtown area looking at the relationship of buildings, public spaces, traffic, gateways, the pedestrian environment, lighting, signage and more. The Downtown has a tremendous number of assets: including, the Connecticut River, the Canal Trail, over seventy businesses, government center, ample housing and historic structures. The assets and challenges facing the Downtown should be addressed in a comprehensive fashion.

Dexter Plaza: A significant parcel in the downtown area is the Dexter Plaza. This is a chronically underperforming retail development that is unfortunately developed in a suburban form rather than a traditional downtown development pattern. The Town should work with the property owner to encourage a rethinking and redevelopment of this parcel that looks at new uses, and a reconfiguration of building placement, that places new buildings at the street line in a traditional multi-use and multistory downtown pattern.

Montgomery Building: A second means of two-way full access to the building from Main Street is a necessary improvement to a successful site reuse. This would provide the means to achieve sufficient traffic circulation and most importantly to allow proper access to the site in case of an emergency. Residential use demands that safe and accessible parking, free from flooding, in sufficient numbers be provided. This also will require thoughtful and imaginative solutions such as deck parking or other means of achieving this result.

Open Space Greenways

Spring Park / Kettle Brook: The existing town open space, consisting of Spring Park along an expanse of Kettle Brook form a modest greenway in the center of the community. There are opportunities in Town to expand the concept of connecting open space along this natural feature.

Merrigan Brook: The area around Merrigan Brook provides a Greenway opportunity. Near the upper reaches of this brook lies Circle Drive Park, and further to the west is the open space secured during the development of the new subdivisions near Acorn Drive. There is an opportunity to connect these areas with open space as the surrounding land develops.

Waterworks Brook Greenway: This waterway is one of the longest undeveloped watercourse corridors within the Town of Windsor Locks. The majority of this watercourse lies within the Connecticut Water Company's wellfield site in the southeast corner of Windsor Locks. The open space opportunities, recreational potential and existing wildlife habitat should be preserved. This provides the Town with a unique opportunity to maintain a large undeveloped expanse along a major watercourse to be maintained as part of its future Greenway system.

Connecticut River Greenway: The State of Connecticut has a long standing, yet conceptual, plan to establish a Greenway along the Connecticut River highlighting the agricultural heritage within Suffield and the canal and mill history of the Windsor Locks riverfront land. There is continued interest by both Towns and the State in moving this Greenway plan into reality. This could be a tremendous recreational, tourism and economic asset to the community and its residents. The Town should re-energize its efforts to work with the State of CT to find ways to achieve this Greenway plan.

SECTION XI. PLANNING POLICIES

Windsor Locks is generally a built up, or mature community, unlike its neighbors that still have substantial amounts of undeveloped land. However, as clearly demonstrated in the previous chapters of this plan, there are many planning opportunities that need to be acted on in the future development of the community and there are many community challenges still to be met. Each preceding chapter contains planning goals and objectives; these collectively espouse desirable “policy” on community development as envisioned by the Planning and Zoning Commission. By its very nature, the Plan must advance or reflect policy on population, economic activity, esthetics, transportation, and other basic elements of Town layout and life.



This Plan of Conservation and Development sets forth the following Planning Policies that should serve to guide the planning activities of the Town and the Planning and Zoning Commission through the next planning period. The Commission should use this list of Planning Policies to organize future workshop sessions and should establish priorities among these policies.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Watercourses:

1. Perform an inventory of each of the Town’s major watercourses to evaluate their health and open space opportunities.
2. Involve school groups and other organizations in an education program about the importance of the Town’s watercourses.
3. Seek other opportunities to create additional public open spaces around the Town’s watercourses to preserve their functions and create connectivity of the Town’s open spaces.
4. Consider opportunities for public paths and trails along open space corridors, along the Town’s significant watercourses, as a unique recreational amenity and educational opportunity for Town residents.
5. Strengthen land use regulations to require Stormwater Management Plans to improve water quality discharges within the Town’s Stormwater drainage systems.

Wetlands and Floodplains

1. Seek to update the Town’s Inland Wetland Regulations consistent with the latest CT DEP model regulations.

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section XI. Planning Policies; Cont.

2. Establish a no net loss policy of inland wetland soils as the result of new development.
3. Seek opportunities with the Conservation Commission and the Parks Department and possibly with the Board of Education to provide educational markers and signs along significant wetlands and other natural features within the Town Parks and Open Spaces.
4. Encourage the dedication of open space in new residential development to preserve and protect the town's wetland systems.

Aquifer Protection

1. The Aquifer Protection Agency should proceed to adopt regulations based on the State model regulations.
2. All land use agencies should review their regulations to ensure that they provide the maximum protection to aquifer areas.
3. Work closely with the CT Water Company to protect the existing aquifer area in Windsor Locks.

Topography

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.

Natural Diversity Data Base

1. Review the Natural Diversity Data Base maps with all new development proposals and seek State DEP assistance if development impacts such areas.
2. Make the Natural Diversity Data Base map for Windsor Locks publicly available to prospective developers and property owners within Windsor Locks.
3. Adopt amendments to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations that places such a review into the required review process.

Open Space

1. Initiate planning efforts with Suffield and the State of CT to move forward with the implementation of the Windsor Locks Canal State Park.
2. Initiate planning efforts to discover potential extensions and preservation of the Kettle Brook Greenway.
3. Initiate planning efforts to discover potential extensions and preservation of the Merrigan Brook Greenway.

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section XI. Planning Policies; Cont.

4. Amend the Windsor Locks zoning and subdivision regulations to strengthen the open space provisions that encourage the preservation of open space greenways as lands within these corridors are proposed for development.
5. Form a planning group within the Town to 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.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

1. To continue to fund the town’s Capital Improvement Program budget on a yearly basis to fund needed roadway improvements.
2. To encourage the State of Connecticut and continue to seek grants to implement improvements as identified in the Bradley Area Transportation Study.
3. To encourage, to the extent possible, the use of common driveways, interconnection of parking lots, and limits on the number of curb cuts along the Town’s major streets.
4. To plan for a safe and efficient street system to serve the town’s business and industrial areas that does not impact on surrounding lower density uses.
5. To work with the Town’s legislative body, the Economic and Industrial Development Commission and private property owners to investigate the possibility of re-establishing the King Spring Road connection to the North Street industrial area.
6. To require the construction of sidewalks along all business parcels during new construction or substantial reconstruction in order to begin a long term objective to form a connected sidewalk system along the town’s busiest streets.
7. Review town land use regulations to require / encourage sidewalks construction for pedestrians within new and redeveloped business zoned parcels and between adjacent parcels and the adjacent street system.
8. Continue to develop and adopt a set of standards for the construction of Windsor Locks roads and other public improvements.
9. Establish bus shelters at logical locations along Route 75 and seek funding through the assistance of CRCOG.
10. Work with State and Amtrak officials to achieve an improved rail facility in Windsor Locks, either a reuse of the historic rail station or a new facility at the current rail stop.
11. Actively promote the concept of a full commuter rail service in the Springfield, MA / New Haven corridor.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Industrial

1. Investigate is the Town owned parcel on Old County Road, now used as a leaf dump, could be put to more productive industrial use.
2. Review the zoning pattern along Old County Road from Halfway House Road south to determine a zoning district pattern that best reflects current uses and the most appropriate future uses.
3. In a coordinated efforts with the Board of Selectmen, Town Attorney and affected property owners, seek a reasonable and effective method to extend King Spring Road from its present apparent terminus to the industrial area north of Northgate Drive.
4. Consider methods, such as tax incentives, to encourage owners to maintain the value of older industrial buildings so that they are kept productive and marketable into the future.
5. Consider ways to increase code enforcement efforts particularly for the older commercial and industrial areas of town.

Commercial

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission should establish clear policies on what improvements are expected for new commercial development and redevelopment in the Town's business districts.
2. Improved commercial development site plan design standards affecting lighting, landscaping, reasonable signage, circulation, proper driveway cuts, and pedestrian circulation should be continually researched and incorporated into the town's land use regulations.
3. Pedestrian sidewalks should be a mandatory improvements expected with new development, particularly along Route 75 and within and among commercial uses.
4. 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.
5. The Planning and Zoning Commission should continue to ensure that airport valet parking not overwhelm the commercially zoned areas of town near Bradley Airport. Regulations should require or provide incentives to have the frontage of these parcels presently used for valet parking along Rt. 75 used for traditional business purposes.
6. The Planning and Zoning Commission in conjunction with the EIDC should push for a Strategic Master Plan for Downtown Windsor Locks.
7. Work with property owners to encourage the productive reuse of the Montgomery Building that minimizes traffic impacts on Routes 140 and

Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development
Section XI. Planning Policies; Cont.

- 159, produces increased tax revenues for the Town, provides open space access to the CT River and produces an asset to the downtown.
8. Consider Village District or Historic Overlay zoning in the Main Street Commercial areas to encourage new development and redevelopment compatible to a downtown setting.
 9. Encourage and support the successful reuse of the Main Street Historic Train Station.
 10. Study and implement zoning solutions for the best use of the commercially zoned land along the Route 20 corridor.
 11. The Planning and Zoning Commission should adopt strong architectural standards for all new business and industrial construction. The Town should consider the benefits of establishing a formal Design Review Commission that would be comprised of design professionals that would serve to advise both applicants and the Commission.