

# Plan of Conservation and Development

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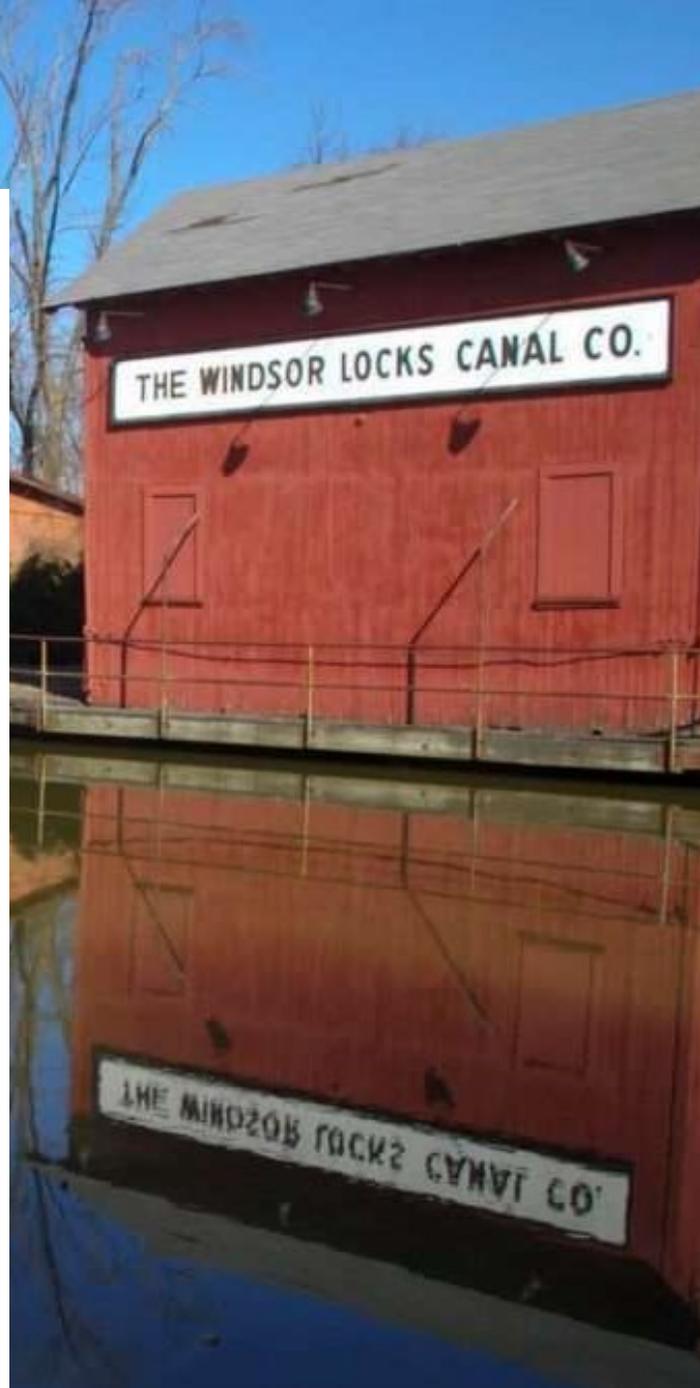
# 2020

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**Town of Windsor Locks**

**Authored by: Planning and Zoning Commission**



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# Plan of Conservation and Development

## Acknowledgements

The Planning and Zoning Commission is grateful to the Windsor Locks residents for the sessions you attended, the surveys you took and the input you contributed to develop your community's vision. The Commission would also like to thank the many town boards, commissions and staff who hosted endless meetings and workshops, the results of which are woven throughout this Plan.

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## SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

At least once every ten years, the planning commissions in each municipality must “prepare, adopt and amend a plan of conservation and development” in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-23. The objective is not simply to comply with State requirements, but to create a tool which will portray the historic fabric of the community, review present-day conditions and sentiment, and identify goals and objectives for the next ten or twenty years.

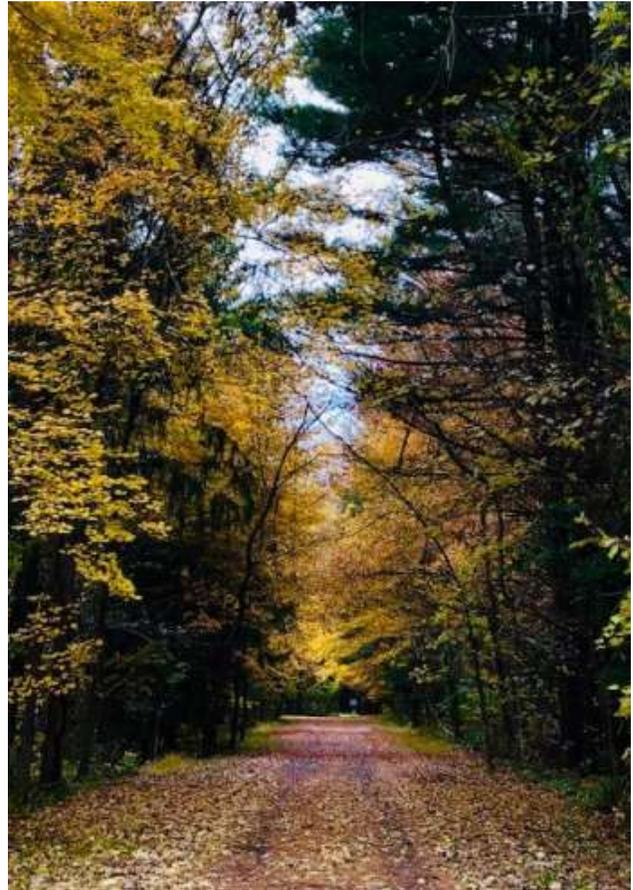
While the plan’s title contains two simple words, “conservation and development”, its text is complex. To think of development solely in terms of how many new buildings a town has is too narrow. Similarly, to think of conservation only as a physical restriction from any new buildings is also short-sighted.

What is Conservation? It is preserving health, environment, air, water, character (arts and culture), celebrating history, neighborhoods, open space, creature habitat, soils, safety, parks, trees, and green building and more.

What is Development? It is people, maturity, change, augmentation, wealth, capital, education, roads, sidewalks, utilities, infrastructure, programs, services, businesses, transportation, demands, industry, housing, needs and density among other things.

To create a sustainable community these two efforts must be balanced well, allowing for both careful planning and some organic positive change. Conservation and development can both have value, benefit, and impact. A well thought out plan can help a community embrace both in a scaled, appropriate way that maintains the diversified tax base and fosters a safe, desirable, and delightful place to live, learn, work or visit, where all community members can thrive.

Waterworks Brook Conservation Area  
South Center Street



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**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”.**

**What the Connecticut General Statutes Require:**

The statutes require that the following topics be explored as part of the plan:

1. Community Development Action Plan, if any
2. the need for affordable housing,
3. the need for protection of existing and potential public surface and ground drinking water supplies,
4. the use of cluster development and other development patterns to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity within the municipality
5. the state plan of conservation and development adopted pursuant to chapter 297,
6. the regional plan of conservation and development adopted pursuant to section 8-35a,
7. physical, social, economic, and governmental conditions and trends
8. the needs of the municipality including, but not limited to, human resources, education, health, housing, recreation, social services, public utilities, public protection, transportation and circulation and cultural and interpersonal communications,
9. the objectives of energy-efficient patterns of development,
10. the use of solar and other renewable forms of energy and energy conservation,
11. protection and preservation of agriculture,
12. sea level change scenarios published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Technical Report OAR CPO-1.
13. a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, sidewalks, multipurpose trails and other public ways as appropriate,
14. a plan for coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people and identify areas where it is feasible and prudent,
15. encouragement of compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development patterns and land reuse,
16. the promotion of such development patterns and land reuse,
17. a recommendation for the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation, agricultural and other purposes and include a map showing such proposed land uses,
18. a recommendation for the most desirable density of population in the several parts of the municipality,
19. notations for any inconsistencies with the following growth management principles:

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20. Redevelopment and revitalization of commercial centers and areas of mixed land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure;
  21. expansion of housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs;
  22. concentration of development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse;
  23. conservation and restoration of the natural environment, cultural and historical resources and existing farmlands;
  24. protection of environmental assets critical to public health and safety;
  25. integration of planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional, and state-wide basis,
  26. make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region in which the municipality is located, as designated by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management under section 16a-4a,
  27. promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low- and moderate-income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs identified in the state’s consolidated plan for housing and community development prepared pursuant to section 8-37t and in the housing component and the other components of the state plan of conservation and development prepared pursuant to chapter 297,
  28. consideration for allowing older adults and persons with a disability the ability to live in their homes and communities whenever possible.

Such plan may:

- a. Permit home sharing in single-family zones between up to four adult persons of any age with a disability or who are sixty years of age or older, whether or not related, who receive supportive services in the home;
- b. allow accessory apartments for persons with a disability or persons sixty years of age or older, or their caregivers, in all residential zones, subject to municipal zoning regulations concerning design and long-term use of the principal property after it is no longer in use by such persons; and
- c. expand the definition of “family” in single-family zones to allow for accessory apartments for persons sixty years of age or older, persons with a disability or their caregivers.
- d. In preparing such plan the commission shall consider focusing development and revitalization in areas with existing or planned physical infrastructure.

For purposes of this subsection, “disability” has the same meaning as provided in section 46a-8.

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The state encourages the inclusion of the following topics in the plan:

1. airports,
2. parks,
3. playgrounds and other public grounds,
4. the general location, relocation and improvement of schools and other public buildings,
5. the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned, for water, sewerage, light, power, transit, and other purposes,
6. the extent and location of public housing projects,
7. programs for the implementation of the plan, including (A) a schedule,
8. a budget for public capital projects,
9. a program for enactment and enforcement of zoning and subdivision controls
10. building and housing codes and safety regulations,
11. plans for implementation of affordable housing,
12. plans for open space acquisition and greenways protection and development,
13. plans for corridor management areas along limited access highways or rail lines, designated under section 16a-27,
14. proposed priority funding areas,
15. any other recommendations as will, in the commission's or any special committee's judgment, be beneficial to the municipality.
16. The plan may include any necessary and related maps, explanatory material, photographs, charts or other pertinent data and information relative to the past, present and future trends of the municipality.

**In 1996 a plan was updated titled the "Plan of Development". The last update named "Plan of Conservation and Development" was adopted in 2007.**

### **Utilizing the Plan**

A Plan of Conservation and Development, once completed, provides a recording of observations, a list of aspirations and a coordinated path toward realizing tangible short term and long-term goals. The Planning process should deliberately encourage community members to be part of the plan's creation and implementation. Boards and Commissions within the Town should refer to the plan in their decision and policy making and before offering recommendations on capital improvements. Specifically, the Planning and Zoning Commission must refer to this document in reviewing all land development proposals, property zone changes and zoning regulation text amendments. Town Hall departments should use this plan as an advisory guide whether they seek to seize new opportunities or find local solutions to identified needs. Regional planning agencies and State of Connecticut departments look for consistency between a town's requests for support and funding and the community's current Plan of Conservation and Development. Rather than being filed away in a cabinet, this document should be promoted within the community, inspired by and easily available to

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its citizens, used often by boards, commissions and staff and shared with local, regional, state, and federal organizations whenever possible. The document does not need to remain unchanged for ten years and may be amended from time to time as concerns or opportunities arise or as sentiment changes.

## SECTION II. AREA OF INFLUENCE

The Town of Windsor Locks, located in the north central part of the State of Connecticut on the Connecticut River, is a New England gateway. As part of the Greater Hartford region along a major north-south Interstate 91, any decision making regarding the community's wellbeing and future growth or preservation efforts must be done within the context of the Capital Region, State of Connecticut, and proximity to the State of Massachusetts as well as the relationship to neighboring towns. Windsor Locks lies within the Knowledge Corridor and is a transportation hub, acting as the connector to other places by train and plane. It is within this context that the community realizes its value, uniqueness, needs and offerings and can maximize future opportunity. Planning should not occur without consideration of the Windsor Locks "Area of Influence".



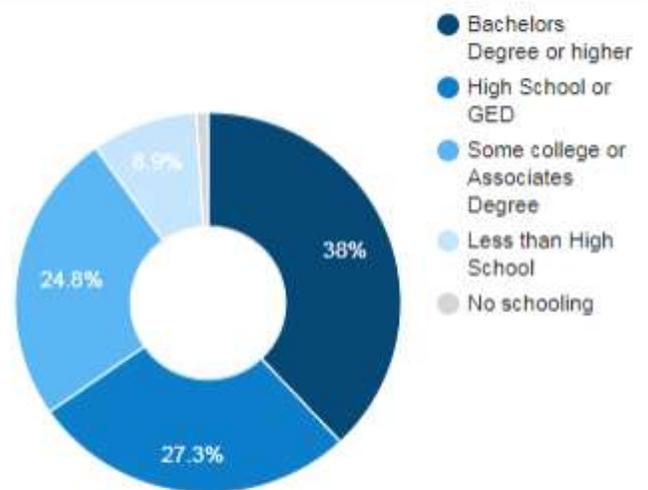
### Hartford Region

The Hartford Region is a remarkably 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 demographic make-up of the region.

### Education

Towns within the Capitol Region enjoy proximity to institutions of higher education along highway 91 through central Connecticut and western Massachusetts, what is known as the Knowledge Corridor. In educational attainment, the State of Connecticut, at the time of the 2010 Census, was the fourth highest of all the states, at 37.6%, for the proportion of its population with a college degree. According to the 2017 American Community Survey, this number has now increased slightly to 38%. The Hartford Region had an even higher percentage of the population with a college degree at 42.8%. Retaining this skilled and educated workforce has been a regional priority and must continue to be. Population Growth The

Figure 5: Connecticut Education Attainment Breakdown



overall population in the Capitol Region increased between the years 2000 and 2015 by 5.76%. Each recent Plan of Development included a review of population growth in the Area of Influence as the towns of East Granby, East Windsor, Enfield, Suffield, and Windsor, as well as the City of Hartford both impact and are impacted by Windsor Locks. 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, 2010 year, census data.

**Population Growth** The overall population in the Capitol Region increased between the years 2000 and 2015 by 5.76%. Each recent Plan of Development included a review of population growth in the Area of Influence as the towns of East Granby, East Windsor, Enfield, Suffield and Windsor, as well as the City of Hartford both impact and are impacted by Windsor Locks. 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, 2010 year, census data.

*Population: Windsor Locks and Its Area of Influence*

Town	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Increase 1970-2010		Increase 2000 - 2010	
East Granby	3,532	4,102	4,302	4,745	5,055	+1,523	43%	+310	6.5%
East Windsor	8,513	8,925	10,081	9,818	11,024	+2511	30%	+1206	12.3%
Enfield	46,189	42,695	45,532	45,212	44,747	-1445	-3%	-465	-1%
Hartford	158,017	136,739	139,739	124,121	124,817	-33,200	-21%	+696	.6%
Suffield	8,634	9,294	11,427	13,552	15,513	+6,879	80%	+1961	14%
Windsor	22,502	25,204	27,817	28,237	28,962	+6,460	28%	+725	2.6%
Windsor Locks	15,080	12,190	12,358	12,043	12,466	-3,037	-20%	+423	3.5%

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

As noted in the previous POCD, during the decade from 1980 to 1990 all communities in the above table had an increase in population. It is important to note that these communities range from the State of Connecticut’s urban core, the City of Hartford, to rural bedroom towns. From 2000 to 2010, six of the seven communities saw some form of growth in population. East Windsor 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. Enfield, Windsor Locks, and to an extent Windsor are either somewhat more mature, or fully suburban, communities that have

These Windsor Locks statistics reflect natural growth restrictions due to the size of the community. The Town is the smallest in land area, at 9.2 square miles, of all communities in the Area of Influence.

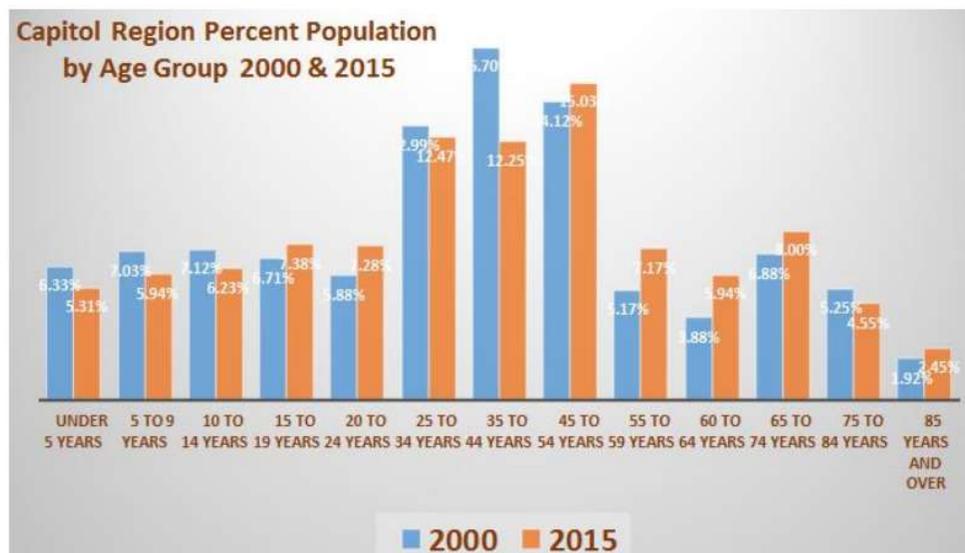
not had a tremendous amount of new housing and have populations that are aging. Their demographic patterns reflect Statewide and regional trends of new housing and population growth.

It is possible however, that between 2015 and 2020, these communities might begin to see a shift. Due to the needs of young professionals, and the desire of many millennials and baby boomers to move closer to a village setting or downtown, and policy changes/smart growth principles which reflect this desire/effort, communities may see additional infill development in their town centers, differing from recent years of suburban sprawl. This type of development, in some instances Transit Oriented Development (TOD), will allow for increase in residential units and population while permitting towns to move forward with efforts to conserve land and control sprawl.

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. The Connecticut Airport Authority is currently preparing a Master Plan of Development. In addition to growth during the past several decades, the airport is planning for moderate growth, new terminals and transportation center, road and signage improvements and is studying opportunity for increased private/quasi-public uses such as customer parking and car rental, on now undeveloped land. The airport property continues to have a powerful influence on Windsor Locks and the area.

**Age** The average age of the Hartford area population is increasing. At the time of the 2020 Census, we can expect that a large percent of the region’s residents will be between the ages of 55 and 65 years. This suggests different evolving impacts on town and regional services as the “baby-boomer” bulge in the population continues to age. This will change the types of services needed. Knowing these age trends can help a region/community plan for needs such as education, workforce, housing, jobs. We can expect the need for increased services in the areas of retirement, adult recreation, healthcare,

transportation, accessibility, and senior living. Per the CERC data profile prepared with information from the CT Data Collaborative, as of 2016, the percentage of population 45 years and older in Windsor Locks is 48%, higher than Hartford County’s 43%.



"People, they vote with their feet," said Peter Francese, a demographer who studies New England. "A tiny, tiny percentage of people over the age of 55 ever move," Francese said. "They're rooted to where they are. They've got friends, they've got networks. The people who leave are 75 to 80 percent young people." *Hartford Metro Area Has Country's 10th-Largest Population Loss, Hartford Courant May 2016*

**Workforce** There is a concern statewide of the area's skilled workforce now entering retirement years and the growing need of retaining and attracting the younger element of our workforce to meet the needs of area businesses.

**Millennials** The State is actively seeking to retain young professionals, often referred to as Generation Y, or Millennials. 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. Understanding the needs, interests and characteristics of this demographic can assist the region and municipalities with making our communities more attractive to a needed workforce.

**How millennials are often described:**

- \*18-35 years old
- \*live with parents longer
- \*earn less / need affordable homes
- \*stay single longer
- \*Bachelor's degree or higher
- \*entrepreneurs/innovators
- \*have a harder time finding jobs
- \*use public transportation
- \*less likely to live alone
- \*enjoy living in villages/downtown settings
- \*were impacted by the recession in 2007-2010
- \*familiar with digital technologies

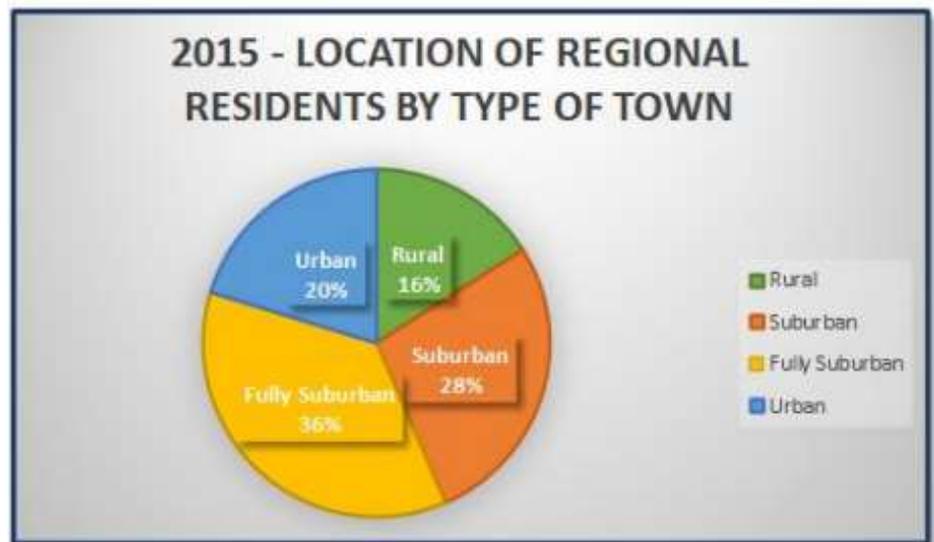
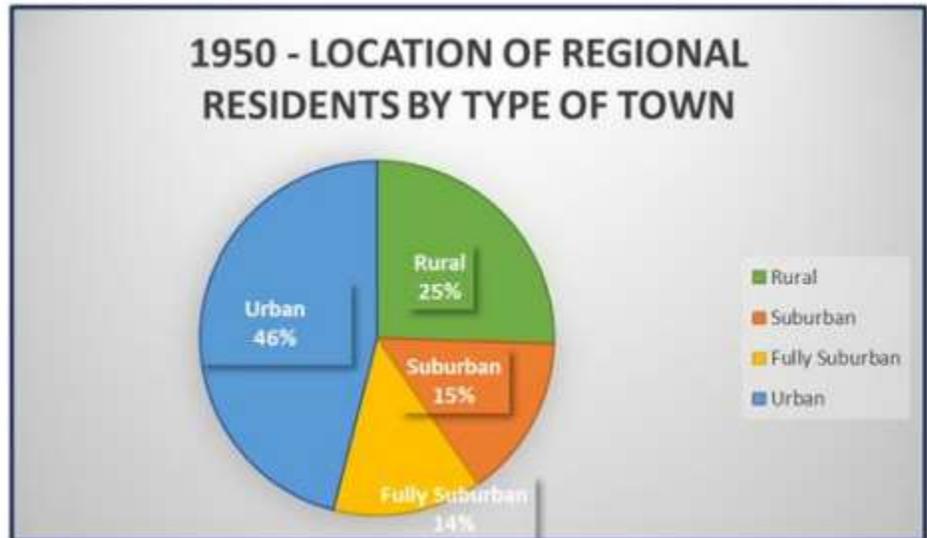
*Source: YESct Partnership for Strong Communities*

**Commute to Work** In 2007, this Plan acknowledged that jobs, over time, were moving further away. Data still suggests that employees travel quite a bit to get to their place of employment. Windsor Locks residents and those residents in many of the Hartford Region's towns still only experience an average 22-minute commute, due to proximity to various modes of transportation and a variety of employers between Hartford and Springfield. Sources: US Census 2010, American Community Survey, 3-year trend study, 2013. The percentage of the region's workforce who worked in their town of residence decreased from 31% in 1990 to 25% in 2000. However, in the next decade, it is anticipated that employees will be increasingly working from home. It will be interesting to see, with the upcoming 2020 Census data, whether these trends continue. While more and more companies are allowing "work from home" scenarios, public transportation improvements and more desirable housing options along the Hartford / Springfield Rail could make it easier to travel farther in less time, continuing the trend of employees working outside their town of residence.

**Location** Residents of the Capital Region are choosing to live in different locations than in past decades. The share of the region's population living in rural and suburban areas in 1950 was 40%. The

share of the region’s population residing in fully suburban and urban communities was 60%. In 2015, data shows more of a shift from our urban municipalities (such as Hartford and New Britain) to inner ring suburbs which are denser than suburban communities, known as “fully suburbanized”. The majority, 36%, of our residents now live in fully suburban towns. We also see a smaller percentage of our regional population residing in rural communities and more residing in suburban communities.

Planners are particularly interested in location trends as they can help communities anticipate impacts, such as: new development, extended utilities and other infrastructure and increased resources / revenues, for example. If these trends continue, communities that are fully suburban might expect high demand for housing, a market for infill development. This might also be interpreted to mean that residents find value in denser communities that are not urban, but that have a village character and are proximate to work, transportation, walkable neighborhoods, or other life aspects (worship, education, amenities, food resources, other people).



Further Sections of the Plan will continue to discuss in detail, the people (their choices, trends, and demographics), the geographic areas, transportation systems, knowledge and industry corridors, housing and employment markets. To summarize, this plan not only highlights the aspirations and goals of Windsor Locks, it also recognizes the Area of Influence within the State of Connecticut and across State borders, of which the community is an integral part.

### SECTION III. COMMUNITY LIVABILITY



Have you heard about AARP's Livability Index? The Livability Index assesses seven broad categories of community livability: housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity. Metric values and policy points within each category are combined to create the category score. Those category scores are then averaged to create a location's total livability score. The score, as a guide, can be used as a conversation starter with local decision makers. <https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/how-are-livability-scores-determined>

**Introduction** This section of the plan describes Windsor Locks historically and culturally, explores past trends in population size, demographics, and housing within the community, and helps the reader to understand current sentiment. The community will use this information to better plan for, create or sustain neighborhoods in the future that are safe, convenient to services and resources, affordable to many different people with diverse income levels, attractive in character and connected by varying means of travel. Livable neighborhoods will meet the needs of the current population and will welcome new people of all ages to make Windsor Locks their home.

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 in north-central Connecticut, approximately halfway between Hartford, Connecticut and the City of Springfield, Massachusetts. The Town is the home both the Bradley International Airport, serving the greater Hartford, CT / Springfield, MA metropolitan area, and Amtrak's New Haven – Hartford – Springfield Line rail service. 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 1392 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. The landscape of the Town contains several streams generally running west to east toward the Connecticut River. People Windsor Locks was originally named Pine Meadow as part of the Windsor Settlement. Early settlers were English, followed by Irish, French, Italian and Polish immigrants. Each wave of these residents was a strong

contributor to the formation of the community. The town continues to embrace a diverse population with changing and varied ancestries.

The Town has a rich industrial and transportation history, producing wool, paper, and electric tinsels among other products alongside the Connecticut River. The canal and “Locks” were constructed in the late 1800’s to ease travel and trade, allowing boats to avoid the river’s nearby rapids.



The people of Windsor Locks can further define their community in the riverside train tracks, resilience through flood and hurricane events, development of a military airfield and the eventual airport. The

Historic Train Station, Main Street, now in restoration and seeking an adaptive reuse.

community is proud of the World Championship of Windsor Locks’ 1965 Little League team and they continue to celebrate the inauguration of Ella Tambussi Grasso, born in Windsor Locks in 1919 to Italian immigrants, who later became the first female governor in the United States.

**Population Profile** Population data gathering is important in preparing for the future needs of a community. Decision makers should reflect on this data when creating policies and investing public dollars to provide resources to sustain and support a livable and desirable town for current and future residents. In the early 1970’s the Windsor Locks population exceeded 15,000 people, followed by a sharp dip in the 70’s and 80’s likely due to downtown renewal, demolition and typically smaller family size. Population projections for Windsor Locks, in the past, have estimated increases of up to 20,100 by the year 2000. However, such growth never materialized. As of the 2010 U.S. Census, the Town had a population of 12,498. Largely a built-up, mature town, Windsor Locks has had relatively stable population growth during the past two decades. With little



The Windsor Locks Middle School History Club created Heritage Day, to celebrate the community and to activate the underutilized Middle School grounds as a “Town Green”, given the proximity of the space to downtown. For more information: <http://www.wlheritageday.com/>

Projected population in East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield and 4 more

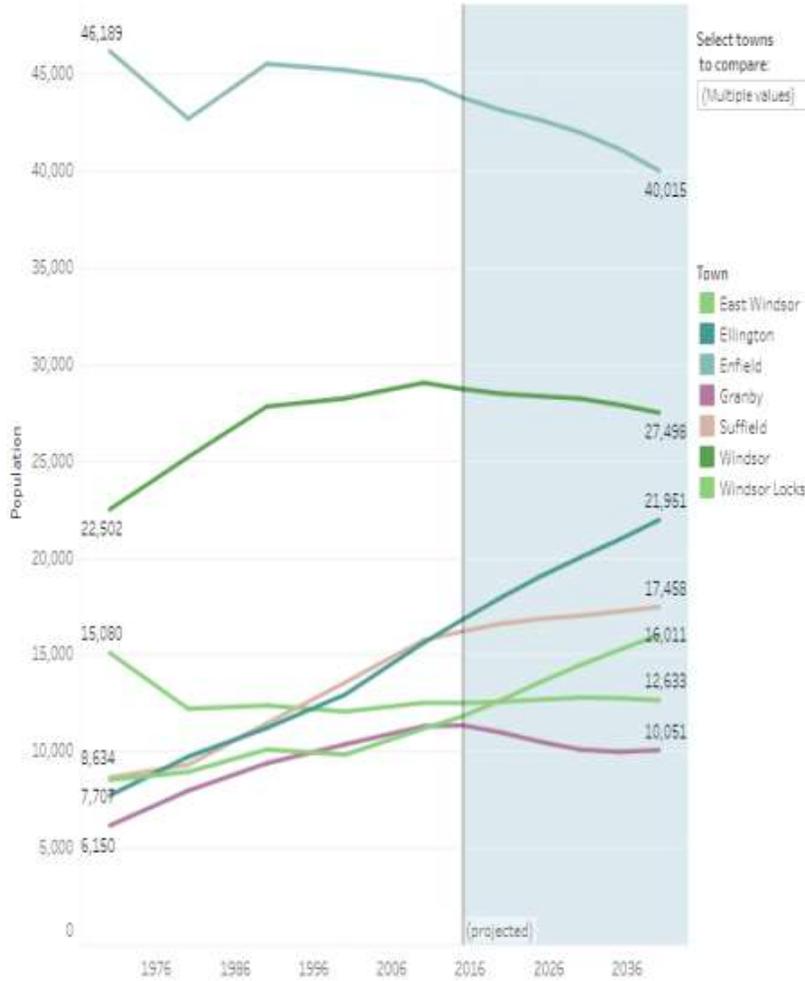


Table 1 - Connecticut State Data Center – Tableau Public

developable land remaining for new housing, the projected increase in population is not substantial. This increase would be more likely to occur in areas of housing infill or in the town’s bookends, near the airport and downtown. Family composition, births, deaths, and other factors all play a role in projecting population. This will be further explored in later paragraphs. Table 1 (left) shows population projections to year 2036 (12,633 people) relative to other nearby towns.

Table 2 (below) describes the population, by decade, in percent changes. Many single-family homes were constructed between 2000 and 2010 which may have influenced this increase. One community is off North Street in the neighborhoods known as

Windsor Locks Farms, Northwind Estates and Windgate Mews. Not noted in the table below, according to the Partnership for Strong Communities, in 2005 the population estimate was 12,511. The population dropped slightly from 2005 to 12,498 in 2010. In 2015, the estimate was 12,531. This equates to an estimated minor increase of .26% from 2010 to 2015.

**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%
2010	12,498	+455	3.8%



**Population Health and Wellbeing** This paragraph briefly touches on the Town’s Community Health Profile of 2013, prepared for the North Central Health District for Windsor Locks as a member town. Community Health is not wholly determined by someone’s genetics. Health conditions can be influenced by social, political, economic, and environmental determinants. While this

does not imply a direct cause and effect relationship, a strong correlation indicates an association between certain health outcomes and a specific community, warranting further exploration by the town. The data and recommendations derived from it can help town hall departments prioritize spending, policy changes and programming.

For example, Windsor Locks is slightly above the district average for the North Central Health District towns in measures such as perinatal care, cancer outcomes, cardiovascular outcomes, and childhood illness outcomes among others, however the town scores lower than some peer communities in respiratory disease and mental health categories. The town should then explore best practices in community design and programs that would support the outcomes where Windsor Locks residents score low. Actionable policies, with these lower scoring categories in mind, should be developed and carried out when we plan for our education, environment, air quality and economic security, for example. The Health Index data should be reviewed by current and future local leaders, who can work with nearby community health organizations and the public to create and implement specific goals and objectives which will optimize the health of all residents.

### **Goals and Policy Objectives**

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

#### **Objectives:**

1. Brainstorm a list of potential departments and partners to include in the health outcome improvement effort.
2. Create a committee of staff, residents, local leaders, and health professionals to review the most recent Windsor Locks Health Index prepared for North Central Health District.
3. Develop a list of evidence-based, short-term, and long-term tasks which are known to improve the specific low scoring health outcomes.
4. Develop a strategy for implementation using a multi-disciplinary and intergenerational approach, building on existing programming.
5. Consider the goals and objectives throughout this Plan that might satisfy #3 above, calling them out as priority.
6. Provide a means of tracking and assessing improvements in health outcomes and work closely with the North Central Health District to do so. Resources: Windsor Locks Community Health Index, Connecticut Association of the Directors of Health 2013

**Age and Population** Connecticut is aging. Windsor Locks is aging. The proportion of those over age 50 continues to rise. Local decision makers should embrace policies which will support aging in place. Data gathered by a partnership of the Connecticut Data Collaborative and CT Legislative Commission on Aging shows the following projections for percentage of population 65 years of age or older for the Town of Windsor Locks:

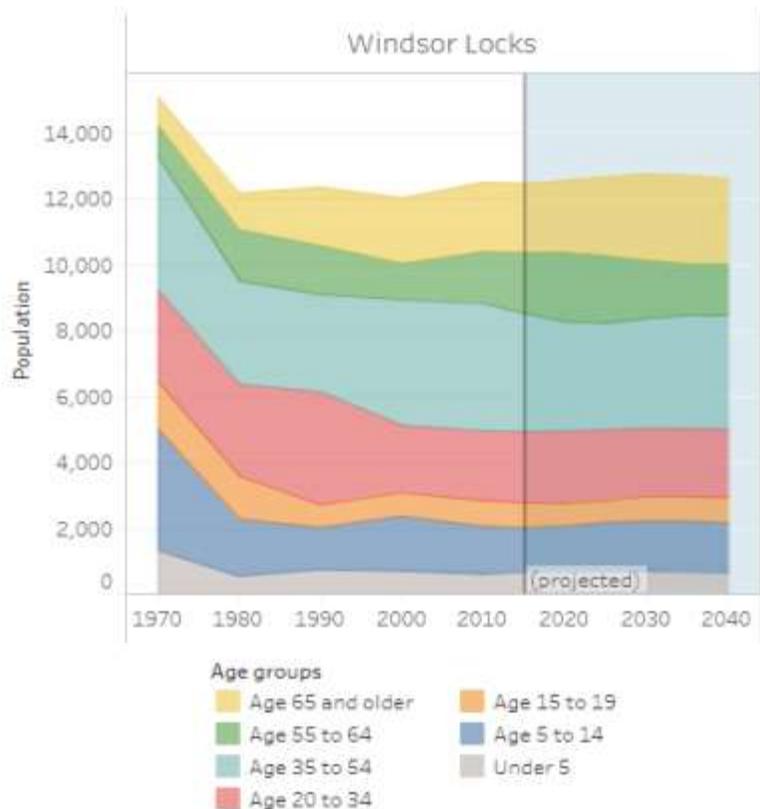
2010 - 16.7%	2020 - 20.1%
2015 - 17.9%	2025 - 23.3%

The largest age group in 2000, the 35 to 45 age group, will be the largest (age 55 plus) in 2020. This trend will continue into later decades. See Table 3 (right) for population projections by age group for Windsor Locks. The baby boomer population moves through the

population profile. The “echo” of the baby boom is also evident in the group age 35 to 54. The number of infants and school age children is projected to rise only minimally, which is further explored in later chapters. These projections are an important planning tool. In lifespan planning, the community accommodates the needs and basic desires of all ages, using an intergenerational approach to policy making and public spending. This can be accomplished by creating regulations, constructing public infrastructure, and providing programming which supports a variety of people rather than for specific ages or groups of people. Examples of such supportive neighborhood components are multi-modal transportation, walkability, inclusive design, accessory apartments, proximity to green space, food resources and mixed-use development.

**Homes and Neighborhoods- 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. According to the 2013 American Community Survey, 81% of the town’s 5,521 housing units were single-family housing units. Windsor Locks has experienced years of significant expansion in the number of housing units during the 60’s and 80’s, followed by 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 decade between 2000 and 2010 showed a gain of 328 new units equating to 6.4%, much of this occurring in the early or mid-2000’s prior to an economic downturn.

Table 3 - Connecticut State Data Center – Tableau Public



**Total Housing Units in Windsor Locks  
1960 - 2010**

Single Family Home – Northwind Estates Subdivision  
with Conservation Easement



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%
2010	5429	6.4%

The number of new housing units in the 38 Capitol Region Council of Government towns also had a modest growth rate between 2000 and 2015. The overall growth rate of the region was a growth of 7.12%. Hartford saw the greatest number of units constructed, and Andover, the least. The range of growth rates varied significantly across the 2 Section III, Community Livability region with Ellington having the largest rate of growth of 23% and New Britain and Enfield at only 2% growth. It is useful to compare the rate of housing unit growth with towns in the nearby Area of Influence.

**Housing Unit Growth of Area Towns  
2000 – 2015**

Ross Way – Multifamily Development (ages 55+) detached units



Town	New Housing Units 2000-2015	Rate of Growth
Enfield	403	2%
Windsor Locks	194	4%
East Windsor	335	8%
Windsor	771	7%
Suffield	124	3%
East Granby	295	16%

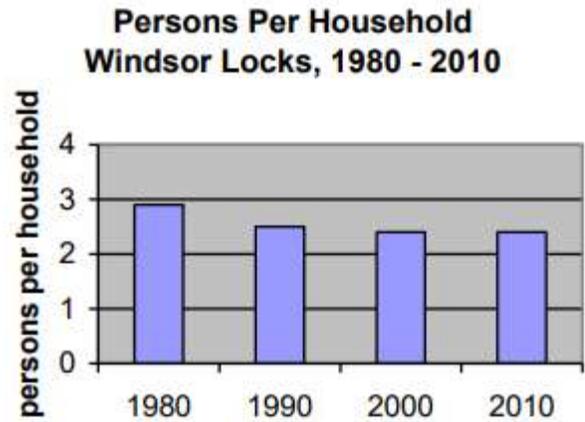
*Montgomery Mill Redevelopment Underway*



As shown on the above chart, the Town experienced a small increase in housing units since 2010. This growth averages out to approximately 11 housing units per year. This rate of new construction, if continued through the remainder of the decade, would result in a total housing unit inventory of approximately 5,538 by the year 2020. However, when you consider newer developments such as: Stonebrook Assisted Living apartments on Old County Road, Woodridge Condominiums on Oakridge Drive

and Transit Oriented Development mixed use efforts such as the Montgomery Mill redevelopment (currently under construction) the community can expect that growth rate to rise and the estimated total to be closer to 5800 units within the next decade.

**Household Size** As noted in the 2007 Plan, 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 dropped from 2.93 in 1980 to 2.43 in 2000, representing a 17% decrease in household size over the 20-year period. The 2010 census reported the current household size to be essentially maintained at 2.4 persons per household. The drop in the average size of households over recent decades is a national and state demographic trend and is attributed to many 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 and maintaining the town’s housing inventory.



**Neighborhoods: Established and Desired** All built developments, small and large, make an impact on their surroundings. This is particularly true of residential neighborhoods. The location, quality and design of new homes is as important as the quantity regarding the overall impact to the community

In housing, the community desires:

- |                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| High Quality                 | Appropriate Scale                  |
| Attractive and Varied Design | Safety and Security                |
| Energy Efficiency            | Low Impact Design                  |
| Universal Design (see p.12)  | Affordable to Varied Income Levels |

Woodridge Condominiums, Oakridge Drive



now and the many generations to come. These places are where we choose to live, work, play or raise families. In engaging with each other and with outside professionals Windsor Locks has invested a great deal of time and resources in understanding housing need, appropriate scale, visual preferences, and desired development patterns. With truly little vacant land available for development or preservation, the town going forward will focus on preservation, redevelopment and seeking opportunities for infill which

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will not only maintain but enhance the charm of its already established neighborhoods.

Our neighborhoods and our homes should be connected physically and functionally to "life".

Life can mean...

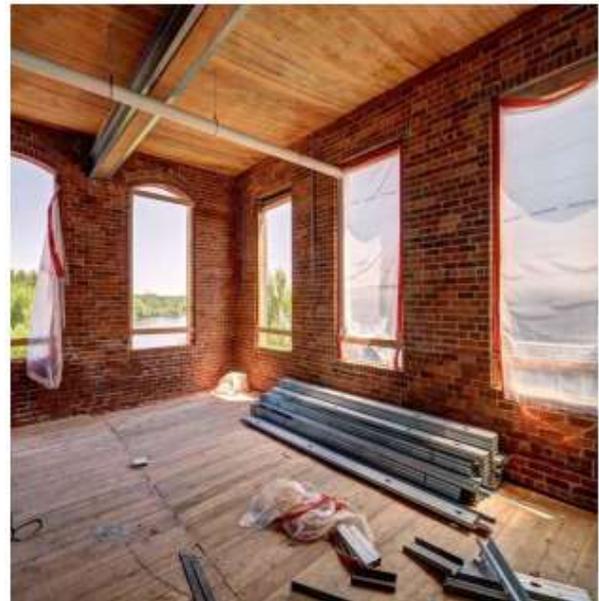
- other people
- food resources
- healthcare
- transportation
- formal, quality education
- opportunities for personal growth
- experiencing nature
- jobs
- worship
- community participation
- culture, delight and fun

**Universal Design** Universal design is the design of an environment, whether it be a home, intersection, plaza, or another type of space, so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, needs or abilities. By considering the community's people and their diverse needs throughout the design process, which reflects the lifespan planning approach (1 month old to 100 years old), environments that meet the needs of all can be achieved. In this way, sustainable communities and universal design are linked. When incorporated from the early stage of planning for our neighborhoods, we not only become a more desirable and welcoming community, but we reduce the need for costly and wasteful retrofits in the future.

*Montgomery Mill – 160 mixed income apartments*  
[www.facebook.com/MoMillApts](http://www.facebook.com/MoMillApts)

### How affordable are our homes?

The cost to rent or purchase a house is becoming increasingly less affordable to millions of Americans and each year existing affordable housing units are lost as they are transitioned to for-profit housing. Each municipality is called, through Federal and State of Connecticut legislation, to preserve affordable units and find creative solutions to the affordability crisis. In Windsor Locks, according to the State of Connecticut 2014 Affordable Housing Appeals List, 9% of homes are considered affordable. Single family homes dominate the housing stock (81%).



The community has a better than average supply of units for a variety of the municipality's workforce, such as teachers, nurses, electricians, firefighters, and town employees. Still, the same report shows concern over the narrow offerings that would typically appeal to retired persons, baby boomers and young professionals or millennials. Much of this information can be found in the 2015 Partnership for

Strong Communities Town Profile, see Addendums. It is recommended that Windsor Locks analyze the current multi-family development regulations and continue to implement Inclusionary Housing Study recommendations, such as inclusionary zoning, deed restrictions, Montgomery Mill – 160 mixed income apartments accessory dwelling structures/ in-law suites and infill development, [www.facebook.com/MoMillApts](http://www.facebook.com/MoMillApts) with the goal of maintaining affordable rates for at least 10% of the community’s homes.

**Density** Windsor Locks boasts a variety of housing stock, from apartments and condominiums to large single-family homes. Lot sizes range from under 5000 square feet to over 10 acres, while the majority of lots are between .25 acres and .5 acres. Current zoning and subdivision regulations require new residential developments to have lot sizes that exceed lot sizes in many of the community’s existing neighborhoods. Over time this has provided for some extremely attractive newer homes in spacious neighborhoods, an important offering. However, the regulations for single-family lots as they exist sometimes restrict infill opportunities and customary improvements to long standing properties built prior to regulation changes within Residential A, AA and B zones.



Chicago, IL, 9 units per acre – Visualizing Density, Julie Campoli

Potential market for new housing in the downtown (left) including the Montgomery Mill reuse, table by Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc. 2012

Annual Potential Market for New Housing Units Higher-Density Housing Units DOWNTOWN WINDSOR LOCKS <i>Town of Windsor Locks, Hartford County, Connecticut</i>		
HOUSING TYPE	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Multi-Family For-Rent (lofts/apartments, leaseholder)	340	50.4%
Multi-Family For-Sale (lofts/apartments, condo/co-op ownership)	155	23.0%
Single-Family Attached For-Sale (townhouses/ live-work, fee-simple, condominium ownership)	180	26.6%
Total	675	100.0%

SOURCE: Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc., 2012.

There are few vacant lands for future residential development. The town should consider whether a carefully drafted regulation could provide more flexibility for already established properties while maintaining the desirability of neighborhoods, incentivizing upgrades, and environmental improvements. Additionally, the town should explore opportunities to utilize, and build on, its existing “Multi Family Special Development”,

“Flexible Residential”, “Adaptive Reuse”, “Airport Interchange Overlay Zone” and “Main Street Overlay Zone” regulations. These can strengthen design and architectural requirements, incentivize green infrastructure, and storm water improvements and provide growth opportunities in new, appropriate locations throughout the town.

The paragraphs to follow will explore existing and future housing and densities within various neighborhoods in town.

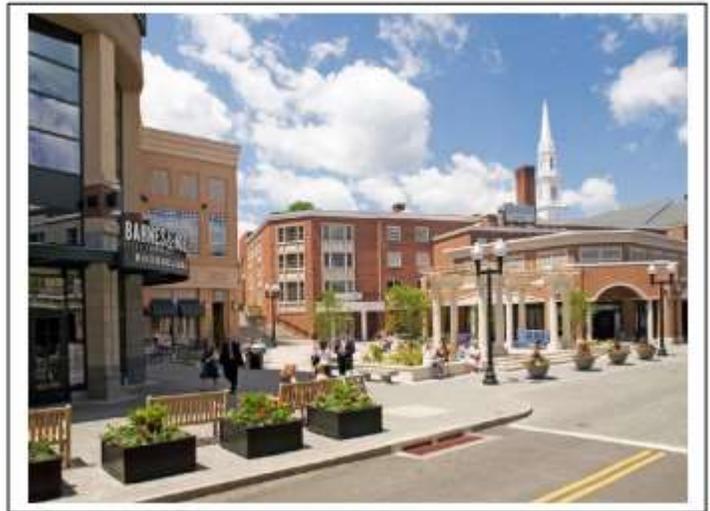
### **Main Street / Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Area**

Currently this area within the Business Downtown Redevelopment (varies between 15 and 21 units per acre) District (BDRD) permits adaptive reuse of existing buildings at higher densities. The long vacant Montgomery Mill is the best example of this, where 160 residential units are under construction in a previous industrial space, and where intense

industrial uses are no longer desired. Additionally, the Main Street Overlay Zone (MSOZ, red) hints at the beginning of a Form Based Code, focusing on where buildings are located and enhancing the public realm rather than focusing on uses and restrictive setbacks. This area currently appears largely suburban.

In the MSOZ zone 15 units / acre are permitted for new construction. While this density may be appropriate for areas within the overlay zone, it could be considered low for the core area or for properties with frontage on Main Street. Developers and consultants have encouraged the community to consider increasing the permitted density to 40 units per acre in the Main Street Overlay Zone, which can be typical in a transit-oriented development center. The community should

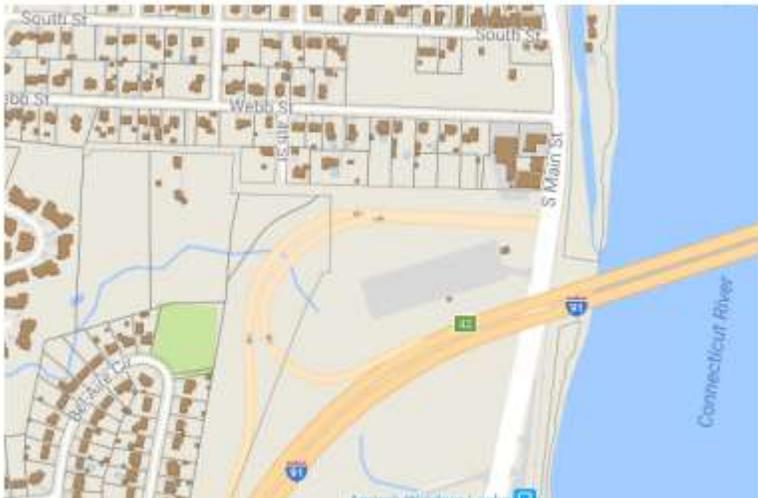
Mixed-Use Example, Blue Back Square, West Hartford CT  
(varies between 15 and 21 units per acre)



weigh the possible positives and negatives of an increase, while considering appropriateness of scale, increased project feasibility and economic development, growth in the grand list, foot traffic downtown, proximity to multi-modal transit center,

added vibrancy, having new and attractive living options for young professionals, the local workforce, and retired residents as well as the need for increased community policing, infrastructure, maintenance, or other services.

**Mill Village Transition Area** This area is developed with single family and multifamily uses and allows for conversion to higher densities or low impact commercial uses as a transition to single family neighborhoods.

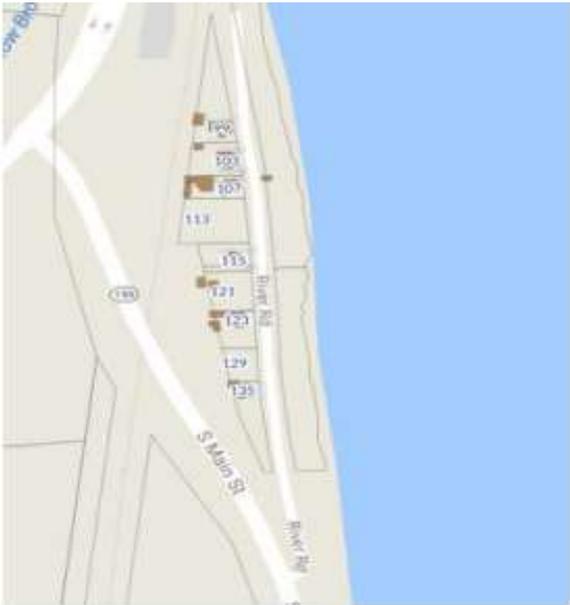


**South Main Street at Highway 91** Properties near the corner of Webb Street and South Main Street are currently zoned industrial, though are used commercially and residentially. This is also a gateway area from the highway and entering from the Town of Windsor in need of better wayfinding and general improvement due to blight. This area may be a good candidate for a mixed-use rezone with infill/increased density to 4 to 7 units per acre and master plan

due to the peculiar mix of current zones and the available developable land behind properties on Webb Street. There is potential for greenway and pedestrian connections from South Main Street to Bel Aire Park. Any new residential development must enhance, rather than negatively impact, Dibble Hollow Brook.

**River Road Residential and River Access**

Twelve properties on River Road are zoned industrial, yet all are either vacant or developed with single or multifamily uses. Two of these properties are on the east side of the road, owned by the State of Connecticut DEEP and the Town of Windsor Locks. A survey was conducted of property owners and residents in 2017 to see what uses the participants wanted on this road. Overwhelmingly the responses supported a zone change from industrial to residential. Some participants were open to using the vacant land for park space and access to the river. Participants did not support the addition of boutique shops, active recreation areas or other commercial



uses. It should be noted that any substantial improvements to these properties must comply with flood zone regulations. It is recommended that a residential zone be applied to these properties, removing the non-conformity (residential in an industrial zone) and maintaining the single family / duplex development pattern that exists, adding only passive public recreation on the river side.



**South Center Street Transition** Zoning patterns on the southern portion of South Center Street near where it intersects with Oakridge Drive are varied. The Oakridge Condominiums lie on a Business 2 property, an auto related use is in a residential zone, and other properties are in the Business 1 zone. In some cases, these are legal non-conforming uses. The commercial uses are typically one-story suburban style. With both established and new condominium neighborhoods at the end of Oakridge Drive, the adjacent

Waterworks Brook preservation area, a mix of uses and the need for some sprucing up, this entry way at South Center Street could become an attractive gateway. The area might benefit from an overall zone change and master plan. The area transitions from single family neighborhoods to multifamily, and could become a charming village area, embracing low impact supportive commercial or office, inclusion of a parklet, new pedestrian connections and mixed use 2 story development to include a small amount of additional infill housing at 4 to 7 units per acre.

**North Street Residential and Industrial Conflict** There are several legal non-conforming industrial uses within residential neighborhoods on North Street, particularly on the north side of the road. These uses include trucking, paving, power cleaning of large commercial equipment and warehouse.

A creative solution is needed to reduce impacts of this mix of uses on residential neighborhoods. The community is supportive of the residential uses and is comfortable with the current density (3-5 units per acre), both single family lots and planned communities with more flexible design, so no change is being recommended at this time related to residential densities.





**Central Windsor Locks, Spring Street and Elm Street (Rt. 140) Corridors** The central area of Windsor Locks boasts desirable established residential neighborhoods and delightful historic homes. Typically, this area is developed with patterns of single-family homes, some more densely laid out than others. Within these corridors and side streets are multifamily “activity nodes” in proximity to intersections, public transportation, convenience stores, schools, parks and/or places of worship. Several of the multifamily properties, apartments, efficiency units and historic homes have the need for (possibly costly) restoration. It is recommended that the town review these nodes of activity and older neighborhoods and develop a strategy, in addition to enforcement of blight regulations, which promotes

property upkeep and/or redevelopment. This will allow the multifamily density (between 3 to 15 units per acre) to remain incorporated within the single-family residential neighborhoods. Such a strategy, with proper regulations and design criteria, will support a quality diverse housing stock that is attractive, safe and convenient.

**Plan of Conservation and Development Workshop - Housing** During one of the initial POCD workshops, participants were asked to move to a topic table. One of the table topics was “Housing”. Participants were asked to discuss current and desired housing options in Windsor Locks.

Here is the summary of free flow thoughts that were generated by the participants:

- comfortable
- welcoming
- safe
- charming variety of diverse homes
- established neighborhoods
- varying house sizes, architecture, color, no more cookie cutter subdivisions
- need more (and newer) apartments/condos downtown and near the airport (both with housing above stores), downtown bed and breakfast
- need for “granny flats/in-law apartments”
- WL neighborhoods are walkable, close to highway, regional shopping
- home occupations – people are working from home more and more, starting their own businesses from home, working from home should be permitted if the uses are: computer, office, arts/music lessons, tutoring, anything that does not require lots of parking, have lots of visitors, make too much noise or look bad.
- Why live in WL? – low taxes, location, small town feeling still with lots going on nearby

With the information in this section in mind, the following Goals and Policy Objectives were formed. At the end of this Section, the reader will find resources for implementation, notes on compliance with the State Plan of Conservation and Development housing goals, as well as the Partnership for Strong Communities Housing Profile for reference.

QR Reader Post Card distributed during the Incentive Housing Zone Study. Participants called in or went online.



### Goals and Policy Objectives

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

#### Objectives:

1. Further analyze the current zoning and density of residential neighborhoods, especially those called out in the body of this section of the Plan. Consider amending zones as appropriate to allow growth and maintain current residential character where it already exists. Consider writing a consolidated regulation that incorporates the multiple avenues for approval of residential development, infill and redevelopment opportunities including “pocket neighborhoods”.
2. Inventory vacant lands to be considered for development and preservation.
3. Review and consider implementation of recommendations made in the following studies as they relate to housing, density, form-based code, and future development:
  - a. Incentive Housing Zone Study prepared by Milone and Macbroom (2015).
  - b. Main Street Study (2008) prepared by Ferrero and Hixon
  - c. Transit Oriented Development Study (2011-2013) prepared by Fuss & O’Neil
  - d. Zimmerman / Volk Associates, Inc. (2012)
4. Incorporate low impact development, lifespan planning (accessory dwelling units, “granny flats”), affordability and inclusive design standards into residential regulations as appropriate.
5. Review and revise this section of the plan as required from time to time per Connecticut General Statutes Section 8 – 30g.
6. Conduct neighborhood visual preference survey, incorporate design guidelines for residential development community wide utilizing survey outcomes.

## Implementation Resources:

Partnership for Strong Communities <http://www.pschoosing.org/news/2018-housing-data-profiles>

CERC Profiles <http://profiles.ctdata.org/profiles/>

Town of Simsbury Workforce Housing Overlay Zone [www.simsbury-ct.gov](http://www.simsbury-ct.gov)

Department of Housing <http://www.ct.gov/doh/site/default.asp>

Model Land Use Regulations <http://greenregionct.org/sustainable-land-use-model-regulations-3/>

Green Region CT <http://greenregionct.org/affordable-housing/>

Regional POCD <http://greenregionct.org/regional-plan-of-conservation-and-development-update-housing/>

State of the Nation's Housing <http://greenregionct.org/state-of-the-nations-housing-2013/>

Camoin Case Studies <https://www.camoinassociates.com/pocket-neighborhood-case-studies>

Pocket Neighborhoods <https://rosschapin.com/projects/pocket-neighborhoods/>

## Compliance with State Plan of Conservation and Development and CGS Section 23

- Affordable housing
- Compact mixed use development patterns
- Desired land uses
- Desired density
- Preservation and expansion of housing opportunity and design choice
- Multi-family development opportunity
- Development around transit nodes
- Lifespan Planning

While the 2018 data from the PSC Housing Data Profiles are often referenced throughout this document, the 2020 data came out just prior to printing the POCD. Key findings are shown here:

2020 Housing Data Profiles

**WINDSOR LOCKS**



### KEY FINDINGS

#### Housing

**10%**

of housing is subsidized

**25%**

of households rent their home

**25%**

of housing units are in multifamily buildings

#### Affordability

**20%**

of households spend between 30% and 50% of their income on housing

**12%**

of households spend more than half of their income on housing

**\$23.65**

the hourly wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment

#### Population

**42**

the median age of residents

**18%**

of residents are people of color (BIPOC)

**+0.6%**

projected population change from 2020 to 2040

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## SECTION IV. EDUCATION AND PERSONAL GROWTH

Windsor Locks strives to provide people of all ages with a community which fosters personal learning, growth, and development, starting with early childhood. This section will describe the current physical public educational institution and related population demographics which can be helpful tools in planning for the future of education in town. It will discuss the Town's goals and objectives which, if implemented, will help to ensure continued opportunities for generations of learners, inside a classroom, in nature and in all corners of the community. The components of this section include the following topics:

- Public Schools
- Population Demographics
- Facility Needs
- School Policies and Goals
- Kids and the Community
- The Five Protective Factors (as they relate to Land Use and Community Planning)
- Workforce Development
- Community Goals and Objectives



Windsor Locks Elementary School Program

### Our Public Schools

The public-school system is made up of two elementary schools, a middle school and high school. These schools are located on four separate sites located throughout Town. The following is an inventory of facilities and locations:

- North Street Elementary School, 325 North Street
  - o 32 Classrooms Pre-K – Grade 2
  - o 13.25 acres
- South Elementary School, 87 South Street
  - o 34 Classrooms Grades 3 – 5 Windsor Locks Elementary School Program
  - o 24.13 acres
- Windsor Locks Middle School, 7 Center Street
  - o 38 Classrooms Grades 6 – 8
  - o 13.11 acres
- Windsor Locks High School, 58 South Elm Street
  - o 52 Classrooms Grades 9-12
  - o 61.6 acres

Planning future needs of the community includes understanding changes in data over the most recent decades in housing units, births, deaths, enrollment. This information should inform and predict future facility needs and warranted policy changes which influence the Windsor Locks school district.

**School Population** As the table below shows, there was a significant decline in the K-12 school population from 1970 through 2015. Since 1970 the public-school population, while it had a modest increase in 2000, has had an overall and steady decline of 2581 students. This translates to a 61% decrease in students.

**Public School Students/Housing Unit**

	<b>Number of Housing Units</b>	<b>Public K-12 Enrollment</b>	<b>Public K-12 Students/Unit</b>	<b>% Change compared to previous line</b>
<b>1970</b>	4229	4211	1.00	
<b>1980</b>	4232	2328	0.55	-44.8
<b>1990</b>	4929	1589	0.32	-41.4
<b>2000</b>	5101	2050	0.40	+25.0
<b>2005</b>	5332	2043	0.38	-05.0
<b>2010</b>	5429	1785	0.33	-13.2
<b>2015</b>	5521	1630	0.30	-9.09

As indicated in the 2007 plan, demographers look for trends between housing unit growth and the change in school population. In 2017 this is still true. 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 was 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 was short-lived as was the impact on the school population. More information on these trends can be seen in the “Population and Housing” chapter.

According to the Windsor Locks Central Office data, the school population since 2007 has been relatively stable with a reported modest decline in school enrollment in the 2017 – 2018 school year of 1565 down from 1630 in 2015. While the number of housing units has steadily increased, the

number of students enrolled in the schools has steadily decreased. These community statistics indicate that the number of housing units does not dictate public school enrollment numbers.



The number of persons per household has been decreasing consistently since the post-World War II period. According to the Partnership for Strong Communities Housing Data Profile of 2015 the average persons per household held steady, only reduced to 2.4 from 2.43 in 2000. More information can be found about these trends and their relationship to the Windsor Locks community in the Community Livability chapter of the Plan.

The town has rezoned significant land areas from Industrial to Residential zoning in the early 2000's, and some additional properties have been rezoned in more recent years. Still, 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.

The following Table, "Windsor Locks Births and Deaths", provides figures from 1985 through 2017 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. As indicated in the 2007 Plan, 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.

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 projections beyond this five-year time frame should be used for general forecasting only and not be a basis for predicting future budget or facility

Live Births to Residents			Deaths to Residents		
Year	Births	Average	Average	Deaths	Year
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
2005	93	106	120	150	2005
2006	100			116	2006
2007	101			114	2007
2008	127			99	2008
2009	108			119	2009
2010	94	105	120	107	2010
2011	102			115	2011
2012	102			140	2012
2013	104			118	2013
2014	124			118	2014
2015	110			151	2015
2016	94			145	2016
2017	124			132	2017

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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 school planning tool.

The significant drop that occurred toward the late 90's and the early 2000's and the apparent plateau in Town births is a demographic figure that can assist the community with its planning efforts for educational facilities and programming. Although the birth numbers had historically experienced variations with yearly fluctuations of highs and lows, the decline over the past several decades is demographically significant. The total number of live births had exceeded the number of deaths without fail from 1980 through 1998; however, in 13 out of the last 18 years deaths have exceeded the number of births.

**Windsor Locks is one of the 153 Connecticut municipalities projected to see a drop in school age population between 2015 and 2025. Many towns will see declines over 30%. The projected decrease for Windsor Locks is 8%. Meanwhile, the 65+ population for Windsor Locks is projected to increase by 28%.**

**An Aging Population** As noted in the population and housing sections of the Plan, the Town population is aging. An 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. The decline in the number of births in past five years can be explained by the overall aging of the population, a decline in the town's child-bearing age population, and a possible significant out migration of the 25 - 34-year age groups which was and may continue to be an unfortunate trend throughout the region, the State and New England in general.

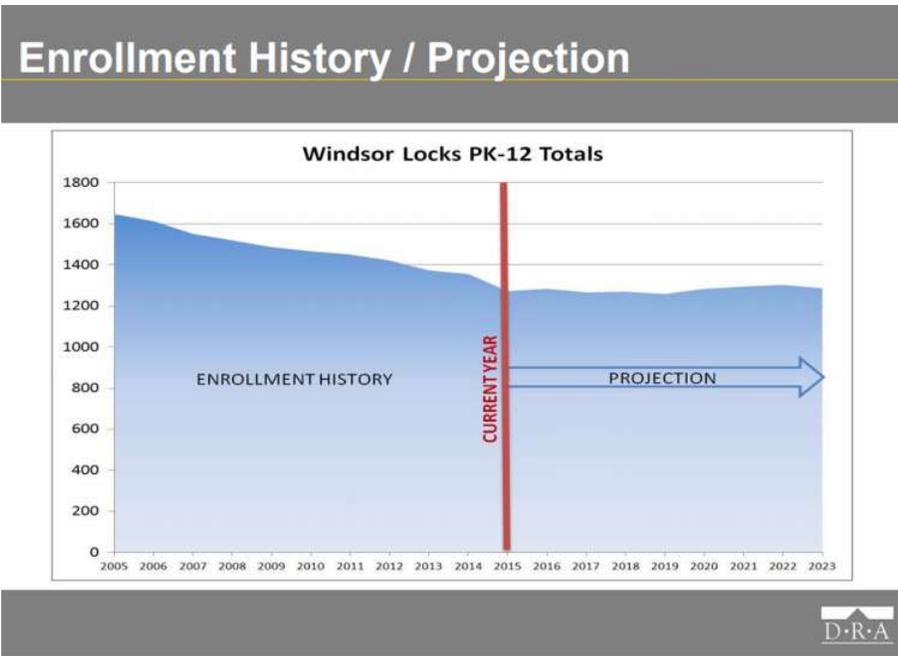
Windsor Locks has made strong strides in revitalization of the town center including increasing connectivity and transportation opportunities, which in 2017 begun to take physical shape with redevelopment occurring along the Main Street corridor. For example, a building permit was issued for conversion of the long vacant Montgomery Mill to 160 apartments just feet away from what will be a new rail stop. The age group referred to above has shown interest in living nearer to downtown in walkable, bikeable, connected and convenient places with character and “things to do”. If the Town can continue to develop along these lines, “Millennials”, young families, and aging populations alike may stay or newly gravitate to all that the community has to offer.

The Town has little developable land left for residential use. The Town has rezoned new areas for residential use over the past few years and is considering ways to accommodate infill and accessory dwelling units that do not detract from neighborhood character. It is unlikely that new subdivisions or large numbers of new homes will be built. Therefore, 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 demographic shifts usually occur slowly over a long period of time.

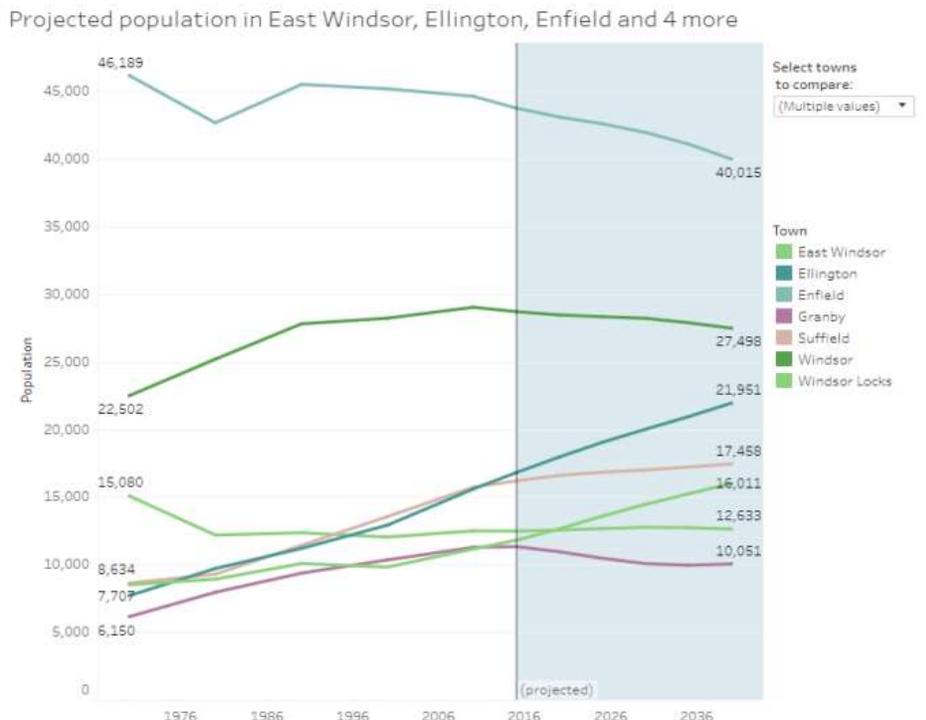
**Future School-Age Population Projections**

At the time that this Plan was drafted, town by town enrollment projections were no longer provided by the State Department of Education. Instead, the WLPS conducted a facility needs study in 2015. The graph depicted on this page shows that enrollment dropped from over 1500 students in 2007, to over 1200 in 2015. The projection graph shows only a very slight increase beginning in 2019, with a plateau into the 2020s.

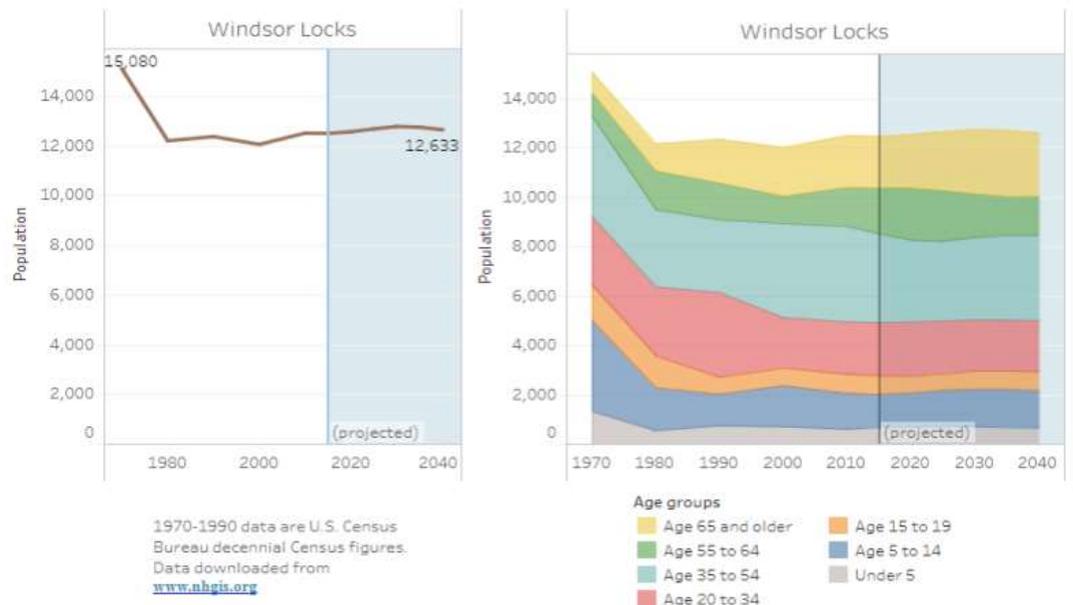


Prepared by DRUMMEY ROSANE ANDERSON, INC. 2015

This is useful data, in addition to the birth and death trend data, for school planning purposes. School systems would be wise to analyze demographic data every five years, well in advance of planning for facility and faculty need to monitor for unexpected changes to currently perceived trends. While such needs may change due to student age, learning space design considerations or program need, increased enrollment is not likely to be a significant factor in Windsor Locks over the next decade. The graphs below provide a visualization of the decline in the



community population over time, as well as a projected population that is not much different than it is now, even twenty years from now. In the comparative map, towns like Ellington and East Windsor are shown to expect moderate growth with more developable land, while others plateau or even decline.



**School Facility Needs** The district wishes to continue to make improvements to facilities that will preserve structures and foster excellent programming in a smart and responsible way.

The following projects were listed in the previous Plan and have been completed:

1. Middle School window replacement program
2. High School window replacement program and upgrade to the original heating system
3. High School Professional Library and Distance Learning Center

Needed upgrades include reconfiguration of space or renovations to the interior of existing buildings to accommodate the growing need for Pre – Kindergarten classes as the Town has a continuing commitment to early education. Upgrades at the district’s building entrances are needed to meet current accessibility and safety codes. The district will also be assessing various facilities for roof replacement (either partial or full) as the thirty-year anniversaries will be coming up within the next ten-year period. Lastly, the district will assess the need for upgrades to athletic fields to meet both competitive

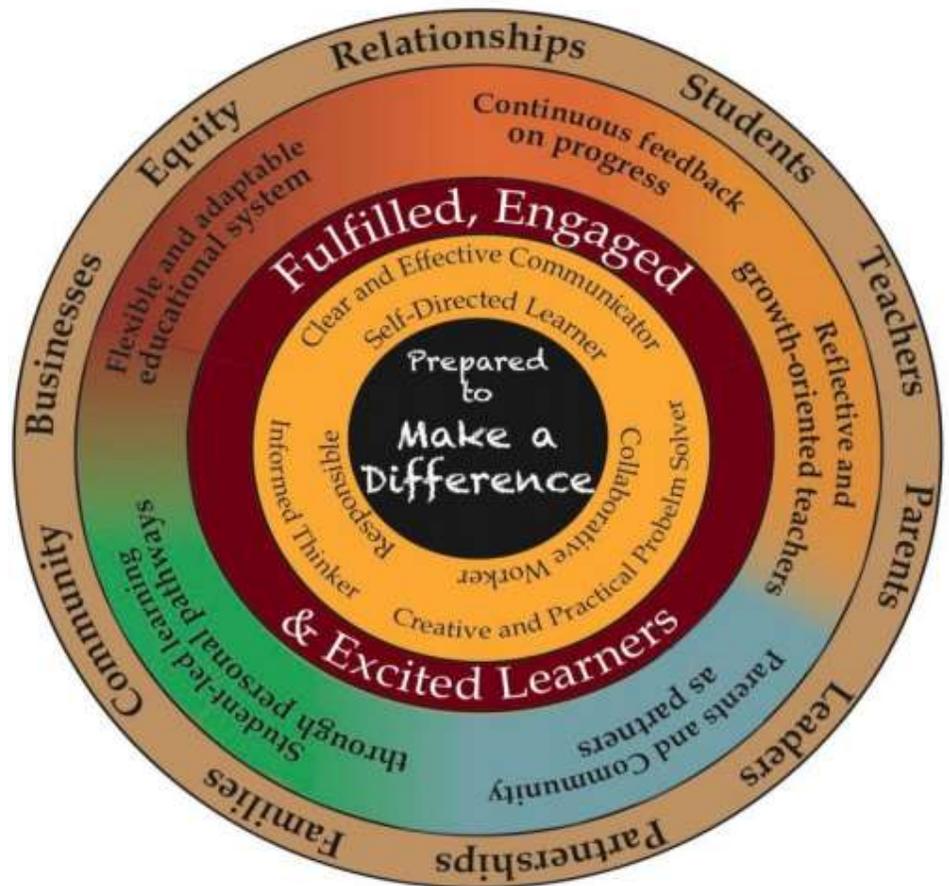


Prepared by DRUMMEY ROSANE ANDERSON, INC. 2015

standards and present-day usage expectations, such as rubberized tracks and proper irrigation. Further facility needs will continue to be reviewed annually by the Windsor Locks Public Schools Central Office.

### **Personalized, Mastery-Based Learning**

Windsor Locks Public Schools Windsor Locks Public Schools, in 2013, began to engage the public regarding the district plan to ensure that the first class to receive a diploma based on demonstrating mastery of academic standards, and not seat time, would be the class of 2020. From 2011-present, the district has been undergoing a complete transformation based on one clear and common focus: to improve the quality of instruction, thereby improving student achievement, by changing adult behaviors. Through this transformation, the district shaped the collective beliefs and values that still serve to drive schools toward realizing the promise of personalized/student-centered learning:



- Learning MUST be the constant; therefore, time MUST become the variable. All learners learn at different rates.
- All students can learn, and all teachers CAN teach all students.
- A “D” average and 24 credits of seat time is no longer good enough for the students at Windsor Locks Public Schools.
- All students will graduate from Windsor Locks Public Schools college, career, and life ready.

As school staff began to live and breathe these beliefs, they quickly realized that, for students to be college, career, and life ready, they need to be Our Vision of the Windsor Locks Graduate 11 Section IV, Education and Personal Growth educated in an environment that engages and challenges them beyond the traditional forms of schooling. Students can learn more and at deeper levels when the

instruction is centered on who they are as individuals; where they were, where they are, and where they are going in the learning process, and their demonstration of mastery against a set of robust academic standards.

Earlier chapters of this Plan refer to trends such as increasing cost of housing, the increased desire of young adults to use public transportation and not purchase a car right away, job loss in the region, the need for a young professional workforce that is ready to be innovative. The type of instruction being implemented by the district must prepare the young adults of Windsor Locks to face these challenges, seek and find opportunities to shine as community members.

We believe that when students lead, own, and develop their own learning and are co-designing in the process – in other words, when they **“Design, Apply, Document, and Defend”** their learning – they develop the capacity to truly contribute to their society as 21<sup>st</sup> century learners and workers. **Shawn L Parkhurst**  
- **Superintendent of Windsor Locks Public**

**Kids and Community Planning in Windsor Locks** The students of Windsor Locks and staff at the Town Hall have begun to develop a stronger relationship, especially through involvement in community planning, where students can help shape local solutions and participate in placemaking. One example of this interdepartmental coordination is the monthly “Meetings on Main”. At these meetings, business people, residents, local community leaders and students review and seek opportunities to make positive community change, often by implementing recommendations from previous professional planning studies. These efforts are made part of the academic learning experience. The district encourages students to be engaged, responsible and vocal citizens. The airport, aerospace, innovation, and precision manufacturing companies that tend to define local industry have potential to be natural local partners, as do all the community’s businesses. The Town’s proximity to the CT River and the associated tributaries, wetlands and greenways can provide inspiration for continued learning opportunities for outdoor classrooms. The Town should seek ways to formalize early learning opportunities at Town Hall and at local businesses of all types. The Town should also seek ways to increase the amount of student participation in the everyday planning process and build on recent successes. The youth perspective is important to community participation efforts. In ten years, many

of the community’s students will be adults, contributing to the area where they live, work, or participate.



**Early Development Instrument** Through a grant from The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, Windsor Locks was able to conduct a study in the Spring of 2018 using

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the EDI (Early Development Instrument). The EDI helps towns to determine how ready its little ones are when they enter kindergarten. In 2019, community partners, together with the schools, will analyze this data to develop and implement specific strategies for improving readiness.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

**Personal Growth** Babies, school age children, teens and adults alike are learners. Community members of all ages need opportunities to learn new skills, whether one is seeking a first job, or facing a job loss or simply looking for socialization and fulfillment. The following paragraphs will discuss how as a town, Windsor Locks can help young children succeed in school, help strengthen families, create a skilled workforce, and provide continued opportunities for personal growth.

**Protective Factors** There is a research-based and highly effective framework for supporting strong families known as the “5 Protective Factors and 5 Promotive Factors”, various forms of which have been explored internationally. The above referenced approach was developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP). If present, these factors provide a pathway to increase family strength, enhance child development and educational outcomes, reduce childhood abuse and neglect, support substance abuse prevention and increase the overall well-being of children and families.

The approach focuses on five factors:

1. Resilience
2. Opportunities for Social Connection
3. Support in times of Need
4. Knowledge and Information
5. Social and Emotional Competence

While every person (and every family) is different and will have varied challenges, there are ways that our land use and conservation and development policies can positively impact the citizens’ overall well-being, including families and learners of all ages. When people have convenient access to fresh air, green space, transportation, healthful groceries, jobs, quality homes and places to be active and socialize, they have many of the resources that can foster a healthier, happier, and more successful life. For example, studies show that children who live in an environment that has the above resources and qualities are less likely to be asthmatic and are often ill less frequently, they have learned necessary gross motor skills, and may be more socially and emotionally competent, all which can lead to better educational outcomes.



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Communities can provide the above for all citizens through thoughtful community planning and involvement of all Town Departments. Results are known to be best when the 5 factors are supported on a local level, through implementation of policies made for that community and objectives made for neighborhoods. The factors could be supported through zoning regulations, community outreach, public and private design of spaces, economic development, and conservation planning. Efforts should be made to consider this approach in future planning endeavors. Specific recommendations will be made in the Goals and Objectives section of this section based on local data and the results of Windsor Locks Public School early learning indicator study findings.

**Workforce Development, Adult and Higher Education** Workforce Development is an interconnected set of solutions to meet employment needs: It prepares workers with needed skills, emphasizes the value of workplace learning and addresses the hiring demands of employers from the outset. The goal is to place workers in jobs where there are career development opportunities. Workforce development enables individuals to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes for gainful employment or improved work performance; and provides employers with an effective means to meet their demand for skills.

Windsor Locks boasts several large employers and job opportunities particularly in the manufacturing and aerospace industries. Windsor Locks residents also find opportunities in nearby towns and cities such as Windsor and Hartford. Many residents from other towns commute into Windsor Locks, as noted in the data set below. Connecticut in general worries about companies closing or moving out of state, threatening job security and a secure economy. Organizations such as the Metro Hartford Alliance and more locally the Bradley Development League, look to market the region and all it has to offer. More about this topic will be discussed in the Economic Development section of this Plan. While some residents will travel or even move away after high school, it is ideal to have local opportunities for varied types of education and skill training within the community and in the region. In choosing a location, businesses need to know that they will have a strong employee base. A sustainable region will retain and attract skilled workers, making our towns more attractive for new businesses to locate, making jobs continually available to the people of the community.

Windsor Locks lies within the Knowledge Corridor, an interstate partnership of community members in Massachusetts and Connecticut who create a partnership in economic development, planning, tourism, business and higher educational institutions in order to advance the region's economic progress.

Education and training opportunities include but are not limited to:

University of Massachusetts  
Porter and Chester Institute  
Holyoke Community College  
Lincoln Tech Training  
Springfield College  
Asnuntuck Community College  
Springfield Technical Community College  
University of Connecticut  
Connecticut Fire Academy (Windsor Locks)  
Trinity College  
Stone Academy  
University of Hartford  
N.E. Tractor Trailer  
Capital Community College  
Windsor Locks Adult Education  
Goodwin College



### Public School and Town Wide Goals and Objectives

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

#### Objectives:

#### Public School Community and Facility Goals

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

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

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

Resources:

<http://www.wlps.org/>

<https://www.cssp.org/>

<http://knowledgecorridor.org/>

<https://www.planning.org/kidsandcommunity/>

<https://windsorlocksadulted.org>

[www.metrohartford.com](http://www.metrohartford.com)

<http://www.bradleydevelopment.com/>

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## SECTION V. ENVIRONMENT, LAND and NATURAL RESOURCES

**Introduction** This section of the Plan of Conservation and Development will identify and make recommendations related to a variety of natural features within the town of Windsor Locks. These recommendations are based on community input, land use board and commission review and professional reporting. Our land and our natural resources satisfy our wants and needs. They add beauty and character to the landscape and offer opportunities for residents to stay active and experience nature. They also provide some things that we depend on: clean water, fresh air, cooling shade, habitat for animals and land for agriculture. Windsor Locks is a built-up town. Any remaining natural features are irreplaceable and should not be taken for granted.

Environment, Land and Natural Resource Topics included in this section:

- a. Drainage Basins and Watercourses
- b. Aquifer Protection
- c. Wetlands and Floodplains
- d. Topography and Slopes
- e. Natural Diversity Database
- f. Agriculture and Farming
- g. Open Space and Greenway Creation
- h. Environmental Sustainability
- i. Climate and Resiliency
- j. Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4)



Each subsection as identified in the introduction will contain the community's goals and objectives to be used as guiding principles for not only the Planning and Zoning Commission and other land use commissions but for all citizens and governing bodies of the Town.

### Drainage Basins and Watercourses

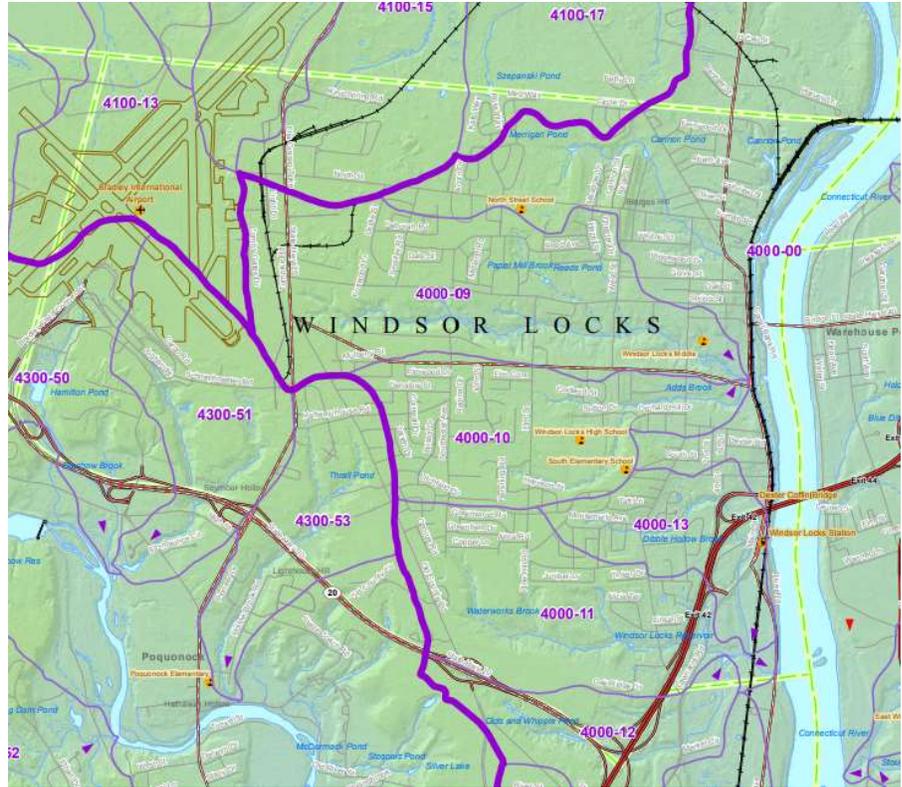
**Drainage Basins** As stated in the 2007 Plan, it is important to understand the value of the Town's watercourses, and the natural systems that they have carved out of the landscape. To do so, one must understand the drainage basins in which they lie. There are numerous drainage basins in the State of CT, three which lie in the Town of Windsor Locks.

The State of CT is divided into major watershed basins, all flowing 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 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.



## NATURAL DRAINAGE BASINS MAJOR, REGIONAL, SUBREGIONAL AND LOCAL WINDSOR LOCKS, CONNECTICUT

### LEGEND

- Basin Boundary
  - ▬ Major Basin
  - ▬ Regional Basin
  - ▬ Subregional Basin
  - ▬ Local Basin
- Local Drainage Basin Direction
  - ▲ Outlet Direction
  - ▲ Main Stem Direction
  - ▲ Coastal Direction
- Elevation
  - High - 2,413 FT
  - Low - 1 FT

**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.

These two small basins eventually flow to the CT River through each basin's tributary rivers and streams.

The previous and below maps shows the location and identification of basins and directions of surface water flow. These are intended to serve as a municipal guide for drainage basin delineation and identification. Local basins make up larger subregional, regional, and major drainage basin areas and are differentiated by their drainage basin boundary type and identification numbers. Arrows on the map represent general direction of surface water flow within local drainage basins. Local outlet direction is shown in purple. For full map and description follow the following web link.

[http://cteco.uconn.edu/maps/town/basinrelief/basinrelief\\_WindsorLocks.pdf](http://cteco.uconn.edu/maps/town/basinrelief/basinrelief_WindsorLocks.pdf)

**Aquifer Protection Areas** While protecting the waters of the community and state remains a priority, Windsor Locks no longer has a formally defined Aquifer Protection Area through the State of Connecticut. CT Water Company wellfields, within what is now known as the Waterworks Brook Preservation Area, were abandoned since the 2007 Plan. The Town, through its department staff, land use commissions, CT Water Company, and other regional entities, should continue to support natural resource preservation and minimize water pollution.

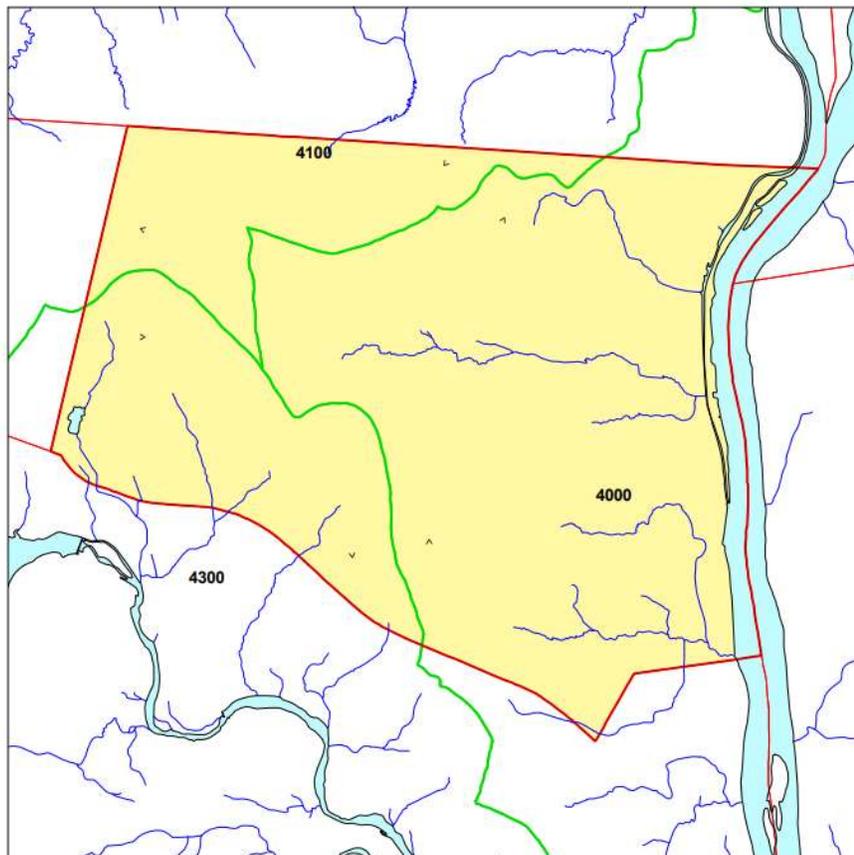
**WINDSOR LOCKS  
CONNECTICUT SUBREGIONAL  
BASINS AND SURFACE  
WATER FLOW DIRECTIONS**

**Explanation**

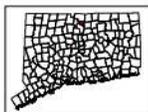
-  Town Boundary
-  Subregional Watershed Boundary
- 4201** Subrg. Basin ID# - as designated by CTDEP
-  Watercourse
-  Open Water
-  Basin Outlet
-  Surface Water Flow Direction

The table provides statistics for each subregional basin. Shown are the areas of the basin within the town, the percentage for that area, and the percent of the town covered by each basin.

Sbas_id	AcresInTw	Percofb	Percoftn
4000	3852.2	3.8	64.3
4100	922.7	5.9	15.4
4300	1202.0	0.9	20.3



Town Area: 5977 Acres



Digital layers provided by the CTDEP.  
Map composed by the NEMO project.  
For educational purposes only.

1 0 1 Miles

The University of Connecticut, CES: November 02, 1999

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**Watercourses** Most of the Town’s named and significant watercourses are 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:

- Seymour Hollow Brook**
- Merrigan Brook**
- Paper Mill Brook**
- Kettle Brook**
- Adds Brook**
- Dibble Hollow Brook**
- Strawberry Meadow Brook**
- Rainbow Brook**
- Waterworks Brook**

**Watercourses** safely transport stormwater flows; store floodwaters; perform a cleansing function to stormwaters that flow to them; provide for wildlife habitat; and provide aesthetic and recreational opportunities for the Town’s residents.

The health of these watercourses is of substantial interest to the Town as they travel through many of the Town’s residential neighborhoods, are located within a few the Town’s parks and recreation areas and perform many significant natural functions.

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 and through the Middle School property on Center Street.

**Kettle Brook** provides a fantastic outdoor classroom for the Middle School students. The community should continue to build on this opportunity by scheduling regular clean-up events, creating better access, installing a walking path, and adding educational signage, as recommended in the Main Street Study of 2008 prepared by Ferrero and Hixon.

Another significant brook is **Merrigan Brook** with headwaters near the Suffield Town line, crossing through North Street. It is characterized by substantial areas of wetlands and steeply sloped banks. From an open natural watercourse, it then travels through some of the denser neighborhoods in Town before entering the Connecticut River. Windsor Locks should continue to protect the natural headwaters of Merrigan Brook by expanding open space connections with other recently established open space areas near Circle Park and Chapman Chase.

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**Waterworks Brook** is in the southeast corner of Town. Most its length is located within the bounds of what was previously known as the Connecticut Water Company wellfields 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 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 was a priority in the 2007 Plan. Since then, the Water Company has abandoned the wellfields and the property is now entirely preserved land.

**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.

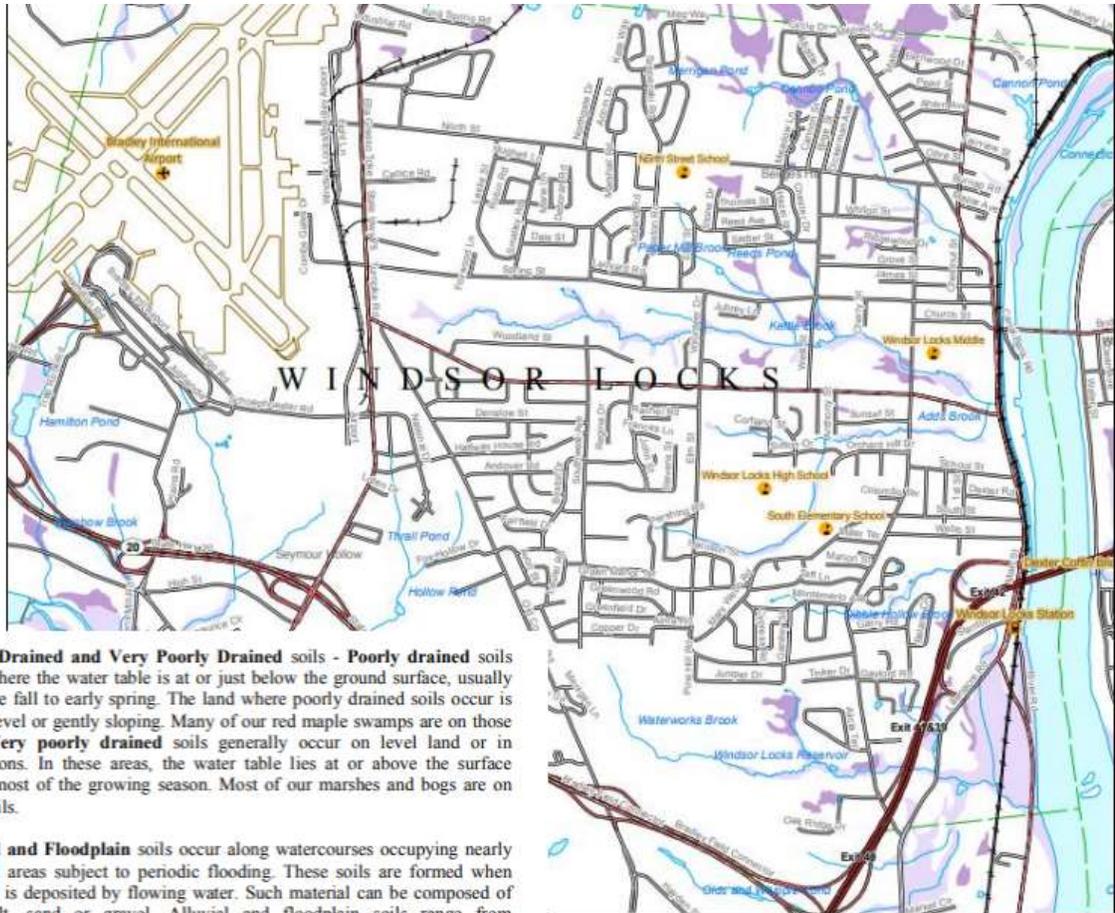
**Inland Wetland Soils** State laws protecting inland wetland soils began in 1974 with a substantial strengthening in 1987. As required by State law the Town of Windsor Locks has adopted Inland Wetland Regulations and has established an Inland Wetland Commission.

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.

**Fun fact:** Wetlands may not always appear wet. Our minds want to identify wetlands and watercourses with such terms as marsh, swamp, river, brook, pond, or lake. However, the CT Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Act (Act) defines wetlands by soil type. The soil types of wetlands are poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial, and floodplain. Identifying wetlands by soils allows us to recognize those areas during times of drought when there is no surface water present, or during winter when characteristic wetland indicator plants may not be obvious. *Source: CT DEEP Website*

Wetland soils are defined by State law as poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial 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. The full map and description can be found by going to the following web link at CT Eco.

[http://cteco.uconn.edu/maps/town/SoilWet/SoilWet\\_WindsorLocks.pdf](http://cteco.uconn.edu/maps/town/SoilWet/SoilWet_WindsorLocks.pdf)



**Poorly Drained and Very Poorly Drained soils - Poorly drained soils** occur where the water table is at or just below the ground surface, usually from late fall to early spring. The land where poorly drained soils occur is nearly level or gently sloping. Many of our red maple swamps are on those soils. **Very poorly drained** soils generally occur on level land or in depressions. In these areas, the water table lies at or above the surface during most of the growing season. Most of our marshes and bogs are on these soils.

**Alluvial and Floodplain soils** occur along watercourses occupying nearly all level areas subject to periodic flooding. These soils are formed when material is deposited by flowing water. Such material can be composed of clay, silt, sand or gravel. Alluvial and floodplain soils range from excessively drained to very poorly drained.

**Wetland Soil Map**

**Floodplains** Windsor Locks has a limited amount of land 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 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.

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

**Objectives:**

1. Explore the establishment of increased regulated areas in the Town wetland regulations particularly associated with the Town's major watercourses and their associated wetlands. Specifically, consider increasing the activity review area to one hundred feet (100') from the top of the bank of a watercourse.
2. In all new development proposals, establish and enforce a. a no net loss policy of inland wetland soils, and/or b. alternative enhancement opportunities policy to create higher value wetland areas where streams have been urbanized or where wetland soils have historically been disturbed.
3. Seek opportunities with the Conservation Commission, Department of Public Works, Parks Department and possibly with the Board of Education to provide educational markers, kiosks, and signs along not only watercourses, but significant wetland areas, natural features, conservation easements, open space areas and within the Town Parks. Consider requiring natural resource 10 Section V, Environment, Land and Natural Resources identification markers or signs as part of future land use approvals, via amended zoning, subdivision, and wetland regulations, by the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission.
4. Continue to require the dedication of open space as part of new development projects to preserve and protect the town's wetland systems.

**Topography and Slopes**

As discussed in the 2007 Plan, Windsor Locks is a Connecticut River Valley Town and does not generally have dramatic topographic changes or large areas of steep slopes. As noted earlier in the drainage basin section, most of the Town slopes from west to east toward the Connecticut River.

The airport property occupies the Town's highest elevation at an 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 many of the Town's single-family homes.

Some steep slopes and more dramatic elevation changes occur in the eastern portions of Town, and near 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.

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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. 11 Section V, Environment, Land and Natural Resources

**Objectives:**

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

**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 DEEP, 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, now updated as of December 2016, 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 available at the following DEEP online link and is shown at the close of this section of the Plan.

<http://www.depdata.ct.gov/naturalresources/endangeredspecies/nddbpdfs.asp>

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 DEEP 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's Natural Diversity areas as identified by the State of Connecticut.

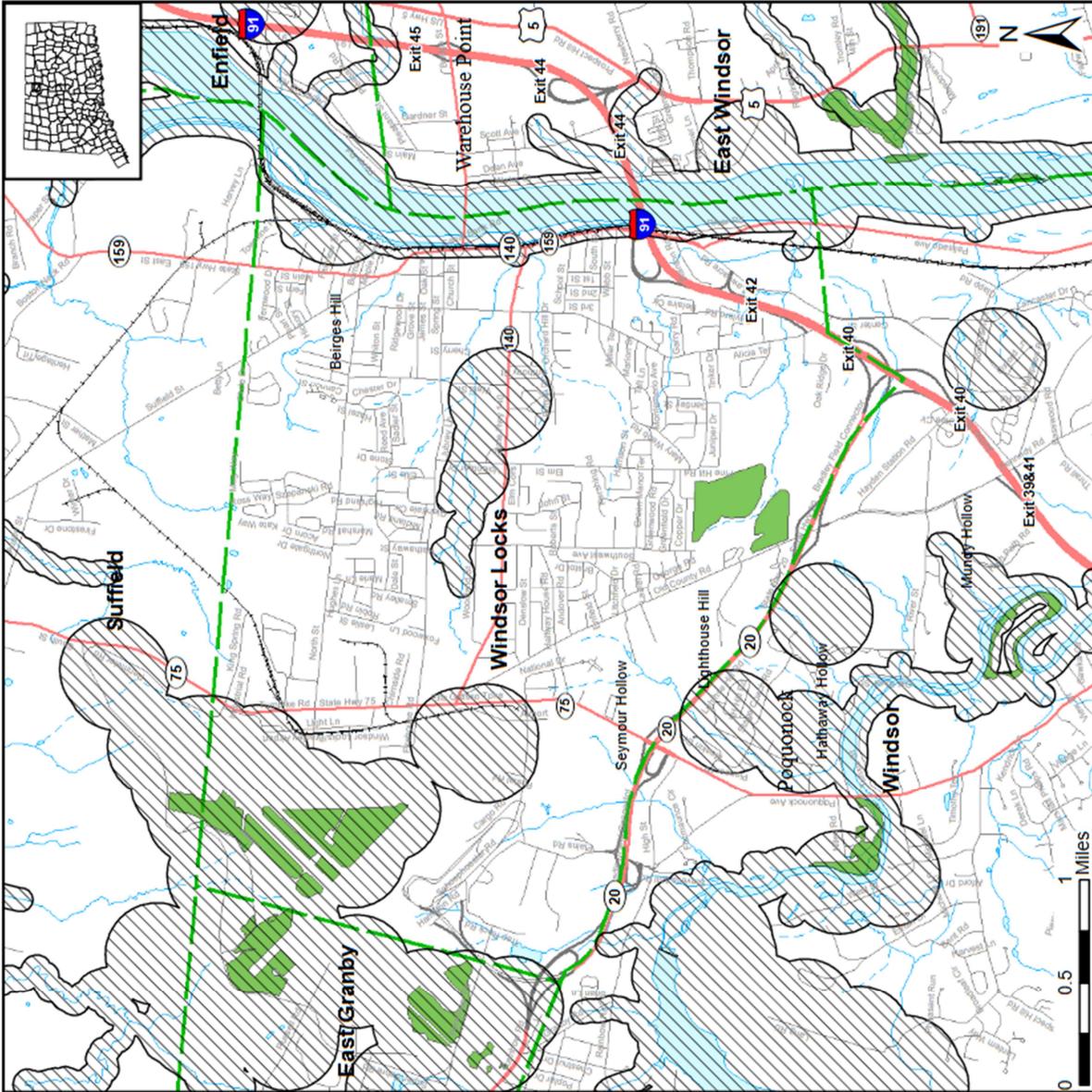
**Objective:**

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

Eagles, a symbol of our nation's strength and freedom, can often be seen soaring through the skies of Windsor Locks. They routinely nest in the tall trees at the bank of the Connecticut River, particularly near the Suffield and Enfield town lines. To foster a supportive environment for the eagles and their chicks, the Canal Trail State Park is closed annually, often from November through late June. Preservation of habitat is crucial to slowing or reversing the decline of the eagle population. The community will need to work closely with the CT DEEP to balance preservation, public enjoyment, and redevelopment in this area.



<https://www.trailink.com/trail/windsor-locks-canal-state-park-trail/> photo by @cancerrn



**Natural Diversity Data Base Areas**  
**WINDSOR LOCKS, CT**  
 December 2020

-  State and Federal Listed Species
-  Critical Habitat
-  Town Boundary

**NOTE:** This map shows general locations of State and Federal Listed Species and Critical Habitats. Information on listed species is collected and compiled by the Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) from a variety of data sources. Exact locations of species have been buffered to produce the generalized locations.

This map is intended for use as a preliminary screening tool for conducting a Natural Diversity Data Base Review Request. To use the map, locate the project boundaries and any additional affected areas if the project is within a hatched area there may be a potential conflict with a listed species. For more information, complete a Request for Natural Diversity Data Base State Listed Species Review form (DEP-APP-007), and submit it to the NDDDB along with the required maps and information. More detailed instructions are provided with the request form on our website.

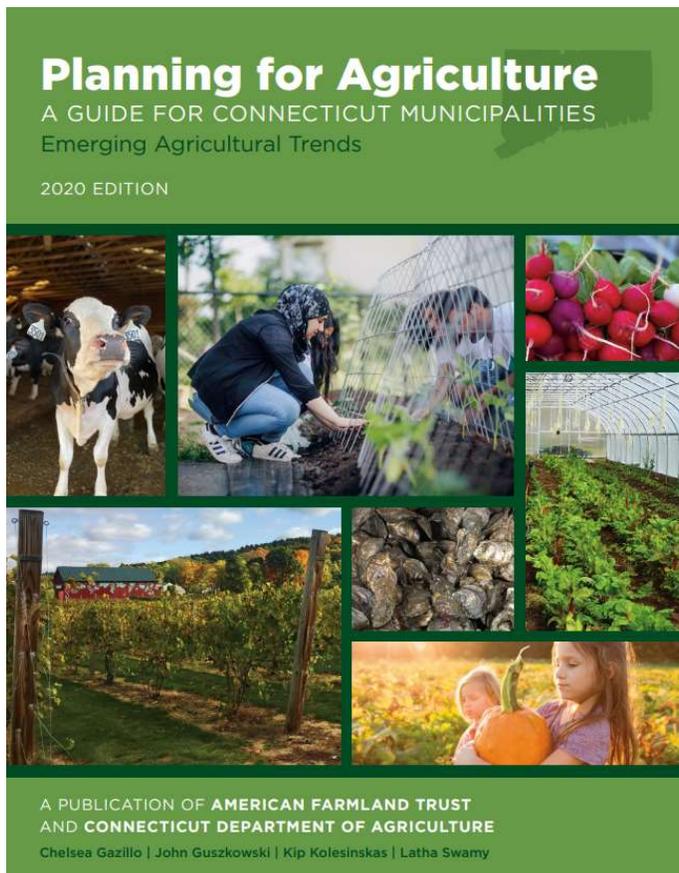
[www.ct.gov/deep/nddbrequest](http://www.ct.gov/deep/nddbrequest)

Use the CTECO Interactive Map Viewers at <http://cteco.uconn.edu> to more precisely search for and locate a site and to view aerial imagery with NDDB Areas.

**QUESTIONS:** Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)  
 79 Elm St, Hartford, CT 06106  
 email: [deep.nddbrequest@ct.gov](mailto:deep.nddbrequest@ct.gov)  
 Phone: (860) 424-3011



**Agriculture and Farming** The Town of Windsor Locks is geographically small and largely developed. The amount of farm acres continues to decrease, and development pressures are increasing. Windsor Locks, known to be an industrial mill town, shares that industrial history with acres of tobacco, horse pasture, vineyards, and vegetable crop. Agriculture and farming are a part of the fabric of the Windsor Locks community, helping to create the Town’s and Regionals character and economy. Windsor Locks residents and farmers, especially since 2014, have expressed interest in establishing a formal agency for promoting the preservation of remaining agricultural lands in Town. It is important that the Town include a goal and related objectives in this Plan to inventory, rank and protect existing farms, to seek balance between development and the continuance of agriculture and provide support to the farmer and resident who desire farm preservation.



Several CT municipalities have created a formal town commission or a less formal committee to both provide the farmers input into town policies and to help develop initiatives that will keep farming in the community viable. In 2016, the Windsor Locks Conservation Commission agreed to take on the role of the Agricultural Commission and has voted to also work in conjunction with an Agricultural Advisory Committee. The Conservation Commission would, as it does now, keep agendas and minutes and all other recording requirements for such business which may happen within both special meetings and regularly scheduled meetings.

Municipalities may establish a local agricultural council by vote of the Board of Selectmen per Section 7-131v. CGS.

The Conservation Commission, acting as this council, should seek to:

- Provide information to local farmers and to municipal boards and commission about the benefits of a balance between agriculture and other land uses
- Educate municipal officials about agricultural laws and safety issues
- Identify grant sources to grow the recently established Agricultural Land Preservation Fund, support local farmers and encourage farm preservation

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- Enable a common understanding of agriculture among all municipal departments
  - Provide information and guidance about zoning issues related to agriculture
  - Support local, regional and state vocational agricultural programs concerning agricultural matters

### **Farmland Inventory and Ranking**

**System** In 2016, eighteen (18) properties were identified during the initial farmland inventory. Agricultural uses include tobacco, corn/other vegetable crop and horse / pasture. Some confirmation through property owner outreach, site visits and Assessor involvement should take place to understand the community’s agricultural offerings more fully. It is suggested that the town utilize a ranking system for preservation efforts.



*Winlox Farm, West Street, Windsor Locks CT*

The following criteria is common for inventory ranking:

- Parcel size
- Percent of prime or important soils
- Percent active cropland
- Contribution to availability of local fresh foods
- Development pressure
- Natural significance (waterways, endangered species, vernal pools)
- Cultural significance (community support, historic recognition, iconic features)
- Nearness to open space land (preserved through deed or restriction, natural state, recreation, or farming)
- View from Town Road, Access, Character and placemaking opportunity

**Creating a Supportive Agricultural Business Environment** As agriculture and farming can be an integral part of a local economy it is important for the community to understand what they offer and what they need to remain viable.

Here is a list of questions for community members, land use commissions, economic development committees and others to consider in developing future goals and objectives.

1. Do the community’s farms provide on -site and/or off-site sales?

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2. Does the farm contribute to a farmers' market or other farm related celebration or festival?
  3. Do the Zoning Regulations permit agriculture related stands and signage?
  4. Do the Zoning Regulations promote smart growth principles, encouraging a balance between development and preservation? (Flexible Residential Regulations, Conservation Subdivisions)
  5. How does the town publicize state tax exemptions for the local farmers?

**Farm and Agricultural Preservation Plan and Strategies** It is recommended that the Town create a formal Preservation Plan for open space and agriculture, separate from the Plan of Conservation and Development. There are several resources for collaboration and planning for preservation.

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

**Objectives:**

1. Continue to work with the State of Connecticut to map/formally recognize the Town's agricultural soils.
2. Create an updated inventory of agricultural and farm lands.
3. Survey property owners to understand what their needs and wants are for the future of their lands and identify which properties are ripe for preservation.
4. Utilize the recently established ranking system to score identified parcels.
5. Consider annual appropriations to grow the recently established Agricultural Land Preservation Fund.
6. Review and amend the zoning regulations and subdivision regulations to encourage and support the farm community.
7. Provide resources to the farm community regarding town policies, regional support, and available grant funds.

**Helpful Resources:**

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/ct/home/>

University of Connecticut Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR)

<http://clear.uconn.edu/>

State of CT Community Preservations Program <https://portal.ct.gov/DOAG/ADaRC/ADaRC/Farmland-Preservation>

A guide for Connecticut Municipalities [Planning for Agriculture: A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities - FIC \(farmlandinfo.org\)](#)

CRCOG Sustainable Region [http://crcog.org/community\\_dev/sustainable-dev.html](http://crcog.org/community_dev/sustainable-dev.html)

EPA Smart Growth <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth>

**Open Space and Greenways** In the period between 2007 and 2017 Windsor Locks has continued to prioritize the expansion of its system of open spaces and neighborhood parks. This effort is particularly important due to the overall developed nature of the town and the reduction in green space over the last number of decades. While opportunity for development is important, so is preservation of the landscape. Both development and preservation are valuable to a community's economic health and sustainability. While areas of active and passive recreation are also 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.

**Open Space** Open space is a parcel or group of parcels, typically undeveloped or relatively natural land, including forest land, land designated as wetland under section 22a-30, and not excluding farm land, the preservation or restriction of the use of which would (A) maintain and enhance the conservation of natural or scenic resources, (B) protect natural streams or water supply, (C) promote conservation of soils, wetlands, beaches or tidal marshes, (D) enhance the value to the public of abutting or neighboring parks, forests, wildlife preserves, nature reservations or sanctuaries or other open spaces, (E) enhance public recreation opportunities, or (F) preserve historic sites.

**Greenways** Greenways are corridors of connected open space parcels that 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, multi-use (non-auto) paths and interconnected public spaces available to Town residents. They generally better preserve the natural feature it surrounds, such as a watercourse or wetland area, 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, enhance existing greenways or to establish future greenways. There are a variety of ways that these objectives can be achieved. Open space can be required as part of future subdivision and clustered

The State of Connecticut's plan envisions a mixed landscape preserving natural communities, protecting water quality, providing outdoor recreation, and offering green spaces for all residents. The State's goal is to preserve 673,210 acres or 21% of Connecticut's land as open space by the year 2023, including 10% of open space to be DEEP owned as additions to the State's parks and forests.

CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT  
POLICIES: THE PLAN FOR  
CONNECTICUT



2013-2018

Prepared by the Office of Policy and Management  
In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 16a-29  
Adapted June 5, 2013

residential development approvals by the Planning and Zoning Commission. 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 from 10% to 20% as is common with many surrounding communities, and larger percentages in clustered residential developments allowed by Special Permits.

As recommended in the Plan of 2007, the Town has established an Open Space Land Acquisition Fund. This has been funded by contributions through “fees in-lieu of open space” from new development but has not yet been funded by contributions from annual budget appropriations. Such annual contributions should be considered. As Windsor Locks is already largely developed the community is not likely to realize a great deal of new residential development. The Town’s open space fundraising efforts should not rely on fees in-lieu of open space alone. Open space grants should be aggressively pursued by the Town to achieve its open space goals.

"Greenway" means a corridor of open space that (1) may protect natural resources, preserve scenic landscapes and historical resources or offer opportunities for recreation or nonmotorized transportation, (2) may connect existing protected areas and provide access to the outdoors, (3) may be located along a defining natural feature, such as a waterway, along a man-made corridor, including an unused right-of-way, traditional trail routes or historic barge canals or (4) may be a greenspace along a highway or around a village. (CGS section 23-100)



Windsor Locks Canal Trail State Park 4.5-mile greenway connecting Windsor Locks to Suffield, now also connects to trail improvements between Suffield and Enfield over the Route 190 CT River bridge. traillink.com photo by @carlka931

### Existing Open Space and Greenway/Trail Opportunities

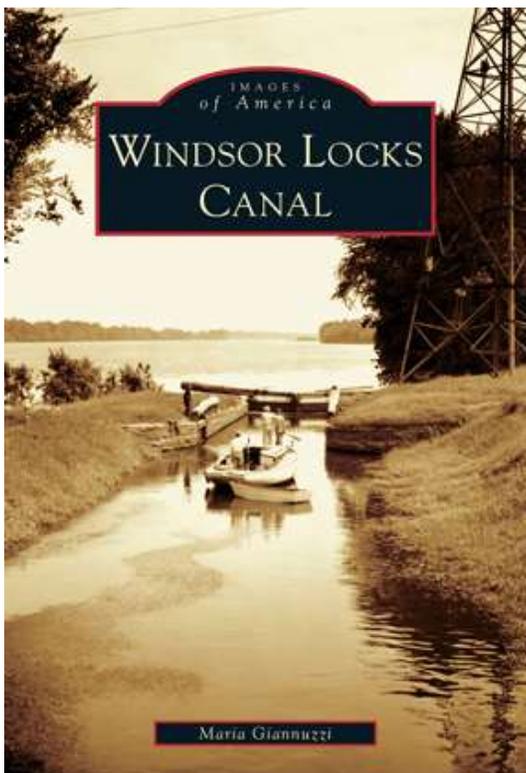
**Spring Park / Kettle Brook Greenway** - The existing town open space, consisting of Spring Park along an expanse of Kettle Brook forms a modest greenway in the center of the community. The town should seek opportunities to expand open space along this natural feature.

**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

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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, creating a greenway along Merrigan Brook, including surrounding wetlands, providing both protection for this natural feature and additional passive recreational opportunities. Windsor Locks should continue conversations with the Town of Suffield regarding a coordinated effort at the town line.

**Waterworks Brook Greenway** – This waterway is one of the longest undeveloped watercourse corridors within the Town of Windsor Locks. Most of this watercourse lies within what was previously known as 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 DEEP’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 was realized in the 2007 Plan and the land has since been preserved, expanding the Town’s greenway system. The community should look for ways to expand the preservation area onto adjacent parcels when appropriate or require significant natural buffers when adjacent parcels are developed. Additionally, the community has shown interested in organizing continued clean-ups, enhancing the park entryways, adding wayfinding and educational signage, and connecting the land to adjacent neighborhoods through travel paths.



**Connecticut River / Windsor Locks Canal Greenway** - The State of Connecticut has a long standing, yet conceptual, plan to establish a state recognized Greenway along the Connecticut River highlighting the river, canal and locks, the agricultural heritage within Suffield and the canal and mill history of the Windsor Locks riverfront land. This Greenway has already had the beginnings of the 4.5-mile Canal Trail State Park, a bikeway established along a portion of the riverfront area through easements secured with the State of CT and the land owners. There is continued interest by both Towns and the State in moving 21 Section V, Environment, Land and Natural Resources this formal greenway plan into reality, preserving the canal and locks, adding additional access points to the river and an expanded park area. The Town may also want to have further discussions regarding a Hydropower Feasibility Study. This park is currently a tremendous recreational, tourism and economic asset to the community and its

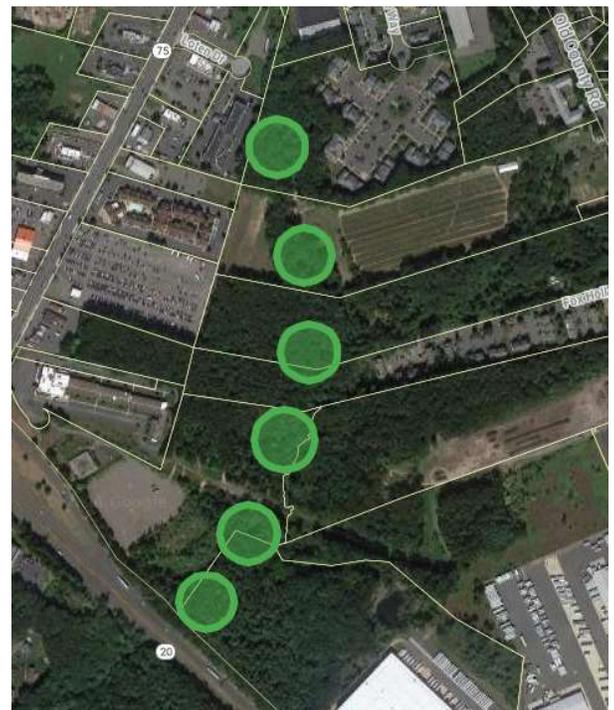
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residents. The Town has re-energized its efforts to work with the State of CT, Town of Suffield, land owners and other stakeholders to find ways to achieve this greenway plan.

**Small Abandoned Parcels** - The town should seek to identify “abandoned” and tax delinquent parcels which could be acquired for future open space. In 2016, the Tax Office and Land Use departments worked together to establish a list of 14 of such smaller parcels which were directly adjacent to other Town owned open space, undeveloped land, active recreation areas or otherwise provided potential connecting pathways to open space. Often these small parcels were approved for subdivision decades ago by developers or owners who for one reason or another did not ultimately develop the land. In some cases, the parcels are “paper streets” or are encumbered by watercourses or poorly drained soils, ideal for preservation and not ideal for development. Windsor Locks should continue to pursue acquisition of this set of parcels and similar parcels that become available through this process to expand existing open space or greenways.

**Hillside Greenway** – Hillside Avenue is a “paper street” that was never developed, adjacent to several town owned parcels and wetland soils. It is located between North Main Street and Mabel at the town line of Suffield. While the Town of Suffield has not identified the land north of these properties as prime for preservation, discussions between the towns should continue regarding the opportunity to expand the greenway beyond the town line to the North, at least as a buffer to any new industrial development in Suffield.

**Strawberry Meadow Brook / Back access** – This waterway is a significant feature that runs somewhat parallel to and to the east of Ella Grasso Turnpike/Route 75. It acts as a natural separation between the industrial and residential uses on Old County Road and the commercial uses on Ella Grasso Turnpike. Much of the brook is located on private properties where there is development potential. Additionally, a back-access road to Ella Grasso Turnpike was recommended several years ago as part of the Bradley Area Transportation Study along this brook, to open additional land for development and alleviate traffic on the route 75 corridor. This area, should there be proposals for any type of development, will need careful planning and a cooperative effort between property owners to accomplish ideal development and connectivity for either a road and/or multi-use path adjacent to the brook in a



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way that preserves the watercourse, its upland area, adjacent wetland soils, and at least three identified ponds along the stretch between Route 20 to Loten Drive.

**Route 20 Corridor** – There are a few highly visible parcels being marketed for commercial development along the Route 20 corridor. The community should consider the opportunity to create and/or maintain a linear greenway consisting of a multi-use path adjacent to the highway right of way from approximately South Center Street to Hamilton Road. Such a greenway could incorporate natural features, portions of historic farm fields, connections to the Town of Windsor and other adjacent open space lands. Once established this could be an alternative travel way connecting Main Street to the airport corridor and could enhance any new development proposals.

**River Road** – Windsor Locks, a CT River community, has little public access to the river. The town owns land on the east side of River Road along the water and so should consider creating a formal public access point, park, and potential greenway feature in this location. Further, the town should consider the future development of this neighborhood. River Road is currently zoned industrial. Given the existing residential homes on the west side of the street, the proximity to a major waterbody and the tendency of the area to flood, the town should also consider a zone change. Together with the property owners, other neighborhood stakeholders and the State of CT DEEP the town should establish a plan for River Road which considers existing residences, flood management, public access and preservation.

### **Open Space Goals and Objectives:**

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

### **Objectives:**

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

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

## **Environmental Sustainability**

The term "sustainability" will be referred to several times throughout this document. A sustainable community has resources (for example: food, jobs, economic wealth, health, transportation, and housing) available to it in the long term. The way a community conducts itself today impacts its overall wellbeing for decades to come. Environmental sustainability specifically allows for the needs of today's community to be met without jeopardizing valuable natural resources, agriculture and energy needed by future generations.

Since the 2007 Plan, Windsor Locks has participated in the following activities:

- Motion sensor and LED lighting within Town Hall
- Upgraded heating and cooling systems within Town Hall
- School district solar panels
- Town Library Energy Efficiency Upgrades

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- Rain barrel / Open Space Fund program
  - High School MS4 Education / Science Classes
  - Staff APA Ambassador Program (introducing youth to the Planning field)
  - MS4 Outreach and Education events

### **Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency**

Per the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection website, “The term renewable energy generally refers to electricity supplied from renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power, geothermal, hydropower, and various forms of biomass. These energy sources are considered renewable sources because they are continuously replenished on Earth.” States, regions, and local communities are asked to participate in efforts to use, and possibly produce, clean sources of energy. Since we know that fossil fuels are not infinitely available and create harmful greenhouse gases it is important to do so. Producing and using clean sources of energy locally can reduce dependency on others, minimize our contribution to these negative environmental impacts and create local jobs. Similarly, energy efficiency efforts reduce the amount of energy required to do all the things we need energy to do daily. Undertaking energy efficiency projects is one of the easiest ways to help lower energy usage and minimize impacts of energy use on the environment. Energy efficiency can take place in the home or in a business, in public facilities and among the private sector, no matter how big or how small.

This Plan provides a few recommendations related to resource preservation, community health and similar efforts. This section will build on this discussion to create an even more environmentally responsible Windsor Locks.

### **Environmental Sustainability Goals and Objectives:**

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

#### **Objectives:**

1. Land Use - Create a program that incentivizes “green construction” or similar retrofitting projects throughout the planning and zoning process.
2. Land Use - Amend the Zoning Regulations to include Low Impact Development standards
3. Municipal – Develop a community wide policy committing to a Sustainability Plan
4. Municipal – Consider becoming a Sustainable CT member
5. Municipal - Review current Town Hall / Municipal Department recycling, office supply and equipment purchasing, digital filing programs for opportunities for eco-friendly improvement.

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6. Municipal - Review current municipal services related to residential recycle programs to look for opportunities for improvement.
  7. Municipal – Continue the discussion on the purchase of an electric vehicle fleet and charging station at Town Hall
  8. Citizen - Create new ways to provide community education and outreach on changes that can be made at home. This can build on the current MS4 Stormwater Management best practices.

Helpful Resources:

<https://www.energizect.com/>

<https://www.ct.gov/deep>

<https://sustainablect.org>

<http://crcog.org/sustainable-capitol-region/>

## Climate and Resiliency



In the fall of 2005, due to heavy and prolonged rains resulting from tropical storms, many areas in Windsor Locks were inundated, a few citizens nearly lost their homes to slip surfaces and erosion. Since then, there have been several storms (snow, rain, wind) that have negatively impacted properties in town. The following paragraphs will continue the conversation of planning for intense weather patterns and the possibility of prolonged changes in our environment by exploring the idea of resiliency and helping to prioritize next steps for decision makers as they are presented with new predictions related to warmer air and land, mean sea level rise, frequency, and intensity of storms.

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Resilience: the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties, toughness

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A resilient community:

- Is attractive, safe and welcoming
- Is affordable to many
- Prioritizes walking, cycling and public transportation as much as it does the automobile
- Is designed to accommodate a mix of uses and a diverse economy
- Is designed to permit somewhat increased densities to allow for increased open space
- Is convenient to quality services and amenities (jobs, school, grocery, worship, social)
- Has a distinct sense of place, is unique with small hints of delight and surprise (unique features, color, art, culture)
- Has a quality public realm, spaces where people feel encouraged to sit, enjoy, spend time

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- Has enhanced green infrastructure
  - Has maintained its biodiversity both in its backyards and in its public spaces
  - Protects and celebrates local heritage

It is known that the above characteristics helps a community to be desirable, sustainable, and economically strong (resilient), but what does resilience mean when it comes to climate and weather and what is the difference between the two?

**Weather** Weather is the measure or assessment of the atmospheric conditions manifesting over a certain geographical location, at an exact moment in time.

**Climate** Climate is the measure or assessment of atmospheric conditions that manifest on a certain geographical location over an elongated period, often exhibiting repeatable patterns of change or stability on an annual or longer basis. [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov)

#### **What information should Windsor Locks consider?**

While Windsor Locks is not a coastal community and is therefore not as directly impacted by sea level rise, the Town is located along the Connecticut River and is subject to flood events. It is important to review available data and consider the possible local impacts of various weather and climate scenarios related to this increase, as well as our community's overall impact to the environment which everyone shares. Global Mean Sea Level Rise scenarios, NOAA Technical Report shows a remarkably high confidence that global mean sea level will rise at least 0.2 meters (8 inches) and no more than 2.0 meters (6.6 feet) by the year 2100. Consideration of this report and what it may mean for our local communities is required by CT State Statute when preparing local Plans of Conservation and Development. Such review and consideration can lead to better regional planning and therefor smarter local decision making by boards and commissions, as well as increased preparedness.



*Connecticut River at Montgomery Mill, 25 Canal Bank, prior to adaptive reuse and restoration, 2018*

**Sea Level Rise, related to climate trends, warm air and land temperatures and ice melt, is predicted to impact shorelines and riverine communities, increasing erosion and flooding risk, which should be assessed based on local risk and conditions.**

Inland communities like Windsor Locks should consider the following impacts:

- more frequent and more severe storms
- warmer air, water, and land temperatures
- longer periods of drought in between rainstorms
- flood
- health
- economy

In town, this could mean that new areas will flood, however it is more likely that areas already known to be inundated or have poorly drained soils may now have standing water, or areas that are known to flood may flood more frequently and with more intensity.

Health impacts of changing weather patterns or longer-term shifts in climate for an inland community could be poor air quality, increase in infectious diseases or conditions ripe for breeding of mosquitos, for example. Local farm crops can be impacted adding to fresh food insecurity.

Shallow waters and warmer temperatures can impact the economy, especially for those industrial companies that rely on bodies of water to cool their plants. Road closures due to flood can also impact commerce and local transportation.

The community may want to consider this question, “Would you be concerned that the recent patterns of storms will continue?” If so, it may be time to assess the community’s resiliency if these storms were to maintain their frequency. Additionally, there are steps that can be taken to reduce vulnerability, whether storm severity or frequency continues or not.

**“A category 3 hurricane could result in a loss of up to 70 – 80% of the State of Connecticut’s trees.” CIRCA Executive Director and UConn Professor of Marine Sciences, James O’Donnell**

**Mitigation** Mitigation means preventing or reducing impacts from occurring, making changes proactively. In November 2019 FEMA approved the Capitol Region Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan 2019-2024, in which are specific mitigation goals for Windsor Locks related to storms, flood, wind and similar potential climate related impacts.

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**Mitigation Strategies and Actions** The Town proposed to initiate several new mitigation actions as part of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. The full list of actions should be reviewed, updated, and acted upon based on their priority. Actions guided by the mitigation plan have been incorporated into this Plan to assist departments in planning for the upcoming ten years. The actions have been prioritized based on FEMA guidelines.



Action: Monitor infrastructure. Enforce and maintain, as appropriate, cleaning of grates along Main Street and clearing of trash rack adjacent to 1 and 8 Main Street.

Goal: Improve the resilience of local and regional utilities and infrastructure using strategies including adaptation, hardening, and creating redundancies.

Category: Prevention

Lead: Public Works

Cost: \$5,000 - \$10,000

Funding: Town Operating Budget, Grants as needed

Timeframe: 01/2020 - 12/2025

Priority: High

Action: Enter the Sustainable CT program through Registration and review actions that can be undertaken to pursue Certification. Make progress with actions related to hazard mitigation and low impact development.

Goal: Increase the use of natural, “green,” or “soft” hazard mitigation measures, such as open space preservation and green infrastructure.

Category: Natural Resources Protection

Lead: Planning

Cost: \$0 - \$10,000

Funding: Town Operating Budget, Grants as needed

Timeframe: 01/2020 - 12/2025

Priority: High

Action: Update voluntary list of people who identify as vulnerable or people who are disabled and may need assistance with evacuation, oxygen, transportation or other accommodations during an emergency event or natural hazard. Improve interdepartmental coordination and protocol. Increase communication to residents related to emergency preparedness.

Goal: Improve public outreach, education and warning systems.

Category: Education and Awareness

Lead: Public Works  
Cost: \$0 - \$1,000  
Funding: Town Operating Budget, Grants as needed  
Timeframe: 01/2020 - 12/2025  
Priority: High

Action: Develop designs and a cost-estimate for elevation of the fueling tank at the 1 Stanton Road DPW site; tank is currently underground and at-risk of being impacted by flooding.

Goal: Improve the resilience of local and regional utilities and infrastructure using strategies including adaptation, hardening, and creating redundancies.

Category: Structural Projects

Lead: Public Works Cost: \$10,000 - \$25,000  
Funding: Town Operating Budget, Grants as needed  
Timeframe: 01/2020 - 12/2025  
Priority: High

Action: Conduct outreach to local businesses with the aim of preventing the accidental release and pollution from chemicals stored and used at their facilities during or following natural hazard events.

Goal: Improve public outreach, education, and warning systems.

Category: Education and Awareness

Lead: Planning and Development, in coordination with DEEP  
Cost: \$200 - \$1000

Funding: Materials and Resources Provided by CT DEEP, Town Operating Budget, Grants as needed  
Timeframe: 01/2020 – 12/2025  
Priority: Medium

**Low Impact Development** Low Impact Development, or LID, is a site design and stormwater management strategy intended to maintain or replicate predevelopment hydrology using small-scale controls integrated throughout the site.

Low Impact Development manages runoff by

- Encouraging conservation
- Reducing impervious areas
- Slowing runoff by using landscape features
- Using measures to reduce and cleanse runoff

**Tropical Storm Irene resulted in over 800,000 power outages requiring 9 days to fully restore, downing 2% of the State's trees with total damages estimated at 200 million dollars. T.S. Irene was not even considered a "major hurricane". Governor's Storm Briefing 2011 Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection**

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- Preventing pollution as close to its source as possible.

LID is also referred to as “Green Infrastructure,” or “Green Stormwater Infrastructure” and can be a tool for both mitigation and adaptation.

**Adaptation** Adaptation means managing impacts, learning how to accept and live with new impacts, projecting the community’s needs, understanding the cost associated with each impact and choosing projects that are “the best bang for your buck”.

**Beautification/Seek Opportunity** Mitigation measures provide function, but they can also provide beauty. Consider how the town can embrace the current landscape or anticipated changes. Windsor Locks can creatively seek opportunities for beautification in its existing environmental features, create new wetland areas, rain gardens and other flood storage areas. There is also opportunity in enhancing parks and other natural resource areas such as the CT River, encouraging public access, trails, and other types of tourism, so that they become economic generators. Lastly, the Town can consider retreating from flood prone areas and allow dense and diverse growth in other areas of town to sustain or grow the tax base.

#### **Climate and Resiliency Goals and Objectives:**

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

#### **Objectives:**

1. Initiate a process for determining the community’s resiliency
2. Identify the community’s questions and concerns
3. Assess the community’s current development patterns against areas likely to be impacted
4. Understand and analyze risks
5. Review flood regulations
6. Communicate with property owners regularly to gain input and reduce losses
7. Write and implement low impact development and compact development regulations
8. Strengthen land preservation programs
9. Consider community wide goals such as reduced emissions and reduced energy consumption
10. Reassess the community’s resiliency at least every 10 years in line with the State of Connecticut and University of Connecticut’s recommendations and requirements per PA 1319
11. Complete already identified Mitigation Strategies and Actions

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## Partners and Resources in Creating a Resilient Community:

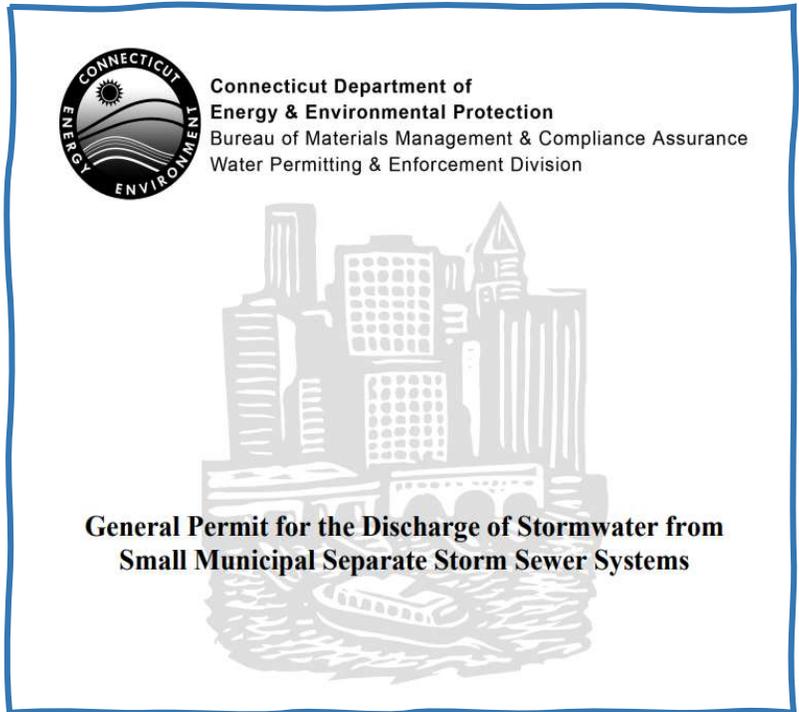
### Partners:

Residents and Property Owners  
Selectmen and all Town Hall Departments  
North Central District Health Department  
Local Utility Companies  
Capitol Region Council of Governments  
University of Connecticut, CLEAR, NEMO  
Windsor Locks Public Schools  
USDA – NRCS and State of Connecticut DEEP

### Resources:

Clean Air Partnership [www.cleanairpartnership.org](http://www.cleanairpartnership.org)  
CT DEEP Adaptation Resource Toolkit [www.ct.gov/deep](http://www.ct.gov/deep)  
CT Climate Change [www.ct.gov/deep/climatechange](http://www.ct.gov/deep/climatechange)  
UNH Forging the Link Low Impact Development <https://www.unh.edu/unhsc/forging-link-topics>  
Clean Air Cool Planet <http://www.cleanaircoolplanet.org/>  
CT Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation - UConn [www.circa.uconn.edu](http://www.circa.uconn.edu)

**Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4)** The United States Environmental Protection Agency determined that municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) are a major pathway for the introduction of pollutants to waterways and are a leading cause of poor water quality, for both fresh and coastal waters. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) administers and implements this program through the General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Small Municipal Storm Sewer Systems (the General Permit).



The DEEP issued a new General Permit effective July 1, 2017. As part of the General Permit application, Windsor Locks has developed and has begun implementing the Stormwater Management Plan which incorporates:

- Public Education and Outreach
- Public Involvement and Participation
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
- Construction Site Runoff Control
- Post-construction Stormwater Management
- Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping

The Town's Department of Public Works, Planning and Zoning Commission and various departments will need to work cooperatively to continue to meet the new requirements of the General Permit and minimize the discharge of pollutants to Town and State waters.

#### **MS4 Goals and Objectives:**

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

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**Objectives:**

1. Continue to perform a regular inventory of each of the Town's major watercourses to evaluate their health.
2. Build on the current volunteer trail and watercourse "clean-ups" to establish a more formal annual schedule.
3. Continue to involve residents, school groups and other organizations in an education program about the importance of the Town's watercourses, including the function of upland areas and impacts from storm water runoff due to adjacent land uses.
4. Seek new opportunities to create additional public open spaces around the Town's watercourses to preserve their functions and create connectivity among the Town's open spaces areas.
5. Consider new opportunities for public paths and trails along open space corridors (Spring Park, Kettle Brook and Waterworks Brook, for example), along the Town's significant watercourses, as a unique recreational amenity and educational opportunity for Town residents.
6. Develop low impact development land use regulations, requiring site specific stormwater management plans which mitigate polluted runoff and maximize green, open, and pervious spaces to minimize impacts to waterways.
7. Evaluate various types of green infrastructure and consider establishing local policies which encourage or require green infrastructure use within the community's roads and development projects.
8. Establish a formal interdepartmental Stormwater Management Plan to identify, mitigate and prevent pollution to the waters of the community, the region, and the State of Connecticut.



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## SECTION VI. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

The traffic and transportation section of any Plan of Conservation and Development is an integral one. Communities must plan for, and around, their transportation networks. The types of uses that are encouraged in an area often depend on nearby existing or planned transportation options.

A plan for circulation is one that relies on an integrated network of arterial, collector, and residential streets needed to distribute automobile related traffic (people and goods) safely and efficiently throughout a town. The plan would be incomplete if it did not ensure transit options to support all users such as accessible rail, public busses, shuttle services, shared-vehicle programs, sidewalks, multi-use pathways, plazas, and trails.

Why is transportation important in a community? Transportation links us to: jobs, healthcare, shopping, other people, and groceries...life.

This transportation section is especially fundamental in the Plan for Windsor Locks. Locally, residents enjoy an established road system and series of connected sidewalks in most neighborhoods. Home to an airport, rail station, a major highway, state routes and a bridge crossing the Connecticut River, the Town is regionally known to be a growing transportation hub. In recent years, many of the community's planning efforts have focused on transportation related opportunities. These opportunities will be explored further in the following pages.

This section of the Plan covers the following topics:

- Roads and Streets Inventory
- Traffic
- Bradley Airport Area
- Complete Streets
- Active Transportation
- Transit Oriented Development
- Needed Improvements
- Goals and Objectives
- Implementation



**Boats navigated through Windsor Locks by canal -** In 1824, a group of prominent Hartford businessmen formed the Connecticut River Company to construct a canal, which included a series of "locks" to control water levels that would allow boats to bypass the treacherous rapids of Enfield Falls. This extended the opportunity for travel along the Connecticut River. The very meaning of the name, Windsor Locks, is inspired by transportation.

**Roads and Streets Inventory** As of December 31, 2016, there were 62.24 miles of public roads in Windsor Locks. Of this amount, the State of Connecticut maintains 10.4 miles (16.7 percent), and the remaining miles, 51.84 miles (83.3 percent) are maintained by the town.

Since the 2007 Plan of Development, the number of miles of local roads has increased by 1.85 miles.

The amount of newly constructed miles of road has been minimal in the past few decades as the amount of land available for development is limited. At the time of this document’s adoption, the only streets under construction are planned to be privately owned and maintained within common-ownership residential communities.

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
2016	51.84	51.84

**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 designed to efficiently distribute local and regional traffic through Town or onto the surrounding expressway and interstate highway system. The following paragraphs outline 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 at the interchange of Route 20 and Old County Road, has made industrially and commercially zoned properties along this corridor highly desirable. Over the last few decades, several properties along these expressways have been developed by substantial, nationally known businesses and industrial firms.

**Arterials / Principal Thoroughfares** State routes offer easy connections to the interstate and expressway systems and are designed to service areas that are adjacent to interstates, within town and between neighboring 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 often also provide 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 services needed for these streets although they are privately owned and maintained. Examples of private residential streets are: Alma Road, Rachel Road, Washington Street and Fourth Street. Generally, the Town will only accept private streets as a public road if they are first brought up to town standards.

There are also several private streets in the community’s 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 is an example of a private street accepted as a Town road after it was brought up to town standards. The Town should continue to review such requests on a case-by-case basis. In approving a new private roadway in a 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 has 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
2018	\$263,603

**Local Road Maintenance** Maintenance of Town roads is managed through the Town’s Department of Public Works (DPW). Town roads are maintained by eight employees of the Windsor Locks DPW. Responsibilities of the department include paving, snow plowing, brush removal, mowing, maintenance of stormwater systems, pavement overlays, pavement sealing, sidewalk repairs, replacing curbing and road construction projects.

The Town has developed 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 continues to improve this

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segment of the infrastructure through its capital improvement requests. This requires substantial sums of money on a continuing basis.



In 2017 and in recent years, there has been a heavy focus on the town's transportation network and Transit Oriented Development. Efforts are underway to relocate the Amtrak rail platform, construct Complete Streets downtown, improve access to the CT River, provide bike and pedestrian travel throughout town, across the Canal and over the bridge to East Windsor, for example. Planning for such projects, in addition to maintenance of existing roads, requires the

development of a sound capital expenditure program. During fiscal year 2018 – 2019, a total of \$2,662,000 was set aside for road repair with a request of \$8,473,000 in the 5-year Capital Improvement Plan through fiscal year 2022 – 2023. This allocation establishes a proper fund to address aging roadways and drainage systems. Interdepartmental planning and long-term budgeting should be encouraged. Well maintained, safe and welcoming roadway system contributes to the quality of life for Windsor Locks residents.

**Traffic** Two major roadways associated with Bradley International Airport, Ella Grasso Turnpike (Route 75) and Schoepfoester Road, are the most heavily traveled roads in the community. 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.

**Traffic Counts** According to the 2016 State of Connecticut traffic monitoring data, Route 75 handles up to 24,380 vehicles per day, just north of the interchange with the Bradley Filed Connector, compared to 24,500 vehicles in 2001. The roadway hits daily peaks at 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Schoepfoester Road, an east-west roadway extending from Route 75 to the airport, handles approximately 13,725, in 2016, down from the 2001 estimates of 17,800 vehicles per day. The Town's other major north-south State arterial roadway, Route 159, Main Street, is the next busiest roadway in the community, handling 14,550 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 9,950 trips per day just north of Old County Circle. Spring Street and CT Route 140, Elm Street, like in 2001, continue to handle between 4,000 and 6,000 trips per day.

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**Commuting (Journey to Work)** Understanding the commuting trends of residents of Windsor Locks and other nearby towns can help predict demand on local roads and other modes of transportation. According to the US Census and Department of Labor, 56% of workers commuting to Windsor Locks live within 15 miles of their job. Nearly 85% of Windsor Locks inbound 6 commuters drove to work alone, while 10% carpooled, 2.1% took the bus, and 2% walked, biked, or traveled by some other means. This modal distribution may change now that 1. the CTRail Hartford Line commuter rail service began operation in June 2018 and 2. as Complete Streets and Active Transportation policies are implemented. At the time of the previous Plan, workers were increasingly located in diverse areas, sometimes away from urban centers and often traveling far distances, increasing commute time. While this still may be the case for many employees there has been a shift. As technology and work culture advances, and as physical expansion for parking is limited, employees are working more and more from home.

In the Capitol Region the average travel time to work increased 6% from 21.9 minutes to 23.2 minutes from 1990 to 2000. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Hartford County commuters traveled 22.1 minutes to work in 2013 and 23 minutes in 2017. It appears that commute times have once again leveled out. Windsor Locks residents experienced a similar trend with the average travel time to work increasing from 18 to 19 minutes between 1990 and 2000. However, since 2000 the trends are largely unchanged. Most Windsor Locks commuters spend no more than 20 minutes on their trip to work. In fact, in 2017 there was a higher percentage (20.5%) of Windsor Locks commuters who spent 10 or less minutes on their commute compared to any other shorter or longer commute time category.

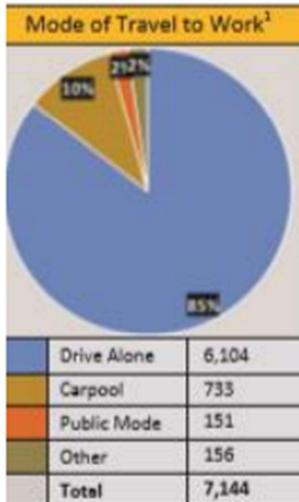
In 2000 an estimated 25.4% of Connecticut residents worked in their own towns, down from 31.1% from 1990. Windsor Locks residents followed this trend with the percentage of residence working in town dropping from 37.7% in 1990 to 24.4% in 2000, a 13.2% decline. In 2014 the number of Windsor Locks residents working in town dropped to 10.2%, an additional 14.2% decline. The commute out of town for work has significantly increased over the last decade. We know that many factors contribute to a person's decision making when it comes to transportation choices and employment. While it is impossible to control what drives these trends, Windsor Locks can be aware of the data and trends to make thoughtful land use decisions. In the following paragraph let's explore current trends and technologies that are impacting our decision making and consider ways that the local government can best support a successful local transportation network.

For more information, see the Employment and Commute Fact Sheet which follows this Section.

# Town of Windsor Locks

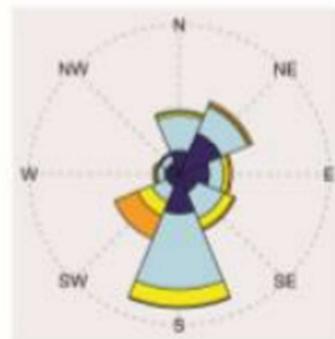
# Employment & Commute

Town Overview	
29.6 square miles land area	
12,498 population (2010) <sup>3</sup>	
12,585 jobs (2014) <sup>4</sup>	



According to the US Census and Department of Labor, 56% of workers commuting to Windsor Locks live within 15 miles of their job. Nearly 85% of Windsor Locks inbound commuters drove to work alone, while 10% carpooled, 2.1% took the bus, and 2% walked, biked or traveled by some other means. This modal distribution may change once the CTrail Hartford Line commuter rail service begins operations in June 2018.

Recent data indicates that the largest number of workers in Windsor Locks commute from the South. A significant number come from the East also, while 10.2% of workers are Windsor Locks residents, and 16.1% commute from Massachusetts. An estimated 11,301 workers commute into Windsor Locks from other locations on daily basis, while 1,284 both live and work in Windsor Locks, for a total of 12,585 people working within the Town of Windsor Locks. Additionally, 7,920 people live in Windsor Locks but work elsewhere.



**Commute Distance**

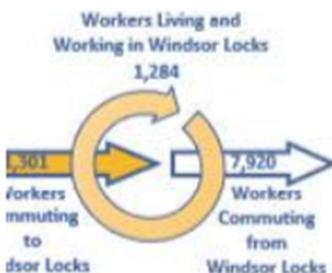
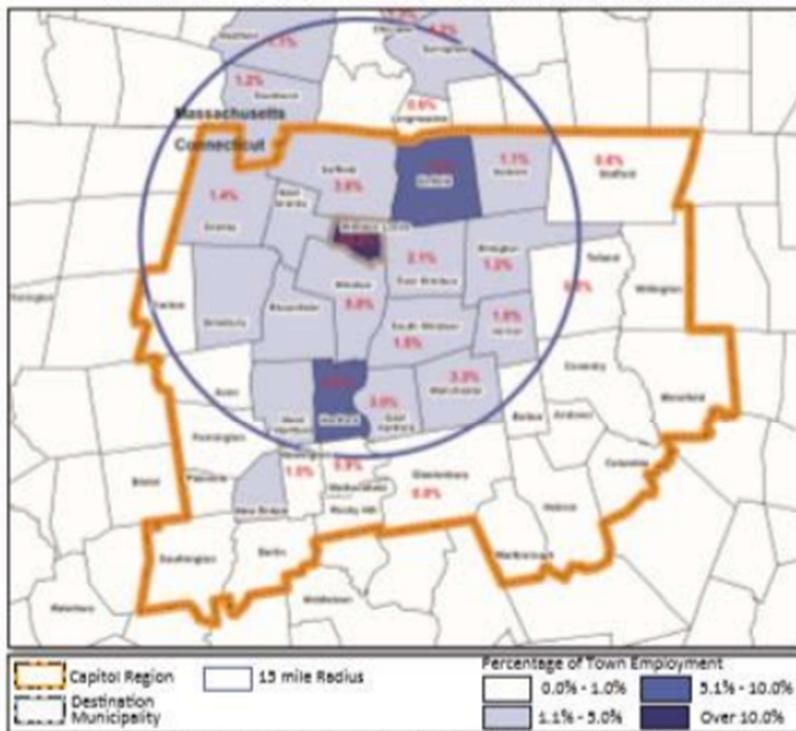
< 10 mi.	10-25 mi.	25-50 mi.	> 50 mi.
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The flow chart and map provide a visual account of the most frequent towns of origin for commuters to Windsor Locks. As can be seen, the majority of workers are residents of nearby towns.

**Commuting Patterns of Inbound Windsor Locks Workers<sup>2</sup>**

Origin	#	%
North	1,589	12.6%
Northeast	1,958	15.6%
East	1,294	10.3%
Southeast	1,501	11.9%
South	3,293	26.2%
Southwest	1,732	13.8%
West	648	5.1%
Northwest	571	4.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,585</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Notable Origin		
Windsor Locks	1,283	10.2%
MA	2,021	16.1%

**Percentage of Windsor Locks Employment from the Region<sup>2</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Source: (1) CTPP Journey to Work 2008-2013 ACS 5 yr. estimate. (2) Census On the Map Employment estimate 2014. (3) Census 2010. (4) Department of Labor. Employment and commute data is derived from multiple sources and therefore may not exactly match individual sources.  
<sup>2</sup> Published: March 2018; Updated: June 2018

**Transportation Trends** Several technologies are converging on the transportation industry. Autonomous vehicles, smart cars (with internet connectivity, accident reduction and predictive maintenance), Uber, Lyft and Zipcar, electric environment minded/low or no emissions technologies, active transportation and a focus on rail and public transportation lead the way as we near the year 2020. These changes in the ways people travel must be kept in mind during community planning, infrastructure, and budgeting efforts.



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Windsor Locks should consider the following as tools to encourage a strong transportation network:

- Permissive mixed use zoning regulations that encourage residential dwelling units among diverse commercial and office spaces (job opportunities)
- Communitywide study to assess roadway needs, develop a long-term replacement and maintenance plan
- Communitywide study to assess active transportation and the multimodal network, identify gaps and recommendations
- Implementation of Complete Streets plans and policies
- Partnerships with the State of Connecticut, Connecticut Airport Authority, and nearby towns to provide a welcoming and efficient multimodal system utilizing flight, rail, shuttle, shared vehicles (Uber and Zip) and multiuse paths.
- The Sustainable CT program is one that could help with such an effort in providing a framework for tracking success, technical assistance, and grant funding. Their mission is to provide municipalities with a menu of coordinated, voluntary actions, to continually become more sustainable; to provide resources and tools to assist municipalities in implementing sustainability actions and advancing their programs for the benefit of all residents; and to certify and recognize municipalities for their ongoing sustainability achievements.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the transportation sector is one of the largest contributors to U.S. greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. According to the *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks 1990–2017* (the national inventory that the U.S. prepares annually under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), transportation accounted for the largest portion (29%) of total U.S. GHG emissions in 2017.

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The community should keep transportation alternatives in mind when reviewing development proposals, designing improvements to the local transportation system and budgeting for new public vehicles and equipment. The Town should consider how it might incentivize carpooling, promote use of public transportation, and convert town vehicles to a hybrid or fully electric fleet.

**Complete Streets** Smart Growth America defines Complete Streets in the following way: They are for everyone, designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations. Complete Streets policies consider people who walk and bike legitimate users of a community's transportation system. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient. Complete Street policies are set at the state, regional, and local levels and are frequently supported by roadway design guidelines.



According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Complete Streets reduce motor vehicle-related crashes and pedestrian risk, as well as bicyclist risk when well-designed bicycle-specific infrastructure is included (Reynolds, 2009). They can promote walking and bicycling by providing safer places to achieve physical activity through transportation. One study found that 43% of people reporting a place to walk were significantly more likely to meet current recommendations for regular physical activity than were those reporting no place to walk (Powell, Martin, Chowdhury, 2003).

Additionally, a Complete Streets strategy can result in the following health benefits:

- Address chronic disease (asthma, diabetes, heart disease)
- Increase physical activity
- Improve safety
- Reduce human exposure to transportation-related emissions
- Reduce motor vehicle-related injuries and fatalities
- Reduce transportation's contribution to air pollution

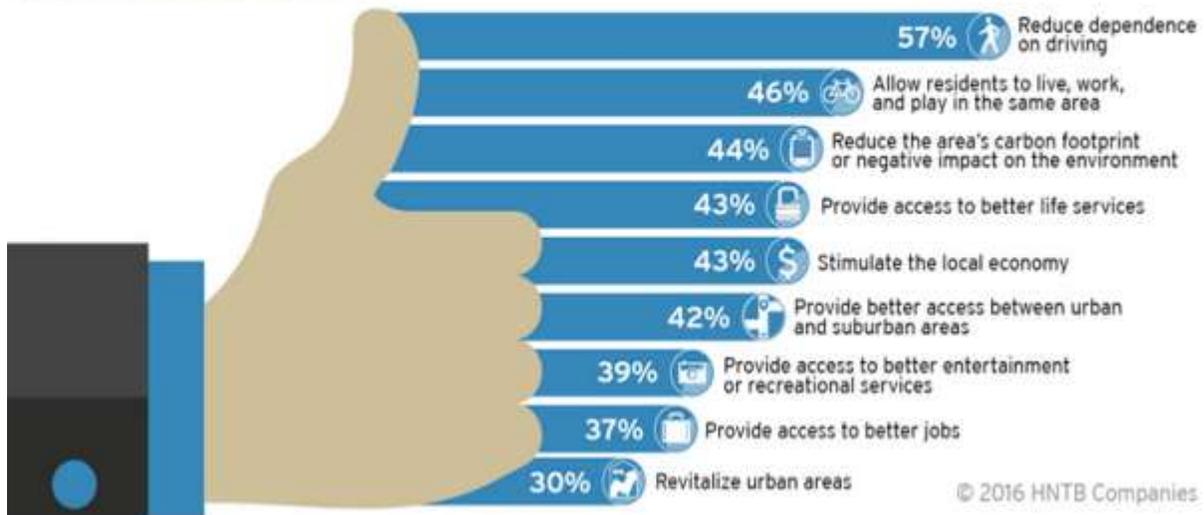
As of 2019, over 1325 agencies at the local, regional, and state levels have adopted Complete Streets policies, totaling more than 1400 policies nationwide. The Capitol Region Council of Governments

launched a program to develop a Complete Streets Plan for the capitol region to study and assist communities with developing and implementing Complete Streets policies. By adopting the recommendations made within the Main Street Study, Once and Future: Transit Oriented Development Study, the Mark Fenton Walkability Audit and other endeavors, the Windsor Locks community has come to embrace the concept of Complete Streets. Still, according to Bike Walk Connecticut, the town’s Bike Walk score was only 36.9 out of 100 and ranked 36th walkability in the State. Next steps might include a town policy and ordinance and regulation changes that support such policy. Active Transportation and Complete Streets concepts should be incorporated into any future transportation plans, whether considering a particular site, a corridor or neighborhood, or a community-wide plan.

**Transit Oriented Development** Transit-oriented development, or TOD, is a type of community development that includes a mixture of housing, office, retail and/or other amenities within a walkable neighborhood, located within a half-mile of quality public transportation. TOD creates better access to jobs, housing, and opportunity for people of all ages and incomes. It also supports convenient, affordable, and active lifestyles, creating places where our children can play, and our parents can grow old comfortably.

## BENEFITS OF TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

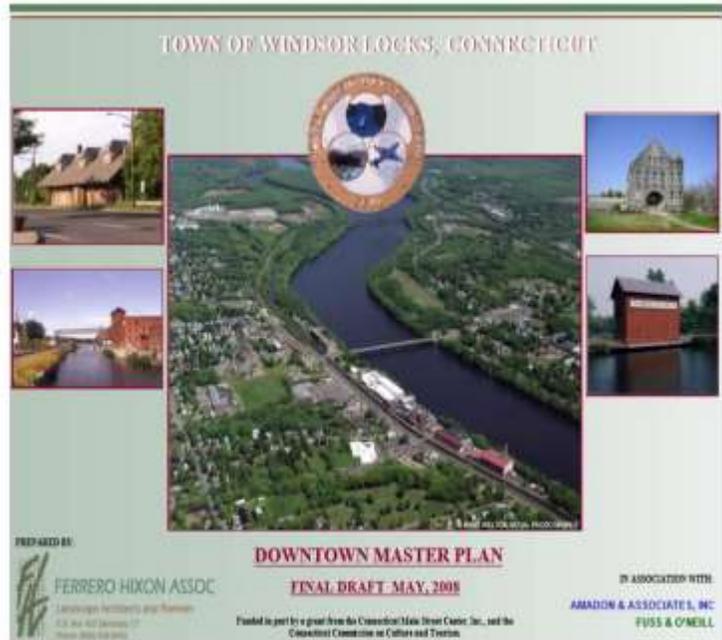
*Americans believe transit oriented development provides an array of benefits ranging from lifestyle to environmental to economic.*



**What is Active Transportation?** Active transportation is a way of “getting around” that is powered by human energy, primarily walking and bicycling. Often called “non-motorized transportation,” active transportation communicates the key connection between healthy, active living and our transportation choices. By combining greenways and trails, roadway amenities, raised medians, pedestrian refuge areas, improved bus stop areas and other traffic calming measures, we can provide

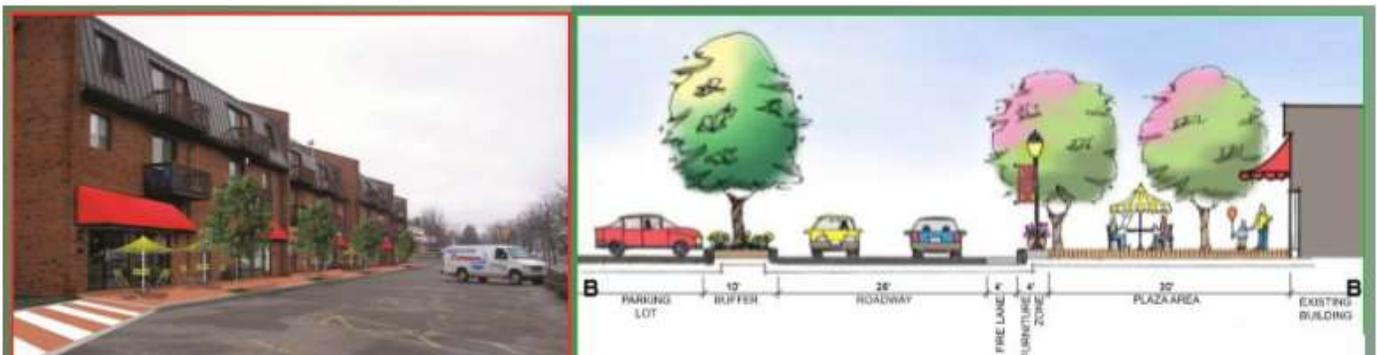
safe, efficient, enjoyable, and convenient alternatives to traveling by vehicle. Active transportation can be a healthy and economical way to travel that can support a community’s economic growth, reduce congestion, and reduce environmental impacts.

**Main Street Study** In 2008, the Town of Windsor Locks commissioned a valuable study of the Main Street area authored by Ferrero-Hixon and Associates. The Windsor Locks Main Street Study provides numerous recommendations to be taken by the Town to improve the economic viability of this significant area of Town, and addresses areas such as the relationship of buildings to the street, public spaces, traffic, gateways, the pedestrian environment, lighting, signage, mixed uses, and the importance of relocating the train station back to the downtown area.



Some of these recommendations have already been acted upon, while some have not and continue to be relevant. Such recommendations for redevelopment, façade improvement and transportation improvements should continue to be considered as Main Street revitalization efforts move along. These recommendations will be reflected in the goals and objectives of this plan.

(The recommendations for 60 Main St. including sidewalk installation, trees, awnings and lighting on left have been implemented. The above was recommended for Dexter Plaza, 18 Main St.)



**Windsor Locks: Once and Future Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study** Written in 2013 the Once and Future TOD study, completed for the Town by Fuss & O’Neill, provides a thorough assessment of the downtown area in Windsor Locks as it relates to the relocation of the rail platform from the current southern end of town back to Main Street. The purpose of the study was to identify and define opportunities associated with the passenger rail station’s downtown location. Several

recommendations were made because of citizen and steering committee engagement. More about this study can be found in the Economic Development Section of the Plan. The following are just some of the recommendations made related to the transportation system in the TOD area:

- Prioritize station relocation to downtown, provide airport shuttle
- Allow for shared parking areas, parking to the rear of buildings and on street parking
- Provide multi-modal bike and pedestrian connections
- Provide access over the existing canal for connections to the State of Connecticut Canal Trail, Connecticut River and Montgomery Mill residential community
- Provide bicycle facilities and storage
- Provide Main Street traffic calming measures, pedestrian refuge areas
- Provide Main / Bridge / Church Street intersection reconfiguration
- Provide Bridge Street lane diets and cycle track
- Provide improvements on Chestnut Street
- St. Mary's Triangle improvements
- "Town Square" improvements at the base of what is now Church Street
- Enhance transit connectivity between downtown and other destinations
- Finalize and implement a wayfinding plan
- Incorporate green infrastructure into road design and roadside stormwater system design



### Windsor Locks: ONCE AND FUTURE

Transit-Oriented Development Study

Volume 1 - Recommendations

"Windsor Locks is uniquely positioned in the region, is well connected to regional activity centers via regional highways and arterials, as well as by rail and bus transit. Relocation of the station brings many opportunities, including downtown's becoming a hub for commuter travel along the Hartford – Springfield line."  
Windsor Locks: Once and Future TOD Study  
Fuss & O'Neill

**Mark Fenton Walkability Audit** In 2014 Windsor Locks provided a community engagement day which included a walking tour, brainstorming session, and evening discussion. The event was presented by Walkable Communities expert Mark Fenton, and hosted by North Central Connecticut District Health Department, the Town of Windsor Locks, and the Town of East Windsor. The event was funded by the Connecticut Department of Public Health Chronic Disease Prevention Grant with the intention of helping communities identify ways in which they can be healthier. We know that physical activity makes us healthier, but how can we as a community member or local decision maker, create places

and neighborhoods in which we are intrinsically more active? How can we design our communities so that it is desirable, safe, and convenient to play more outdoors, to travel on foot or by bicycle more frequently? After input from the community, here were Mr. Fenton's recommendations, some of which Windsor Locks has begun to address, some of which this Plan will include in the final policy, goals, and objectives section for further consideration:



1. Let your regulations support mixed-use village center(s) where people live near where they shop, learn, relax
2. Reduce 'sprawling' residential communities in favor of compact, connected neighborhoods
3. Permit density through conservation developments while protecting farmland, open space
4. Plan within a transportation network, not site by site
5. Create a sidewalk inventory, identify gaps and always require sidewalks or some sort of action in lieu, during planning and zoning decision making
6. Adopt a Complete Streets Ordinance and carry out in local regulations (all users considered in every project)
7. Create a network of trails, connect on road when necessary
8. Know the community's bike friendly rating and seek to improve it
9. Improve wayfinding to encourage exploration of various town assets
10. Examine safe routes to all schools and link to public places [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)



It will come as no surprise that children are no longer most likely to walk or bike to school, and this reduction in physical activity is dramatic. Can we support safer, more desirable routes to school through policy, programs, and design?

### Wayfinding

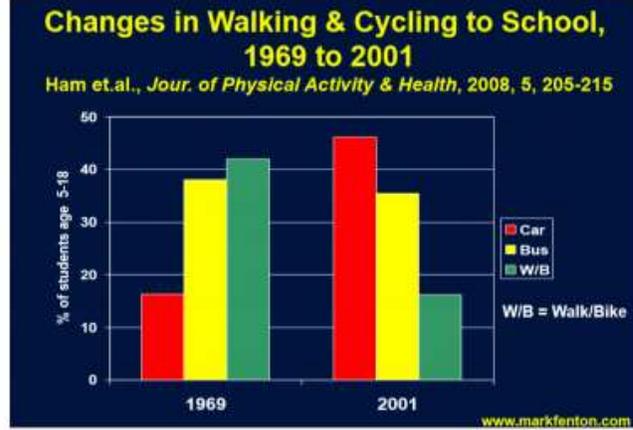
- Where can I get on this trail?
- How long will it take?



www.markfenton.com

### Changes in Walking & Cycling to School, 1969 to 2001

Ham et al., *Jour. of Physical Activity & Health*, 2008, 5, 205-215



Year	Car	Bus	W/B
1969	16%	38%	42%
2001	46%	35%	16%

www.markfenton.com

**Hartford Springfield Line, New Rail Station Planning** As noted Section VII, the community has developed an overall plan to revitalize downtown Windsor Locks and create a thriving and connected community. Construction of the new rail station is key. As a major recommendation of the Main Street Study and the TOD Once and Future Plan, ensuring that this project comes to fruition has been a priority for the town. Great progress has been made through coordination with Amtrak, the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation and Windsor Locks to further design both the adjacent complete streets and the station area. Successful station areas have great connections to roads, complete streets, wayfinding, accommodations for bicyclists and shuttle/bus service. Continuing to work cooperatively with these departments and pursuing opportunities for public private partnerships (P3) will be important in working toward construction of the relocated platform, “up and over” and double tracking. Ensuring that there is a shuttle directly interacting with the airport is also critical. At the ConnDOT public meeting on 9.19.2019, a photo depicts a first phase of the station relocation, see above.



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**Bradley Area Transportation Plan.** As outlined in the 2007 Plan, the Capitol Region Council of Governments completed the “Bradley Area Transportation Plan”. The Bradley Area Transportation Study included a comprehensive analysis of current and future traffic conditions and land use in the airport area. The study identified transportation improvements that were needed to accommodate growth and to develop a strategic plan for maintaining safe and efficient access to the airport area.

Several improvements to the Route 75 corridor were recommended, some seen as having regional impact, to improve access, safety, and aesthetics. These included landscaped center medians, center left turn bays, sidewalks, and bus shelters in various locations along the corridor.

17 Some of these improvements have been realized since the 2007 Plan of Conservation and Development became effective. Bus shelters, and immediately adjacent sidewalks connecting to the nearest driveway, were installed in 2015 through a partnership with CROCOG, CT Transit and the Town. Additionally, the State committed LOTCIP funding to sidewalks and some crosswalk and pedestrian improvements along Route 75. Installation is due to take place in 2019.

Windsor Locks continues to work with property owners, stakeholders, the State DOT and CROCOG regarding traffic and safety improvements along Route 75, drawing from recommendations in the study and including new ideas for traffic calming and safety measures such as roundabouts and pedestrian refuge islands. Some of these improvements are State improvements to complete and fund, but local actions can assist in these efforts.

Another major recommendation of the study was to develop a rear accessway on either side of Route 75. These roadways could alleviate some of the traffic on Route 75 and provide access from the rear of business properties opening opportunities for additional economic development. The Town should consider the creation of a multi-use pathway along (or as a first phase of) these rear access roads, along Strawberry Meadow Brook from the Windsor town line, between Route 75 and Old County Road, possibly connecting to Loten Drive and Halfway House Road.

The Bradley Area Study concludes with some overall recommendations:

1. Provide the Town with Traffic Calming Strategies for possible implementation. Public input indicated that citizens perceived speeds were too high on Route 75, Spring Street, and Old County Road in Windsor Locks. Since the 2007 Plan the Town of Windsor Locks has experienced unfortunate fatalities along Route 75 when people attempted to cross this busy road.
2. All new construction and major reconstruction projects should include standard shoulder widths whenever possible.
3. Install pedestrian facilities with all new construction, reconstruction, and major maintenance projects whenever possible.

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4. Review municipal regulations relative to access management and provide recommended regulatory changes.

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 improvements to the existing street and sidewalk network that will require municipal planning, regulatory changes, and / or local or grant funding.

**Implementation** The principal means of implementing the objectives of a transportation 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 construction are all logical elements of the Town CIP program.

Subdivision and Site Plan approvals also contain requirements of private developers to complete important elements of the transportation 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 and sidewalk 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.

**Summary.** Transportation facilities are one of the most important factors in creating community, particularly in a transportation hub like Windsor Locks. Particularly, if located within ¼ mile of a person's home, roads and trails can link people to jobs, groceries, places of worship, school, recreation and medical care. Essentially they connect people to what they need and desire. Windsor Locks is an established and desirable gateway community to New England, and now more than ever is embracing it's variety of transportation offerings as an asset to all people and an important economic development tool.

## **Goal and Objectives**

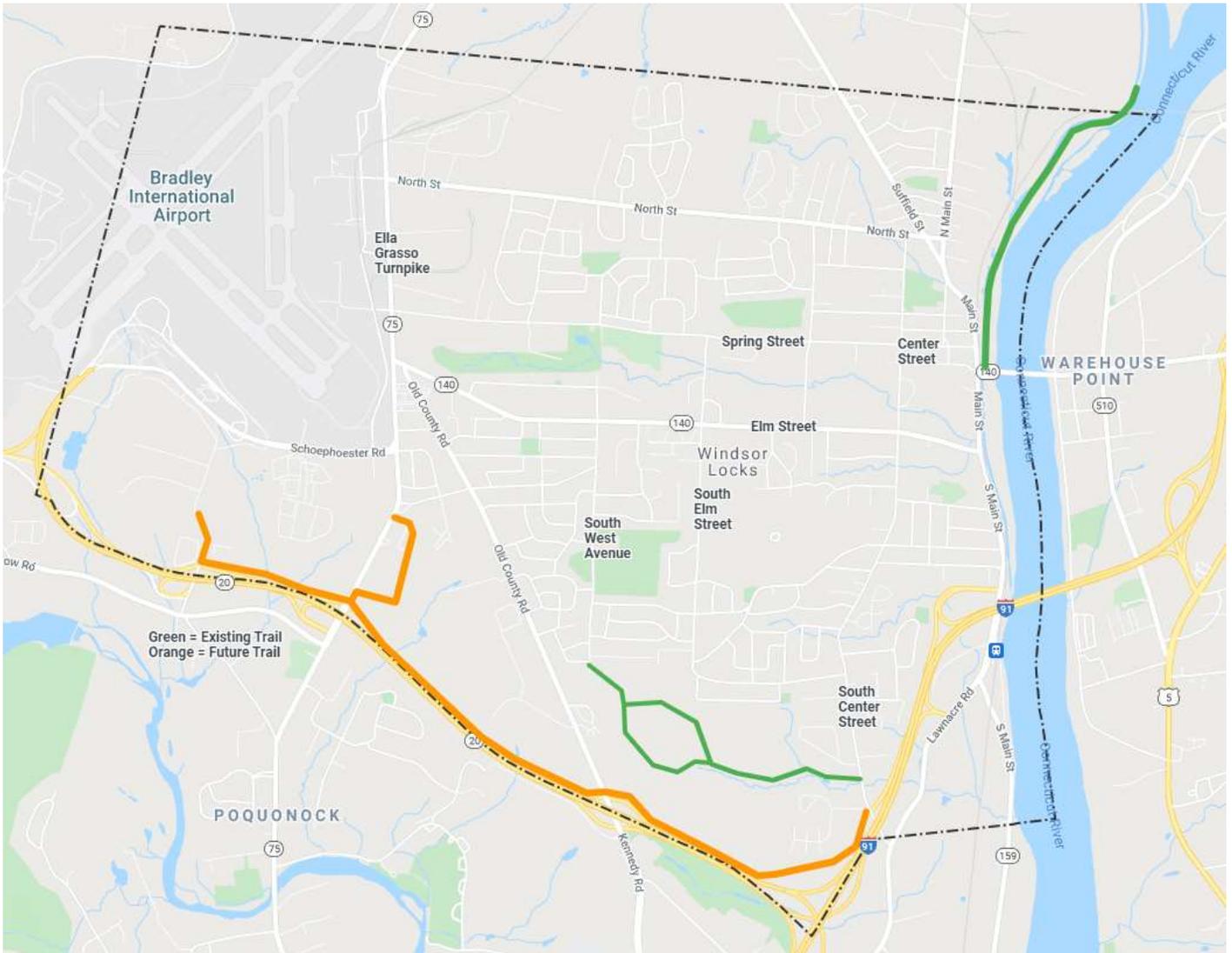
**Goal:** To provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the Town of Windsor Locks. Community Transportation System

### **Objectives:**

1. To evaluate, plan and budget for necessary and desired roadway and associated utility upgrades

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2. To inventory middle neighborhoods community-wide for gaps in the sidewalk system and create a plan and budget for increased connectivity. For example, community members routinely have expressed interest in sidewalk extensions on North Street and West Street
  3. To evaluate, plan and budget for needed accessibility improvements in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
  4. To integrate Complete Streets policies where possible in each five-year roadway plan
  5. To coordinate with the ConnDOT regarding engineering and construction of roadway safety improvements on Ella Grasso Turnpike
  6. To work with businesses and developers on projects up on Ella Grasso Turnpike to consolidate driveways to provide for safer traffic access
  7. To evaluate, plan and budget for transportation needs on Old County Road, where the industrial uses transition to mixed use and residential uses, including minimizing truck traffic
  8. To continue to work toward construction of the new rail station on Main Street
  9. To ensure connectivity between new rail station and the airport
  10. To continue to explore opportunities for Route 75 Back Access Roads / Multi-Use Pathways.
  11. To further develop concept for Route 20 Corridor Multi-Use Path
  12. To initiate construction of designed Main Street Complete Streets
  13. To inventory and evaluate existing public parking and opportunities for new public parking.
  14. To explore opportunities for designated parking at the Historic Station
  15. To inventory and evaluate existing pedestrian connections between Main Street, Library, Middle School, and Town Hall and seek opportunities for improvements
  16. To coordinate with State of CT DEEP, Ahlstrom and Friends of the Canal on resurfacing the State of Connecticut Canal Park Trail
  17. To ensure canal pedestrian crossing is constructed connecting Main Street to Canal Bank, Montgomery Mill and the Canal Trail
  18. To seek opportunities to improve connectivity on Bridge Street / Route 140 between Windsor Locks and East Windsor
  19. To evaluate need and consider increased van and shuttle services if such need is demonstrated both in town and between towns as a shared service

## Existing Roadway and Trail Map (future trails in orange)



### Resources:

Powell KE, Martin L, Chowdhury PP. Places to walk: convenience and regular physical activity.

American Journal of Public Health 2003;93:1519-1521. Pucher J, Buehler R, Bassett DR, Dannenberg AL.

Walking and cycling to health: A comparative analysis of city, state, and international data.

American Journal of Public Health 2010;100(10):1986-1992. Reynolds CC, Harris MA, Teschke K, Cripton PA, Winters M.

The impact of transportation infrastructure on bicycling injuries and crashes: a review of the literature. Environmental Health 2009;8:47.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Program of the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Human Environment provides extensive bicycle and pedestrian resources and guidance.

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Smart Growth America National Complete Streets Coalition works to promote Complete Streets. Their site includes fundamental information about Complete Streets, support for implementing Complete Streets, fact sheets, and news updates.

Complete Streets: Best Policy and Implementation Practices summarizes successful policy and implementation practices based on the examination of 30 communities across the country.

<http://www.bikewalkct.org/complete-streets.html>

<http://crcog.org/complete-streets/>

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## Section VI: Economic Development Economic Development

**Introduction** Windsor Locks, which is located equidistant between Hartford, Connecticut and Springfield, Massachusetts, was originally built around the Connecticut River and has always had a strong connection to transportation and industry. The town is located along highway 91 which runs north and south through the state and is home to both the Bradley International Airport and an Amtrak rail stop. Additionally, the town is ideally located midway along the New York to Boston corridor. Windsor Locks is connected, convenient and competitive within the region and beyond.

Photo: <https://www.collinsaerospace.com>



Windsor Locks is the present location of many nationally and internationally recognized corporate and business entities. These include Raytheon/Collins Aerospace, formerly UTAS/Hamilton Sunstrand, an innovative and leading supplier of design, products and services related to space flight and aviation, as well as Ahlstrom-Munksjö, formerly known as Dexter Corporation, one of the world's leading players in sustainable and innovative fiber solutions. Ahlstrom-Munksjö is the second oldest firm in continuous operation in the United States.

**Industrial Sector Overview** Since 2007, when the last Plan was completed, the town has continued to see growth in its industrial sector. The following are some examples of such growth:

- UTC/Collins Engineering Lab
- Serta Simmons Bedding
- Mazak Corp
- Design Automation Associates
- Spectrum Machine & Design, located on Old County Circle, specializes in manufacturing of complex parts and tooling for the Aerospace and Defense Industries.
- Permasteelisa, an international company with presence in 30 countries, specializing in design and manufacturing of architectural exterior and interior building systems, has expanded from their Windsor office to now utilize industrial space in Windsor Locks off Route 75.

These are examples of the many companies that bring significant local investment. The community's location, proximity to ideal transportation and freight capabilities and attractive tax structure continue to appeal to such locally and internationally recognized companies. This section of the Plan

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will go on to further discuss what site selectors consider in their location decision making, including available land, available workforce, local permitting processes, and nearness to other companies providing ancillary services and partnership opportunities.

**Business Sector Overview** In addition to maintaining a strong Industrial sector, the Town's business sector is experiencing investment. Commercial properties that were vacant or blighted are seeing façade improvements, redevelopment, and new businesses. This is primarily due to enforcement and economic development efforts along with proximity to the airport, high activity levels and traffic volumes.

The following are examples of such operations:

- Hothead Burritos
- Popeye's
- Pho 75
- Bobby V's
- Hungry Rhino
- Springhill Suites

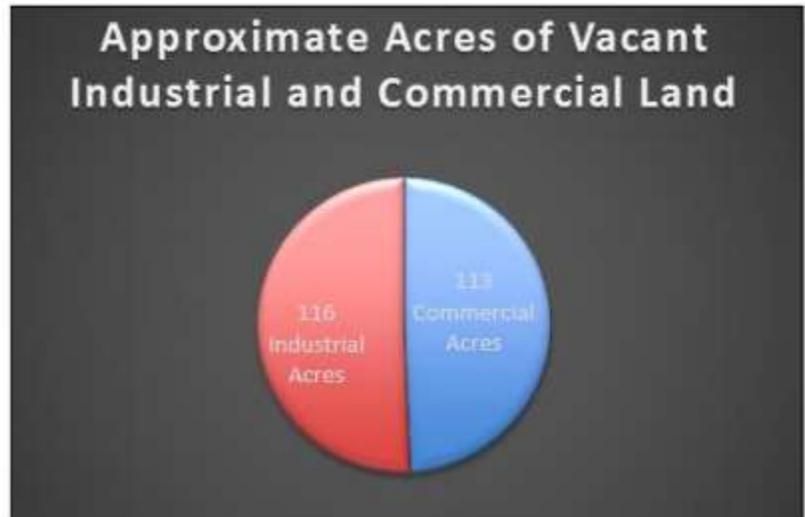
While not yet constructed, the community continues to receive applications and inquiries for brewery, bakery, bistro, multi-family housing and mixed-use development concepts.

**Growth Opportunity and Trends** Conversations about Mixed-Use Development, Adaptive Reuse, Infill and Transit oriented Development (TOD) are prevalent among public officials, planners, and communities nationwide. As industry changes, we see more digital and robotic design, increased office space and less manufacturing floor space. Towns and cities are promoting creative reuse of industrial space to avoid vacancies and sometimes to preserve historic buildings. This can be a positive trend. Adaptive reuse is an alternative to sprawl and can create vibrant, more village-like residential neighborhoods in closer proximity to businesses, and perhaps even light industrial maker spaces. It becomes more difficult to talk about industrial, business, and residential uses in their own silos. This Plan will describe development opportunity in each of the sectors, but will dive deeper into that Mixed-Use, Adaptive Reuse, Infill and TOD conversation as well.

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### **Vacant Industrial and Commercial Land**

While Windsor Locks is considered a small town by population, the community has denser and more urbanized characteristics than many small towns. One important reality is that the remaining vacant land is quite limited. As the following chart shows, there are approximately 117 acres of vacant industrially zoned land and 113 acres of vacant business zoned land. At the time of the 2007 Plan there were approximately 120 business acres available and 150 industrial acres available. This calls for an additional focus on redevelopment opportunities, filling vacant tenancies, infill, tourism, and adaptive reuse to ensure economic sustainability.



**Industrial Districts** Industrially zoned land is expected to decrease slightly from that which is currently indicated on the Official Zoning Map of the Town due to rezoning and flood resiliency efforts. Most of the town’s industrially zoned land is developed, but there are still small pockets of undeveloped acreage available. As the amount of developable land decreases, the pressure increases to maximize existing land uses and obtain the greatest possible economic return. The community will need to balance the need for continued growth with the impacts to nearby residential neighborhoods. Some of the infill opportunities within the town are near roads and lands that serve the town’s residents. Adaptive Reuse regulations should continue to be utilized as trends in industry change, allowing for flexibility in use of industrial spaces and ensuring occupied industrial spaces.

There are 130 properties devoted to industrial uses, which amounts to approximately 770 acres, or 13% percent of the Town’s land area of which the overwhelming majority are aerospace, design, training, precision manufacturing and freight oriented—such as Collins / UTC Aerospace, Mazak Corp, Spectrum Machine and Design and Multi-Mode Logistics.

Each of the industrial areas are described and discussed below.

**I. Old County Road and Old County Circle** One of the major industrial areas in Town is along Old County Road. In the late 1990’s, 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 developed and have become an important and successful Industrial

District adjacent to Route 20 only minutes from Bradley International Airport. Uses include the Federal Express, Ford Motor Company, Mazak Corp., and American Wood Molding (now Serta Simmons Bedding). These parcels 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, now mature, mitigate impacts onto the residential area on the east side of Old County Road. It is important that these mitigation measures are maintained.



**Compost Facility** The Town owned land which is currently permitted as a compost facility likely has greater potential for a future light industrial or other transitional use. Additionally, the existence of the compost facility may cause limitation on future development of the adjacent vacant parcels to the north and west of this property. The Town should investigate whether other less valuable land can be used for the compost operation to free this parcel for a higher value use and eliminate the chance of permitting and development conflicts.

### Halfway House Road and Old County Road

The area near the intersection of Old County Road and Halfway House Road should be considered for rezoning. Industrial uses in such proximity to residential neighborhoods is not ideal. The Commission rezoned a parcel north of the Fox Hollow residential community as Multi Family Special Development District (MFSD) to accommodate another cluster residential development. This left the Industrial Corridor divided into two sections and conflicting zones remain. The east side of Old County Road consists of long-established residential neighborhoods. The rear portion of



Concorde Way, known as Concorde Landing, is also residential. All industrially zoned land north of the MFSD zone on Old County Road should be considered for a zone change to encourage low intensity,

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optimal transitional uses that will support and connect the residential communities and business communities.

**II. North Street** Another major Industrial area is located on North Street south of the Suffield town line. North Street has had an increase in single family homes, many of which were being constructed at the time of the last Plan in 2007. At this time, one of the largest available industrially zone parcels exists between current residential and industrial uses. While access to this parcel from King Spring Road would



have been ideal, the community was not able to achieve this goal due to ownership patterns and other constraints. For this reason, traffic will need to exit and enter from North Street. It is recommended that the Planning and Zoning Commission revise the permissible land uses for these parcels 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. Sufficient buffers to the residential development to the east should be required in such revised zoning district.

**III. River Road** As noted in Chapter III, the twelve properties on River Road are zoned industrial, yet those that are developed contain single or multifamily uses. Two of these properties are on the east side of the road, owned by the State of Connecticut and the Town of Windsor Locks. A survey was conducted of property owners and residents (2017) to see what uses the participants wanted on this road. Overwhelmingly the responses supported a zone change from industrial to residential. Some participants were open to using the vacant land for park space and access to the river. Participants did not support the addition of boutique shops, active recreation areas or other commercial uses. It should be noted that any substantial improvements to these properties must comply with flood zone regulations. It is recommended that a residential zone be applied to these properties, removing the non-conformity (residential in an industrial zone), and maintaining the single family / duplex development pattern that exists. The Town should explore opportunities for passive public recreation, particularly on the river side where the public land is located.



**Town of Windsor Locks**  
**Building and Land Use Department**

Town Planner / CZEO  
 Jennifer V. Rodriguez, AICP

Town Hall  
 30 Church Street  
 Windsor Locks CT 06096  
 Phone 860-827-1447

**Survey for Residents and Property Owners**  
**Land Use on River Road**

Thank you for taking a moment to complete this survey. Currently all of River Road is zoned "industrial". Historically it has been a residential neighborhood. Industrial uses may not be the best fit for this location due to proximity to the CT River, flood hazard areas and regulated wetland soils, and due to the existence of an already established residential neighborhood. The Planning and Zoning Commission is updating the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development (aka the POCD), an aspirational document which guides future community-wide decision making and policy/regulation changes. Prior to making recommendations in the POCD our office would like your feedback. Please check the circles next to the uses below that you would find appropriate on River Road:

- Manufacturing
- Trucking
- Warehouse and Storage
- Boutique shops
- Office / Retail
- Restaurant
- Bed and Breakfast
- Banquet / Resort
- Residential
- Parks and Open Space
- Riverfront Public Access
- Comments/Other

Thank you!

Jen

**Industrial District Conclusion** The Windsor Locks industrial areas are close to build-out. The community is faced with ensuring that the existing buildings remain marketable. This will necessitate redevelopment. There can be unique barriers to redevelopment such as environmental contamination, the need for creative financing and increased costs. The town should work closely with property owners and state agencies to remove such barriers, and whenever possible, streamline permitting processes and encourage use of the Adaptive Reuse regulations. Reinvestment in these areas is critical or the industrial/commercial buildings will begin to deteriorate. Tax benefits or other types of economic support for rehabilitation of older commercial and industrial properties over fifty years old should be considered. Keeping older developed areas in acceptable and marketable condition will also require continued active enforcement under the blight and property maintenance codes.

**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 commercially zoned land is developed, but there are still small pockets of undeveloped acreage left adjacent to Ella Grasso Turnpike (Rt. 75) and throughout the community. As these pockets are in-filled pressure will increase to maximize existing land uses to obtain the greatest possible economic return. The Town has

recently seen teardowns and redevelopment of older previously developed commercial properties, as well as several façade improvements in 2017 and 2018. Two additional factors may come into play in the next decade, specifically a master redevelopment plan for the Bradley International Airport and Main Street revitalization efforts, which will result in redevelopment opportunities in each of these commercial districts. Any in-fill development and redevelopment need to be carefully and thoughtfully managed to produce positive changes for the businesses, customers, and the Town residents. Redevelopment throughout the community will offer opportunity for new commercial services, jobs, better circulation, connectivity, more aesthetic architecture, and landscaping.



There are approximately 570 acres, or nearly 10% 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 International Airport, and the downtown station relocation and planned Transit Oriented Development, these uses will intensify.

These commercial acres are divided among several distinct business districts that have unique roles, opportunities, and challenges. Each of these areas are described and discussed on the pages to follow.



**I. Ella Grasso Turnpike Area** Since the 2007 Plan substantial commercial development has recently occurred within the business district along Ella Grasso Turnpike (Route 75). Most of this commercial and retail development indirectly and directly correlates to the growing passenger and freight business associated with Bradley International Airport. As it was in the previous decade, growth has been particularly strong in the service-oriented sector such as hotel rooms and restaurants. The trend of maximizing commercial sites and redeveloping commercial buildings is likely to continue as vacant sites are limited.

**Hotel.** The Planning and Zoning Commission should look very closely at any new proposals for hotels beyond those already approved. Windsor Locks has over 1300 constructed hotel rooms and more than 200 approved hotel rooms not yet constructed. 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 a significant percentage of valuable frontage on Route 75. The Planning and Zoning Commission should continue its effort to require these frontages to be developed more intensely with parking relegated to the rear of properties. It is possible that some of the valet parking sites that currently exist will be moved to the airport proper, freeing up valuable frontage along this corridor for new, private development. The town should keep regular communication with airport staff and business owners to understand and anticipate such opportunities.

**Transportation.** Section VI of the Plan discusses current challenges for Route 75 related to travel and traffic, though transportation efforts are equally applicable to this section. A safe and well-designed transportation system will greatly enhance the economic development opportunities in an area. It is imperative that the community continue to work with the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation, Bradley International Airport, and adjacent property owners to redesign Route 75, building on the pedestrian improvements to be installed in 2019. With safety and traffic calming improvements made, and with the corridor's location proximate to Route 20, the airport, rail, and highway 91, this commercial area is sure to continue to be a sought-after location for new development.



While it has been several years since the Bradley Area Transportation Study was completed, the document continues to provide sound recommendations, one of which is to provide “back access” roads, to the extent possible, parallel to Route 75. This would provide new frontage, better circulation, and access to the rear portions of existing properties and therefore expand development opportunities. This concept should continue to be explored. If, due to topographic, environmental, or other constraints, this plan is not able to be achieved, the town should consider construction of an active travel trail for bicyclists and pedestrians.

**Transitional Uses near Ella Grasso Turnpike** Over time, a varied zoning pattern developed in the transition areas near Elm Street, Halfway House Road and Concorde Way. In all cases, single family residential properties exist close to busy commercial and industrial areas. There are several vacant parcels that serve as transition areas between these zones. It is recommended that the community explore rezoning for these nodes to encourage village uses, carefully considering whether heavy industrial uses should continue to be permitted. Village-like transition areas could accommodate multi-family development, office, low impact commercial uses and light industrial uses.



II. Town Center This district encompasses the historic downtown area of Windsor Locks. Main Street experienced substantial urban renewal that removed much of the historic building forms that once stood there. Development that occurred in the 70's and 80's had a somewhat higher density, and a slightly higher mixture of uses than other business districts, but were built with a generally suburban, rather than downtown form and architecture.

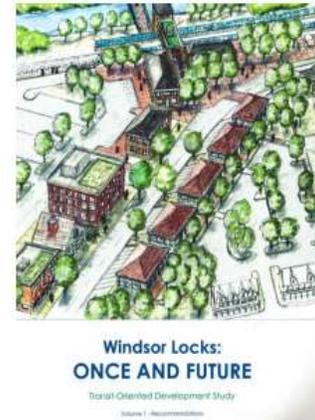
The Downtown has a tremendous number of assets including, the Connecticut River, the Canal Trail, over seventy businesses, government center, ample housing, and historic structures. The Planning and Zoning Commission and Economic and Industrial Development Commission, as recommended in the 2007 Plan, pushed for a Strategic Master Plan for Downtown that would analyze the relationship of buildings, public spaces, traffic, gateways, the pedestrian environment, lighting, signage and more. This resulted in the Downtown Master Plan 2008 prepared by Ferrero and Hixon.

**Downtown Master Plan 2008.** The most significant action item to result from this Plan was to pursue the relocation of the train station back to the downtown, promoting transit-oriented development. The town has made significant strides in gaining a commitment from the State and Amtrak to relocate the station. Other efforts underway include the use of middle school grounds and Town Hall slope for fairs and events, the redevelopment of the Montgomery Mill and the receipt of construction funding for Complete Streets adjacent to the new station location. The major policy recommendation was to adopt the Main Street Overlay Zone, which the Planning and Zoning Commission has since adopted.

Here is a summary of recommendations, many of which have now been realized, while some are a work in progress:

- ✔ Pursue Train Station Relocation
- ✔ Promote Transit Oriented Development
- ✔ Petition State DEEP to reinstate Canal State Park
- ✔ Develop Supportive Overlay District
- ✔ Encourage Mixed Uses and Higher Density
- ✔ Promote Ahlstrom / Industry as Unique to Center

**In Progress:** Rail Crossing to Montgomery Mill Connectivity is essential to creating walkable communities. One important recommendation within the Main Street Study is to explore a crossing, vehicular and/or pedestrian, from Canal Bank to a newly constructed train stop. This would provide improved circulation, increased safety, and direct access to the train by residents of the Montgomery Mill, and a connection to the 4.5-mile Canal Trail, the Canal Park, and the Connecticut River itself. The Town should continue to work with all stakeholders to fully explore this opportunity.



**Windsor Locks: Once and Future, Transit Oriented Development Study.** As a follow up to the Downtown Master Plan, the town commissioned the Once and Future TOD Study, prepared by Fuss & O’Neil in 2013. The study provides a thorough assessment of the downtown area in Windsor Locks as it relates to the relocation of the rail platform from the current southern end of town back to Main Street. The purpose of the study was to identify and define opportunities associated with the passenger rail station’s downtown location. The following were the guiding principles developed through such engagement:

1. Rediscover a sense of community pride.
2. Create a vibrant walkable mixed use downtown community.
3. Capitalize on current and future reinvestment opportunities.
4. Institute a community of landscaped open spaces to extend and reknit the downtown.
5. Improve the perception and access to downtown through identity and signage.

“Windsor Locks is uniquely positioned in the region, is well connected to regional activity centers via highways and arterials, as well as by rail and bus transit. Relocation of the station brings many opportunities, including downtown’s becoming a hub for commuter travel along the Hartford – Springfield line.”  
Windsor Locks: Once and Future TOD Study Fuss & O’Neil

Several specific recommendations were made because of citizen, stakeholder, and steering committee engagement, which are laid out in more detail on the following pages.

Market Recommendations include two main goals:

1. a substantial increase in housing units within a ten-minute walk to the station site
2. identify and aggressively seek development partners for the Montgomery Mill site (completed)

Over a dozen transportation, redevelopment, complete streets, and economic development interventions were identified throughout the study process, as demonstrated in the Visioning Plan. The study recommendations were adopted by the community into the 2007 town Plan and much progress has been made to implement those recommendations. Windsor Locks should continue to refer to this study as a critical guiding document on transit-oriented development and a resource for market recommendations, mobility initiatives, redevelopment sequencing and prioritization of public capital improvements.

### Visioning



*Design Interventions Key Plan*

### ConnDOT TOD Desire and Readiness Workshop with residents and business members - 2017



**Hartford Springfield Line, New Rail Station.** In an overall plan to revitalize downtown Windsor Locks and create a thriving and connected community, the construction of the new rail station is key. As a major recommendation of the Main Street Study and the TOD Once and Future Plan, ensuring that this project comes to fruition has been a priority for the town. Great progress has been made through coordination with Amtrak, the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation and Windsor Locks to further design both the adjacent complete streets and the station area. Continuing to work cooperatively with these departments and pursuing opportunities for public private partnerships (a.k.a. P3) will be important in working toward construction of the relocated platform, “up and over” and double tracking.

Pictured here: ConnDOT public meeting 9.19.2019 photo (left) and depiction of a first phase of the station relocation (right).



**Historic Train Station.** Historic structures are irreplaceable. They strengthen and diversify a community and enhance public spaces. Investment in public spaces can then be a catalyst for private investment and a growing grand list, which helps to pay for local services. In the Windsor Locks Transit-Oriented Development Study, Historic Station Restoration is identified in the Design Interventions Key Plan. Since the 2007 Plan, and due to efforts to relocate the station back to the center of town, the community explored the idea of using the historic station as the new station building. Feedback at this time indicates that it cannot serve as such.

In 2015 the town engaged Goman & York to conduct an Adaptive Reuse Study to explore modern, compatible uses for the space. The Reuse Study, which reviewed such uses as gallery, public meetings, bistro, and co-work space, confirmed that the nearby market could support a mixture of private and public uses. The Study also provided a resource for market data and template business plans. The TOD Once and Future Study states, “Windsor Locks’ downtown can compete for additional neighborhood shopping, eating, and drinking spending from a trade area within a 7-minute drive time (Trade Area)” when the active station is relocated, “capturing at least 15 percent of expenditure potential and by 2022 the downtown could support 8,000 square feet of additional eating and drinking space”, much of which should be located on Main Street. With a historic and cultural component, this drive time would be increased, as people tend to travel farther and



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stay longer when a trip involves tourist attractions. Parking availability, local fundraising and grant opportunities must continue to be sought after as needed to support restoration and reuse.

Each year for the past few years, the Windsor Locks Middle School has hosted “Heritage Day”, a fundraising fair which has raised thousands of dollars toward this initiative. The ad hoc “Save the Train Station Committee” should work with other boards, commissions, staff, state agencies and other volunteers to increase outreach and fundraising efforts and finalize restoration. Historic Restoration project concepts, coupled with an operational use, give small town residents a reason to stay, and tourists a reason to visit. A local business partnered with a historic space offer a unique built environment that communities embrace which cannot be replicated, adding value to the neighborhood and town altogether. The Windsor Locks Train Station once restored will highlight the importance that local businesses have in place-making. Directly adjacent to the new station “to-be”, this project should be prioritized.

Needed Restoration includes windows, doors, exterior finish work and interior fit-out.

**18 – 20 Main Street aka Dexter Plaza.** Dexter Plaza, due to its acreage and the amount of retail space, is a significant parcel on Main Street. The site is developed in a suburban form rather than a traditional downtown development pattern. While this is an historically underperforming plaza in terms of vacancies and relative to redevelopment potential, several new businesses filled vacancies between 2018 and 2019 adding a great deal of vibrancy.

Business owners have communicated that this surge is in large part due to local revitalization efforts, local economic development potential, including the commitment to relocate the station downtown. The Town should continue to work with the property owner to consider creative ways to enhance the property, encourage upkeep an explore rethinking and redevelopment of this parcel in the future. This exploration should include breaking up pavement in favor of green space, additional landscaping and an eventual reconfiguration of building placement that places new buildings at the street line in a traditional multi-use and multi-story downtown pattern. Increased



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public realm such as a parklet, interior landscaping, outdoor seating and other bike / pedestrian amenities would also be welcome. Lastly, the perimeter of the property should be considered for shared private/public pathways, greenway access or additional public parking, that portion of the property which borders the Middle School and leads to Kettle Brook.

**11 Grove Street aka Windsor Locks Housing Authority.** The Windsor Locks Housing Authority has shown interest in pursuing new, additional, mixed use development along the street line at their Main Street property. This property has one of the largest amounts of available frontage along Main Street and is located across the street from the future station site, an ideal site for additional housing units, retail, and other public amenities. Stakeholders should continue to explore such development opportunities.

**255 Main Street aka Windsor Locks Commons.**

With an option to purchase the parcel, the community issued an RFQ for the Windsor Lock Commons property in 2019 and a mixed-use developer was selected. The Evaluation Committee and other stakeholders should continue to work together bring this most proximate TOD redevelopment project to fruition, in harmony with this Plan, previous planning study recommendations and the Purpose Statement in the Main Street Overlay



Zone regulations. This project will need to be carefully coordinated with the construction of the train station and associated parking to maximize redevelopment potential and recreate a wall of Main Street buildings along the property’s frontage.

**Chestnut and Main Street.** The community has been working alongside property owners to provide a plan of consolidated parcels with the goal of developing new mixed use (housing over retail) construction directly across the street from the new train station. Windsor Locks has been successful at this intersection, with the help of property owners and State of CT funding sources, in demolition of blighted buildings, site preparation work, remediation, clearing, legal work and design. The work and coordination between all parties should continue to remove barriers to and incentivize redevelopment.

**Montgomery Building and Canal State Park Trail.** The “Montgomery Building”, which was long vacant, has now been converted to stunning apartments overlooking town center, the canal, and the Connecticut River. This has been made possible through a strong, persistent, and creative team of developers, professionals, Town and State agencies and many other stakeholders. Along with building

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restoration, the developer has worked with the Town, State of CT DEEP and others in order to create a trailhead park on the south side of the 4.5-mile State Park Trail. This will be an additional waterside amenity for the public. The community should continue to work together to realize a pedestrian access between the canal bank and the train station, along with additional efforts to increase safety, connectivity, river access and public amenities. As mentioned in other sections of this Plan, the Towns of Windsor Locks and Suffield, along with the Friends of the Canal and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection should partner to have the trail resurfaced. Trails, when connected to an overall transportation system and when maintained, can increase property values, boost spending at local businesses, make communities more attractive places to live, encourage healthy activity and can be a tool in revitalizing depressed areas.

**The “Locks”. A Canal Study.** The Towns of Suffield and Windsor Locks recognize the historical significance of the canal which runs parallel to the Connecticut River, Canal Bank and Main Street / Route 159 and in 2019 completed a study which begins to explore:

1. the status of the canal from an integrity and maintenance perspective,
2. its historic context
3. the potential for future uses

The series of locks along with the canal which were constructed to bypass the Enfield Rapids, gave Windsor Locks its name. The canal is a special asset for the community’s residents and provide an attraction for tourists, in addition to providing water for use in cooling equipment and papermaking at the existing mill on the south side of Bridge Street. The recommendations from this study should be further reviewed and considered for implementation through stakeholder partnership. The canal and locks are symbols of Windsor Locks history, provide interest, beauty, and enhance the Connecticut River experience and they must be preserved.

**Bridge Street, Church Street, Route 140.**

The intersection of Bridge Street, Church Street and Route 140 acts as a gateway to the Town. In the 2008 and 2013 downtown studies, this area is identified as one that could provide for beautification, traffic improvements, public amenities, and art. The State of Connecticut Department of Transportation has been working with the community on a new roadway design which begins to address some of the



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traffic issues and provides opportunity to move some of these efforts along. All stakeholders should continue to work together to provide these improvements and enhance this important gateway.

**East Windsor: Main Street and Warehouse Point.** Transit Oriented Development opportunities associated with the Windsor Locks passenger rail station's proposed downtown location, within ¼ mile to ½ mile or within a 5-to-10-minute walk, extend into the Main Street and Warehouse Point areas of East Windsor. The two communities should continue to work closely together on planning efforts related to transportation (both auto related and active), beautification, bridge/Connecticut River, food resource, housing, workforce and other planning or economic development efforts.

**What is Tax Increment Financing (TIF)?** Tax Increment Financing is a local economic development tool, permitted under Connecticut law, allowing municipalities to use all, or a portion of the tax revenues generated from new capital investment to assist in project financing. TIF permits a municipality to fund efforts such as beautification, economic development activities and public infrastructure improvements by using some of the new (increased) property taxes generated from new development within the geographic district. TIF can encourage industrial, commercial, retail, or mixed-use development; increase employment opportunities; and broaden the tax base of the Town of Windsor Locks. Applications for Tax Increment Financing (whether initiated by the Town, a developer or business) are considered by Town staff and the Economic and Industrial Development Commission (EIDC), with all final approvals vested with the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting.

The Town Center / Main Street, and the land along Route 20 together represent the largest combination of vacant and underutilized properties in the community and the biggest opportunity. Factors such as urban renewal, market trends, traffic access issues, potentially deficient public utility capacity and gaps in initial financing have all been identified as barriers to the success of adaptive reuse, revitalization, and previous development proposals.

The TIF looks to reduce gaps in financing for developers, removing some of the financial burden for properties where there are difficult or unusual barriers to development, or in neighborhoods that are higher risk for the developer. The Town should continue to utilize this tool to incentivize wanted development in the downtown TIF district and the TIF districts along Route 20.

**Food Resources / Public Market.** In 2017 the Windsor Locks community began exploring the concept of a Public Market, conceived as a vehicle for increasing availability of food, especially locally produced agricultural products, reinvigorating the town center and the supporting the region's agricultural base. While there are supermarkets nearby, there are none in Windsor Locks. Many residents have limited access to fresh, locally produced foods. The town envisions a year-round, new facility adjacent to the commuter rail station. A lengthy Feasibility Study and Site Analysis was

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completed in 2017 that strongly concludes a public market will be successful if it were developed as an integral part of the downtown station location.

Next Steps:

1. Develop a Business Plan.
2. Form necessary partnerships.
3. Obtain technical assistance and marketing support.

**Airport Interchange Overlay Zone (AIOZ).** Several years ago, 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 allows a transition of higher density uses near Route 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. It is important to the integrity of the District to encourage and ensure the business development of the remainder of the District is consistent the approved master concept plan.

### **Route 20 Corridor and Old County Road**

**Route 20 Corridor** At its eastern terminus, Rt. 20 spurs off highway I-91 providing excellent and convenient access to both the Hartford and Springfield metropolitan areas. At the western end of the corridor in Windsor Locks, the Connecticut Airport Authority is implementing their plans to improve the roadway, terminal and ground transportation facilities and increase both passenger and cargo traffic at Bradley International Airport. There are several existing industrial buildings along the Route 20 corridor and a few large vacant parcels of land well positioned for development. These include the most significant of these parcels, mentioned below; a 17-acre parcel at RT 20 and RT 75, and approximately 50 acres of land at the Collins/UTC property at RT 20 and Hamilton Rd. The Town should encourage appropriate development here as Connecticut and the Region continue to climb out of the slow growth period between 2008 and 2018.

**Old County Road.** There is a large undeveloped business-zoned parcel consisting of about 76 acres of land bordered by the Bradley Field Connector (Route 20) and Old County Road. This property was most recently used for growing tobacco and is bordered on the north by the Waterworks Brook Park

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preservation area. The property is accessed from Old County Road and it might be possible to provide a second access to South 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. Mixed use, corporate office, or high-end industrial uses, not to include trucking or distribution, should be encouraged. Buildings should be of high-quality design.

The combination of visibility, accessibility and connectivity to multi-modal transportation gives the properties in this corridor high potential for diverse, intensive development with a complementary mix of residential, business, and high-end industrial uses. The right development can substantially increase real and personal property grand list growth, providing significant additional revenue to support municipal services for the entire community. The AIOZ zone provides a good foundation for the type of master planning approach that is needed for this property and corridor. If this property and others along Rt. 20 continue to remain vacant at the time of this Plan's implementation, the Town should consider conducting a corridor study to explore possible development scenarios, active transportation improvements such as a multi-use trail, utility needs and broadband services.

**Spring Street** The west end of Spring Street is a unique business district, with a significant amount of auto repair related businesses, 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. The Windsor Locks Zoning Regulations do not permit auto related businesses in this district (within the Business 1 zone) however several auto repair businesses are legally there and were before the regulations changed. As news businesses consider moving to town, they often request approvals in this district, as it has become, in a sense, an auto repair ecosystem. In the Summer of 2018, the community conducted an analysis of the Spring Street district in order to get a better idea of the existing conditions in the area and to explore whether or not a regulation change might be recommended. The analysis included Interviews with businesses and property owners, a land use inventory and zoning review. The following is a summary of this work with suggested future actions for consideration.

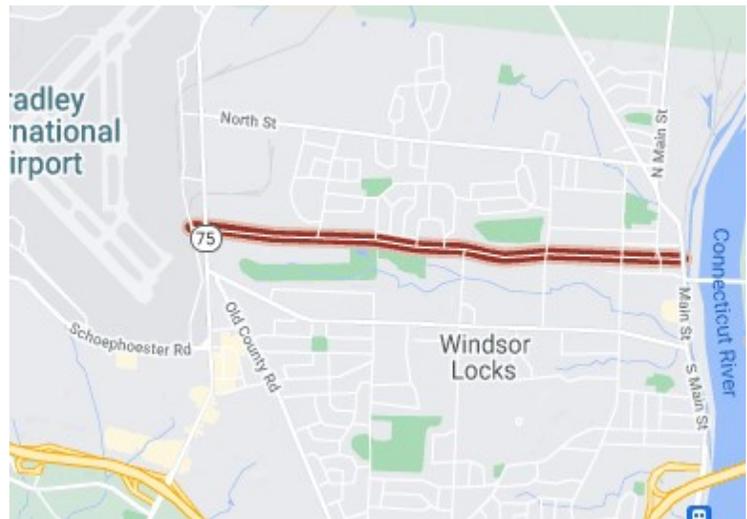
**Listening Tour and Information Gathering** Six business interviews were conducted, with a landowner, a restaurateur, two car repair businesses, a trucking service, and a financial

institution. Generally, all participants agreed the business district leaned towards auto service, light industrial and convenience retail with some limited office and personal and professional services. Most business are locally owned and operated. The business mix was well established and described as stable. No one who was interviewed thought subsurface environmental conditions posed a particular problem for or obstacle to development, land sales, or investment. Admittedly those interviewed were long time business or property owners. Environmental obstacles may not arise until a land sale is being negotiated, or building or expansion plans require private financing, which may trigger a demand for an environmental assessment of properties.

Those interviewed saw no specific threats to the business district, however it was noted that some of the properties used a well and were not along a water line which could be a barrier to business expansion.

As for opportunities, all thought airport related development opportunities should be sought out for the Spring Street district. Ideas

included hotels, cargo related businesses and truck rest stop areas. There was no significant support for a change to the status quo business mix or character of the area, but it was agreed that the general appearance of the district could improve.



Spring Street's easy access relative to the airport, RT. 75, and most of the residential neighborhoods in Windsor Locks were seen as an advantage. Business owners noted that most customers to the area are Windsor Locks residents or those who need the specific services of the various auto related services (auto repair, auto body work, oil changes, auto parts, etc.), the restaurants and personal service businesses (e.g., credit union, hair and nail salons, and medical services) or the services of other businesses (e.g., truck servicing, livery).

Except for a nine-acre (519 Spring St.) and an approximately nine-acre parcel at the southeast corner of Ella Grasso Turnpike and Spring St., most properties are developed and occupied. There are only a few vacant commercial buildings or storefronts. Those businesses interviewed felt that overall, the street was in good condition, although cosmetic upgrades to some properties and more enforcement of zoning regulations which seem to operating contrary to zoning would be helpful.

The land use inventory list supports the overall impression of the business district as predominantly auto service, light industrial and service businesses as opposed to a predominantly retail, office, and personal and professional services.

A land use inventory was conducted in July 2018.

The list of business by broad category are:  
Service/ light industry/ contracting etc. - 13  
Auto/Truck related service – 10  
Personal Service -7  
Restaurant/Food – 5  
Retail - 4  
Professional Service- 3  
Transportation – 3  
Finance/Banking – 1  
Funeral Home – 1  
Hotel – 1

**Zoning Analysis** The Spring Street commercial area is zoned

Business 1. The businesses in the land use inventory were cross referenced to the land use categories in the B-1 zone. The largest number of business that are nonconforming uses as far as the zoning regulations are concerned are the auto repair businesses. As nonconforming uses they are permitted to continue even though they are not allowed in the B1 zone because they were present before the B1 zone was established. However, they cannot be expanded, intensified, or changed to a different non-conforming use unless a variance is obtained from the zoning board of appeals. For a new business, buyer, or investor to change these nonconforming properties to permitted uses the cost of acquiring the property and converting the buildings to serve a permitted use must be economically feasible.

### **Spring Street Recommendations**

1. The Windsor Locks PZC and EIDC may want to consider the following and discuss whether a rezoning or a zoning regulation revision is warranted within the district:
  - a. Leave the zoning regulations and uses as they are.
  - b. Change the auto repair uses to permitted as opposed to prohibited uses, eliminating their nonconforming status.
  - c. Define personal services and “other” services (e.g., landscaping, contracting, etc.) for clarity and consistent interpretation and to ensure the zone is creating the predominant business district desired by the community in B-1 zones.
  - d. Add some retail or service uses to the Industrial zones.
  - e. Create a unique new business or industrial zone that incorporates the mix of uses seen on Spring Street as permitted.
2. Investigate the cost of extending the water line to serve the section of Spring Street that does not currently have water service.
3. Consider ways to encourage businesses to improve their property including landscaping, signage, new building facade treatments etc.

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The Planning and Zoning Commission could consider amending the regulations to incorporate design standards for such improvements. The Planning and Zoning Commission should support the district by creating clarified language in the zoning regulations, considering a rezone of the district, using economic development tools to improve aesthetics, and discussing avenues for upgraded infrastructure to preserve Spring Street as a unique and viable business district.

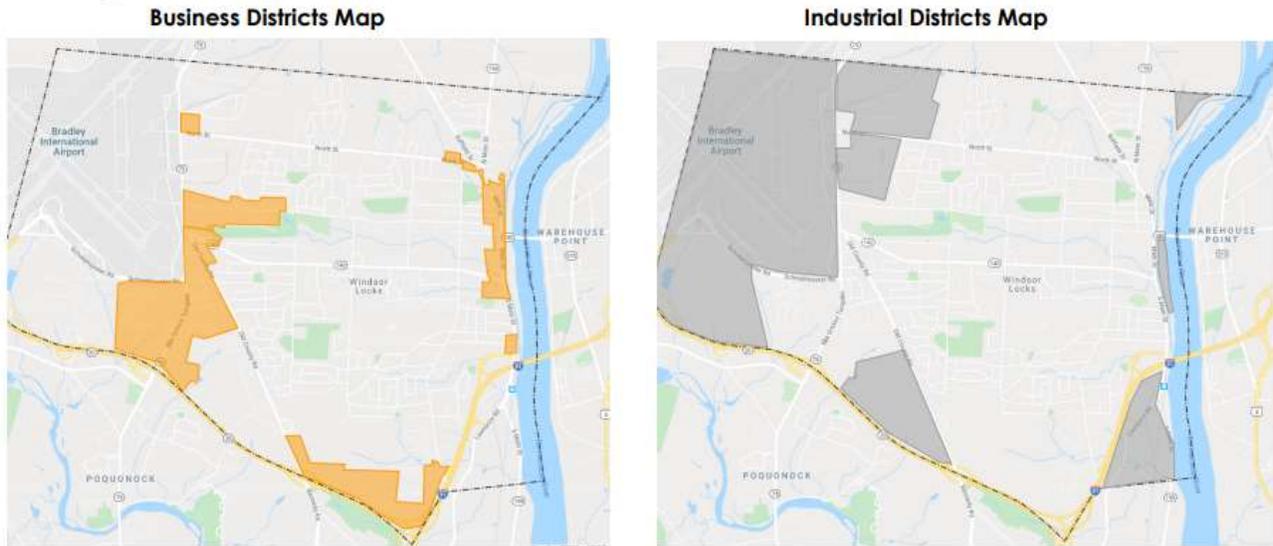
**South Center and Oakridge Drive.** Zoning patterns on the southern portion of South Center Street near where it intersects with Oakridge Drive are varied. The Oakridge Condominiums lie on a Business 2 property, an auto related use is in a residential zone, and other properties are in the Business 1 zone. In some cases, these are legal non-conforming uses. The commercial uses are typically one-story suburban style. With both established and new condominium neighborhoods at the end of Oakridge Drive, the adjacent



Waterworks Brook preservation area, a mix of uses and the need for some sprucing up, this entry way at South Center Street could become an attractive gateway. The area might benefit from an overall zone change and master plan. The area transitions from single family neighborhoods to multifamily, and could become a charming village area, embracing low impact supportive commercial or office, redevelopment of the hotel property, inclusion of a parklet, new pedestrian connections and mixed use 2 story development out at the street to include scaled infill housing at 4 to 7 units per acre.

**Architectural Guidelines and Site Design.** Architectural character, building location and parking lot design are as significant an issue as any other site design criteria 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 community's vision 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.

Since the 2007 Plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission adopted new architectural standards for the downtown area. The Commission should consider adopting similar standards for all business and industrial districts. The Town should then decide whether to establish a formal Design Review Commission that would be comprised of design professionals that would serve to advise both applicants and the Commission.



#### **Goals and Objectives:**

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

#### **Objectives - Industrial:**

- 1. Maintain or increase mitigation measures on Old County Road to reduce impact of industrial uses or associated truck traffic.**
- 2. Investigate whether other less valuable land can be used for the compost operation, freeing this parcel for a higher value use, and eliminating permitting or development conflicts.**
- 3. Review the zoning pattern along Old County Road from Halfway House Road south to encourage low intensity, optimal transitional uses that will support and connect the residential communities and business communities.**
- 4. As the King Spring Road extension, referred to in the 2007 Plan, does not seem feasible, the Planning and Zoning Commission should revise the permissible uses in the remaining industrial district on North Street to exclude high traffic, and heavy truck traffic, uses.**
- 5. Continue to utilize adaptive reuse regulations to provide flexibility in underutilized industrial buildings.**

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6. Continue to provide outreach to industrial businesses to understand workforce, growth strategy and supply chain needs.
  7. Rezone River Road to permit residential uses and passive recreational uses.
  8. Create a plan for future development or preservation for River Road and Lawnacre Road that incorporates resiliency planning and natural resource protection due to proximity to the Connecticut River and flood waters.

**Objectives - Commercial:**

1. Continue efforts to require frontages along Ella Grasso Turnpike to be used for more intense uses than valet parking. Additionally, the town should work closely with the Connecticut Airport Authority to understand how much frontage could open along Ella Grasso Turnpike if some parking uses are moved onto the airport proper.
2. Continue to work toward developing a back access road or multi-use trail parallel to Ella Grasso Turnpike from Route 20 to Loten Drive.
3. Evaluate a rezone for the intersections of Ella Grasso Turnpike, Elm Street and Old County Road as well as Halfway House Road and Concorde Way.
4. Consider public-private partnerships for redevelopment of the Windsor Locks Commons site and station site and continue to move the train station relocation project into a construction phase.
5. Continue to implement recommendations made in the Main Street Study and Once and Future TOD Study.
6. Pursue a rail crossing and bridge over the canal to connect Main Street to the canal bank, Montgomery Mill and Canal Trail.
7. Coordinate a plan with Ahlstrom Munksjo, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Friends of the Canal for resurfacing and enhancing the Canal Trail State Park.
8. Encourage development of new housing units within a 10-minute walk from the train station.
9. Seek funding to complete the Historic Station restoration, fit out and associated parking for future uses.
10. Work with property owner of Dexter Plaza to further enhance the site in the short-term and explore rethinking and reconfiguration of buildings on the parcel in the future.
11. Support the Windsor Locks Housing Authority as they explore new mixed-use development along the frontage of 11 Grove Street that is connected and in harmony with the Main Street Overlay Zone and with adjacent parcels.
12. Continue to pursue excellence in coordination and site design for 255 Main Street, the relocated train station, and the historic train station.
13. Encourage and support the successful reuse of the Historic Station as a Welcome Center, “grab and go” café, tourist destination and meeting house.
14. Complete site preparation for the properties on the corner of Chestnut Street and Main Street and continue to incentivize mixed-use redevelopment.

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

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

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## SECTION VIII. PARKS AND RECREATION

### Introduction

Parks provide structure, beauty, great economic value, and environmental benefits. They can also provide health benefits by providing fresh air and encouraging physical activity, both important for residents of all ages. Recreational programs and spaces can foster personal development and fulfillment. Preschool and school age children need recreational places and programs because they provide opportunities to engage, be creative and problem solve, develop gross motor skills and to develop emotionally and socially. This section of the plan explores the importance of parks and programming, identifies existing parks, and provides goals and objectives related to desired improvements in the town's overall system of recreation areas and programs.

Windsor Locks is a mature town with many established and older neighborhoods. Throughout the community are a wide variety of parks and recreation areas. In fact, in 2014 – 2017 surveys of existing residents “the number of parks” is often touted by respondents as a valued asset. While these outdoor spaces are one of the reasons that the people of Windsor Locks love their community, various needed improvements have been identified. Over many decades, Windsor Locks has obtained and/or developed 18 sites under the cooperative stewardship of the Parks Department, Department of Public Works, and the Conservation Commission. These sites range in size from 0.3 acres to 200 acres.

This inventory of Town Park and Recreation sites has been recently increased by the addition of a preservation / open space site known as Waterworks Brook Preservation Area formerly the Connecticut Water Company land and wellfields. Through major community support and partnership with CT Water and the Trust for Public Land, these wells have been abandoned by the water company and the 200-acre property has been acquired for open space and passive recreation as recommended in the 2007 Plan. Also, the Town's High School now hosts a Skate Park. The preservation of the Water Company land and the installation of the Skate Park were objectives of the 2007 Plan and are examples of working toward meeting the following goal: “To continue to provide a safe, convenient and enjoyable Parks and Recreation system for use by all Town Residents”.



## Park Inventory

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

Park	Facilities
1. Ahern Avenue Park	Playground
2. Barbara Drive Park	Wooded Area, Passive Open Space
3. Bel-Aire Circle Park	Playground, Ballfield
4. Circle Drive Park	Basketball Court, Playground
5. Codey Way Park	Playground, Open Field
6. Denslow Park	Basketball Court, Ballfield, Playground, Soccer field
7. Green Manor Park	Playground, Baseball field
8. Juniper Drive Park	Basketball Court, Ballfield, Playground
9. Noden-Reed Park	Open Field, Fruit Trees, Gardens, Hens
10. Pesci Park	2 Baseball Diamonds, Pool and Bathhouse, Lighted Basketball Court, Playground, Grove Street Garden
11. Reed Park	Baseball Diamond, Softball Diamond, Playground, Basketball Court, Soccer
12. Southwest Family Park	Basketball Court, Playground, Softball Field, Soccer field
13. Spring Park	Pond with fish, Pavilion, Picnic Area, Basketball court, Playground, trails are underutilized
14. Sutton Park	Open Field
15. Veterans Memorial Park	Baseball Diamond, Lighted Softball Field, Playground, 2 Soccer Fields (one with lights), Football field
16. Waterworks Brook Preservation Area	Passive Recreation, Hiking, trail system could be improved
17. Windsor Locks Canal Park	Passive Recreation, River and Canal View, southern access to Canal State Park Trail (4.5 miles to Suffield CT, trail continues to Enfield CT)
18. Woodland Street Park	Playground, underutilized

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Three of the park sites are not developed:

- 1) Barbara Drive Park, 2.91 acres of wooded land which abuts Noden-Reed Park
- 2) Sutton Drive Playground, 1.0 acre of open land abutting school property
- 3) Waterworks Brook Preservation Area, just under 200 acres of wooded land off South Center Street



Noden-Reed Park & Museum

The Barbara Drive and Sutton Drive park sites provide some potential areas for expansion of active recreational facilities if needed. Waterworks Brook Preservation Area is a conserved land to kept in its natural state. In addition, The Parks Department also shares facilities under the jurisdiction of the School Department, both indoor and outdoor.

**Current and Future Needs** The Town's population has remained steady over the past few decades. This may suggest that the demand for town services, such as playgrounds and active recreation facilities, has leveled off reducing the likelihood for increased budgetary impacts of providing such services. According to the Partnership for Strong Communities 2015 Housing Data Profile, Windsor Locks is one of many municipalities projected to see an 8% drop in school age children and a 28% increase of those 65 and older by the year 2025. The largest age categories in 2025 are predicted to be the 15 – 19 and 20 – 24 age groups. These trends may have an impact on the prioritization and use of funds for parks and recreational services required and utilized by town citizens. The teen, young adult and senior populations should be highly engaged and considered in planning for park spaces and recreational programs for the decade or two to come. As discussed in the open space and preservation sections of the Plan, the community will need to consider the long-term environmental benefits, community need and the budgetary impacts of maintaining property when presented with future opportunities to increase the park inventory.

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 those 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 recreational space throughout town in new neighborhoods. One may typically think of parks as they relate to residential neighborhoods, and public space is certainly important in proximity to single family neighborhoods. However, Windsor Locks should also continue to incorporate green space, plazas trees, benches, walkways, and other public amenities throughout commercial areas, particularly where they are adjacent to activity nodes and mixed use (residential and commercial) development. The public realm (places that are accessible and inviting to everyone) attracts people to live, work and visit. These spaces have economic, social and health benefit and should be considered worthwhile and valuable.

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As it did in 2007, the recreation program serves 400-500 youngsters up through middle-school age. Although the Town recognizes the importance of providing increased programs for older individuals as the population changes, the emphasis continues to be 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. Program demands overall are met.

Generally, the Town has adequate water supply, either by utilizing wells or by extended public water lines, to the various parks so that the active recreation fields can be properly maintained. The Parks Department has provided a new bathhouse facility at Pesci Park, funded with a combination of grants and Capital Improvement Funds, as recommended in the 2007 Plan.

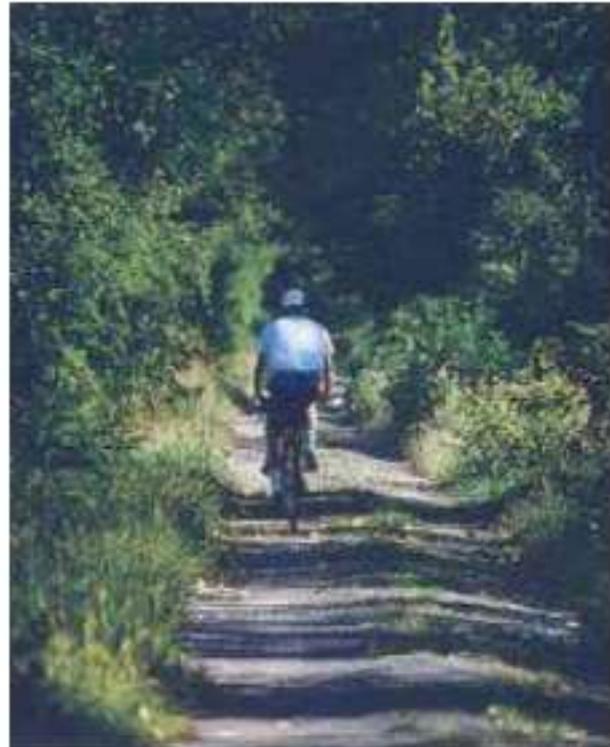
The community has shown interest in the following park improvements:

1. An established boat launch and waterfront park possibly at the southern edge of Town that could link to open space along the Connecticut River. This should be coordinated with the abutting Town of Windsor.
2. Improved landscaping and activated space at the underutilized Woodland Park
3. Additional walkways and associated lighting, increased positive activity, increased sense of safety and continued maintenance of the pool at Pesci Park

The Park Commission and Staff continue to discuss the desire for a Community Center. This involves a major expenditure for a building and possibly a site for such a 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.

As mentioned in other sections of the Plan, including the section on Natural Resources, long range planning aimed at connecting parks and open space with greenways and trails is an effort worth continuing. Areas such as Kettle Brook and Merrigan Brook corridors, as well as along the CT River and along the Route 20 corridor and Strawberry Meadow Brook should continue to be assessed for preservation, bicycle and pedestrian recreational trail, habitat enhancement, environmental education, and wayfinding opportunities.

**State Recreational Facilities** A recreational facility of State-wide significance is the Windsor Locks Canal State Park. The park offers a 4.5-mile recreational bicycle riding and walking trail which highlights the area's agricultural and industrial history. The trail features the historic Canal and Locks, as well as the Montgomery Mill. The Town should continue its active role in organizing with the Town of Suffield, property owners, the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and local developers in planning and seeking funding for a feasibility study to repair the trail surface, preserve the canal walls and locks, better maintain vegetation throughout and explore possible use of the canal for recreational purposes.



Operated by the State of CT and located at Bradley International Airport, the New England Air Museum offers a mix of educational and recreational activities that is unique in the State. The museum attracts residents, travelers, and future possible residents, reflecting the town's strong airport and aerospace industries.



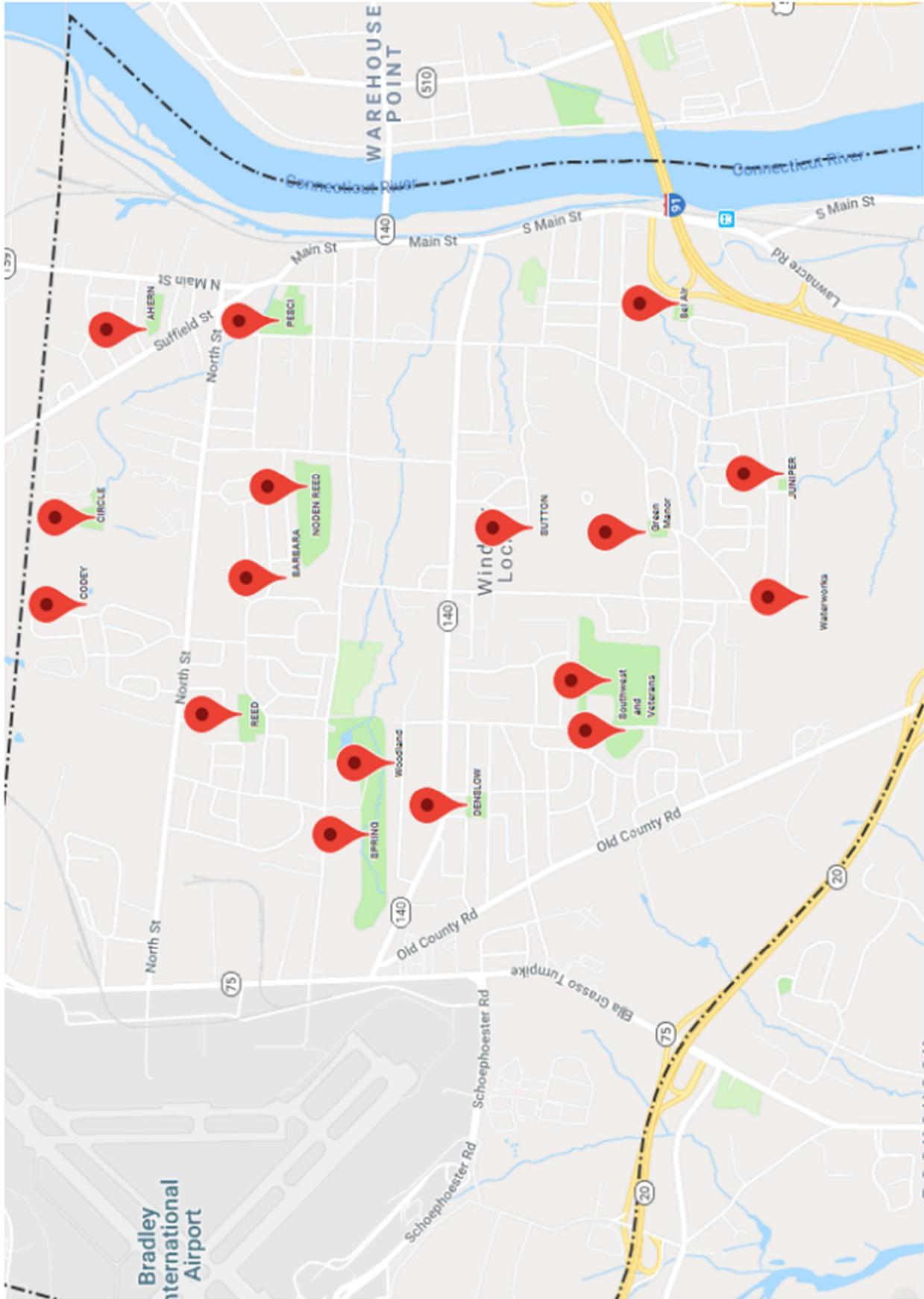
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## Goals and Objectives

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

### Objectives:

1. To continue to support, with the Town's annual Capital Improvement Program on a yearly basis, the funds needed to properly maintain, make safe and improve the Town's park system, including the enhancement of underutilized spaces as identified in the Park Inventory or in future needs assessments.
2. Survey residents in proximity to underutilized park areas to understand the neighborhood needs and desires to improve and better utilize the space.
3. Seek out available grant opportunities to
  - a. assess community strengths and needs related to recreational programs and (indoor and outdoor) park spaces
  - b. fund needed improvements in the existing Town park system
4. Establish a plan for consistent improvements to the Town park's system such as: improve outdoor basketball facilities, establish a boat launch facility to the Connecticut River, preserve and maintain the Canal Trail, Canal and Locks, establish a multi-use path along the Route 20 corridor, enhance walking trails at Spring Street Park the Waterworks Brook Preservation Area off South Center Street.
5. Seek ways to increase safety in active recreation areas such as: neighborhood appropriate and low impact lighting, maintained pathways and landscaping, increased positive activity, community policing
6. Explore opportunities to establish a youth center space and increased programming for adolescent and teen youth.
7. Seek ways to install additional wayfinding and educational signage to direct and engage park users.
8. Continue to extend and establish town Greenways along several of the Town's watercourses, roadways or undeveloped areas and connect these to the Town Park system with access points and trails.
9. Seek opportunities to develop new trail connections and multi-use paths within new development sites understanding that both residents and local employers/employees may enjoy public trails and amenities.
10. Work with Property Owners, Developers and Town of Suffield and the State of Connecticut to expand, improve and maintain the Windsor Locks Canal State Park along the Connecticut River.





## **Section IX. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

### **What is a Capital Improvement Plan?**

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) contains high cost and/or projects that must be sustained over long periods of time such as infrastructure improvements, large equipment purchases, and major facility, capacity, or planning studies for a local government. The CIP works in conjunction with construction and implementation schedules, as part of a community's financing plan. It coordinates strategic planning, financial capacity, and physical development. 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. The Program is financial planning tool, which should provide for implementation of certain recommendations that may be found in the Plan of Conservation and Development. The CIP should develop through coordination between the Planning, Public Works, and Finance departments.

Budget items such as roadway projects, construction equipment, school facilities, sidewalk installation, sewer, open space projects, fire apparatus, town official vehicles and many public works projects are typically categorized in the Town's budget as "Capital Improvements".

### **Benefits of incorporating the CIP into the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)**

A complete and thoughtful CIP will inform the public and help them to know that their local government is investing in infrastructure, the built environment, open space or programming and services. Coordination between the CIP and POCD allows the community to prioritize and implement long-term goals and objectives. It will also help to identify, prioritize, and optimize financing for capital projects such as debt financing and grant opportunities. Reviewing the comprehensive plan while creating the CIP can help to prioritize projects within the community's fiscal capacity.

### **2018/2019-2022/2023 Capital improvement Requests**

#### **Board of Education**

- Interior Renovations
- Accessibility and Safety Code Upgrades, Building Entrances
- Roof replacement (either partial or full)
- Athletic Field Upgrades & Irrigation

#### **Commission on Needs of the Aging**

- Bus Purchase

#### **EIDC**

- Main Street Master Plan Implementation, Phase Two
- Rt 20 Corridor Planning Study

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**Fire Department**

Apparatus Replacement

**Parks and Recreation Department**

Veterans' Memorial Park Path Lights

Reed Park Renovations, Irrigation and Field Work

Ball Park Codey Way Park Well and Irrigation

Pesci Pavilion Expansion

Canal Park Boat Launch

**Police Department**

Cruiser Replacement

**Public Works**

Roadways

Engineering

Drainage/Flood and Erosion Control

Sanitary Sewer Installation/Replacement

Reclaiming and Paving

Sidewalk Installation West Street

PW Facility Study/Evaluation

Irrigation Systems – Sports Fields

**Safety Complex**

Fuel tank remove/install

Materials Screener Truck(s)/Equipment

**Water Pollution Control Authority**

Replace Solids Handling Equipment

Belt Filter Presses

New pump station to separate flow from CT Airport Authority

Replace Main Plant Emergency Generator

Scum Concentrator Replacement

Upgrade Chemical Storage/ Receiving Area

Headwork Grit Screw Replacement

Emergency Generator Replacement (6 Pump Stations)

Roof Replacement - WPCF buildings

Halfway House Road Pumping Station Replacement

Repave / Site Work - WPCF

Sewer Capacity Study

**Building and Land Use**

Inspection Vehicle Replacement

**Selectman**

Town Hall Renovation

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The Commission should continue to advocate for long range planning goals and objectives identified in the adopted Plan and seek their implementation.

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## Section X. EXISTING LAND USE AND FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Community planning is a comprehensive approach to meeting community needs and desires, empowering residents, and community members to participate in and give feedback about their town or city's vision. Whether you are planning for underdeveloped communities with acres and acres of land to develop, or you are planning for redevelopment in a mature, built environment like Windsor Locks, the process focuses on the human need and desire for both development and conservation.

Planning also recognizes area of influence and regional relationships. Planning acknowledges the importance of having strong, connected systems, whether they be human, natural, transportation, housing, or commerce.

In Windsor Locks, growth lies in maintaining or enhancing existing neighborhoods, recreating commercial district character, understanding, and incentivizing redevelopment opportunities, mitigating environmental impact, and celebrating historic and natural assets with purpose and passion. To maintain balance, quality of life and sustainability, the residents must continue to, strategically and regularly, plan the community together.

**Community Land Use Map** 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 predicted or determined for current and future activity. Such patterns are influenced by a variety of natural and physical factors such as rivers and streams, wetlands, and topography. Man-made infrastructure, such as utilities, roads, and buildings, can also have enormous impact on a community.

Land use patterns are greatly influenced in Windsor Locks by the existence and growth of Bradley International Airport, a use that dominates the western half of the Town. The impact of such a facility, encompassing 1080 acres or approximately 18.4 percent of the 9.2 square mile town, is tremendous.

**Population Density** Windsor Locks had 12,043 residents in 2000, and 12,498 in 2010, according to the U.S. Census, representing a 3.78% increase, following a 2.5% decrease in population from 1990 to 2000. This population lives in a Town with a total of 5888 acres (9.2 square miles). To determine the current density, we divide the population figure by the acres and find that the density is a mere 2.12 persons per acre, a slight increase from 2000. Historically, Windsor Locks has had the lowest density of population of any of the "fully suburban" towns in the Capitol Region. In 2019 at the time this Plan was finalized, World Media Group, LLC estimated the population density to be 1,340 / sq mi., ranking Windsor Locks to be the 67th highest in the State. This, however, is a misleading figure since Bradley

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Airport business and industry, governed by the Connecticut Airport Authority, occupy more than one half of the Town's land area. The relatively low density of the Town is also attributable to the fact that Windsor Locks' housing is predominately single family. In 2015 there were 4,017 single family dwellings out of the total of all 5521 housing units in town, or 77% of total units.

**Land Use Changes** 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 2007 Plan. Updated land use maps can be found on file in the Building / Planning office for public view. Since the 2007 Plan of Development, 4 significant changes to the Land Use Plan were approved or adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

**Main Street** Since the 2007 Plan, based on recommendations from the Plan and the various Main Street Studies, the Planning and Zoning Commission approved the creation of the Main Street Overlay Zone (MSOZ). This zone encourages redevelopment in a typical Main Street fashion, recreating the desired wall of buildings close to the street, revitalizing the downtown and adding residential units, foot traffic and a mix of uses that add vibrancy, commerce, and activity. The Commission approved a zone change for approximately 6 acres from industrial to RDRD, permitting the conversion of the industrial, long-vacant Montgomery Mill to a residential community.

**Multi-Family Special Development and Flexible Residential Development** In 2019, the Planning and Zoning Commission increased the permitted density of units per acre in the MFSD zone from 5 to 8. Increasing the allowed units per acre, in a sensible and scaled way, can increase housing supply and overall affordability in the community. Multi Family Special Development zones are often appropriate as transitional areas between commercial districts and single-family neighborhoods, or near nodes of activity where there are sidewalks, places of worship, schools, various modes of public transportation and small markets or shops where a villagelike setting and connectivity can be or has been established. Communities like Woodridge and Chapman Chase were developed under these multi-family regulatory frameworks.

**Old County Road** Another significant change to the Town's land use pattern was the Planning and Zoning Commission's approval of a General Plan of Development for the largest parcel of developable land in town along Route 20, previously agricultural land, under the Airport Interchange Overlay Zone (AIOZ). This zone was originally 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. Since the 2007 Plan a new Assisted Living Community was constructed as a transition from single family and multi-family communities on Old County Road. The uses allowed by the AIOZ are believed to be

better able to provide a transition from the single-family homes and take advantage of the exposure and proximity to Route 20.

**Waterworks Brook Preservation Area** The town purchased the CT Water Company utility land, previously an abandoned wellfield on over 200 acres to preserve the natural resource and provide a passive recreation area for residents and visitors.

**Land Use Changes** In reviewing the land use changes over the last decade, most were considered redevelopment, adaptive reuse or “in-fill” development. In-fill development is new construction or building additions on smaller vacant or underutilized parcels of land. Most development was in accordance with the 2007 Plan.

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. The Commission should never shortcut a careful planning process but should rigorously evaluate such changes and develop a process that enlists the input of all Town agencies, and the 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 approximate changes in land use over time, rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Table 6: Land Use Analysis: 1986 – 2016  
Windsor Locks, Connecticut

Land Use Category	1986		1996		2006		2016	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Residential	1707	29%	1850	32%	1900	33%	2035	35%
Business	239	4%	571	10%	600	10%	1687	29%
Industrial	567	9%	522	9%	620	11%	614	11%
Utilities / Transportation	1530	26%	1750	30%	1750	30%	482	8%
Institutional	320	6%	327	6%	330	6%	330	6%
Recreational / Open Space	165	2%	149	3%	170	3%	395	7%
Agricultural / Vacant	1596	27%	719	12%	530	9%	226	4%

Best available data including Assessor data and manual GIS map measurements of documented changes were used to provide above acreages. Windsor Locks has 5,760 total acres in land including the airport, on which the above percentages are based.

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**Future Land Use** The Windsor Locks Community, through years of participatory planning, submits this Plan of Conservation and Development to the future for all to use as a “road map” in the next decade or more. The Plan offers data, observations, and trends to consider in the next planning period. The information and ideas offered here are to be used as a resource as new planning policies and land use changes are contemplated by boards, commissions, staff, elected officials and all decision makers. This plan shall be utilized to guide programming, spending, planning and development activities in the Town. While there are many recommendations listed throughout this plan, the most significant zone change, and land use recommendations are summarized below.

**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 and 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 and Halfway House Road** The area in the Industrial Zone, north of the Compost Facility along Old County Road to Halfway House Road should be reviewed for possible rezoning. This discussion should include the residential portion of Concorde Way. 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 industrially zoned land north of this approved development, continuing to Halfway House Road, should be considered for potential down-zoning to better reflect existing and adjacent land uses 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 1854 hotel rooms following build out of those already approved. 1488 hotel rooms are currently constructed and in use. 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. Additionally, the PZC should consider conducting a

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corridor study, to include a review of the Connecticut Airport Authority Master Plan and to understand possible impacts and opportunities should most valet parking uses move inward onto the airport property, freeing up significant frontage on Route 75.

**Bradley Area Transportation** Several years ago, even prior to the 2007 Plan, the Capitol Region Council of Governments completed the “Bradley Area Transportation Study”. The Study includes a comprehensive analysis of current and future traffic conditions and land use in the airport area. The study identifies transportation improvements, including roadway safety improvements and a pair of back access roads parallel to Ella Grasso Turnpike that are needed to accommodate growth. The study also proposes development of a strategic plan for maintaining safe and efficient access to the airport area. Since this study was conducted, the Town was awarded LOTCIP funding to install sidewalks, some crosswalks, and some pedestrian amenities. Additionally, bus shelters have been installed since the 2007 plan. While these are much desired and important changes, roadway changes are still needed to address extremely dangerous roadway conditions. This is a priority, and the community should continue to work closely with the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation and all necessary stakeholders to ensure that traffic improvements are engineered and constructed in this planning period.

**Route 20 / Old County Road** The Town applied for, and was selected, to conduct a CT DOT Regional Transportation Study via the Capitol Region Council of Governments. Properties abutting route 20 are highly visible opportunity sites, yet the corridor would benefit from strategic planning, infrastructure improvements (highway access, sewer, broadband) and increased connectivity both for vehicles and active transportation. The Corridor Study funding was not yet awarded due to a pause in State spending in 2018 - 2019, however, the community should continue to pursue such funds to realize this important effort. The 80 plus acre property along Route 20 and Old County Road, aka the Thrall property, the site abutting Ella Grasso Turnpike and Route 20 and underutilized land along Route 20 on the Collins Aerospace property are the largest vacant parcels remaining in Windsor Locks, requiring careful planning to find a highest and best use while minimizing impacts to current and future residents. Of particular concern is reducing truck traffic through residential neighborhoods and increasing traffic calming measures.

**Main Street and Transit Oriented Development (TOD)** The Community adopted a Transit Oriented Development Plan and has begun implementation, most significant of the efforts is the relocation of the train station to the downtown, just north of the historic station. The town should continue to work closely with the State of CT Department of Transportation, Amtrak, and other local stakeholders to see this through completion. Windsor Locks should continue to revisit this TOD plan as a guiding document and implement those recommendations that the community has found feasible and embraced.

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**Complete Streets:** The town, at the time of the drafting of this Plan, has been awarded over \$5 million in LOTCIP funds to construct complete streets from the intersection of Church and Main Street to the intersection of Suffield and North Main Street. Once reconstructed, Main Street will provide wider sidewalks, increased pedestrian amenities like benches and street trees, on-street parking, and traffic calming measures such as narrow roadways and a roundabout. The community should continue working closely with the State of Connecticut DOT and other stakeholders to overcome engineering challenges and realize construction.

Note: Windsor Locks should consider implementing a community wide Complete Streets policy.

**Windsor Locks Commons and Station Area Properties** Windsor Locks Commons is directly adjacent to the land dedicated to the relocation of the train station. Any future redevelopment of this land, or nearby land such as 254 Main Street (across the street) or the nearby Windsor Locks Housing Authority, must be coordinated with and integrated into the TOD area and complete streets plan. Components should include mixed use buildings, first floor commercial, residential above, increased residential density, public amenities, social places, an inclusive design and should promote active transportation such as walking or riding a bicycle.

**Public Market:** Windsor Locks does not have a supermarket within the community's boundaries. Access to food resources, fresh local food, is an integral component of a sustainable community. The Town has completed a feasibility study related to a public market close to, or part of the relocated train station. The study finds that a public market near the station will be successful, providing nutritious food, diverse cuisine and just as importantly, a place to connect and be social. The community should move forward with the development of a business plan, coordinated with development of the station area and Windsor Locks Commons, and pursue related funding.

**Dexter Plaza:** A significant parcel in the downtown area is the Dexter Plaza property. This is a retail plaza that was developed post Urban Renewal in a suburban form rather than a traditional downtown development pattern. While underperforming for several years, in 2019 the plaza experienced several new businesses locating there in response to revitalization efforts, some moving from the neighboring Windsor Locks Commons property to this location. While the community works toward revitalization, station relocation and construction of new mixed-use buildings, the plaza seems to play an important interim role for attracting small businesses who want to remain in the community or be part of the revitalization efforts. Still, the Town should work with the property owner to encourage a rethinking and redevelopment

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of this parcel in the future that looks at a reconfiguration of building placement and locating new buildings at the street line in a traditional multi-use and multistory downtown pattern.

**Montgomery Building/Canal Pedestrian Bridge:** The community has now realized successful site reuse helping to meet residential demand, increasing foot traffic, and acting as a catalyst to downtown revitalization. Pedestrian improvements across the canal at Bridge Street and at the new station area should both be pursued. A pedestrian bridge will provide direct connectivity for residents and tourists alike between the station, the Montgomery Mill, the Canal Trail State Park and the Connecticut River, all major assets for Windsor Locks.

**Spring Street:** In 2019 staff conducted business a use analysis for Spring Street at the request of the Planning and Zoning Commission. The regulations do not permit auto related or industrial uses; however, a good majority of the existing uses fall into these categories. Interviews were conducted as part of this analysis and property owners were overall happy in their location, not planning to move out of the area and some wished they could expand but could not due to their uses being non-conforming. In recent years, the Commission has found new requests for such uses to be welcome and in harmony with other uses on Spring Street. As there is a conflict between such uses and the regulations, it is suggested that the Commission consider a rezone or text amendment which would apply to Spring Street to permit a broader list of uses including auto related or light industrial uses.

### **Open Space and 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. The town should continue to explore opportunities to expand connecting open space along this natural feature.

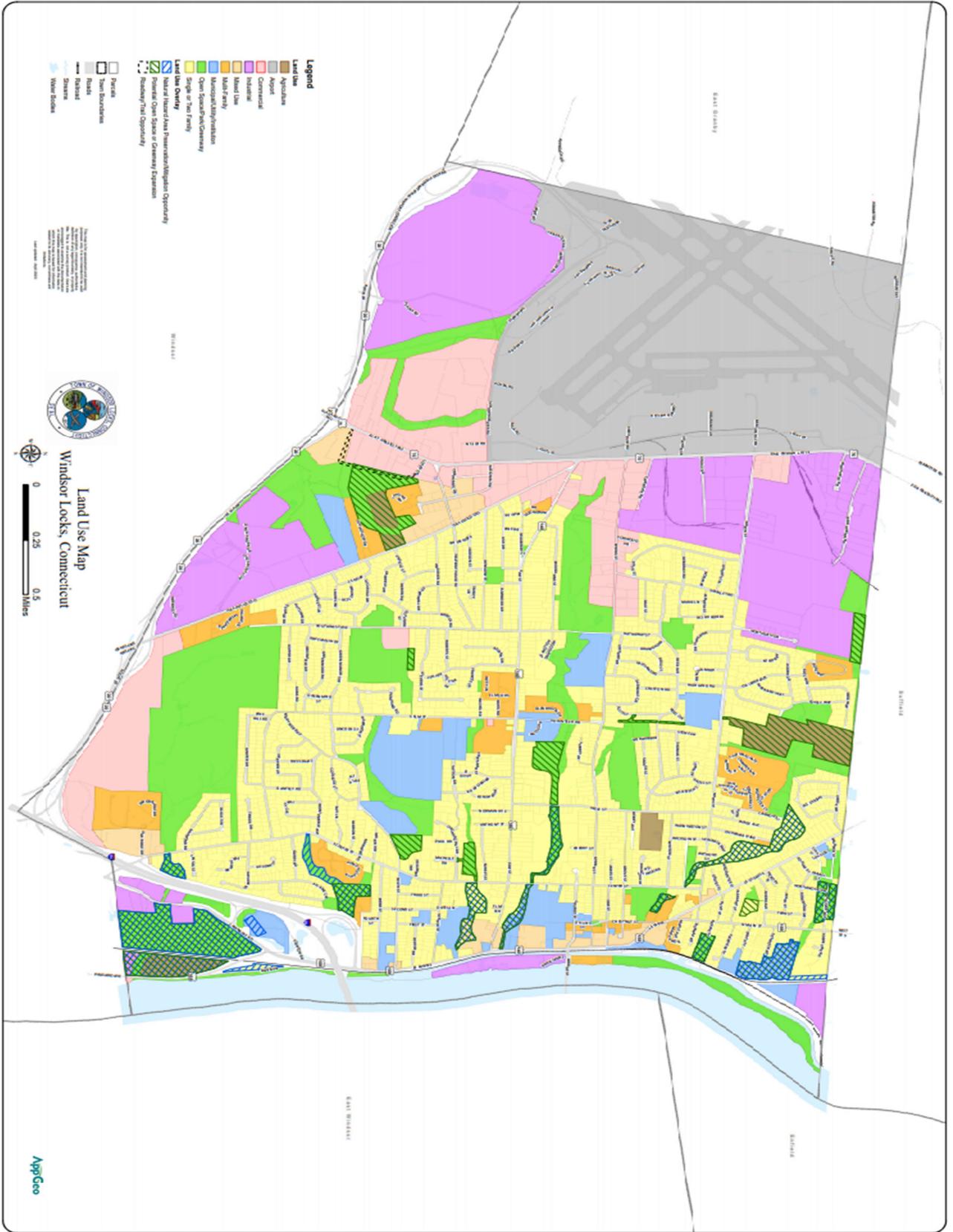
**Merrigan Brook:** The area around Merrigan Brook provides a Greenway opportunity. Near the upper reaches of this brook lies Circle Drive Park, and further to the west is the open space secured during the development of the new subdivisions near Acorn Drive as well as the Chapman Chase residential community. The town should continue to explore ways to further connect these areas with open space as the surrounding land develops.

**Connecticut River Trail and Greenway:** The State of Connecticut has a long standing, yet conceptual, plan to complete the greenway along the Connecticut River. The greenway highlights the agricultural heritage within Suffield and the canal and mill history of the Windsor Locks riverfront land. There is continued interest by Suffield, Windsor Locks and Windsor in fully connecting the existing pieces of the greenway, in addition to repaving the existing canal trail. A gap exists where the Ahlstrom Munksjo private property is located and

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the gap continues south to the border of Windsor. An “in road” trail could be considered to provide part of this connection, through changes in roadway striping and proper wayfinding. The Town of East Windsor is also interested in working with Windsor Locks to continue that connectivity across the Route 140 Bridge by realigning the roadway to include a dedicated bike lane and improved pedestrian sidewalks. Greenways can be tremendous recreational, tourism and economic assets for the community’s residents and visitors. The Town should re-energize its efforts to work with the State of CT, Ahlstrom Munksjo, and other stakeholders to find ways to achieve the completed greenway.

All suggested land uses are depicted on the Future Proposed Land Use map that follows, a copy of which can be found at this link on the Town’s website. [https://windsorlocksct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/WindsorLocks\\_FutureLandUseMap.pdf](https://windsorlocksct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/WindsorLocks_FutureLandUseMap.pdf)



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## **SECTION XI. PLANNING POLICIES - SUMMARY and IMPLEMENTATION**

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

Policies are summarized below by Section.

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

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

**Objectives:**

1. Develop a list of potential departments and partners to include in a health outcome improvement effort.
2. Create a committee of staff, residents, local leaders, and health professionals to review the most recent Windsor Locks Health Index prepared for North Central Health District.
3. Develop a list of evidence-based, short-term, and long-term tasks which are known to improve the specific low scoring health outcomes.
4. Develop a strategy for implementation using a multi-disciplinary and intergenerational approach, building on existing programming.
5. Consider the goals and objectives throughout this Plan that might satisfy #3 above, calling them out as priority.
6. Provide a means of tracking and assessing improvements in health outcomes and work closely with the North Central Health District to do so.

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

**Objectives:**

1. Further analyze the current zoning and density of residential neighborhoods, especially those called out in the body of this section of the Plan. Consider amending zones as

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appropriate to allow growth and maintain current residential character where it already exists. Consider writing a consolidated regulation that incorporates the multiple avenues for approval of residential development, infill and redevelopment opportunities including “pocket neighborhoods”.

2. Inventory vacant lands to be considered for development and preservation.
3. Review and consider implementation of recommendations made in the following studies as they relate to housing, density, form-based code, and future development:
  - a. Incentive Housing Zone Study prepared by Milone and Macbroom (2015).
  - b. Main Street Study (2008) prepared by Ferrero and Hixon
  - c. Transit Oriented Development Study (2011-2013) prepared by Fuss & O’Neil
  - d. Zimmerman / Volk Associates, Inc. (2012)
4. Incorporate low impact development, lifespan planning (accessory dwelling units, “granny flats”), affordability and inclusive design standards into residential regulations as appropriate.
5. Review and revise this section of the plan as required from time to time per Connecticut General Statutes Section 8 – 30g.
6. Conduct neighborhood visual preference survey, incorporate design guidelines for residential development community wide utilizing survey outcomes.

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

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

#### **Objectives:**

##### **Public School Community and Facility Goals**

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

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

1. Assess Windsor Locks neighborhoods for new opportunities to strengthen families and foster growth and development for young people

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

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

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

**Objectives:**

1. Explore the establishment of increased regulated areas in the Town wetland regulations particularly associated with the Town’s major watercourses and their associated wetlands. Specifically, consider increasing the activity review area to one hundred feet (100’) from the top of the bank of a watercourse.

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2. In all new development proposals, establish and enforce a. a no net loss policy of inland wetland soils, and/or b. alternative enhancement opportunities policy to create higher value wetland areas where streams have been urbanized or where wetland soils have historically been disturbed.

3. Seek opportunities with the Conservation Commission, Department of Public Works, Parks Department and possibly with the Board of Education to provide educational markers, kiosks, and signs along not only watercourses, but significant wetland areas, natural features, conservation easements, open space areas and within the Town Parks. Consider requiring natural resource identification markers or signs as part of future land use approvals, via amended zoning, subdivision, and wetland regulations, by the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission.

4. Continue to require the dedication of open space as part of new development projects to preserve and protect the town's wetland systems.

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

**Objectives:**

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

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

**Objectives:**

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

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

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**Objectives:**

1. Continue to work with the State of Connecticut to map/formally recognize the Town's agricultural soils.
2. Create an updated inventory of agricultural and farm lands.
3. Survey property owners to understand what their needs and wants are for the future of their lands and identify which properties are ripe for preservation.
4. Utilize the recently established ranking system to score identified parcels.
5. Consider annual appropriations to grow the recently established Agricultural Land Preservation Fund.
6. Review and amend the zoning regulations and subdivision regulations to encourage and support the farm community.
7. Provide resources to the farm community regarding town policies, regional support, and available grand funds.

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

**Objectives:**

1. Continue efforts initiated during the previous planning period regarding the Windsor Locks Canal and Canal Park (now a State recognized 4.5-mile multi-purpose trail), including:
  - a. Strengthening partnerships with State of CT departments, Town of Suffield, Ahlstrom Corporation and the owner of the vacant mill building
  - b. Seeking funding to resurface and maintain the trail
  - c. Constructing a new entry park at the head of the trail on the southern end in Windsor Locks
  - d. Restoring, preserving and utilizing the canal and locks
  - e. Revisit past discussions regarding conducting a Hydropower feasibility study
2. Continue planning efforts to discover potential extensions and preservation of the Kettle Brook Greenway.
3. Continue planning efforts to discover potential extensions and preservation of open space along Merrigan Brook.
4. Continue planning efforts to discover potential extensions of the Waterworks Brook Preservation Area Greenway (nearly 200 acres of town preserved land formerly known as the CT Water Company property) on South Center Street.
5. Amend the Windsor Locks zoning and subdivision regulations to strengthen the open space provisions by increasing the minimum amount of required open space with new development

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from 10% to a minimum of 20%. Also seek to encourage the preservation of open space greenways when lands within these corridors are proposed for development.

6. The Town has established a formal Open Space Land Acquisition Fund. The Town should request that this account be funded by annual appropriations from the Town's budget in addition to already established subdivision regulations which require "fees-in-lieu of open space" contributions from new development. Development opportunities for new subdivisions are minimal given the developed nature of the community.

7. The Conservation Commission, with input from the Planning and Zoning Commission and Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission should coordinate, plan, and seek implementation and funding methods, for potential greenways in Windsor Locks. This group should consider using the "Integrated Natural Resource Values Analysis" to identify high value areas for preservation efforts.

8. The Town should continue to inventory, and seek opportunities for acquiring, abandoned properties if they contain natural resources or provide opportunity to extend or connect greenways.

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

**Objectives:**

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

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

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**Objectives:**

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

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

**Objectives:**

1. Continue to perform a regular inventory of each of the Town's major watercourses to evaluate their health.
2. Build on the current volunteer trail and watercourse "clean-ups" to establish a more formal annual schedule.
3. Continue to involve residents, school groups and other organizations in an education program about the importance of the Town's watercourses, including the function of upland areas and impacts from storm water runoff due to adjacent land uses.
4. Seek new opportunities to create additional public open spaces around the Town's watercourses to preserve their functions and create connectivity among the Town's open spaces areas.
5. Consider new opportunities for public paths and trails along open space corridors (Spring Park, Kettle Brook and Waterworks Brook, for example), along the Town's significant watercourses, as a unique recreational amenity and educational opportunity for Town residents.
6. Develop low impact development land use regulations, requiring site specific stormwater management plans which mitigate polluted runoff and maximize green, open, and pervious spaces to minimize impacts to waterways.
7. Evaluate various types of green infrastructure and consider establishing local policies which encourage or require green infrastructure use within the community's roads and development projects.

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8. Establish a formal interdepartmental Stormwater Management Plan to identify, mitigate and prevent pollution to the waters of the community, the region and the State of Connecticut.

### **Goals and Policy Objectives from Section VI - Traffic and Transportation**

**Goal:** Provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the Town of Windsor Locks. Community Transportation System.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Evaluate, plan and budget for necessary and desired roadway and associated utility upgrades
2. Inventory middle neighborhoods community-wide for gaps in the sidewalk system and create a plan and budget for increased connectivity. For example, community members routinely have expressed interest in sidewalk extensions on North Street and West Street
3. Evaluate, plan and budget for needed accessibility improvements in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
4. Integrate Complete Streets policies where possible in each five-year roadway plan
5. Coordinate with the ConnDOT regarding engineering and construction of roadway safety improvements on Ella Grasso Turnpike
6. Work with businesses and developers on projects up on Ella Grasso Turnpike to consolidate driveways to provide for safer traffic access
7. Evaluate, plan and budget for transportation needs on Old County Road, where the industrial uses transition to mixed use and residential uses, including minimizing truck traffic
8. Continue to work toward construction of the new rail station on Main Street
9. Ensure connectivity between new rail station and the airport
10. Continue to explore opportunities for Route 75 Back Access Roads / Multi-Use Pathways
11. Further develop concept for Route 20 Corridor Multi-Use Path
12. Initiate construction of designed Main Street Complete Streets
13. Inventory and evaluate existing public parking and opportunities for new public parking.
14. Explore opportunities for designated parking at the Historic Station
15. Inventory and evaluate existing pedestrian connections between Main Street, Library, Middle School, and Town Hall and seek opportunities for improvements
16. Coordinate with State of CT DEEP, Ahlstrom and Friends of the Canal on resurfacing the State of Connecticut Canal Park Trail
17. Ensure canal pedestrian crossing is constructed connecting Main Street to Canal Bank, Montgomery Mill, and the Canal Trail
18. Seek opportunities to improve connectivity on Bridge Street / Route 140 between Windsor Locks and East Windsor

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19. Evaluate need and consider increased van and shuttle services if such need is demonstrated both in town and between towns as a shared service

## **Goals and Policy Objectives from Section VII - Economic Development**

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

### **Objectives - Industrial:**

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

### **Objectives - Commercial:**

1. Continue efforts to require frontages along Ella Grasso Turnpike to be used for more intense uses than valet parking. Additionally, the town should work closely with the Connecticut Airport Authority to understand how much frontage could open up along Ella Grasso Turnpike if some parking uses are moved onto the airport proper.
2. Continue to work toward developing a back access road or multi-use trail parallel to Ella Grasso Turnpike from Route 20 to Loten Drive.
3. Evaluate a rezone for the intersections of Ella Grasso Turnpike, Elm Street and Old County Road as well as Halfway House Road and Concorde Way.

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4. Consider public-private partnerships for redevelopment of the Windsor Locks Commons site and station site and continue to move the train station relocation project into a construction phase.
  5. Continue to implement recommendations made in the Main Street Study and Once and Future TOD Study.
  6. Pursue a rail crossing and bridge over the canal to connect Main Street to the canal bank, Montgomery Mill and Canal Trail.
  7. Coordinate a plan with Ahlstrom Munksjo, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Friends of the Canal for resurfacing and enhancing the Canal Trail State Park.
  8. Encourage development of new housing units within a 10-minute walk from the train station.
  9. Seek funding to complete the Historic Station restoration, fit out and associated parking for future uses.
  10. Work with property owner of Dexter Plaza to further enhance the site in the short-term and explore rethinking and reconfiguration of buildings on the parcel in the future.
  11. Support the Windsor Locks Housing Authority as they explore new mixed-use development along the frontage of 11 Grove Street that is connected and in harmony with the Main Street Overlay Zone and with adjacent parcels.
  12. Continue to pursue excellence in coordination and site design for 255 Main Street, the relocated train station, and the historic train station.
  13. Encourage and support the successful reuse of the Historic Station as a Welcome Center, “grab and go” café, tourist destination and meeting house.
  14. Complete site preparation for the properties on the corner of Chestnut Street and Main Street and continue to incentivize mixed-use redevelopment.
  15. Work closely with the Town of East Windsor in a joint effort to enhance the bridge, gateways, and active transportation amenities between the towns.
  16. Finalize and implement the Small Business Microloans Program as part of the Downtown TIF District.
  17. Continue to prioritize a food resource program, including farmers market, fruit trails, community gardens and a Public Market as part of an overall plan for sustainability, community wellness and economic strength.
  18. Continue to utilize the Airport Interchange Overlay Zone as plans are created for vacant properties along the Route 20 corridor.
  19. Conduct Corridor Studies for Route 20 and Ella Grasso Turnpike to understand development or redevelopment scenarios to include utility need, broadband, desired uses, function, shape, and configuration of buildings as well as their relationship to streets, sidewalks, trails, and open spaces.

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20. Establish clear policies on what improvements are expected for new commercial development and redevelopment of business districts town wide, like the applicability standards developed in the Main Street Overlay Zone.

21. The Planning and Zoning Commission should review and upgrade standards for new hotel construction in Windsor Locks. The market need for additional hotel rooms should be studied prior to new hotel development to avoid over saturation of this use throughout Town but particularly in the Route 75 corridor.

22. Consider a rezone for the western Section of Spring Street to accommodate desired uses, investigate the cost and benefit of extending the water line to properties that are not connected, and encourage aesthetic improvements through enforcement and economic incentives.

23. Analyze zoning patterns, host a community workshop, and develop a master plan for South Center Street and Oakridge Drive to create an attractive, village like, mixed-use gateway to town and to the Woodridge and Oakridge condominium communities.

24. Consider adopting similar standards for all business and industrial districts. The Town should then decide whether to establish a formal Design Review Commission that would be comprised of design professionals that would serve to advise both applicants and the Commission.

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

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

### **Goals and Policy Objectives from Section VIII - Parks and Recreation**

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

#### **Objectives:**

1. To continue to support, with the Town's annual Capital Improvement Program on a yearly basis, the funds needed to properly maintain, make safe and improve the Town's Park system, including the enhancement of underutilized spaces as identified in the Park Inventory or in future needs assessments.
2. Survey residents in proximity to underutilized park areas to understand the neighborhood needs and desires to improve and better utilize the space.

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3. Seek out available grant opportunities to 1) assess community strengths and needs related to recreational programs and (indoor and outdoor) park spaces, 2) help fund needed improvements in the existing Town Park system.
  4. Establish a plan for consistent improvements to the Town park's system such as: improve outdoor basketball facilities, establish a boat launch facility to the Connecticut River, preserve and maintain the Canal Trail, Canal and Locks, establish a multi-use path along the Route 20 corridor, enhance walking trails at Spring Street Park the Waterworks Brook Preservation Area off South Center Street.
  5. Seek ways to increase safety in active recreation areas such as: neighborhood appropriate and low impact lighting, maintained pathways and landscaping, increased positive activity, community policing
  6. Explore opportunities to establish a youth center space and increased programming for adolescent and teen youth.
  7. Seek ways to install additional wayfinding and educational signage to direct and engage park users.
  8. Continue to extend and establish town Greenways along several of the Town's watercourses, roadways or undeveloped areas and connect these to the Town Park system with access points and trails.
  9. Seek opportunities to develop new trail connections and multi-use paths within new development sites understanding that both residents and local employers/employees may enjoy public trails and amenities.
  10. Work with Property Owners, Developers and Town of Suffield and the State of Connecticut to expand, improve and maintain the Windsor Locks Canal State Park along the Connecticut River.

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## SECTION XII. TOWN OF WINDSOR LOCKS WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PLAN

The Windsor Locks Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) pursuant to section 7-246(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes hereby establishes this Water Pollution Control Plan for the Town of Windsor Locks.

**1. Purpose- The purpose of this plan is to set forth the WPCA's policies and objectives for the control of water pollution. The fundamental purpose of this plan is to implement a water pollution control policy consistent with the following.**

1.1. To support and complement the Town of Windsor Locks Plan of Conservation and Development.

1.2. To designate and delineate the boundaries of the areas served by the city's sanitary sewer collection system.

1.3. To designate areas where sewers are to be avoided.

1.4. To outline the WPCA's policy for the effective utilization of existing treatment plant capacity.

1.5. To manage the wastewater infrastructure such that it will promote commercial and industrial development, thereby promoting economic growth for the benefit of the Town as a whole.

1.6. To implement the logical and efficient expansion of the sanitary sewer collection system and treatment system as contemplated by the WPCA's Facilities Plan adopted by the WPCA on August 9, 2011.

**2. Sewer Service Area Map – That certain map entitled, "Sewer Service Areas Windsor Locks, Connecticut Prepared For Town of Windsor Locks Water Pollution Control Authority by Tighe & Bond, May 2011", designating all properties determined to have existing sewer service or possibly in need of sewer service in the future during preparation of the WPCA's Facilities Plan as well as sewer avoidance areas located within the Town of Windsor Locks.**

2.1. Sewer Service Area –This includes areas within the Sewer Service Area that currently have sanitary sewer infrastructure already installed and in service as of the effective date of this plan and areas in the Sewer Service Area in which sanitary sewer infrastructure may be planned for. Such areas, which are located within the boundary line shown, are included as part of the long-term planning process for providing sewage treatment at the Windsor Locks Water Pollution Control Facility. These areas constitute all remaining areas within the sewer service area that are not currently sewered, excluding areas designated as conservation, preservation, or preserved open

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space areas. Areas within the Sewer Service Area that are not serviced by existing sewers are to be designed and constructed by the private sector pursuant to a sewer/allocation permit issued by the WPCA in accordance with the Sewer Use Ordinance, WPCA Rules and Regulations, and applicable Town of Windsor Locks Technical Standards.

2.2 MDC Service Area – This includes the sewer service areas serviced by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) through the connections at Bradley International Airport for treatment at the MDC Poquonock Wastewater Treatment Facility. Properties within the MDC Service Area that are serviced by the sewer main shown on the Sewer Service Area Map (on the Northern portion of Route 75 – Ella T Grasso Turnpike) are serviced by the Windsor Locks WPCA even though the flows are treated by the MDC Poquonock plant.

2.3 Sewer Avoidance Area – The sewer avoidance areas are the areas outside of the designated proposed sewer service area boundary and not included within the MDC Service Area. This includes the Waterworks Brook area.

**3. Capacity Management – Wastewater Treatment and Collection System capacity will be made available to existing and proposed users of the system within the Sewer Service Area. Allocation of Treatment and Collection capacity shall be made in a manner that is consistent with the WPCA’s policies.**

3.1. Residential development capacity allocation shall be limited to such density of development as is permitted by the zoning regulations for the zoning district in which the property is located as of the effective date of this plan.

3.2. Allocation of Treatment and Collection capacity shall lie solely with the WPCA.

3.3. Authority over and approval of the expansion/extension of the public sewer system lies solely with the WPCA. No individual, partnership, co-partnership, firm, company, corporation, association, joint-stock company, trust, estate, governmental entity or any other legal entity or their legal representatives, agents or assigns shall cause the expansion/extension of the public sewer system without the express written consent of the WPCA.

3.4. Under no circumstances will allocation be authorized that will cause the Treatment Capacity to exceed 2,120,000 gpd (100%).

3.5. Under no circumstances will allocation be authorized to exceed the collection capacity of the waste water system at the point of collection or in any downstream segment without a capacity reduction or capacity increasing project being undertaken by the developer that will reduce the

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volume by a ratio of 4:1 or increase the carrying capacity of the affected segments as may be required and approved by the WPCA.

**4. Community Sewerage Systems - Community Sewerage System shall mean any sewerage system serving one or more residences/establishments in separate structures which is not connected to a municipal sewerage system, or which is connected to a municipal sewerage system as a distinct and separately managed district or segment of such system.**

4.1. Community Sewerage Systems shall not be used as a method to extend sewer service for new construction beyond the limits of the Sewer Service Area.

## **5. Miscellaneous**

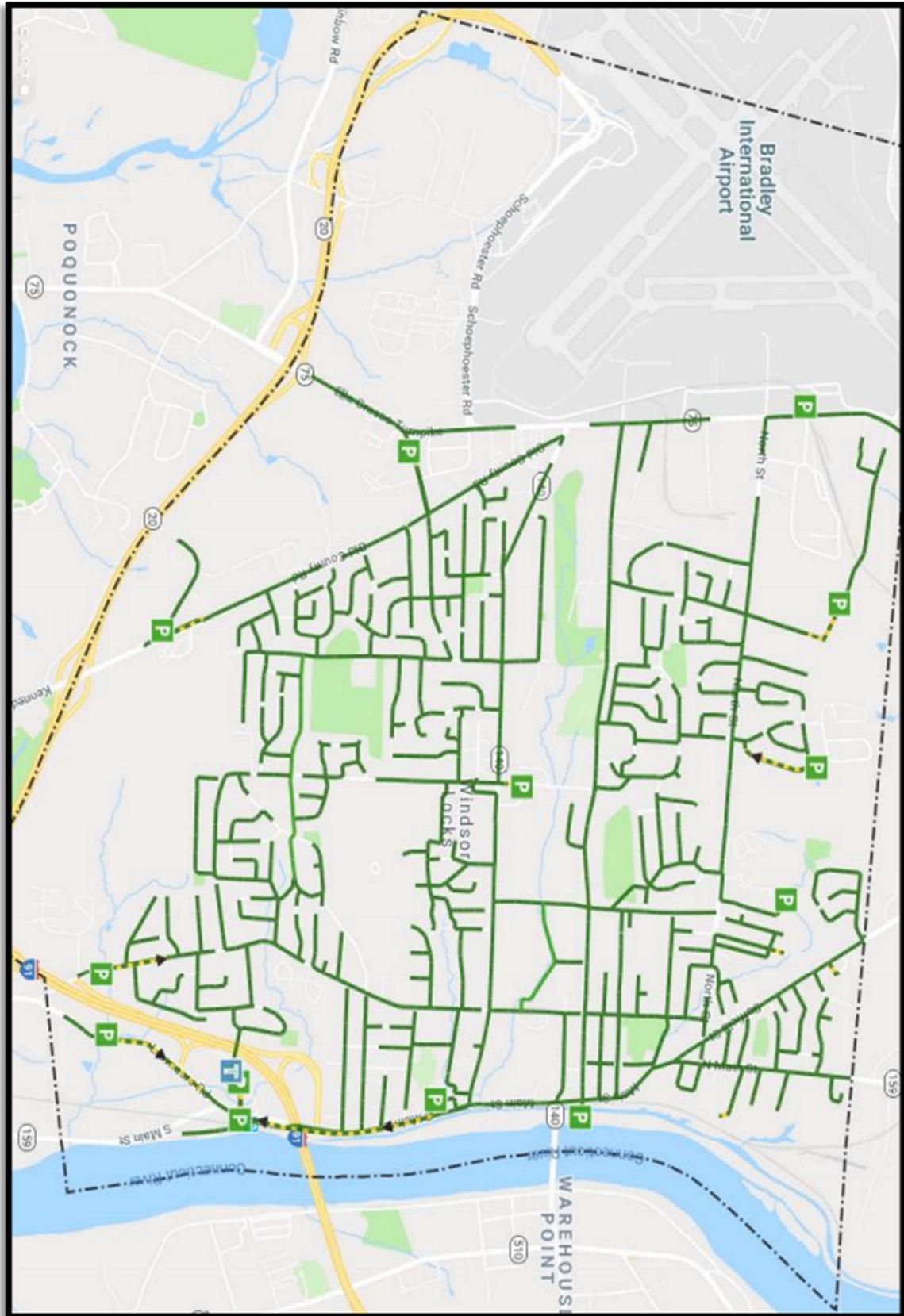
5.1 If any portion of this Water Pollution Control Plan is found to be contrary to any provision of the Town of Windsor Locks, Sewer Use Ordinance and/or WPCA Rules and Regulations the Sewer Use Ordinance shall prevail.

5.2. The Water Pollution Control Authority of the Town of Windsor Locks may amend this Water Pollution Control Plan from time to time.

5.3. In accordance with section 7-246(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes a copy of this plan and any amendments shall be filed with the Commissioner of Environmental Protection.

## **6. Effective Date**

The initial date of adoption of this Water Pollution Control Plan is January 10, 2012. This initial date of Adoption shall be deemed to be the effective date of the Plan. See Sewer Area Map.



**Town of Windsor Locks Sewer Service Area**

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## Community Input and Feedback Form

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Comment:

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Comments can be written on paper and delivered by hand or by mail to:

Planning and Development

Town Hall

50 Church Street

Windsor Locks CT 06096

Or submitted by email to: [jrodriguez@wlocks.com](mailto:jrodriguez@wlocks.com)

Calls are also welcome to the Building and Land Use Office at 860.627.1447.