



Rocky Hill, Connecticut

2025 Plan of Conservation and Development



Contents

Cover Photographs

The Front and Back cover photographs illustrate some of the things that make Rocky Hill special:

The Front Cover

- the Rocky Hill Ferry and the Connecticut River
- Elm Ridge Park from above
- The Historic Town Center
- The beauty of Dividend Pond in the Fall

The Back Cover

The Rocky Hill Community Farm

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- Appendix D – Rocky Hill Complete Streets**



To the Community of Rocky Hill,

The Planning and Zoning Commission of Rocky Hill is pleased to present the 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development. This plan is prepared once every 10 years to guide future development, land use and conservation in Rocky Hill. It also has recommendations to implement the Plan.

The plan reflects the work of town Commissions, Town Staff and many residents who participated in the on-line survey including commission's special meetings and a public hearing on June 18, 2025 and adoption with an effective date of June 24, 2025.

It has been the Commission's goal to develop a Plan that reflects the consensus of the community and establishes a working blueprint for the future of Rocky Hill. As we have all worked together to develop the Plan, it is important to stress that the recommendations in the Plan are designed to improve the overall quality of life and promote the character of Rocky Hill.

We hope this plan provides an honest assessment of our town and offers clear guidance on how to make Rocky Hill even better. We thank the many members of our community who will play a part in implementing this plan and its recommendations.

Sincerely,

Dimple Desai, Chairman
Planning and Zoning Commission



Acknowledgments

The Planning and Zoning Commission would like to acknowledge the following people and agencies who helped shaped this plan and who will help implement it.

THE RESIDENTS OF ROCKY HILL

A special thanks goes out to all of those residents who participated in the on-line survey and provided their invaluable comments as well as the residents who attended public meetings and expressed ideas to ensure that this Plan truly represents the growth that the residents of Rocky Hill want in the next decade.

MUNICIPAL & LAND USE AGENCIES

In recognition for implementation of the prior Plan of Conservation and Development and participation in preparing this Plan, the Planning & Zoning Commission specifically thanks the following Boards and Commissions: Inland/Wetlands/Open Space Commission, Economic Development, Parks & Recreation Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Zoning Commission, (what boards should we put on here).

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Dimple Desai - Chairman, Victor Zarrilli - Vice-Chairman, Giuseppe Aglieco - Secretary, Alan Mordhorst, Ronald Robbins, Sean Hussey – Alternate, Stephen Lecco – Alternate, Nancy Mayeda-Brescia – Alternate.

TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE

Kimberley A Ricci – Town Planner / Zoning Enforcement Officer

TOWN COUNCIL

Lisa J. Marotta, Mayor, Allan Greenspan – Vice Chairman, John Emmanuel, Francis Whelan III, Jeffrey Levine, David Seigny, Willam O’Sullivan, Pankaj Prakash, Mimi Theroux



Introduction

This document is the 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Rocky Hill, Connecticut. It was adopted on June 18, 2025 with an effective date of June 24, 2025. This ten year plan was adopted in accordance with Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS).

A Plan of Conservation and Development is a document that identifies a common vision for the future physical development of a community. While it will often address issues related to the economic development and social development, its key purpose and function is to address the physical aspects of how a community grows and changes over time. For any plan to be successful, it must also identify how this vision will be realized. This Plan also identifies the objectives and action steps which will help attain the future vision for Rocky Hill.

While a vision can be a powerful thing, it is important to note that a Plan of Conservation and Development is primarily an advisory document. It is intended to guide local residents, developers, businesses, suggest desirable future directions and outcomes, and provide a framework for consistent decision-making with regard to conservation and development activities in Rocky Hill over the next decade or so. The Plan should also be a living document over its life span.

While the statutory responsibility to adopt the Plan rests with the Planning and Zoning Commission, implementation will only occur with the diligent efforts of the residents and officials of the Town of Rocky Hill. The Plan will only be effective if it is understood and supported by the people of Rocky Hill and implemented by local boards and commissions.



The following text box summarizes some key statutory provisions related to Plans of Conservation and Development.

EXCERPTS FROM CGS 8-23 – PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Commission shall:

- prepare, adopt and amend a plan of conservation and development ...
- review the plan of conservation and development at least once every ten years ...
- adopt such amendments to the plan or parts of the plan ... as the commission deems necessary to update the plan.

The Plan shall:

- be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality, ...
- show the commission's recommendation for the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial and other purposes and for the most desirable density of population in the parts of the municipality.
- be designed to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people.
- 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
- 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 ...
- take into account the state plan of conservation and development ... and note any inconsistencies it may have with said state plan.
- consider the use of cluster development to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity.

The Plan may:

- show the commission's recommendation for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets and other public ways; for airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds; for general location, relocation and improvement of public buildings; for the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes; and for the extent and location of public housing projects.
- include recommended programs for the implementation of the plan ...
- (include) such other recommendations ... in the plan as will ... be beneficial to the municipality.

This section of the Plan of Conservation and Development provides a general overview of conditions and trends affecting Rocky Hill.



History of Rocky Hill



Homes of Rocky Hill



Business in Rocky Hill



People of Rocky Hill

The History of Rocky Hill

Rocky Hill was settled as part of Wethersfield in the mid 1600s and was incorporated as a separate town in 1843. It covers an area of 13.9 square miles and is situated on the west bank of the Connecticut River, eight miles south of Hartford.

The Town, we now know as Rocky Hill, was first known as Stepney Parish, a river port of Wethersfield. The town's first church in Stepney Parish was built in 1727 and was the seat of government eventually becoming the Rocky Hill Congregational Church. The State separated church and state in 1818. From the Revolutionary War up to the 19th century, shipbuilding was a major activity with a number of shipyards along the river from the Rocky Hill Ferry site down to Dividend.

It has been estimated that over 200 ships were built here. During the Revolutionary War, the General Assembly selected and outfitted Stepney Parish to build an armed vessel to engage the British. That vessel was the "Minerva" which became the basis of the town logo many years later.



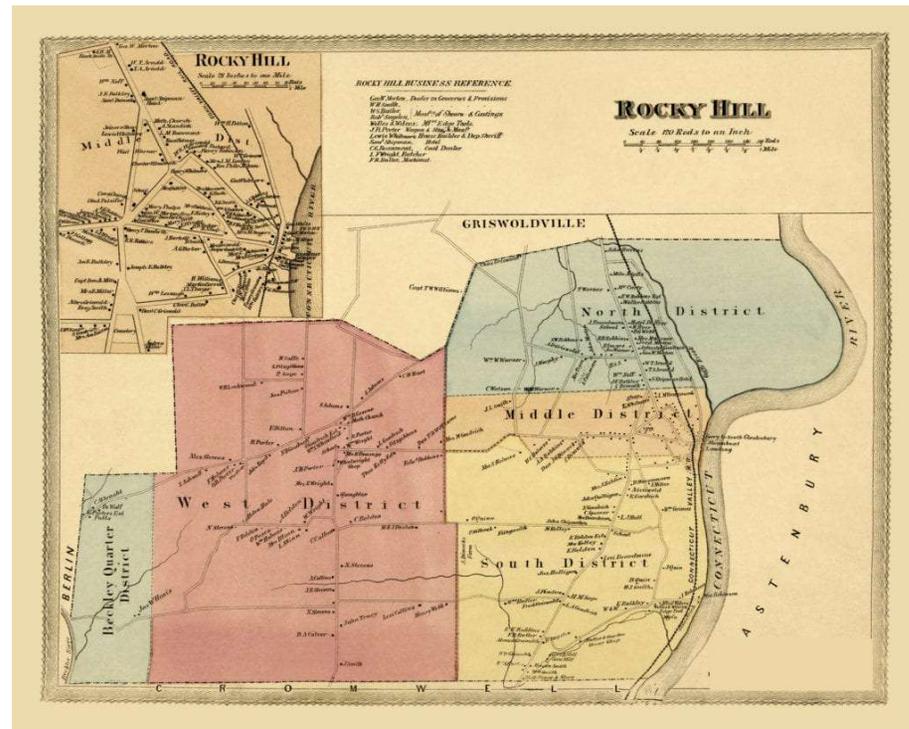
In the early 1900's, industrialization, two world wars and the automobile impacted town's such as Rocky Hill. In the eastern part of town, the great meadows still stood prominently, and the town's residents still relied upon farming for their survival and success. Horses remained the main mode of transportation for goods and people. Yet the railroads that ran through town for a generation connected the town to Hartford, intruded upon the serene setting along the east foot of the hill after which the town was named, and assisted in making shipping on the Connecticut River less prosperous. In comparison, to the west, hillside orchards grew plentifully. Rail literally split the town in half in a manner later replicated by roads and highways.

The History of Rocky Hill

Modern railroads were a major reason for the change from “the old picturesque port” to a more industrialized base. Rocky Hill streets and roads were now being paved, aided by state grants, in an effort to bring more automobiles to the town. The Silas Deane Highway was built in 1930, splitting the town in half and catering to the increased presence of cars. The Middletown to Hartford bus service, established in 1930, put an end to the old trolley line that serviced the town.

When the Federal government allotted hundreds of millions of dollars for construction of the nation’s highway system with passage of the Interstate Highway Act of 1954, it represented a triumph for the automobile. In Connecticut, these federal funds brought Interstate-91 by the early 1960s. This ended the domination of railroads and brought more people to Rocky Hill. In about a century, from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth century, the town’s population grew from roughly 1,000 to more than 18,000.

Today, Rocky Hill is a suburban community of 21,000 residents and up to 2,200 businesses, including several national and international companies. The Town is traversed by State Routes 3, 99 and 160, and Interstate-91, and benefits from easy access to Interstate I-84 and State Route 9 as well as a freight rail line, Bradley International Airport, and the port of New Haven are 30 minutes by vehicle.



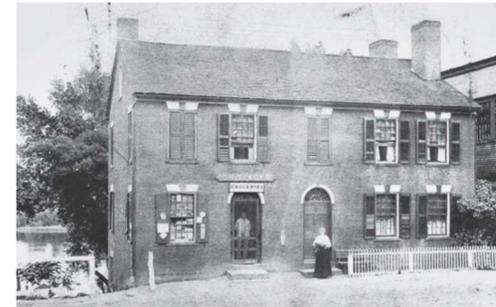
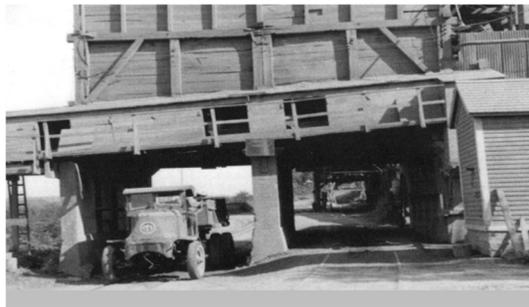
Town leaders and citizens, in partnership with regional, State and federal agencies, are focused on the global economy and “community” building. Municipal plans and zoning laws have been revised allowing advanced manufacturing and mixed use/affordable housing. Development efforts are concentrated on attracting and retaining advanced manufacturing, IT, medical and finance institutions while prioritizing the revitalization of our town center, pedestrian access to the Connecticut River and affordable housing.

The History of Rocky Hill

LOCAL ECONOMY

Rocky Hill is primarily residential with a 33% commercial tax base. Residents and businesses benefit from Rocky Hill's participation in the Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Total commercial retail square footage is estimated at 1.87 million square feet while total commercial office square footage is estimated at 2.07 million square feet (with approximately 713,000 square feet of Class A office space). Total flex industrial square footage is estimated at 2.52 million square feet. Rocky Hill's diverse population demographics provides residents with numerous cultural, religious, business and dining opportunities through the year.

Rocky Hill's employment base consists of diverse industries and service establishments from Henkel North America, ARBURG Inc., MTU Aerospace, Simoniz, BJ's Warehouse distribution facility and SYSCO, to Gray Media-WFSB Channel 3, Trinity Health, Kohl's, Walmart and McDonald's. All of the Town's businesses are located within eight business parks and two commercial corridors. The eight business parks range from providing contractor yards, to Class A Medical and Office space. Within Town are 10 State and quasi State agencies including the State of Connecticut Veterans Home and Hospital, caring for approximately 600 patients, the State of Connecticut Public Health Lab, and the Office of the Chief State's Attorney. Rocky Hill continues to attract and retain Class A medical, healthcare and social services businesses and professional, scientific and technical services in the business parks and throughout Town, accounting for approximately 40% of Rocky Hill businesses.



The History of Rocky Hill



As is the case in many municipalities, the post COVID-19 shift to work-from-home schedules and the down-sizing, or right sizing of business operations, has resulted in increased vacancy rates in a number of the office and commercial buildings in Town. This, coupled with increased mortgage interest rates, increased housing values and a lack of single-family housing units, has resulted in pressure to convert existing vacant office space into residential multi-family housing. To accommodate this market shift, the Rocky Hill Planning & Zoning Commission has revised zoning regulations to allow residential mixed-use development in areas where previously only office and commercial uses were allowed. The town has also revised its affordable housing requirements as required by the State of Connecticut. As a result, close to 500 residential apartment units on five separate properties have been approved since 2022. Currently, over 400 of those units are under construction throughout 4 of the properties, with Kelson Row, the 214-unit mixed-use redevelopment of the former Ames property, being the most impactful development due to its potential to catalyze additional Town Center redevelopment and pedestrian access to the Connecticut River. All of the projects cited will include 10% - 30% of the units to be officially designated as affordable in accordance with Town zoning regulations and State statutes.

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL, CONNECTICUT DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC STATISTICS
LAST TEN CALENDAR YEARS**

Calendar Year	Population	Per Capita Income	Total Personal Income	Median Age	School Enrollment	Unemployment Rate
2024	20,705	\$ 53,066	\$ 96,773	43.7	2,530	3.1%
2023	20,746	\$ 49,145	\$ 86,410	43.2	2,543	3.8%
2022	20,780	71,994	85,125	43.2	2,549	4.3%
2021	20,168	45,689	79,421	43.2	2,596	5.4%
2020	20,115	46,263	81,737	42.1	2,625	2.4%
2019	20,145	44,956	79,421	44.7	2,742	2.4%
2018	20,105	43,921	81,988	43.8	2,716	3.4%
2017	20,119	42,252	81,576	43.2	2,698	4.1%
2016	20,021	43,207	75,442	43.4	2,623	4.6%
2015	20,094	42,229	65,814	43.4	2,608	3.9%
2014	19,915	39,785	63,343	43.7	2,487	4.8%

Town of Rocky Hill Connecticut Budget Book 2026 p. 21

Rocky Hill Household Analysis

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS **8,894**

- **Family Household** **51%** **6% higher than state average**
- **Married Couples** **47%** **3% lower than state average**
- **Single** **36%** **26% higher than state average**
- **Senior Living Alone** **24%** **49% higher than state average**

Data source, American Community Survey 5-year estimates; Town of Rocky Hill Connecticut Budget Book 2026 p. 14

Economic Analysis

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

- **Above \$200,000** **14%** **3% lower than state average**
- **Median Income** **\$86,410** **3% higher than state average**
- **Below \$25,000** **8%** **44% lower than state average**

Data source, American Community Survey 5-year estimates; Town of Rocky Hill Connecticut Budget Book 2026 p. 15

Housing Overviews

HOMEOWNERS VS RENTERS

MEDIAN HOME VALUE 2021 **\$275,600**

- **Rocky Hill** **68%** **OWN 32%** **RENT**
- **State Average** **66%** **OWN 34%** **RENT**

Data Source: 2021 US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. Home value data includes all types of owner-occupied housing.

Labor Force

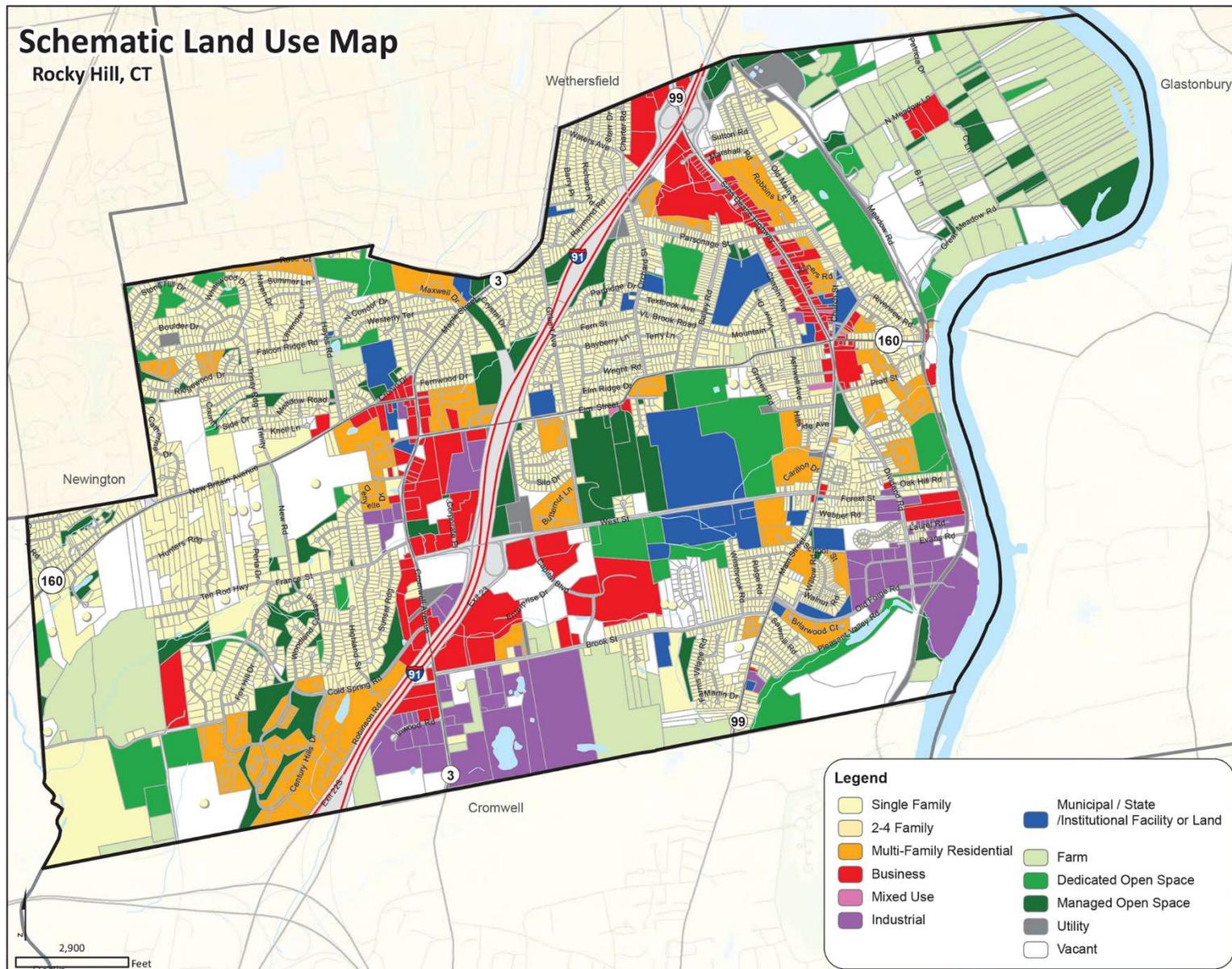
EMPLOYED VS UNEMPLOYED

- **Rocky Hill** **11,242** **347**
- **State** **1,822,090** **71,113**

* CT Department of Labor 2023

Schematic Land Use Map

Rocky Hill, CT





Plan Development

The Rocky Hill Plan of Conservation and Development has been built with the public's vision over the next 10 years. The plan uses the principals to create a vibrant, sustainable town with resiliency. The Planning and Zoning Commission used several methods to reach out to the public to gather data to understand that vision:

- A discussion of issues before the Planning and Zoning Commission in prior meetings and in Plan Implementation Meetings.
- Input from members of other boards and commissions. Town Department Heads and Elected Officials.
- Online survey for Rocky Hill residents and businesses, (over 500 responses received).
- A public meeting devoted to hearing from Rocky Hill residents on the POCD.

Complementing all this input, many of the concepts and suggestions incorporated into this Plan have been carried over from the 2015 Plan which are established principles that remain valid today. There were many themes discovered with all this information acquired. The online survey was taken primarily by town residents but close to 30% of the majority of those surveyed also work in town.

- **Environment – things to protect and preserve** – *through many Plan Implementation Meetings and the online survey, sustainability is very important to the residents of Rocky Hill. Also, open space preservation and enjoyment was top on most lists.*
 - Preserve open space, farmland and other environmental areas and link them together.
 - Acquire more open space.
 - Protect natural resources.
 - Encourage Sustainable development
 - Implement Low Impact Development regulations.
- **Economic Development** – *a majority of those surveyed agreed that there needs to be a good mix of business and residential development. They prefer High Tech, Manufacturing and Medical as businesses to come to or stay in town. Those surveyed also agree that Restaurants and Specialty Businesses should be supported in Rocky Hill.*
 - Reinforce the Town Center and the Silas Deane Highway as an economic, cultural and residential areas.
 - Increase High-tech, light manufacturing, medical and specialty business as well as varieties of Restaurants in town
 - Seek out businesses that complement businesses already in town.

Transportation/Infrastructure – A high percentage strongly agreed that walkability and a bike friendly community was important to them. This included a public trail system. Those surveyed also agree that transportation is key to attract new residents and businesses to town.

- Create walkable neighborhoods and expand the sidewalk network in town
- Encourage biking, walking and public transportation with a Complete Street Plan.
- Connect the Town Center to the rest of the town with walkable loops.

Development - over half surveyed - believe that housing choice in town is important to them. Many saw these top points to have a mix of housing for current and future residents. A high percentage were Agreeable/Neutral on Mixed Uses on the Silas Deane.

- Mixed use developments
- Create more affordable housing and starter housing opportunities
- Create a Middle Housing plan.
- Celebrate and develop access to our waterfront including cleaning up and developing the Foundry property.

Community – Many who were surveyed agreed that expanding public spaces for public uses and expanding the arts was important to them. The promotion of the history of the town was also well represented with most of those surveyed agreeing to embrace the past. There was more of a neutral response to community health programs.

- Increase Community Sustainability Efforts in town such as waste reduction and renewable energy
- Expand public spaces for events such as fairs, the arts and open markets.
- Create a Community Theater/ Arts council
- Support the extensive town history and the programs that enhance it.
- Look at Community Mental Health services and programs.

Implementation – Many residents agreed that the POCD should be a living document and that it can be spoken about and changed at any time during the duration of the document.

- Utilize the Plan Implementation Committee to regularly review the POCD and coordinate implementation.
- Make sure that the POCD becomes a living document that can be updated at any time.
- Establish long term capital planning.
- Re-establish the “ARAB”, Architectural Review Advisory Board.

12:22
Mail
rockyhillct.gov — Private

Respondent's Age

Rocky Hill Resident?
 Yes
 No

Work in Rocky Hill?
 Yes
 No

What do you see as the greatest need for the Town of Rocky Hill in the next 5 years?

10 Years?

20 Years?

What do you especially like about Rocky Hill and how it has developed and why?

What do you especially dislike about Rocky Hill or how it has developed that you do not care for? And why?



Conservation Strategies

The first thematic section of the Plan of Conservation and Development addresses “conservation” issues. For the POCD, the term “conservation” is intended to organize and address different topics which Rocky Hill residents have indicated they wish to try and preserve or protect in the future



Natural Resources



Open Space



Farming



Community Character

Protect Natural Resources

The protection of natural resources is important to Rocky Hill residents. This includes protection of water quality, water resources, land resources, air resources, wildlife, and other natural resources.

Water Quality

The protection of water quality is felt to be the most important natural resource protection strategy for Rocky Hill. Even though most residents and businesses obtain water from a public water provider (the Metropolitan District Commission), water quality is a key factor in overall environmental health and a key barometer of the quality of the overall environment. To help maintain and enhance water quality, Rocky Hill will seek to establish “green infrastructure” where we will use the natural environment and natural processes to better manage stormwater runoff. This approach is also referred to as “low impact development” strategies.

Aquifer Protection

At the present time, Rocky Hill has two sets of aquifer protection regulations and programs.

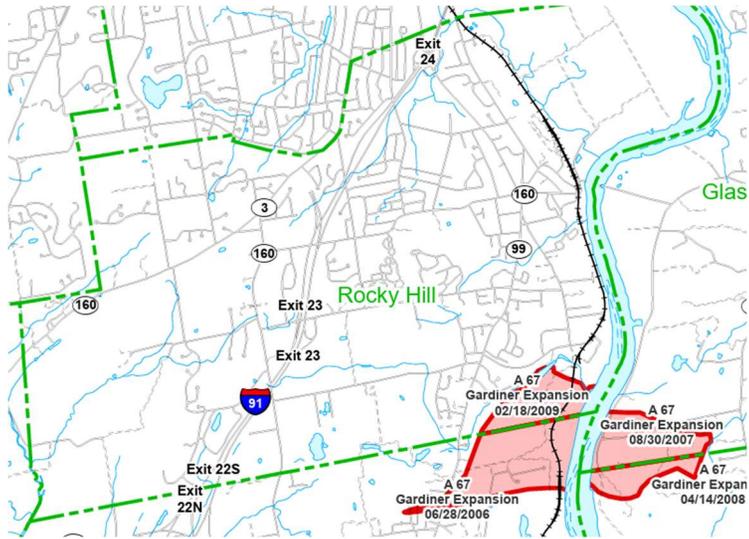
State-Defined Area – The State has established a program which applies to “aquifer protection *areas*” – defined as the recharge areas for pumping wells. The Town has adopted the State-mandated regulations and the Planning and Zoning Commission administers these regulations.

Town-Defined Area - Rocky Hill’s Zoning Regulations established an “aquifer protection *district*” and refers to a 2014 report for the location of the district. This report and any associated maps are not readily available and so it raises questions as to where the regulations apply. The State has issued a more recent map showing surficial aquifer potential. The Town may wish to refer to this map since it is readily available.

At the same time, it makes sense for the Town to review the provisions in the Aquifer Protection District. A number of industrial zones and commercial zones are located in the areas shown as having some surficial aquifer potential and ensuring that appropriate regulations are in place will be important.

Rocky Hill should:

- Review the applicable provisions of the Rocky Hill Zoning Regulations,
- Review how the boundaries of the Aquifer Protection District are defined, and
- include the boundary of the Town’s Aquifer Protection District on the zoning map and/or make the 2014 report / map available on the Town website.



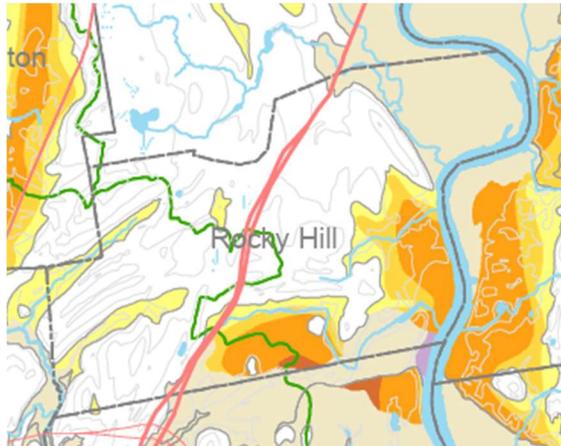
State Defined Aquifer Protection Area

AQUIFER PROTECTION AREAS

Rocky Hill, CT
December 23, 2021

- Level A APA (Final Adopted)
- Level A APA (Final)
- Level B APA (Preliminary)
- Town Boundary

This is the area affected by the “Aquifer Protection Regulations” adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission



SURFICIAL AQUIFER POTENTIAL

Thicker coarse-grained deposits have a higher potential yield.
Thicknesses are mapped for the entire surficial deposit.



These are the areas which would be expected to have the best potential for developing water sources (and which might thus have the highest need for regulations protecting water quality). However, the Zoning Regulations do not clearly indicate which area(s) it applies to

Terminology

As used in the Plan of Conservation and Development:

- A strategy is a “big picture” goal for Rocky Hill
- A policy is a guideline that helps accomplish the overall strategy (a policy does not generally have a specific end date)
- An action step is a recommended task that helps accomplish the overall strategy (a task has an end date or specific result)

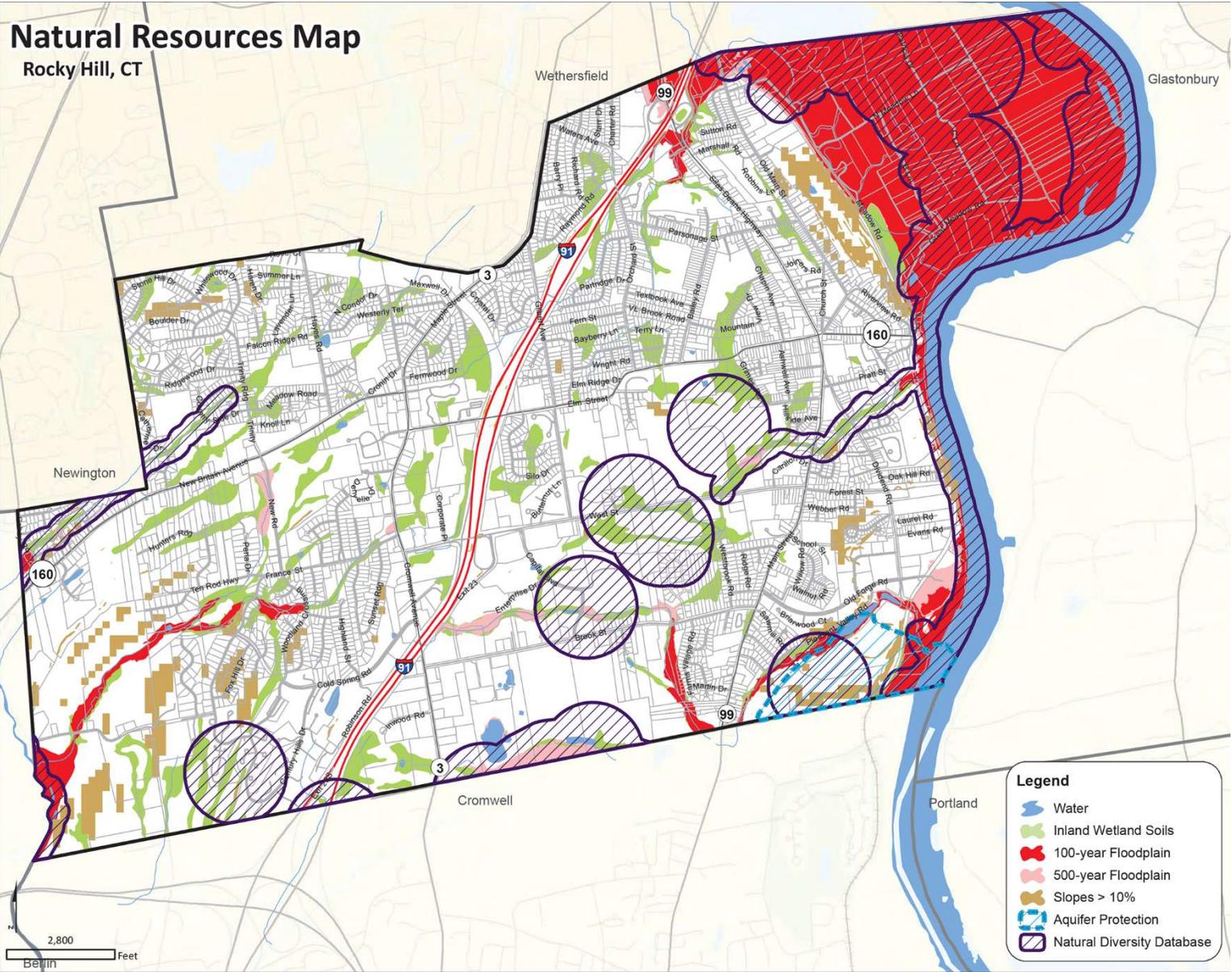
Leaders and Partners

The “leader” is the entity considered most likely to bear responsibility for implementing the policy or completing the action step.

Partners are other entities likely to be involved in implementation.

Please refer to the inside back cover of the POCD for a legend to the entities identified in the tables.

PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to protect watercourses, waterbodies, wetlands, vernal pools, and other important water resources in Rocky Hill.	OSCC	PZC, Town
2. Continue to protect water quality in Rocky Hill.	OSCC	PZC, Town
3. Continue to protect aquifer areas in Rocky Hill.	PZC	Town
4. Maintain participation in the National Flood Insurance Program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT-DEEP).	TC	PZC
5. Protect local plants and animals and their habitats.	OSCC	PZC, Town
6. Continue to protect other natural resources and to consider natural resource issues at the time of development.	PZC	OSCC, Town
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
7. Amend the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations to Implement “low impact development” (LID) regulations and remove any impediments to the implementation of LID.	PZC	Staff
8. Modify the Zoning Map to delineate the Town-defined Aquifer Protection District.	PZC	Staff
9. Review provisions of the Zoning Regulations (Aquifer Protection District) to ensure regulatory provisions are appropriate.	PZC	Staff
10. Modify the Zoning Map to delineate the Connecticut River Conservation District.	PZC	Staff
11. Consider whether it would be advantageous to separate the three functions (inland wetlands regulation, conservation commission functions, open space considerations) currently assigned to the Open Space and Conservation Commission.	TC	OSCC, LAFP
12. Review the Flood Plain Overlay District since it appears there is no underlying zone in certain areas of Rocky Hill (such as between Evans Road and Brookwood Drive).	PZC	Staff



Create An Open Space System

Approximately 10 percent of the land area in Rocky Hill can be considered:

- **dedicated open space** (land likely to remain as open space in perpetuity due to ownership or restrictions), or
- **managed open space** (land which is used for a purpose compatible with open space but is not preserved).

Rocky Hill residents are proud of the open space the town has and support the preservation of additional open space in the future. In fact, in November 2012, voters approved a \$10 million bond authorization to preserve farms and open space. With some of that money, the Straska Farm was purchased by the town for Farmland Preservation. The town has since renamed it the Rocky Hill Community Farm. The town has also invested in development rights to several other historic parcels in the town such as Hayes Farm, land in the Great Meadows and the Backiel Farm.

2012 Rocky Hill Voters Approve \$10 Million to Preserve Farmland & Open Space

Residents of Rocky Hill empowered Town leaders, through a referendum, to borrow up to \$10 million to buy development rights or to acquire undeveloped properties to protect diminishing farmland, increase open space, and reduce residential sprawl.

<p style="text-align: center;">2014 Town of Rocky Hill Invests in the Hayes Farm</p> <p>The Town of Rocky Hill purchased the development rights to the 47-acre Hayes Farm at 269 Hayes Rd. for \$2 million. These development rights were the first purchased from the Town's Farmland Preservation Fund.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">2016 Town of Rocky Hill Buys Land Along the CT River</p> <p>The Town of Rocky Hill purchased .8 acres of land at 340 Meadow Rd. along the CT River for \$160,000. Plans are to clean up the site and build a river park.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">2019 Voters Approve Referendum to Buy Straska Farm</p> <p>Residents voted by more than 3-1 to purchase the 84-acre Straska Farm at 374 New Britain Ave. for \$7.2 million. Town officials said the property would be leased out to local farmers and also used as passive recreation space.</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;">2015 Town of Rocky Hill Buys Development Rights to the Great Meadows Motocross Land</p> <p>The Town of Rocky Hill purchased the development rights to 66 acres at North Meadow Lane in the Great Meadows for \$620,000. The property will be leveled, regraded and returned to agricultural use.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">2018 Rocky Hill, State & Feds Purchase Conservation Easement on Hintz Farm</p> <p>The Town of Rocky Hill, along with both the CT and U.S. Departments of Agriculture, has preserved the 70-acre Hintz Farm on 142 North Rd. Town \$188,877, USDA \$450,386, State \$450,386.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">2022 Town Moves to Protect Farmland</p> <p>The Town of Rocky Hill, along with the CT State Department of Agriculture, purchased the development rights to the 191-acre Backiel Farm on France St. for \$3.6 million. They also bought an adjacent 9.5 acres outright to lease to farmers.</p> 

The POCD supports and encourages the preservation of open space in the future, especially regarding two key strategic approaches:

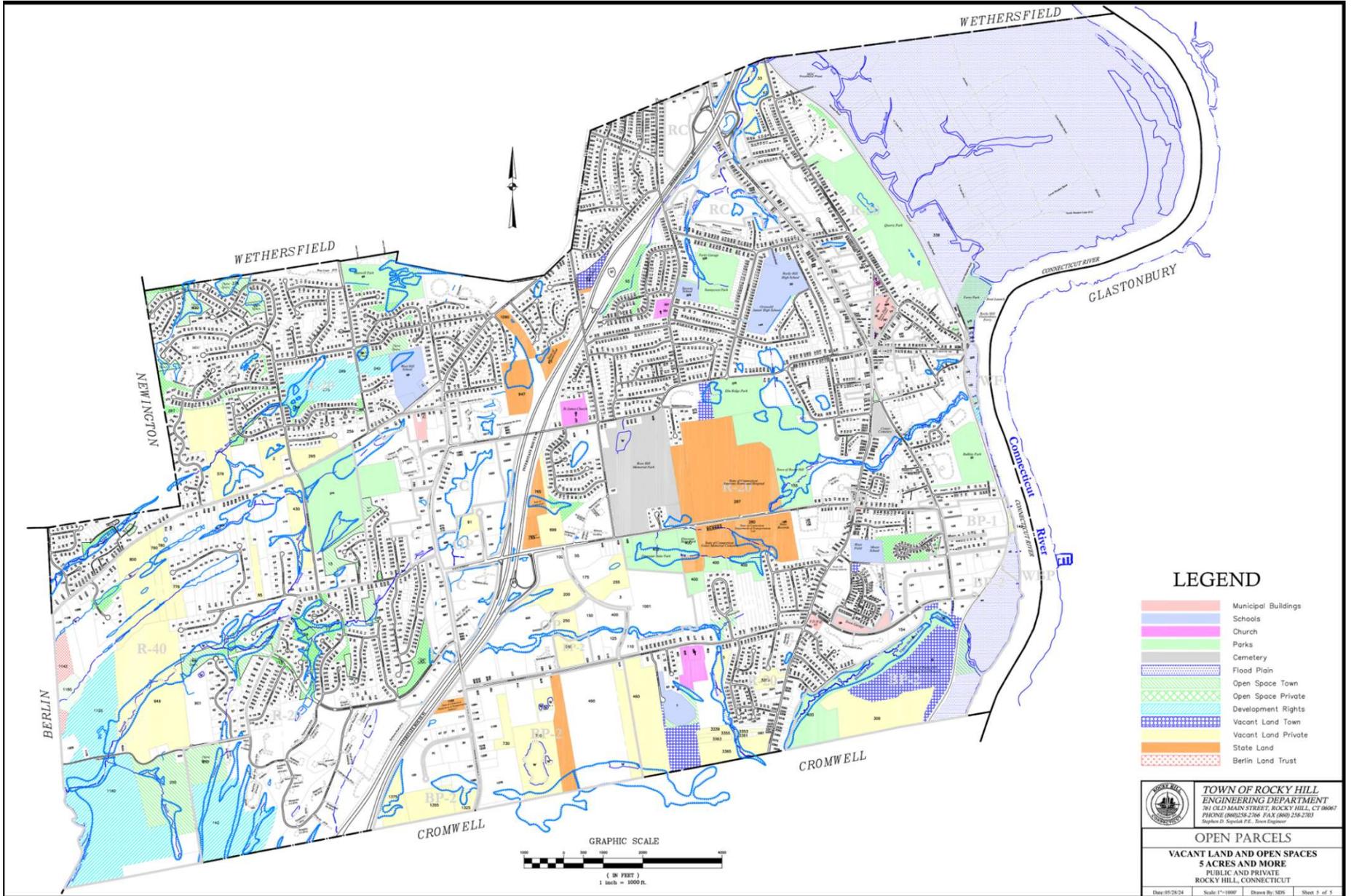
- Rocky Hill should seek to interconnect open space areas into an overall system. A comprehensive open space system will increase the accessibility of the entire open space system to the town's residents and greatly add to its potential recreational use. The development of a trail network should receive high priority since the amount of land that needs to be reserved is small compared to the benefits that are gained.

- Rocky Hill should seek to preserve as much open space as possible along the Connecticut River. While Rocky Hill has considerable frontage along the Connecticut River, only a small percentage of the river frontage is preserved as dedicated open space. Moreover, there is little in the way of recognized public access to or along the riverfront. One of Rocky Hill's highest open space priorities during the planning period and beyond should be to re-establish a connection between the community and the Connecticut River. The Town should consider acquiring property or establishing some sort of public access or connection to the river whenever:
 - riverfront property becomes available
 - a development is proposed along the river
 - an opportunity arises to acquire property in the "Great Meadow"
- Rocky Hill should plan for and develop an open space network that sustains and or improves the natural biodiversity and wildlife habitat in town. Watercourses and waterbodies provide an opportunity for linear connectivity and opportunities to create dedicated open space and greenway trails. Other water courses in town should also be pursued in combination with the creation of new conservation easements.
- Efforts should also focus on opportunities to link open spaces with the towns existing Greenway System. (See Appendix C).
- Open spaces should also be preserved in perpetuity using property covenants and conservation easements for new developments, site plans and or subdivision applications.
- Natural vegetation should be preserved and or improved in all designated open spaces to align with objectives of increasing biodiversity and improve wildlife habitats.

Since watercourses provide an opportunity for linear connectivity, opportunities to create dedicated open space and greenway trails along other watercourses should also be pursued.



Vacant Land and Open Spaces More Than 5 Acres



Rocky Hill has some significant open space areas which help contribute to the overall character of the community and the quality of life of its residents. These open space areas should be preserved and enhanced.



Upper left-Dividend Trail area, top middle-Veterans Memorial Amphitheater, upper right-The Great Meadows of Rocky Hill, bottom left-Goff Brook Trail, bottom middle-Dividend Pond Trails, bottom right-Quarry Park

Encourage Open Space Development Patterns - In the western areas of Rocky Hill, the Plan recommends that open space development patterns be encouraged in the R-40 Zone to help ensure that important natural resources and features are protected, open spaces are preserved for public use and enjoyment, and community character is preserved.

Some communities have established a regulation where lot size requirements are reduced as more open space is preserved. The same flexibility may also be made available for yard setbacks and lot coverage. A key consideration might be that the same number of lots might be created but that the amount of preserved open space might be increased.

Conventional Subdivision



Conservation Subdivision



Open Space Proportionality

One of the key values of open space is public access and use. However, if land deeded as open space is wetlands or steep slopes, its utility for public access may be limited.

As a result, it may make sense for Rocky Hill to consider changing its open space set-aside requirements to require that the land preserved as open space reflect the overall characteristics of the land being subdivided. In other words, if 20 percent of the parcel is wetlands, then no more than 20 percent of the required open space set-aside can be wetlands. Of course, the wetlands area could still be protected as open space but it would not contribute to the minimum open space set-aside requirement.

CREATE AN OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain a driven commitment to preserving as much open space as possible, especially open space that allows for public access and use.	Town	OSCC, PZC, LAFP, PRC, GMCT, RHLT
2. In order to be able to quickly respond to opportunities when they arise: a. maintain a land acquisition fund to set aside money for open space purchases, and b. continue to appropriate municipal funds to acquire open space.	TC	Town, Staff
3. Seek to connect existing and new open space and recreation areas.	OSCC	LAFP, PRC, GMCT, RHLT
4. Establish a series of trails as a key element in connecting open space and recreation areas into an integrated system.	OSCC	LAFP, PRC, GMCT, RHLT
5. Re-establish a connection between the community and the Connecticut River by preserving public access along and near the riverfront: a. Consider acquiring the property whenever property near the river becomes available or whenever property becomes available in the “Great Meadow”. b. Consider acquiring public access to the river whenever a development is proposed along the river.	OSCC	LAFP, RC, GMCT, HLT
6. Establish a “Riverway” trail along the Connecticut River in Rocky Hill through whatever means are available.	OSCC	LAFP, PRC, GMCT, RHLT
7. Continue to cooperate with other organizations (such as the Great Meadows Conservation Trust) that preserve open space.	Town	Staff
8. Encourage establishment of a Rocky Hill Land Trust to receive open space donations and acquire open space parcels.		
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
9. Create and distribute maps to identify publicly accessible open space and trails.	OSCC	Staff
10. Establish a signage or marking program for open space areas in Rocky Hill so that residents can become more familiar with where open spaces are in the community.	OSCC	PRC
11. Consider clarifying the division of responsibilities between the Open Space and Conservation Commission and the Land Acquisition and Farmland Preservation Committee.	TC	OSCC, LAFP
12. Notify developers when submitting/reviewing subdivision applications about the towns policy and need to create quality open spaces that preserve natural vegetation, protect wildlife habitats and allow public access when possible	PZC	Staff
13. Town Commissions should ensure that dedicated open spaces are preserved in perpetuity using property covenants and conservation easements for new development, site plan and or subdivision applications	Staff	

Support Farms and Farming

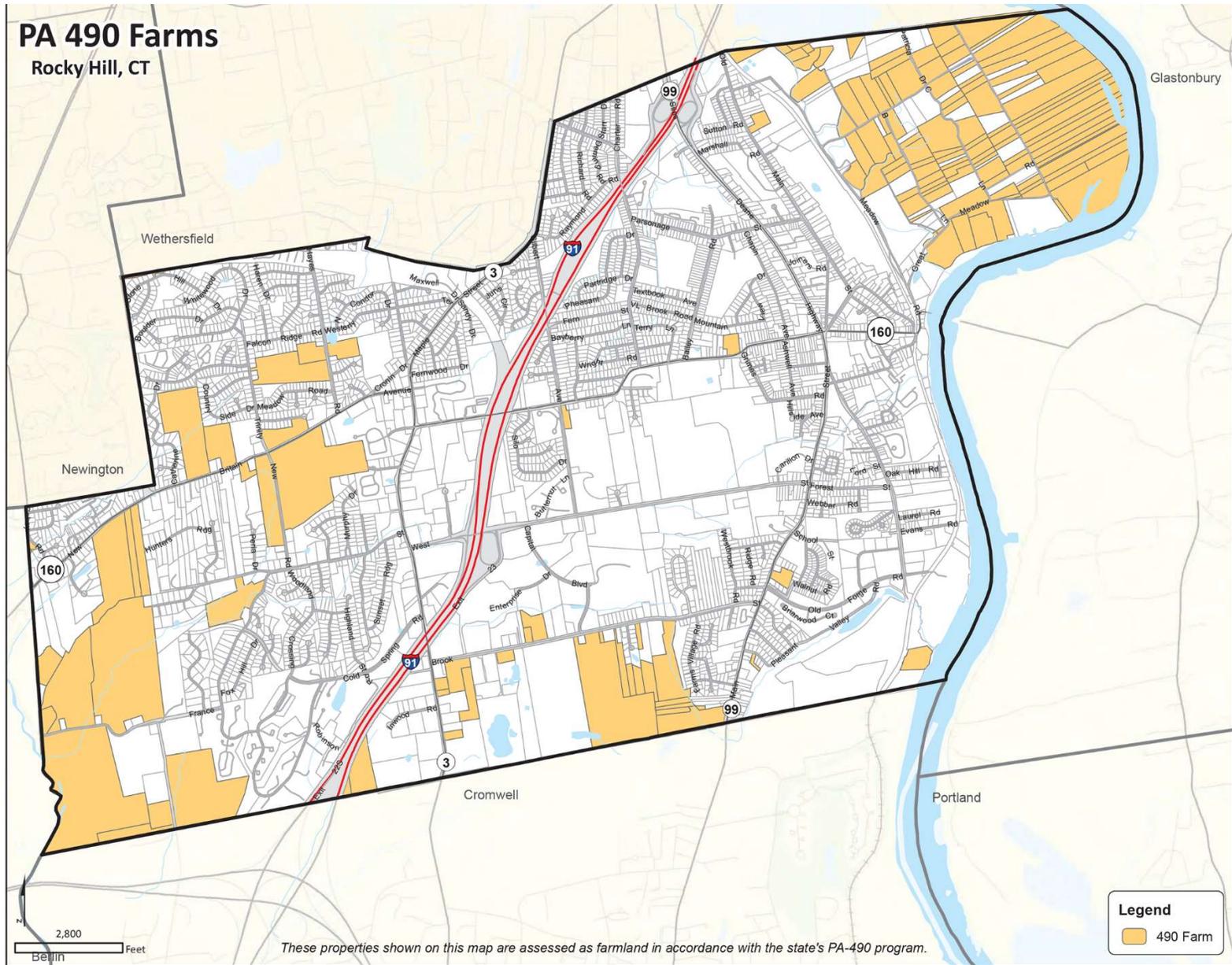
Farms and farming are a large part of the history and character of Rocky Hill and contribute to the overall community in many ways. The Town of Rocky Hill and the Farm Preservation Committee has preserved several farms in town. The biggest being The Rocky Hill Community Farm in the West End of town. The town has leased land to farmers as well as started the planning process for a community garden. Support of agricultural activities is an important aspect of encouraging a more livable community and a sustainable future. Other farm activities have been established like a Farmers Market and a Buy Local Program.

SUPPORT FARMS AND FARMING		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Preserve and protect existing farms and farmland including purchasing of development rights, when appropriate.	LAFP	Town
2. Promote preservation and expansion of farms and farming activities.	LAFP	Town
3. Allow farming on Town-owned land, where appropriate.	LAFP	Town
4. Consider whether an Agricultural Advisory Commission might be helpful to guide local policy on agricultural issues.	TC	LAFP
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
5. Promote the use of a Community Garden.	TC	LADP
6. Evaluate and revise local regulations to ensure they are “agriculture-friendly” including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. defining agriculture and agricultural activities, b. defining agritourism, c. ensuring agricultural activities are permitted, and d. allow roadside signage that raises awareness of working farms. 	PZC	LAFP
7. Consider a VO-AG program in the Rocky Hill School System.	BOE	Town



PA 490 Farms

Rocky Hill, CT



These properties shown on this map are assessed as farmland in accordance with the state's PA-490 program.

Local Option Assessment

The Plan recommends that Rocky Hill consider implementing the “local option” of CGS Section 12-107e (also known as the Public Act 490 program).

This program allows the community to identify land which can be assessed on “use value” (which can be much lower than market value). By making undeveloped land cheaper to own, there is less reason that a property might be sold and developed and so it will contribute to community character for a longer period.

The Plan recommends that this program (the open space assessment program) be considered for any residentially zoned property in excess of 5 acres in size.

Preserve And Enhance Community Character

Preserving and enhancing community character is important to residents. In public meetings and online polling, as part of the process of preparing this Plan, residents consistently mentioned the importance of preserving and enhancing community character. While the elements of community character may be different for different people, the common elements are addressed in this section of the Plan.

Scenic Resources

Scenic views and scenic areas contribute to the perception of community character in Rocky Hill. The scenic attributes of these areas should be protected and preserved to the extent feasible. Since undeveloped land contributes to the perception of community character, Rocky Hill should consider implementing the “space assessment” component of CGS Section 12-107 (see sidebar). Also, since “gateways” can help promote community character, the Plan recommends that Rocky Hill promote the establishment of gateway features at key entries to the community.

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER – Scenic Resources		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Preserve scenic resources in, and the scenic attributes of, Rocky Hill.	Town	Staff
2. Encourage the retention of undeveloped land.	OSCC	Staff
3. Promote the establishment of community gateway features (signage, landscaping, lighting, etc.) and other elements that contribute to community character.	PZC	DRB
4. Encourage street tree planting and landscaping, especially in commercial areas and new subdivisions.	PZC	DRB
5. Maintain the “property maintenance” ordinance (Chapter 98 of the Town Code).	TC	Town
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
6. Amend local regulations to consider scenic resources and scenic attributes in land use applications.	PZC	Staff
7. Consider establishing and implementing a PA-490 open space program to maintain and enhance the amount of “perceived” open space in Rocky Hill.	TC	PZC, Town
8. Consider expanding the street scape along state roads in town.	PZC	Town

Historic Resources

Historic buildings and sites also contribute to the character of Rocky Hill. A wonderful example of this is the fact that the Rocky Hill – Glastonbury Ferry – the longest continuously operating ferry service in the country - is a well-known treasure that contributes to the character of the community. The Plan recommends that Rocky Hill continue and enhance efforts to recognize and preserve historic resources.

Sensitive ownership of historic buildings is unquestionably the best way to preserve them and many of the historic structures in Rocky Hill are being well taken care of by their owners. While a 1973 study recommended that local historic districts be established in and near Rocky Hill Center, property owners at that time did not support a regulatory approach which would require permits for work visible from a public street. Since that time, some of these areas have been recognized on the “National Register of Historic Places” due to the quality and number of resources in these areas. However, this designation offers little or no protection of individual buildings and so Rocky Hill’s historic resources continue to be at risk.



Identified Historic Resources

- National Natural Landmark
- Dinosaur State Park

Areas Listed On The National Register Of Historic Places

- Elm Street Historic Area
- Rocky Hill Center Historic Area
- Glastonbury-Rocky Hill Ferry Historic Area

Sites Listed On The National Register Of Historic Places

- Academy Hall
- Rocky Hill Congregational Church
- John Robbins House (262 Old Main Street)

Sites Listed On The State Register Of Historic Places

- Griswold House (189 Parsonage St)

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER – Historic Resources		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to encourage sensitive ownership and responsible stewardship of historic resources.	HS	MH, Staff
2. Seek to protect archeological resources.	PZC	Town, Staff
3. Encourage awareness and preservation of cultural, archaeological and historical resources.	HS	Town
4. Consider utilizing historically accurate “place names” in new developments to help preserve history and character.	Town	HS Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
5. Consider allowing adaptive reuse of historic buildings when it is appropriate given the location of the site (such as Glastonbury Avenue) and will aid in the preservation of the historic structure and neighborhood.	PZC	Town, Staff

Design Review Process

Architectural design and site design contribute to community character. Buildings that complement Rocky Hill’s identity as a New England town contribute to community character. Buildings that are fundamentally out of character or scale will negatively affect community character.

Rocky Hill residents have indicated that architectural and site design is important to them and that they want a process that will ensure that design is an important consideration as part of any land use approval. Residents don’t want any building or use just for the sake of having it – they also want a building or use that complements and enhances the overall character of the community.

While the Town Council adopted an ordinance in 2013 establishing an “Architectural Review Advisory Board”, no members have been appointed. While this is unfortunate given the importance that the community had placed on design, it may provide an opportunity to improve some provisions in the ordinance:

- Appoint more than 3 members in order to have a thoughtful discussion of what constitutes good design in Rocky Hill,
- Appoint people for overlapping 4-year terms so that it is not reconstituted every two years when a new Council is elected,
- Require that applicants obtain a report rather than requiring a “referral” by the Planning and Zoning Commission (waiting for such a referral will slow down the approval process).

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER – Design Review Process		
<u>Policies</u>	Leader	Partners
1. Promote excellence in building and site design.	ARAB	PZC, Staff
2. Promote development that contributes to, and enhances, a “sense of place” in Rocky Hill.	ARAB	PZC, Staff
<u>Action Steps</u>	Leader	Partners
3. Promote the appointment of members to the Architectural Review Advisory Board.	TC	PZC, Staff
4. Establish a meaningful design review process in Rocky Hill.	TC	PZC, Staff
5. Adopt and maintain design guidelines.	ARAB	PZC

Samples of Design Guidelines From Other Communities

Townwide Guidelines

Architecture

Historic Resources

Does the development directly or indirectly impact historic resources?

Guidelines:

- Treat tourism as a major component with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- Preserve and/or enhance natural views and features of historical importance.
- Incorporate historic cultural landmarks (e.g., houses, commercial buildings, old movie walls, houses to show, houses, tree stands on open space edges, etc.) into new development.
- Preserve and maximize historic scale, massing, and proportion when applicable.

Historic resources
Simsbury Town Center

Simsbury's Town Center is the historic heart of the community and includes a number of older buildings that are valued by the community.

Design guidelines for treatment of Heritage Buildings in the Town Center are provided on page 63.

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Town of Simsbury Guidelines for Community Design

Townwide Guidelines

Architecture

Form and Space

Do the building forms and surrounding spaces reflect continuity of density, streetscape rhythm, yard setbacks, and community character?

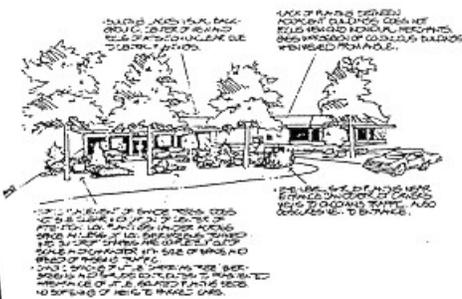
Guidelines:

- Design to create interesting and proportional outdoor spatial relationships between buildings, open space, and setbacks on adjacent lots.
- Establish building rhythm with adjacent building forms for visual continuity.
- Create variety using building clustering, surface screens, projections, and open space breaks.
- Honor local historic detailing with simple roof forms and shapes.
- Avoid long, large, unarticulated structures which are monotonous and do not contribute to the streetscape.
- Use large open spaces to provide strong, clear boundaries between different land uses or different neighborhood densities.
- Establish visual and functional focal points (e.g., "town gate", landmark structure, public park, etc.) for all large developments.

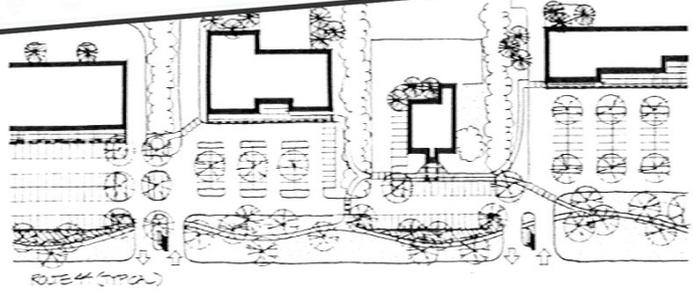
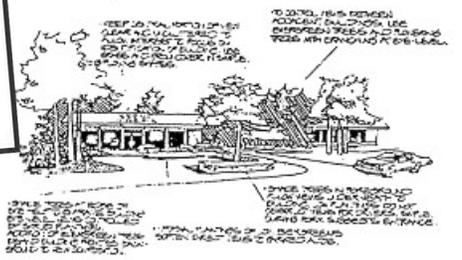
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Town of Simsbury Guidelines for Community Design

Landscaping and Maintenance



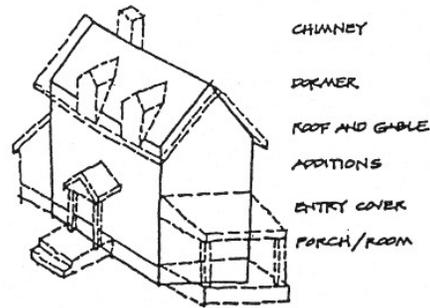
Typical Planting Mistakes



RECOMMENDED LINKAGES

1. CONSIDERATION OF SPACE DOES NOT TO GO UNTHOUGHT. THE PLAN AND ROUTE SA, DIVIDED INTO THREE SECTIONS: A, B, AND C. SECTION A, B, AND C.
2. PROVISION OF ENCLAVE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN BUILDINGS AND PROVISIONS OF OTHER ROADS. SECTION A, B, AND C.
3. PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE BETWEEN BUILDINGS TO BE GREATER THAN TO APPEARANCE OF BUILDINGS.
4. PROVISION OF INTERCONNECTED ROADS AND WALKWAYS TO GO THROUGH SECTION A, B, AND C. THIS PROVIDES FOR A VARIETY OF PROVISIONS FOR THROUGH TRAFFIC AS WELL AS FOR LOCAL TRAFFIC.
5. PROVISIONS TO GO THROUGH APPEARANCE OF PROVISIONS. SECTION A, B, AND C. THIS PROVIDES FOR A VARIETY OF PROVISIONS FOR THROUGH TRAFFIC AS WELL AS FOR LOCAL TRAFFIC.
6. PROVISIONS TO GO THROUGH APPEARANCE OF PROVISIONS. SECTION A, B, AND C. THIS PROVIDES FOR A VARIETY OF PROVISIONS FOR THROUGH TRAFFIC AS WELL AS FOR LOCAL TRAFFIC.

Recommended Plantings



MODIFIERS TO THE FORM

Community Spirit

Community character includes community pride and spirit. Community spirit is enhanced by local events and activities, volunteer efforts, accomplishment of community goals, positive media recognition, and similar things.

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER – Community Spirit		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to promote community spirit.	Town	PRC, Staff
2. Continue to encourage programs and events that contribute to community pride and spirit.	Town	PRC, Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
3. Consider a program of recognizing municipal volunteers through events such as an annual picnic.	TC	Town, Staff
4. Maintain a Rocky Hill “website” to promote community events.	Town	Staff
5. Consider how to use “social media” to enhance community spirit.	Town	Staff

Fireworks



Concerts

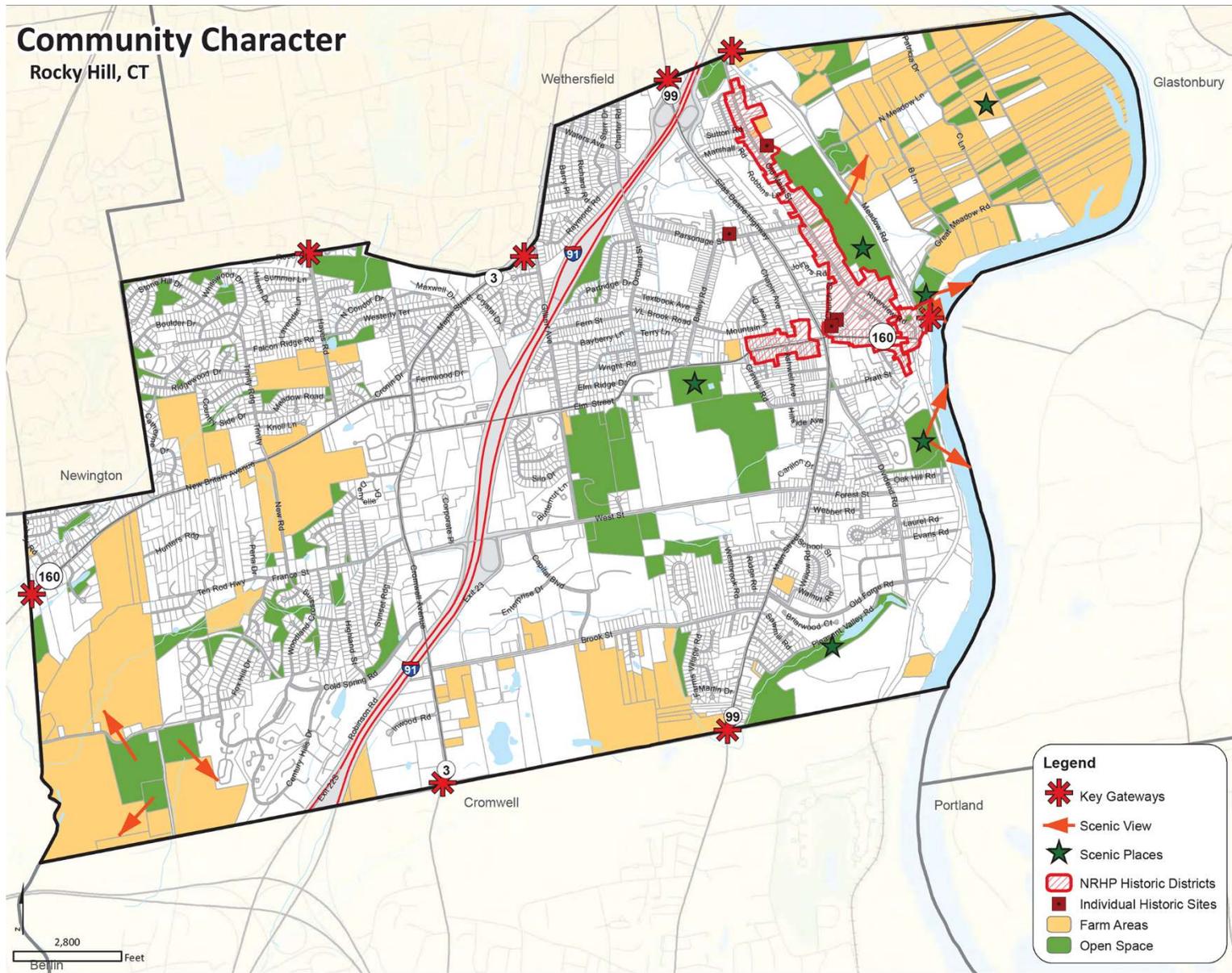


Community Fairs



Community Character

Rocky Hill, CT



Legend

- Key Gateways
- Scenic View
- Scenic Places
- NRHP Historic Districts
- Individual Historic Sites
- Farm Areas
- Open Space

Promote Sustainability and Resiliency

For the purposes of this Plan, “sustainability” refers to the philosophy of encouraging activities that allow present generations to meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The term “resiliency” refers to the community’s ability to readily recover from sudden changes or adversity.

Rocky Hill has established Sustainability Task Force called Sustainable Rocky Hill which is an advisory board appointed by the Town Council and is a group of local volunteers and town officials who help their town become more environmentally friendly and earn Sustainable CT certification. This volunteer committee has several goals:

1. Advancing Sustainability Initiatives -Working on local projects that support Sustainable CT’s goals, like using clean energy, improving transportation, planning land use wisely, and involving the whole community.
2. Supporting Municipal Certification – Assisting the town in earning points toward Sustainable CT certification (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) by documenting and submitting actions that meet sustainability criteria.
3. Engaging the Community –Encouraging residents, businesses, and organizations to take part in sustainability efforts through education, outreach, and volunteer work.



The need for municipalities, regional planning organizations, academic institutions, corporations, states, and federal agencies to increase resilience to extreme weather events and a changing climate is strikingly evident amongst the communities across the state of Connecticut. Relatively recent events have reinforced this urgency and compelled the Town of Rocky Hill to proactively collaborate on planning and mitigating risks. Recently, the Town of Rocky Hill embarked on certification with Sustainable CT. As part of that certification, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Sustainable CT provided the Town with a community-driven process to assess current hazard and climate change impacts and to generate potential and prioritized solutions to improve resilience and sustainability. In August 2024, Rocky Hill’s Core Team helped organize a Community Resilience Building process and workshop facilitated by TNC in partnership with Sustainable CT. The core directive of this effort was the engagement with and between community members to define strengths and vulnerabilities and the development of priority resilience actions for the Town of Rocky Hill. The Rocky Hill Community Resilience Building Workshop’s central objectives were to:

- Define top local, natural, and climate-related hazards of concern.
- Identify existing and future strengths and vulnerabilities.
- Identify and prioritize actions for the Town.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Promote energy conservation / sustainability, water conservation and waste reduction / recycling.	STF	OSCC, Town, Staff
2. Educate residents about sustainability concepts.	STF	OSCC, PW, Town, Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
5. Support Sustainable Rocky Hill to promote sustainability and resiliency and propose programs useful to residents and businesses.	TC	Town, Staff
6. Evaluate alternative approaches (lighting, controls, equipment, building envelope, electrical consumption, electrical generation, and vehicles) and make recommendations to reduce energy usage, increase reliability, and save money.	STF	OSCC, PW, Town, Staff
7. Continue to review and improve hazard mitigation plans for recurring events, such as flooding.	Town	Staff
8. Continue to review a Resiliency Plan to be able to respond to these events in the future	Town	Staff
9. Establish one or more emergency shelters for when they are needed in the future.	Town	Staff
9. A Town Drainage Study should be done to try and mitigate severe flooding events.	Town	Staff
10. Encourage and promote sustainable practices in all town facilities	Town	Staff



Development Strategies

The second section of the Plan of Conservation and Development addresses “development” issues. For the POCD, the term “development” is intended to organize and address different topics which Rocky Hill residents feel will help them guide future growth and change in the community.



Town Center



Residential Development



Business Development

Support Expansion of the Town Center

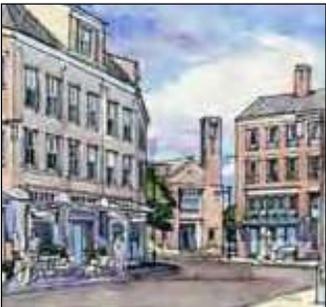
It is a key recommendation of the Plan to encourage the expansion of a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly Town Center in Rocky Hill with a “sense of place”.

While the predominant development approach over the past 50 years has been automobile-oriented patterns with single-use sites, there is growing interest and demand for more walkable development patterns with a diversity of uses within individual buildings and in small areas. With the current development of the Town Center along the Silas Deane Highway and with the residential neighborhoods nearby, the area to the North of the current Town Center has good potential to support the expansion of a mixed-use development approach.

However, to turn this potential into reality will require a major shift in terms of how Rocky Hill has historically approached land use and zoning. As explained in many on-line sources (the following is adapted from newurbanism.org) the main design principles can be summarized as follows:

Concept	Description
Discernable Structure	A relatively compact area with a higher intensity center and discernable edge with quality public uses and/or spaces at center and throughout
Sense of Place	Emphasis on creating a sense of place with human-scale architecture which emphasizes good design, beauty, aesthetics, and human comfort
Walkability	A pedestrian friendly street design (buildings close to street; porches, windows & doors; tree-lined streets; on street parking; hidden parking lots; garages in rear lane; narrow, slow speed streets) which makes walking pleasurable
Mixed-Use & Diversity	A mix of shops, offices, apartments, and homes within neighborhoods, blocks and buildings resulting in a diversity of people (ages, income levels, cultures) and a range of housing types, sizes and prices in closer proximity
Increased Density	More buildings, residences, shops, and services closer together for ease of walking, to enable a more efficient use of services and resources, and to create a more convenient, enjoyable place to live, work, shop, and play
Pedestrians Not Vehicles	An interconnected street grid network creating a high-quality pedestrian network and where pedestrian considerations generally outweigh vehicular considerations
Transit Connection	Transit availability supports a pedestrian lifestyle

Images Of Mixed-Use Pedestrian-Friendly Village-Type Areas



The potential benefits resulting from this type of development approach are summarized below:

Entity	Potential Benefits
Residents	Higher quality of life; Better places to live, work, and play; Healthier lifestyle with more walking, and less stress; Close proximity to main street retail & services; Pedestrian friendly communities offer more opportunities to get to know others in the neighborhood and town, resulting in meaningful relationships with more people, and a friendlier town; More freedom and independence to residents in being able to get to jobs, recreation, and services without the need for a car or someone to drive them; More diversity and smaller, unique shops and services with local owners who are involved in community; Big savings by driving less, and owning less cars; Less ugly, congested sprawl to deal with daily; Better sense of place and community identity with more unique architecture; More efficient use of tax money with less spent on spread out utilities and roads
Businesses	Increased sales due to more foot traffic and people spending less on cars and gas; More profits due to spending less on advertising and large signs; Economies of scale in marketing due to close proximity and cooperation with other local businesses; Smaller spaces promote small local business incubation; More community involvement from being part of community and knowing residents
Developers	More income potential from higher density mixed-use projects due to more leasable square footage, more sales per square foot, and higher property values and selling prices; Cost savings in parking facilities in mixed-use properties due to sharing of spaces throughout the day and night, resulting in less duplication in providing parking; Less need for parking facilities due to mix of residences and commercial uses within walking distance of each other; Greater acceptance and less resistance by the public; Faster sell out due to greater acceptance by consumers from a wider product range resulting in wider market share
Municipalities	Stable, appreciating tax base; Less spent per capita on infrastructure and utilities than typical suburban development due to compact, high-density nature of projects; Increased tax base due to more buildings packed into a tighter area; Better overall community image and sense of place;

Adapted from newurbanism.org

Images Of Mixed Use Pedestrian-Friendly Village-Type Areas



The importance of the overall design to the success of the Town Center cannot be understated.

Development and expansion of the Town Center *must be led by the Town* or it may not be successfully done. When the Town reacts to a development proposal submitted by others, its review is limited to those things the developers wants to do rather than the things the community needs to do. While a developer may only own the property for a few years, the development itself will be a part of the community for several decades or even longer. Rocky Hill should undertake a “charrette” or some other form of public design exercise to involve the community in planning for the Town Center and establishing goals for desirable outcomes.

Development and expansion of the Town Center must be *in accordance with good “place-making” principles*, or it may not be successfully done. A development which does not represent excellence in “place-making” could result in a development which misses the mark and accomplishes few of the benefits described previously. Portland, Oregon has prepared a document entitled “Portland Main Street – Design Handbook” which outlines some of the key considerations:

Design Issue	Possible Guidelines
Street Level	Provide a “storefront” on street-front sides of the building to attract and engage pedestrians. Blank walls or windows will not do this. Set a standard for how much of the street-level wall needs to be glass display windows and open to the interior. Orient the main entryway to the street-front for pedestrians with secondary entrances (if desired) to parking areas. Discourage or prohibit gaps between buildings.
Signage	Promote signage oriented to pedestrians rather than to vehicles. This may include hanging signs perpendicular to the building.
Parking	Provide for “on-street” vehicle parking as a way to animate the street and attract shoppers (the “street” would typically be an internal driveway rather than a public street). Locate parking areas to the side and rear of buildings and provide a visual buffer to a pedestrian-friendly streetscape. Provide parking for bicycles.
Uses	Encourage or require “active uses” such as retail stores and restaurants rather than “passive uses” such as offices or banks. Discourage or prohibit drive-through uses unless the drive through is located and designed in a way to avoid impacts to the pedestrian-friendly streetscape.
Intensity	Provide for enough floor area to create a critical mass of uses. Require multi-story buildings with uses on all floors. Require a diversity of uses to help create a multi-faceted experience.
Setbacks / Standards	Establish a “build-to line” or a maximum front setback (rather than a minimum setback) in order to force buildings to the street and relate to pedestrians. Allow or require zero side setbacks in order to create a continuous streetscape of pedestrian-friendly buildings. Require a minimum building height to help frame the street.
Streetscape	Provide ample sidewalk width to encourage pedestrians, window whopping outdoor dining, street trees, street furniture (benches, trash barrels, bicycle racks, etc.). Plant street trees to create shade and enhance the overall appearance of the area. Place all utilities underground.

Importance Of History

Rocky Hill has a wonderful history and this history can be found all around us in the buildings and places which have endured for centuries. This is especially true in the Town Center area of Rocky Hill.

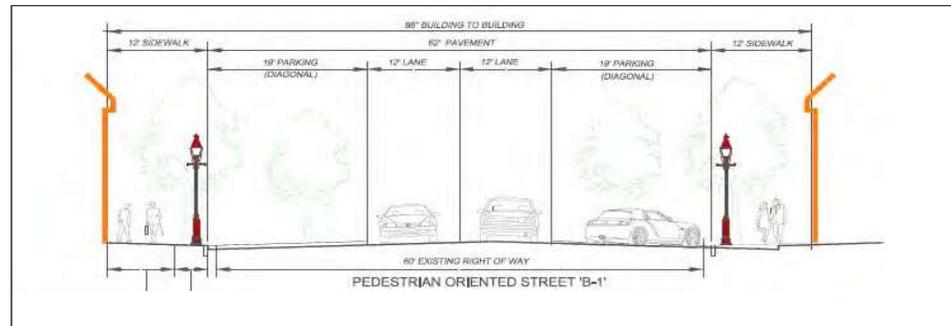
Many of the buildings and development patterns that already exist can provide a framework for how to guide future development.

While future development should reflect the building forms which are reflective of the history of this area, overall character is more important than strict authenticity in terms of building materials or design elements.

The design of the “streets” within the Town Center area is also important. In this case, the word “street” is used to describe private, internal driveways in addition to public roadways. Within the Town Center area, there will be an array of “streets” from a multi-lane State highway (Silas Deane Highway – Route 99) to a low volume State highway (Glastonbury Avenue - Route 160) to existing Town streets (such as Old Main Street) to private roadways as part of existing and new developments.

For the Town Center to be successful, these roadways must have a strong pedestrian focus and ambience. This is because these public roadways are the “glue” which holds all of the potential private development together. If there is no cohesiveness in the public realm of the streets, there will be no cohesiveness in the private realm either and the Town Center will feel like a series of disjointed sites rather than a cohesive village. As the pictures show, more can and should be done to strengthen the pedestrian focus and ambience.

Potential “Street” Cross Section



Existing Streetscapes and Development Patterns



Main Street



Silas Deane Highway



Glastonbury Avenue

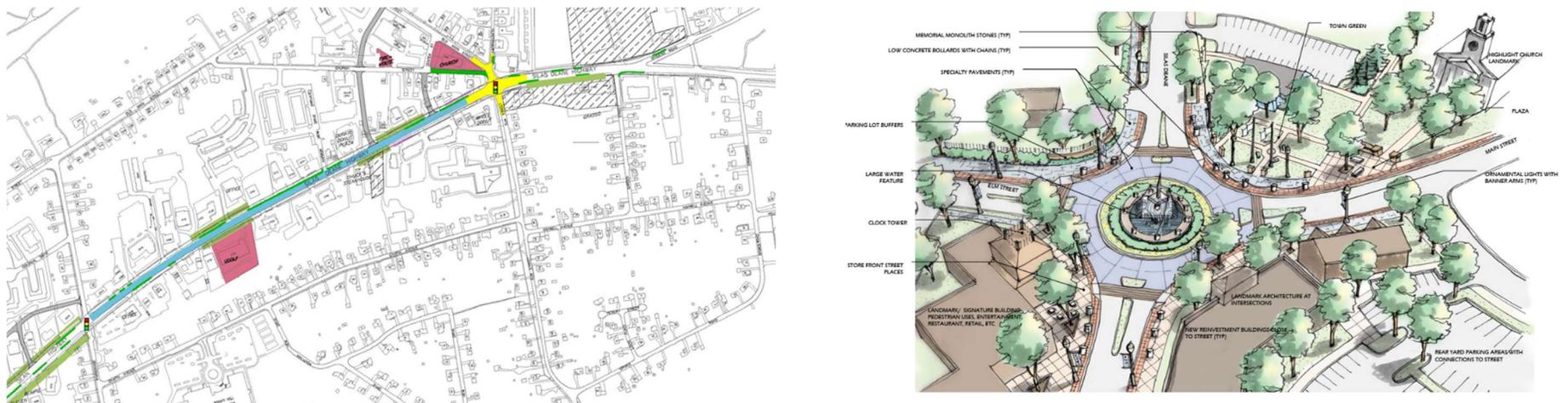


Old Main Street

Public Or Private?

It is envisioned that most, if not all, of the development on private property in the proposed Town Center area will occur as a result of property owners and private developers initiating the development process and investing in Rocky Hill. The role of the Town will primarily be the establishment and maintenance of regulations to guide the development activities to help produce a walkable, pedestrian-friendly Town Center area.

The Town will continue to make investments in the public infrastructure in the Town Center area (sidewalks, streetlights, etc.) in order to support and encourage this private investment and help produce a walkable, pedestrian-friendly Town Center area.

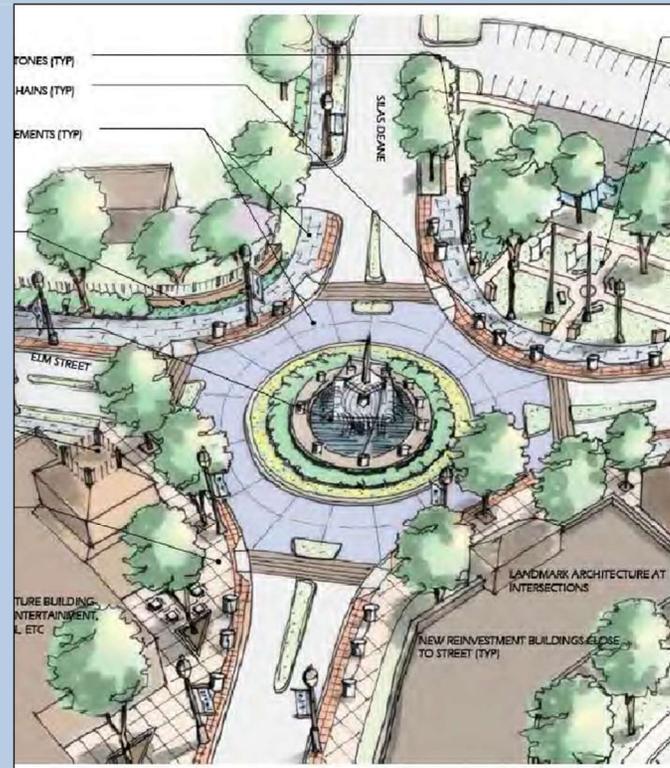
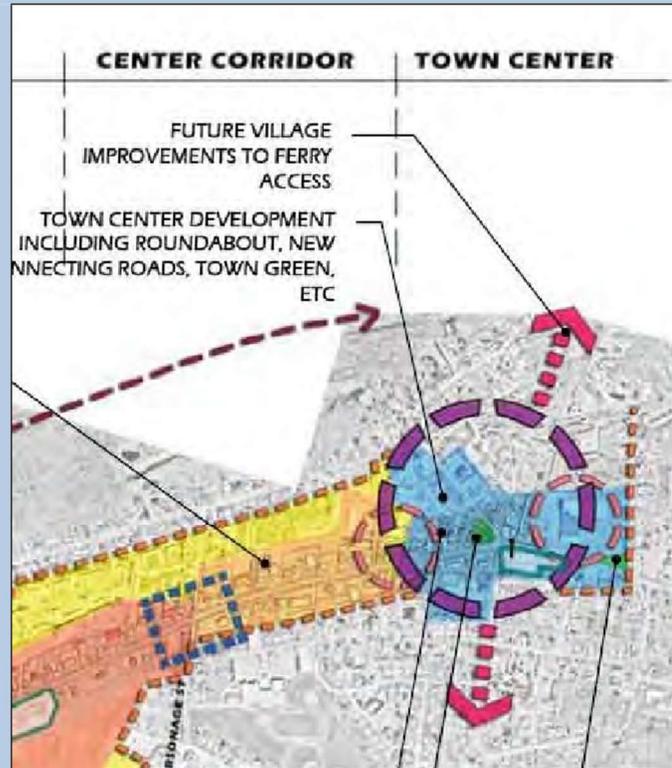


The case studies on the following pages show that the Town Center concept has been recommended and embraced by a number of studies.

CASE STUDY

Silas Deane Highway Corridor Study – Rocky Hill Town Center

In 2006, the Towns of Rocky Hill and Wethersfield undertook a joint study of the Silas Deane Highway to identify ways to revitalize the corridor and encourage reinvestment. The study was prepared with the assistance of a team of consultant led by Fuss & O’Neill and Ferrero-Hixon Associates. The Silas Deane Highway study supported the establishment of a Town Center type area in Rocky Hill and the reconfiguration of the Route 99 / Route 160 intersection to support that vision.



CASE STUDY

Intersections Improvements – Route 99 At Route 160

Following completion of the Silas Deane Highway Study, the Town of Rocky Hill worked with BL Companies to prepare improvement plans for the intersection of Route 99 (Silas Deane Highway and Main Street) with Route 160 (Elm Street and Glastonbury Avenue). The Town was able to obtain grant funding from the State of Connecticut to support Phase 1 of the streetscape improvements and this was completed in 2012. The project scope included closing Church Street (to simplify the intersection of Glastonbury Avenue and the Silas Deane Highway) and adding landscaping, lighting, benches, sidewalks, pavers and angled, on-street parking at the Congregational Church. A decorative, free-standing clock was also installed.

Phase 2 (constructing traffic islands, redesigning existing approaches, and installing a brick pattern beneath the traffic light) is to be undertaken as funds become available.



Village District

The Town Center areas – both the core area and the potential expansion area – include a number of historic resources. These areas are emblematic of Rocky Hill’s rich history as an agricultural community and a maritime port.

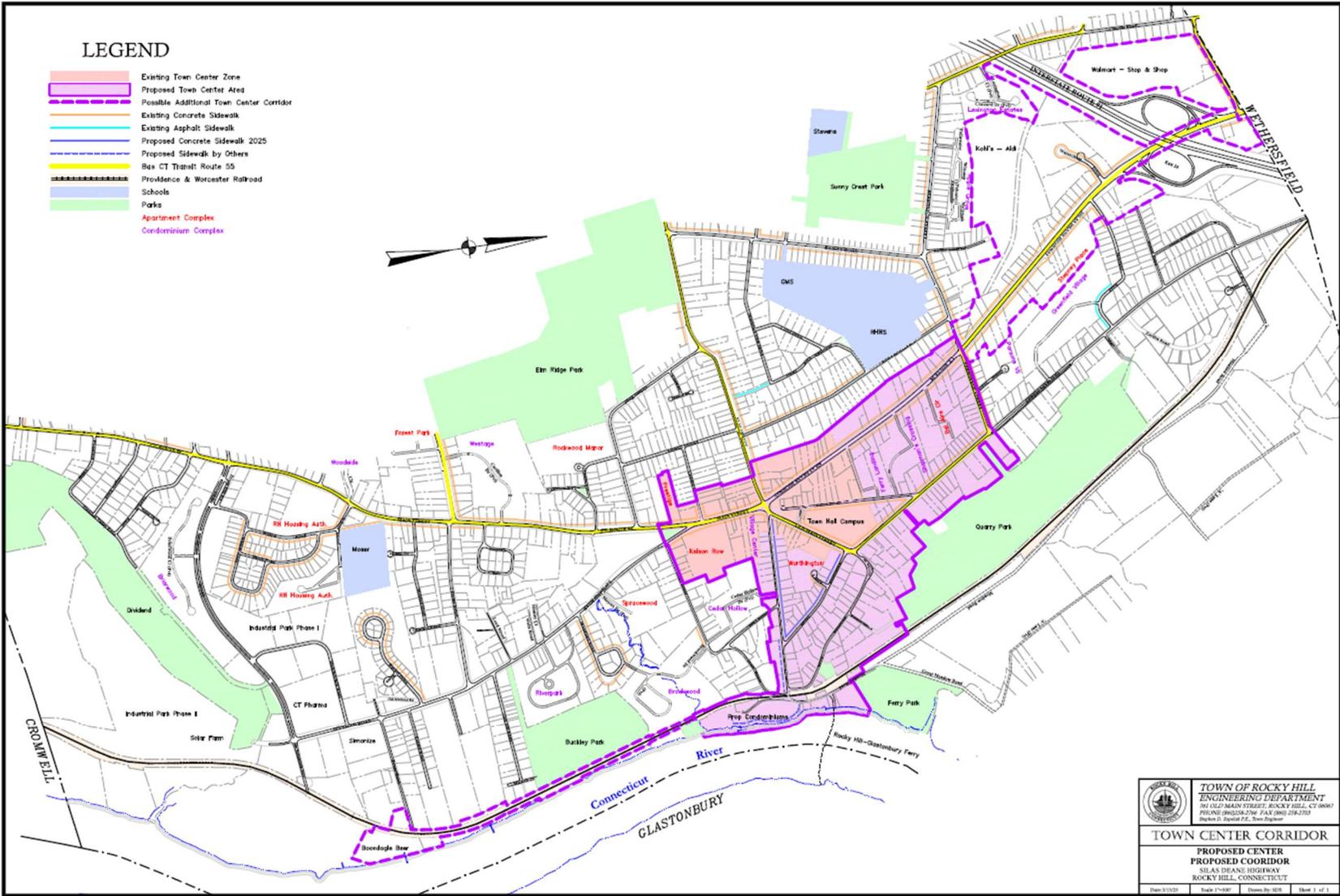
The Plan recommends that a “village district” be established in each of these areas of distinctive character, landscape and historic value in order to ensure that new construction, substantial reconstruction and rehabilitation of properties maintains and enhances the character of these areas.

Once the “village districts” are established, the Planning and Zoning Commission will have the ability to closely manage the design and placement of buildings and other development elements within these areas.

Additional information regarding “village districts” may be found in Section 8-2j of the Connecticut General Statutes.

SUPPORT EXPANSION OF THE TOWN CENTER		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Encourage and support the expansion of a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly, bicycle-friendly, transit-friendly town center.	PZC	EDC, DRB, Town, Staff
2. Encourage and support expansion of the Glastonbury Avenue Overlay Zone in order to connect the Town Center to the riverfront.	PZC	EDC, DRB, Town, Staff
3. Require <i>mixed use buildings</i> (not just single use buildings on a mixed-use site) in the Town Center in order to complement community character and add activity to the area.	PZC	EDC, DRB, Town, Staff
4. Enhance the Town Center as the business, government, civic, institutional, and cultural center of the Town.	PZC	EDC, DRB, Town, Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
5. Undertake a detailed study to expand the Town Center to address land use, circulation, parking, and pedestrian issues and recommend zoning changes to implement the study recommendations.	PZC	EDC, DRB, Town, Staff
6. Study the Glastonbury Avenue Village Overlay District in the Town Center area both the core area, the potential expansion area and its use.	PZC	EDC, DRB, Town, Staff
7. Explore the potential for on-street parking on a state highway with CT-DOT (Main Street and the Silas Deane Highway) or consider making certain road sections Town roads rather than State highways.	Town	Staff
8. Encourage shared parking requirements in the Town Center area in order to account for the shared use of parking spaces at different hours and on different days by different uses.	PZC	Staff
9. Participate in the Connecticut Main Street Program in order to help support businesses and activities in the Town Center area.	Town	Staff
10. Work with CT-DOT on establishing bicycle lanes in and around the Town Center area.	Town	Staff

Town Center Corridor



Manage And Guide Residential Development

Livable Communities

One of Rocky Hill's goals as part of this planning effort is to be a more "livable" community using these principles.

- Community Engagement
- Health and Well-Being
- Housing
- Planning and Zoning
- Safety and Preparedness
- Social / Support Services
- Transportation

Maintain A Diverse Housing Portfolio - Rocky Hill has a diverse housing portfolio with a number of housing options for residents of the Town and the region. This diversity has helped make Rocky Hill the community it is today, and this diversity should be maintained.

Single-Family



Townhouse



Low-Rise



Mid-Rise



Protect Residential Neighborhoods and Areas - Rocky Hill is primarily a residential community. For this reason, the Plan of Conservation and Development recommends that the Town continue to protect the integrity of residential neighborhoods from encroachment by business activities and that appropriate buffers and transitions be provided between business uses and residential areas.

Vegetated Transition (Business to Single-Family)

Aerial View



**Street View Showing
Vegetated Buffer In Rear To Business**



Use Transition (Business to Multi-Family to Single-Family)

Aerial View



**Street View Showing
Business To Multi-Family To Single-Family Behind**



Housing Options

1. Remain in current home.
2. Move to smaller home.
3. Move to condominium with exterior maintenance provided.
4. Retain day-time help.
5. Remain in home with an accessory apartment for caretaker, caregiver, and/or income.
6. Move in with family in their home or accessory apartment.
7. Move to congregate or assisted living complex.
8. Move to subsidized elderly housing.
9. Move to nursing or convalescent home.

Provide For Housing Options - While Rocky Hill has a diverse housing stock today in terms of the number of multi-family units, most of those units were built in the 1970s and may not be well-designed for the housing needs of today or tomorrow compared to the newer multi-family unit built. There is expected to be a need during the planning period for additional housing units in Rocky Hill that are:

- suitable for an aging population since there will be a larger number of people in the older age groups
- affordable to moderate income persons and households. Expansion of 80%, 60% and 40% median housing.
- The use of “tiny homes” to expand usage of already built homes.

Housing For An Aging Population



Possible Considerations

- Smaller units
- Lower maintenance
- Lower cost
- “Universal design”
- Adaptable for handicapped accessibility
- Social opportunities
- Shared services
- Ability to age in place (meals on wheels, home health aides, etc.)

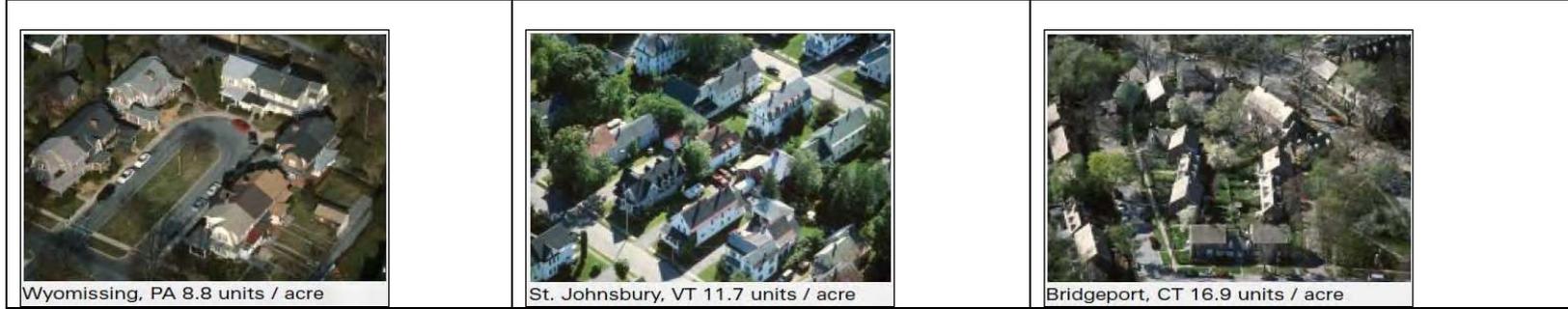
Starter Housing



Possible Considerations

- Smaller units / smaller lots
- Lower cost

Whatever housing strategies are pursued, design will be an important consideration. While many people become concerned when there is discussion of higher density housing, density is just a number. The overall design of a housing development can make higher densities seem more attractive than lower densities. Design may be more important than density.



MANAGE AND GUIDE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain a diverse housing portfolio and encourage Affordable Housing for ALL.	Town	Staff, RHHA, PZC
2. Continue to encourage conservation design subdivisions in the R-40 zoning district.	PZC	Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
4. Plan for additional senior housing units managed by the Housing Authority to meet current and anticipated future needs for affordable housing for seniors.	RHHA	PZC, Staff
5. Maintain “affordable housing” in the Zoning Regulations to be consistent with State statutes.	PZC	Staff
6. Create regulations for Middle Housing in Residential and Commercial Areas	PZC	Staff

Rocky Hill Housing Plan Under Construction



POTENTIAL NEW APARTMENTS
 654 UNITS
 39 Units (8-30g)
 94 Units (Work Force)

	TOWN OF ROCKY HILL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT 261 OLD MAIN STREET, ROCKY HILL, CT 06067 PHONE: 860.582.2766 FAX: 860.258.2783 Stephen D. Sigall, P.E., Town Engineer
	HOUSING 2025 PROPOSED AND UNDER CONSTRUCTION TOWN AND STATE ROADS ROCKY HILL, CONNECTICUT Date: 5/27/21 Scale: 1"=800' Drawn By: SSB Sheet 1 of 5

Truck Parking and Idling

Trucks delivering products to some businesses along Brook Street and elsewhere have been parking and idling along public streets and in other parking lots in Rocky Hill. This activity has the potential to have a negative impact on street capacity and safety and can adversely affect nearby residences and businesses.

The Town should work with local businesses, the police department, and truckers to provide parking / idling areas on the business sites generating this traffic or in other appropriate locations to ensure that potential negative impacts are eliminated or minimized.

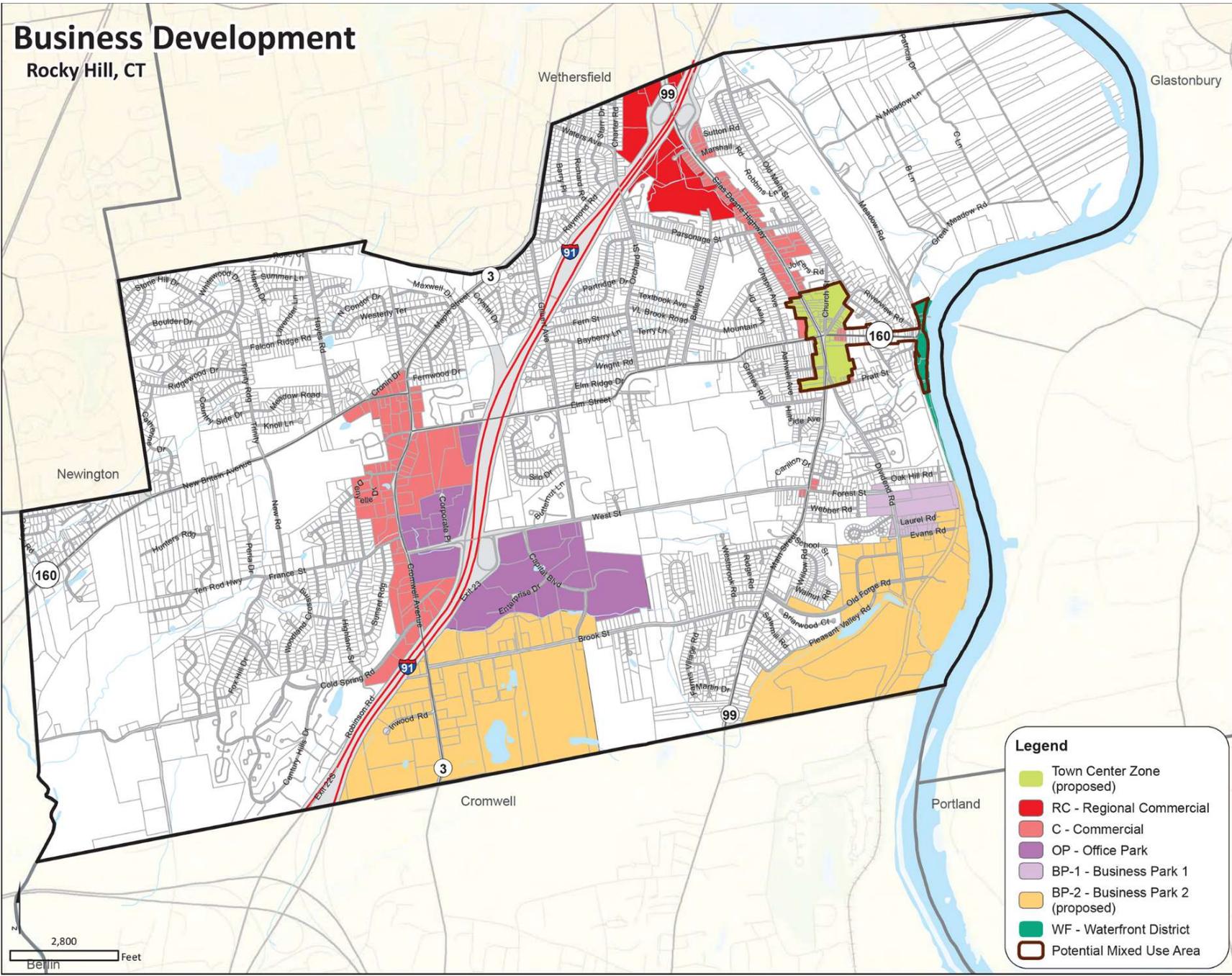
Guide And Manage Business Development

Overall, Rocky Hill has a healthy and diverse economy. Businesses in the community provide jobs for residents of the town and the region, provide goods and services for residents and other businesses in the town and the region, and provide a strong tax base for the community. Overall, a large percentage of the Grand List in Rocky Hill consists of business and industrial uses.



Business Development

Rocky Hill, CT



- Legend**
- Town Center Zone (proposed)
 - RC - Regional Commercial
 - C - Commercial
 - OP - Office Park
 - BP-1 - Business Park 1
 - BP-2 - Business Park 2 (proposed)
 - WF - Waterfront District
 - Potential Mixed Use Area

Revisit Parking Regulations

Rocky Hill should consider the reduction of the number of spaces required for certain uses. Review of the parking requirements in the Zoning Regulations suggests that it might be possible to reduce the parking standards for several use categories. These are the use categories which are most prevalent along the Silas Deane Highway and Cromwell Avenue:

- Shopping centers (4 spaces to 5 spaces per 1,000 SF)
- Retail stores (5 spaces to 6.67 spaces per 1,000 SF)
- Restaurants (10 spaces per 1,000 SF of patron floor area)
- Offices (3.33 spaces to 6.67 spaces per 1,000 SF)

Information from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and observation of parking areas in Rocky Hill suggest that the parking requirements in the regulations may be requiring more spaces than are really needed. Even on the busiest shopping day of the year, Rocky Hill residents have observed that there is parking available at local stores.

At the same time as any change to the parking requirements, Rocky Hill could also upgrade local regulations to encourage or require the following:

- Front yard landscaping and parking lot landscaping (planted islands),
- Signage modifications (attached or detached),
- Lighting regulations,
- Improved drainage (such as “low impact development”), and
- Access management in terms of interconnecting parking lots and reducing the number of driveways.

By continuing to review existing parking rations and making other regulation changes, it might create development opportunities for some properties along these major routes. This could be a win-win situation.

Shared Parking

The Plan recommends that the Commission continue to encourage shared parking within business areas. This strategy reduces the amount of impervious coverage, can help reduce the number of curb cuts, and will help promote a walkable community.

Property Owners	Community
More floor area More rental income Higher property value Enhanced character	Improved building facades More front yard / parking lot landscaping Improved pavement areas Low impact development (drainage) More tax base Enhanced character

Revisit Home Occupation Regulations – While home offices and home-based businesses are more prevalent these days, there can be issues associated with the nature of the activity and whether it generates significant traffic or includes activities not customary in a residential setting. At the present time, any home-based business is allowed through issuance of a Zoning Permit by Staff so that the Commission and the neighborhood may not be aware of certain activities.

GUIDE AND MANAGE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to guide and manage business development.	PZC	EDC, DRB, Town, Staff
2. Seek to make effective use of land zoned for business development.	EDC	PZC, DRB, RHRA, Town, Staff
3. Seek other forms of economic development appropriate for Rocky Hill.	EDC	Town, Staff
4. Manage the Silas Deane Highway commercial corridor in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting redevelopment away from a strip development pattern (see Silas Deane Highway Study) • Encouraging façade improvement • Promoting consolidated parcels and shared driveways and parking 	PZC	EDC, DRB, RHRA, Town, Staff
5. Manage the Cromwell Avenue commercial corridor in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting consolidated parcels and shared driveways and parking • Encouraging façade improvement 	PZC	EDC, DRB, RHRA, Town, Staff
6. Continue to work with the Chamber of Commerce, the Capital Region Growth Council, and other agencies to maintain a business-friendly environment and recruit new businesses for appropriate sites.	EDC	PZC, DRB, Town, Staff

GUIDE AND MANAGE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (continued)

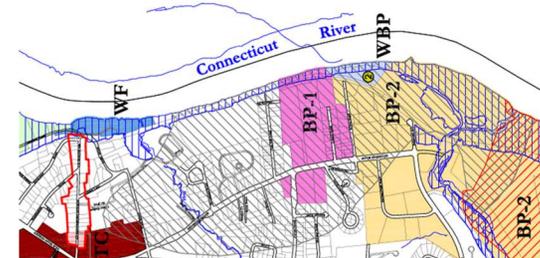
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
7. Review parking requirements and the number of parking spaces required for certain business uses and, at the same time, upgrade local regulations to address front yard landscaping and parking lot landscaping, signage modifications, site lighting, Improved drainage (such as “low impact development”), and access management in terms of inter- connecting parking lots and reducing the number of driveways.	PZC	EDC, DRB, Staff
8. Review home occupation regulations and consider requiring that some uses obtain a Special Permit.	PZC	Staff
9. Revisit Section 7.2.12 of the Zoning Regulations since the incentives for consolidated development seem overly generous and may not be attainable on most properties.	PZC	EDC, Staff
10. Continue to maintain a consolidated inventory of available sites and building space.	EDC	Staff
11. Investigate the potential for permitting limited manufacturing and/or high technology uses in the Office Park zone.	PZC	EDC
12. Work with local businesses, the police department, and truckers to provide parking / idling areas on the business sites generating truck traffic or in other appropriate locations to ensure that potential negative impacts are eliminated or minimized.	TC	PZC, EDC, Staff

Continue to Enhance the Riverfront

Rocky Hill has extensive frontage along the Connecticut River and this riverfront area has a long history of being central to the evolution of the community and the local economy. It is a key recommendation of this Plan to integrate this riverfront area into the overall fabric of the community and to enhance this area for residents and visitors. It is acknowledged that this area is an important asset both locally and nationally. To be successful, it will be important to develop conduits between the existing infrastructure and commercial development of the Town Center, with the inherent recreational and economic opportunities of the Waterfront area.

Enhancing the riverfront will also include development and redevelopment on public and private lands. A major strategy of this Plan is to encourage and support the redevelopment of the Foundry area at the end of Glastonbury Avenue as a mixed use, pedestrian friendly environment with recreational amenities. Balancing recreational, retail and other commercial activities will be critical to keeping this area active and vibrant. Any development proposals should include a commitment to preservation of the vistas of the river and the unique environmental considerations which exist.

ENHANCE THE RIVERFRONT		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Promote redevelopment of the riverfront to create a pedestrian friendly environment with recreational amenities and promote public access to waterfront areas.	Town	PZC
2. Work with private and public partners to promote redevelopment of the riverfront with recreational and limited mixed-uses.	Town	PZC
3. Continue to acquire riverfront open space as opportunities present themselves.	Town	Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
4. Promote and encourage the development of the Foundry Property and River's Edge Development which includes Tulisano Park.	Town	PZC, Staff
5. Interconnect the public areas of the waterfront with walking and bike paths.	Town	PZC, Staff

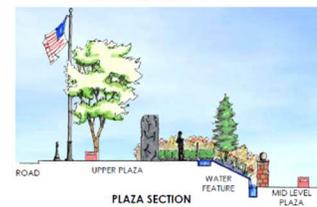




In the early 2010's the Rivers Edge Development was approved for the old Connecticut Foundry Site at the end of Glastonbury Avenue.

With that approval, the addition of a new town park called Tulasano Park will be built.

Tulasano Park
Rocky Hill, CT





Infrastructure Strategies

For the POCD, the term “infrastructure” is intended to organize and address different topics which Rocky Hill residents would like to have or provide to meet community wants and needs.



Community Facilities



Transportation



Complete Streets/Sidewalks



Town Utilities

Address Community Facility Needs

Since a comprehensive evaluation of municipal facilities was not part of the process of preparing this Plan of Conservation and Development, the Town should undertake an overall assessment of existing municipal facilities, their current condition, available land, expansion potential, and potential future use. In this way, the space needs of different departments can be attuned to the existing facilities that are available or to new facilities which may be needed. In addition, anticipated needs can be quantified and prioritized.



Public Safety Facilities – Public safety services include police, fire, and emergency medical services. Recruiting and retaining volunteers for fire and emergency medical response will continue to be important. Interest has been expressed in updating the police facility and a more centrally located facility for fire and emergency medical services.

Education Facilities – Upgrades to School Facilities

- Stevens School
- West Hill School
- Griswold Middle School
- Rocky Hill High School
- School Grounds



Recreation Facilities – Recreational facilities in Rocky Hill include both outdoor facilities (parks, fields and courts) and indoor facilities (gymnasiums, classrooms, and community center space). Strong participation can make it challenging to program activities and, in the case of outdoor facilities, have a chance to “rest” the fields.

Other Facilities / Issues – Rocky Hill residents are proud of their community facilities and expressed interest in their continued maintenance and in expansion / enhancement to meet future needs. How and when these facilities might be improved should be part of the comprehensive evaluation of municipal facilities recommended by the Plan of Conservation and Development.

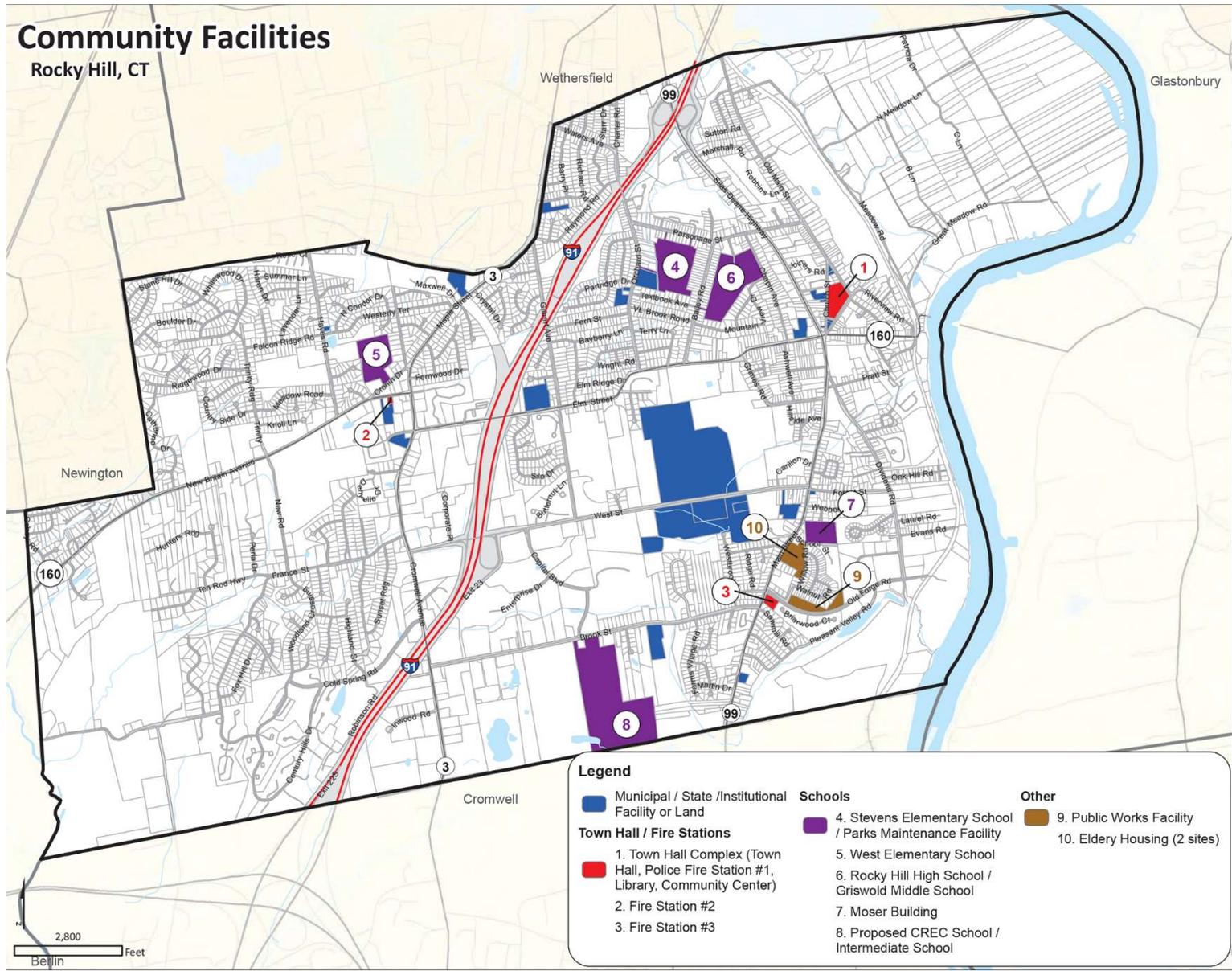
Other issues for the comprehensive evaluation might include looking at:

- how to best maintain our fields and buildings / facilities (Town and School),
- centralizing town facilities for the Highway Department and Parks Department crews,
- expanding / relocating the public works facility,
- providing additional housing for seniors,
- updating technology,
- replacing aging fleet vehicles, and
- providing additional public parking at the municipal complex.

ADDRESS COMMUNITY FACILITY NEEDS		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to identify and plan for community facility needs.	TC	Town, Staff
2. Continue efforts to attract and retain volunteers for local programs, especially fire and emergency medical services.	Town	Staff
3. Maintain mutual aid agreements with adjacent communities.	Town	Staff
4. Maintain existing facilities as efficiently and economically as possible.	Town	Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
5. Undertake a comprehensive evaluation of existing municipal facilities and possible future needs (Town and School).	Town	TC, BOE, FD, PD, PRC, PW, Staff
6. Encourage the future use(s) of the Community center.	TC	Town, Staff

Community Facilities

Rocky Hill, CT



Manage the Roadway Network

In most cases, the major roadways to serve the various land uses in Rocky Hill are already in place. As a result, it will be important to maintain and improve the safety and capacity of existing roadways in Rocky Hill as effectively as possible to minimize the need for major roadway widening or other improvements in the future. “Road Diet” techniques should also be analyzed.

Access Management – One way to maintain and improve the capacity of roadways will be to implement “access management” techniques. Such techniques allow access to land uses along a roadway while controlling access location, design, spacing and operation. Strategies might include shared driveways, interconnected sites, strategic placing of traffic signals, provision of turning lanes, and other approaches. This should be a very high priority on the Silas Deane/Main Street and Cromwell Avenue.

Specific Roadway Improvements

Based on comprehensive traffic studies done in Rocky Hill, there are some specific improvements recommended for implementation. Improvements on these roadways and at these intersections will ease congestion by increasing capacity and better accommodating through traffic and turning movements. Pedestrian improvements are also recommended. For additional information on some of the improvements, refer to the Route 3 Study (2012) by Tighe and Bond or the Silas Deane Highway Study (2006) by Fuss & O’Neill.

1. **Brook Street at Henkel Way**

Installing a roundabout on Brook Street at Henkel Way will create a clear transition between the Business Park and Office Park areas to the north and west and the residential neighborhoods to the east. It will also create a signature entrance for the proposed Town/CREC school complex on Brook Street. Streetscape enhancements are also recommended to the east.



2. **Main Street (Route 99) at West Street (Route 411) and Forest Street**

Aligning West Street with Forest Street and installing a new signal will facilitate access to the Business Park 1 area off Dividend Road to the east. Striping for bicycle lanes is also recommended.



3. **Re-Align Interstate 91 at Ext 24 off and on ramps to and from the Silas Deane Highway.**

The State of Connecticut DOT has proposed to re-align Exit 24 off and on ramps. The town should have an integral part of this re-design and integrate walkability in this area of Rocky Hill.



Roadway Connections – Encouraging or requiring roadway connections in appropriate areas will help distribute traffic efficiently over the road network. As a result, such connections will also help to ease congestion and better accommodate traffic.

A. Cromwell Avenue to New Road

Connecting Cromwell Avenue (Route 3) to New Road (and possibly to New Britain Avenue - Route 160) by extending Rhodes Road can help relieve traffic congestion in this area.



B. West Street (Route 411) To Elm Street (Route 160)

Two private driveways provide the back-bone for a connection between West Street and Elm Street. This connection could help relieve congestion on Route 3.



C. Outer France Street to New Britain Avenue (Route 160)

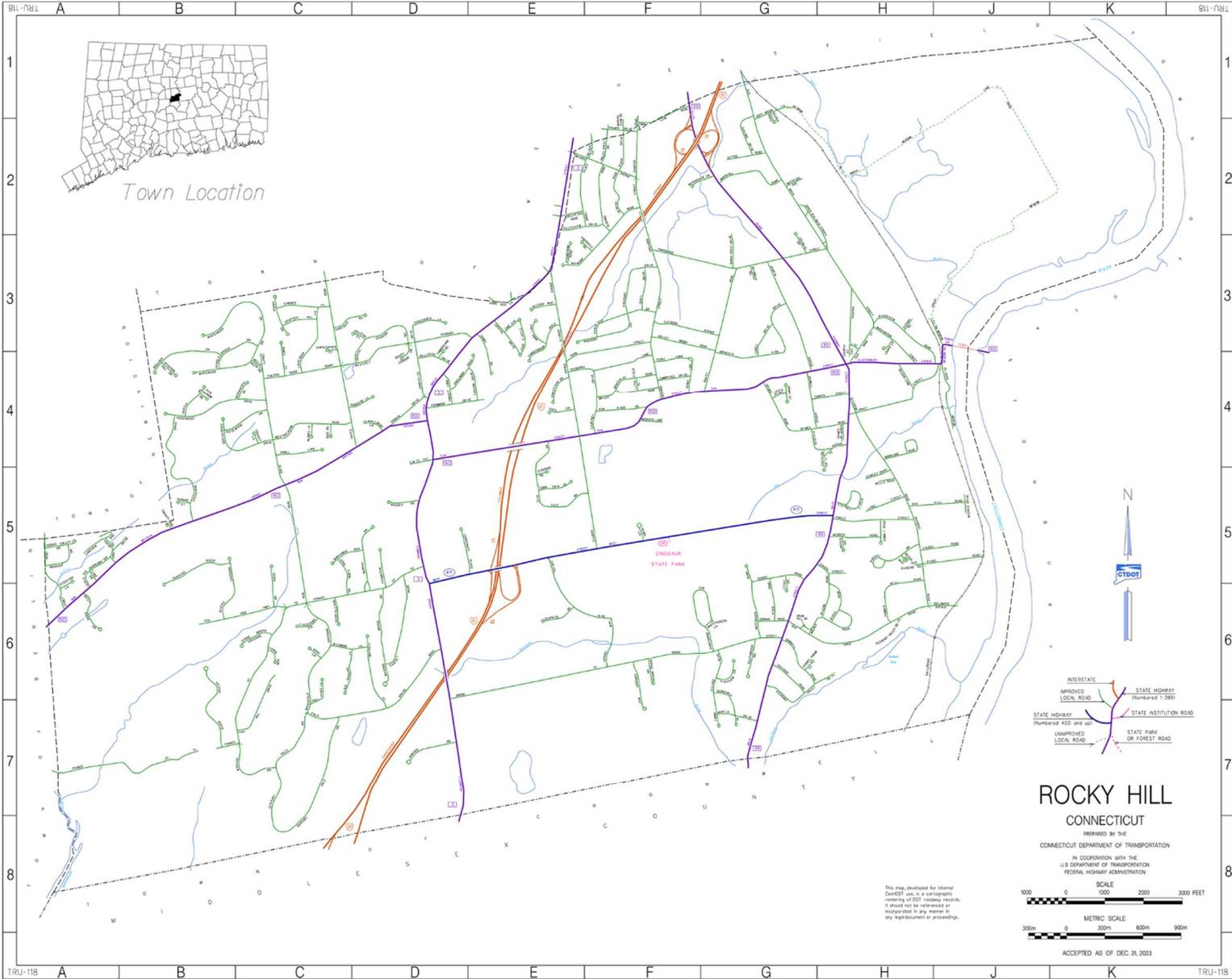
If or when additional development occurs in the western parts of Rocky Hill, providing a roadway connection between Outer France Street and New Britain Avenue will help interconnect a number of cul-de-sac streets and improve overall circulation on the entire west side of town.



Roadway Maintenance – Maintaining roadways is an important part of the Town’s overall vehicular circulation strategy. The Town recently embarked on a five-year plan to upgrade local roads and street after residents authorized \$10 million for infrastructure improvements). Projects will include cap sealing, pavement milling, street repaving, drainage work, and bridge replacement. Since roads are less expensive to maintain when they are part of regular maintenance program, Rocky Hill should continue to use a pavement management system to schedule and prioritize local road projects.

MANAGE THE ROADWAY NETWORK		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain the safety and capacity of the roadway system in Rocky Hill.	Town	PW, PD, Staff
2. Implement access management on major roadways such as the Silas Deane Highway (Route 99) and Cromwell Avenue (Route 3).	PZC	Town, Staff
3. Encourage or require construction of roadway improvements as recommended in the Plan	PZC	PW, PD, Town, Staff
4. Encourage or require construction of roadway connections as recommended in the Plan (connections A through C).	PZC	PW, PD, Town, Staff
5. Strive to promote street continuity in other areas as opportunities arise.	PZC	PW, PD, Town, Staff
6. Work closely with CRCOG and CTDOT regarding transportation issues in Rocky Hill (especially on the Silas Deane Highway and Cromwell Avenue).	Town	PZC, PW, PD, Staff
7. Maintain a pavement management system to categorize and prioritize road maintenance needs.	PW	Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
8. Establish an access management section in the Zoning Regulations.	PZC	Staff
9. Modify the Subdivision Regulations to refer to the road classification plan in the POCD.	PZC	Staff

Roads in Rocky Hill



SIDEWALKS

Since the inception of the Plan Implementation Committee, it has been a priority to chart and expand the use of sidewalks in the town. Through several PIC meetings, many areas of town have been identified as “hot zones” to install sidewalks. The goal was to infill areas in town as well as create walkable loops in the town. Such areas discussed are (please see attached Sidewalk Plan map).

- Extend sidewalks from the Town Center down Glastonbury Avenue to Ferry Park.
- Complete a 1500-foot gap on Elm Street to allow walkability from the Town Center to Route 3 and beyond.
- Adding sidewalks to Washington Street to create a walkable loop in the Town Center and Glastonbury Ave Overlay District (a potential village district)
- Adding Sidewalks to Hayes Road to fill the gap to create a walkable loop.
- Adding sidewalks to New Road and extend across New Britain Avenue to Trinity Ridge to create a connection to the Strazka Farm.
- Adding sidewalks to infill gaps on France Street
- Adding sidewalks on Gilbert Ave to connect Elm Street and Route 3 from North to South.
- Adding Sidewalks on Route 3 between Sandy Drive and Gilbert Ave to create a walkable loop.
- To build out the “Century Hills Drive” sidewalk loop proposed after receiving the Phase 1 grant.

This plan to infill and add sidewalks in the town would promote walkability. As Commercial developers come to town, it shall be the plight of the Planning and Zoning Commission to get more infill sidewalks. In lieu of “sidewalks to nowhere”, the Planning and Zoning Commission needs to have the ability to enforce a “Sidewalk related Ordinance” in which a contractor can contribute to a “Sidewalk ONLY” fund in lieu of installing sidewalks if they are not feasible. This ordinance is similar to what the town already has in the Subdivision Requirements.



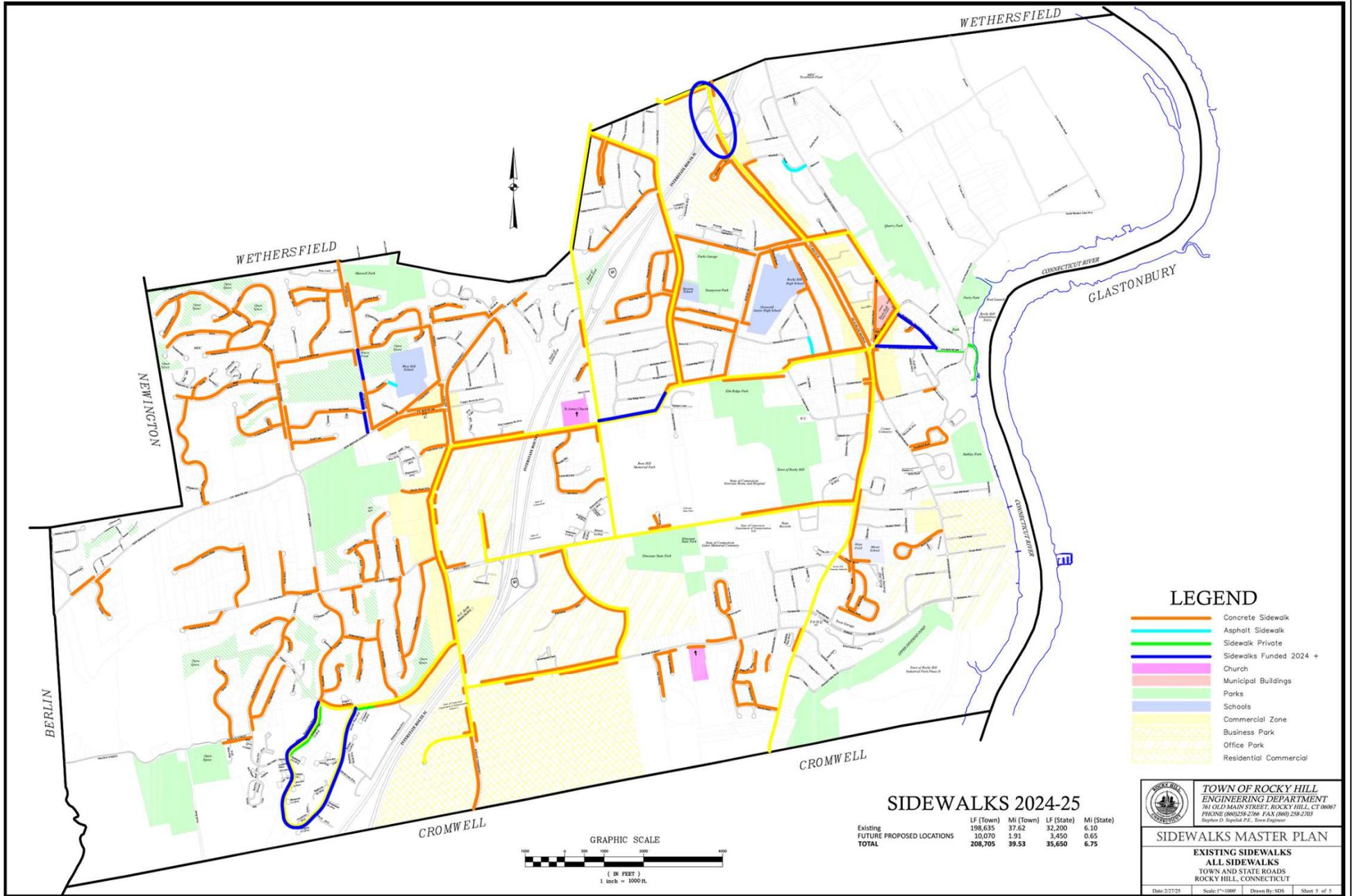
Hayes Road Sidewalk Fill In



Adding Sidewalks to Glastonbury Ave



Elm Street Sidewalk Fill In



SIDEWALKS 2024-25

	LF (Town)	Mi (Town)	LF (State)	Mi (State)
Existing	198,635	37.62	32,200	6.10
FUTURE PROPOSED LOCATIONS	10,070	1.91	3,450	0.65
TOTAL	208,705	39.53	35,650	6.75

TOWN OF ROCKY HILL
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
 761 OLD MAIN STREET, ROCKY HILL, CT 06067
 PHONE: (860)258-2266 FAX: (860) 258-2783
 Stephen D. Spivak, P.E., Town Engineer

SIDEWALKS MASTER PLAN

EXISTING SIDEWALKS
ALL SIDEWALKS
 TOWN AND STATE ROADS
 ROCKY HILL, CONNECTICUT

Date: 2/27/25 Scale: 1"=1000' Drawn By: SDS Sheet 5 of 5

GREENWAYS

A "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).

Trails and greenways in Rocky Hill positively impact individuals and improve communities by providing not only recreation and transportation opportunities, but also by influencing economic and community development. Some of the many trails and greenways benefits include:

- making Rocky Hill a better place to live by preserving and creating open spaces.
- encouraging physical fitness and healthy lifestyles.
- creating new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation.
- strengthening Rocky Hill's economy.
- protecting the environment; and
- preserving culturally and historically valuable areas.

Rocky Hill has established a Greenway system, as adopted by the Town Council (see Appendix). As we go forward, we should expand on the Greenway system.



Bicyclists – Bicycling is growing as a transportation option and as a recreational activity. Accommodations should be made for bicycles in the community. Rocky Hill should establish a Bicycle Committee and prepare an overall bicycle master plan.



Bus Transit – Rocky Hill is fortunate to have several bus routes within the community with service provided by Connecticut Transit:

- Route 55 with service on Main Street and the Silas Deane Highway north to Wethersfield and Hartford and south to Cromwell and Middletown
- Route 47 with service from Cromwell Avenue, Elm Street and Brook Street north to Wethersfield and Hartford.

These bus routes provide an important service and amenity, and service should be maintained and enhanced.



Rail Transit – While there is a rail line through Rocky Hill, there is no passenger service on the line and limited freight activity. Re-establishment of rail service to and through Rocky Hill would help support the development of the Town Center area and should be supported. In the meantime, use of the rail line for a recreation trail is also supported.

River Ferry – The Rocky Hill-Glastonbury Ferry is the oldest continuously operating ferry in the country. The Plan supports its continued operation for transportation and for recreation.

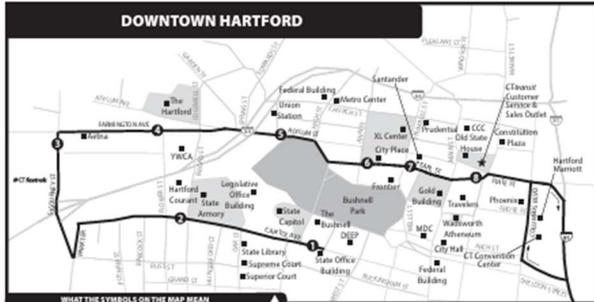
Dial-A-Ride – With an anticipated increase in the number of older residents, there may be increased demand for dial-a-ride services in the future and the Plan supports this service.

SUPPORT OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES

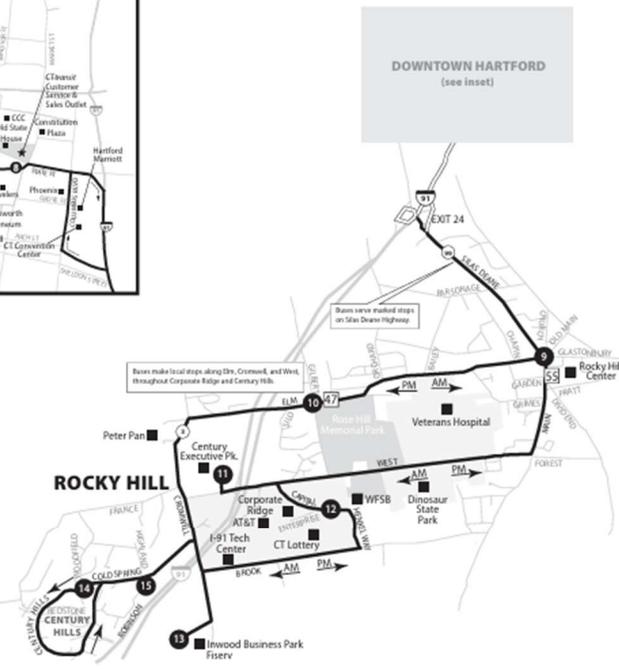
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to expand the pedestrian network in Rocky Hill by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requiring sidewalks in new developments and as part of new CTDOT projects • building new sidewalk connections and complete unbuilt sections of town. • establishing off-road trails and paths and interconnect to existing sidewalk networks • create walkable loops in town 	Town	PW, PZC, TC, Staff
2. Maintain and/or expand funding for sidewalk expansion including a sidewalk fund in lieu of sidewalks.	TC	Town, Staff
3. Seek to identify safe, convenient, comfortable, and secure bicycle-riding environments.	RHBC	PW, PZC, Town, Staff
4. Support expansion of bus transit service to and within Rocky Hill.	Town	Staff
5. As warranted, expand dial-a-ride service to meet the needs of Rocky Hill residents.	Town	Staff
6. Support maintaining the ferry service to Glastonbury.	Town	Staff
7. Support use of the rail line for passenger service and/or preserving the rail right-of-way for a riverfront trail.	Town	Staff
8. Maintain and expand The Rocky Hill Greenway System	TC	PZC
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
9. Create a Complete Streets Plan for the town.	Town	Staff
10. Create a trail guide for residents and make it available on the Town website.	OSCC	Staff
11. Maintain and Expand the Rocky Hill Greenway system.	TC	Town, Staff
15. Apply to be designated as a bicycle-friendly community.	RHBC	Staff
16. Continue to encourage bicycle racks and other facilities be required as part of commercial developments.	PZC	Staff

910 ROCKY HILL—CENTURY HILLS EXPRESS

Bus Schedule Effective December 4, 2016



- WHAT THE SYMBOLS ON THE MAP MEAN**
- 1** Timepoints are places the bus is scheduled to reach at a specific time listed on the schedule. The timepoints are not the only places the bus will stop along the route.
 - Express Portion of Route indicates the bus does not stop in this area.
 - P** Park & Ride Lots offer free parking.
 - 53** Transfer Points show connections with other bus routes. The connecting route number is in the box. This is an example of when to transfer to the 53 Middletown route. Free transfers are available to most local routes in downtown Hartford.



Effective December 4, 2016: The one-way fare for this Express Zone 2 bus is \$3.20.

NOTE: Express Route #901-915 31-Day Passes are only accepted on Express Route #917-950 buses **after** they have been stamped with an expiration date by a CTtransit farebox.

10-Ride tickets for Express Routes #901-915 **cannot** be used on Express Route #917-950 buses.

CTtransit Express Route #901-915 buses honor Route #917-950 10-Ride tickets and monthly passes at all times.

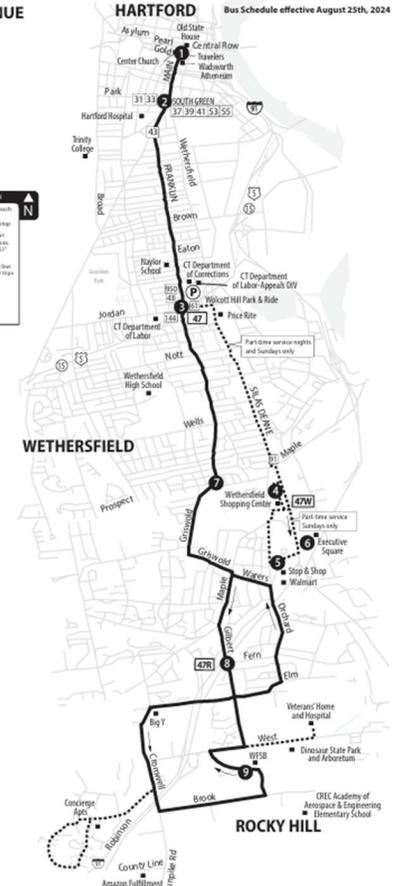
Local service to Rocky Hill is provided by the 55-MIDDLETOWN and 47-FRANKLIN AV-ROSE HILL routes.

47 FRANKLIN AVENUE

47R Wolcott Hill Road

Bus Schedule effective August 25th, 2024

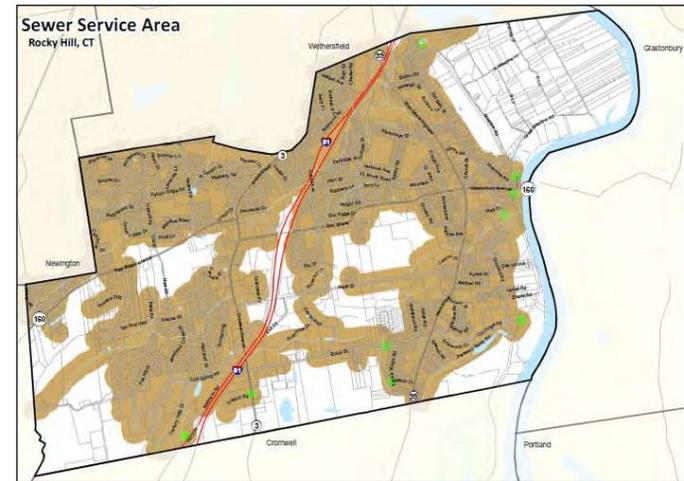
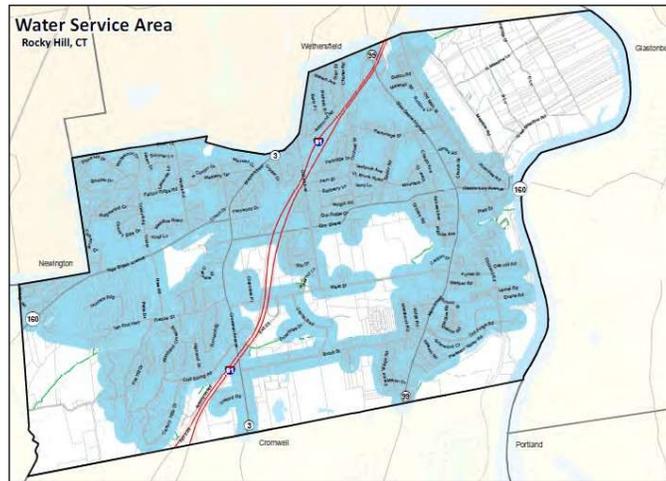
- WHAT THE SYMBOLS ON THE MAP MEAN**
- 1** Timepoints are places the bus is scheduled to reach at a specific time listed on the schedule. The timepoints are not the only places the bus will stop along the route.
 - 53** Transfer Points show connections with other bus routes. The connecting route number is in the box. This is an example of when to transfer to the 511 Route.
 - Part-time routing is shown for stops where the bus does not always stop. Refer to the schedule for days that take the part-time route.
 - P** Park & Ride Lots offer free parking.



Maintain Adequate Infrastructure Services

Piped Infrastructure

Public water service and public sewer service are provided in Rocky Hill by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) although the western side of Town is served by the Mattabasset treatment plant in Cromwell. Ample capacity is available to serve anticipated community needs within the planning period and beyond.



Natural gas service is available in different parts of Rocky Hill to meet the needs of the community.

Storm water drainage is also considered to be piped infrastructure. The Natural Resources section of the Plan made recommendations for implementing "green infrastructure / low impact development" techniques to address stormwater management. The Town's Storm Drainage Master Plan should be updated to incorporate "green infrastructure / low impact development" techniques.

Wired Infrastructure

Electric service in Rocky Hill is provided by Connecticut Light & Power (CLP). Wired telephone service is available from several providers. Cable television service is provided by Cox Cable. Both companies are seeking to provide communication, Internet, and other entertainment services.

An ongoing issue with regard to wired utilities is balancing the frequency and extent of tree-trimming for electrical reliability with the desire to maintain and enhance community character. Rocky Hill should continue to balance these interests.

Wireless Communication Infrastructure

The next major growth area in communications will be wireless services, particularly digital services that offer voice, Internet, and other services. During the planning period, it is expected that the need for antennae to support these services will increase to improve signal coverage and quality handle the anticipated increase in demand. Rocky Hill should adopt regulations or guidelines addressing the desirable location and type of antennae to guide this activity. This would include new “infill” 5G antennas on utility poles around the town.

Wired Infrastructure



Utility Trimming For Reliability



Wireless Infrastructure



MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to require and or support the extension and improvement of piped infrastructure such as public water, public sewer, and natural gas.	Town	PZC, MDC, Staff
2. Continue to require that new wired utilities be placed underground.	Town	PZC, Staff
3. Seek to place existing overhead-w i r e d utilities underground as opportunities present themselves.	Town	PZC, Staff
4. Balance the frequency and extent of tree-trimming for electrical reliability with the desire to maintain and enhance community character.	Town	Staff
5. Continue to anticipate the growth in demand for wireless communication services.	Town	Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
6. Update the storm drainage master plan to incorporate “green infrastructure / low impact development” (LID) approaches to storm drainage.	Town	Staff
7. Adopt regulations or guidelines for the location of wireless communication antennae which would include infill 5G antennas being installed on utility poles.	PZC	Staff



Future Land Use Plan

The Plan of Conservation and Development has been prepared to meet the challenges that will confront the Town of Rocky Hill in the future. The Plan is intended as a guide to be followed in order to enhance the quality of life and community character. It is intended to be flexible in order to allow adjustments in the manner that specific goals and objectives are achieved while maintaining stability in the long-term goals of the community. Still, the most important step of the planning process is implementation of the recommendations.

During the next few years, some of the goals will be achieved, some circumstances will undoubtedly change, and some conditions may arise that will suggest that it is time to reconsider some of the Plan recommendations. Such situations are to be expected. Programs that help achieve community consensus, establish community goals, and promote community welfare will all turn out to be positive steps in the history of Rocky Hill.



Conservation



Development



Town Infrastructure

Future Land Use Plan

The recommendations of the Plan can be combined to present an overall Future Land Use Plan for Rocky Hill. The Future Land Use Plan is a reflection of the stated goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Plan as well as an integration of the preceding elements of the Plan of Conservation and Development. In essence, the Future Land Use Plan is a statement of what the Rocky Hill of tomorrow should look like.

Natural Resources / Open Space / Agriculture

Natural Resources
Open Space
Existing Farms

Residential Areas

Single-Family Residential Areas
Multi-Family Residential Areas

Mixed Use Areas

Town Center Zone
Possible Future Mixed Use Area

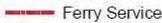
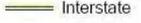
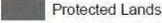
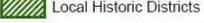
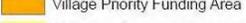
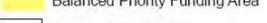
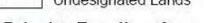
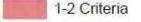
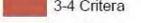
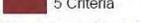
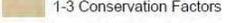
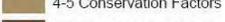
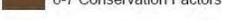
Business Areas

Commercial
Regional Commercial Office Park
Business Park 1 / Business Park 2
Waterfront

Community Facility / Institutional

Municipal / State / Institutional Facilities and Land

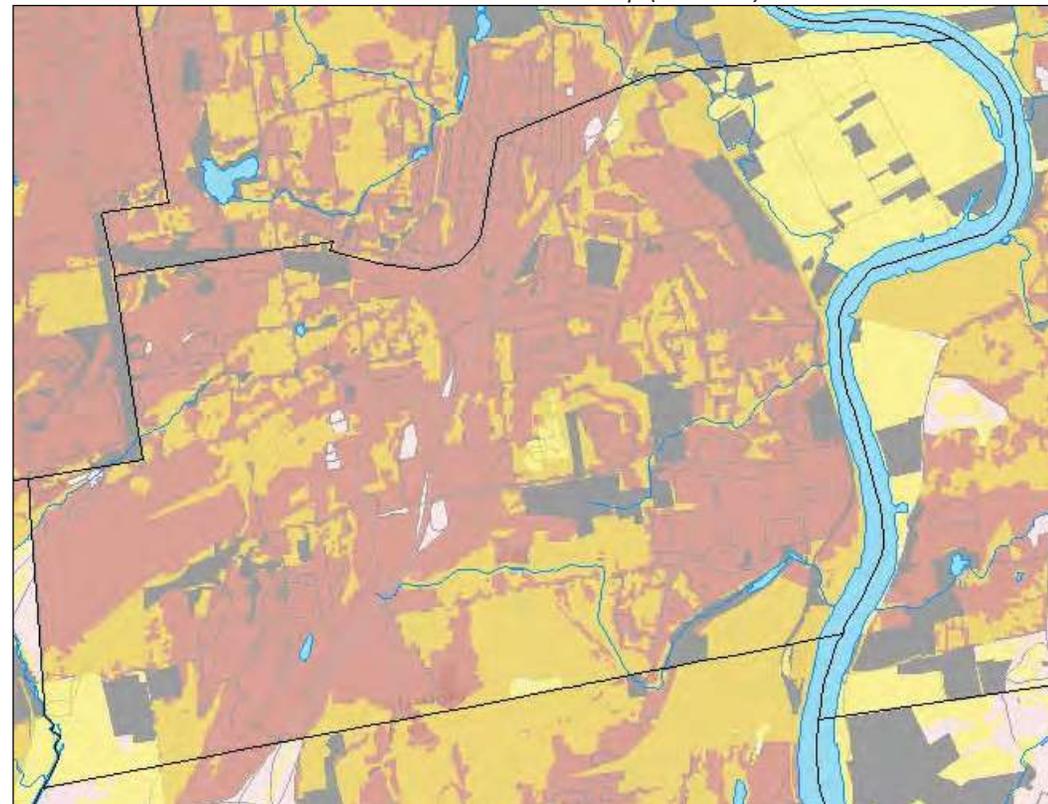
State Plan Categories

-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Busway Stations
-  Rail Stations
-  Ferry
-  Sea Ports
-  Rail Lines
-  Ferry Service
- Airports**
-  Commercial Service
-  General Aviation
-  Reliever
- Primary Highways**
-  Interstate
-  U.S. Route
-  State Route
-  Regional Centers
-  Water
-  Protected Lands
-  Local Historic Districts
-  Village Priority Funding Area
-  Balanced Priority Funding Area
-  Undesignated Lands
- Priority Funding Areas**
-  1-2 Criteria
-  3-4 Criteria
-  5 Criteria
- Conservation Areas**
-  1-3 Conservation Factors
-  4-5 Conservation Factors
-  6-7 Conservation Factors

Plan Consistency

In accordance with CGS Section 8-23, this POCD was compared with the 2013-18 State Conservation and Development Policies Plan and found to be generally consistent with that Plan and its Locational Guide Map.

State Locational Guide Map (2013-18)



Connecticut Conservation and Development Plan – State Growth Principles

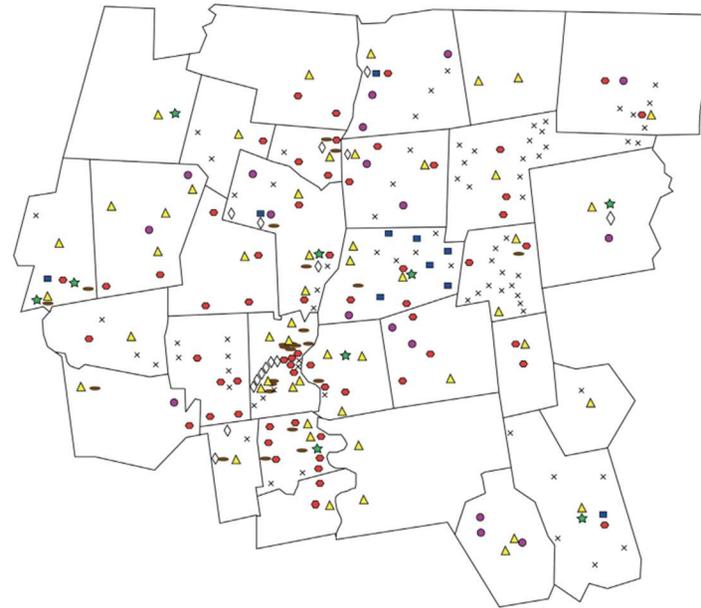
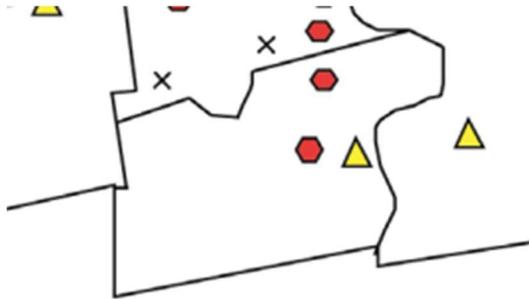
In accordance with CGS Section 8-23, the Plan of Conservation and Development has been evaluated for consistency with statewide growth management principles.

<p>Principle 1 – Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas of mixed-land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure.</p>	<p>FINDING – Consistent</p> <p>While there is no regional center in Rocky Hill, the Plan does promote development of a “town center” as an area of mixed land uses with existing physical infrastructure.</p>
<p>Principle 2 – Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.</p>	<p>FINDING –Consistent</p> <p>The Plan recommends that Rocky Hill maintain a diversified housing “portfolio” and seek to address recognized housing needs – housing that is more affordable and housing for an aging population.</p>
<p>Principle 3 – Concentrate development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse.</p>	<p>FINDING – Consistent</p> <p>The Plan promotes development in the proposed mixed use town center area and along major transportation corridors where transit is available.</p>
<p>Principle 4 – Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources, and traditional rural lands.</p>	<p>FINDING – Consistent</p> <p>The Plan identifies the importance of protecting important community resources such as the natural environment, open spaces, farmland, and historic resources.</p>
<p>Principle 5 – Protect environmental assets critical to public health and safety.</p>	<p>FINDING – Consistent</p> <p>The Plan contains recommendations to protect environmental assets critical to public health and safety. In particular, the Plan stresses the importance of protecting water quality.</p>
<p>Principle 6 – Integrate planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional, and statewide basis.</p>	<p>FINDING – Consistent</p> <p>The Plan is part of the process of integrating planning with other levels of government and with other agencies. The Plan will be used to coordinate efforts with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adjacent communities, • regional organizations, and • state agencies.

Regional Plan of Conservation and Development

In addition, this Plan was compared with the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development adopted by the Capitol Region Council of Governments and found to be generally consistent with that Plan. The Municipal Focus Areas represented on this map have been identified by town planners and include conservation greenways, open space connections, sustainable development, commercial, retail or mixed-use centers or corridor improvements, traditional neighborhood developments, village greens, village or neighborhood centers, historic areas, transit-oriented developments, technology or business centers, brownfields and underutilized property redevelopments. These Municipal Focus Areas represent existing conservation and development efforts that are in keeping with the goals and policies of the Plan. CRCOG will use this map along with the Plan’s goals and policies and site-specific information to support proposals consistent with the goals and policies identified by municipalities for these important focus areas.

The Town of Rocky Hill is represented on the CRCOG Municipal Focus Area Map



Capitol Region Plan of Conservation and Development
Municipal Focus Area Map

The Municipal Focus Areas represented on this map have been identified by town planners and include existing or potential conservation greenways, open space connections, sustainable development efforts, commercial retail or mixed use centers or corridor improvement, traditional neighborhood developments, village greens, village or neighborhood centers, historic areas, transit oriented developments, technology or business centers and brownfield or underutilized property redevelopments. These Municipal Focus Areas represent existing conservation and development efforts that are in keeping with the goals and policies of the CRCOG Regional Plan.

CRCOG will use this map along with the Regional Plan’s goals and policies and site specific information to support proposals consistent with the goals and policies identified by municipalities for these important focus areas.

- Legend**
- × Conservation, Greenway / Open Space Connection / Sustainable Development
 - Commercial / Retail / Mixed Use Center or Corridor Improvement
 - Traditional Neighborhood Development
 - ★ Village Green
 - ▲ Village or Neighborhood Center / Historic Area
 - ◇ Transit-Oriented Development
 - Technology / Business Center
 - Brownfield / Underutilized Property Redevelopment



Implementation

Implementation is the main purpose of the planning process. The whole purpose of the planning process is not to produce a Plan but to identify positive changes that should be undertaken in Rocky Hill in order to:

- meet community needs,
- preserve community character, and
- enhance the overall quality of life.

While identification of desirable strategies is important, that effort will only bear fruit if policies are implemented and if tasks or actions are completed. The Plan of Conservation and Development contains two types of recommendations:

- **Policies** – policies are intended to guide local actions and be on-going strategies of the Town. Policies are not discrete activities and do not lend themselves to measurement or recognition as being complete.
- **Action Steps** – initial tasks are discrete activities which can be undertaken to accomplish Plan recommendations and policies. These can be measured and recognized as being complete. Over time, it is envisioned that additional tasks will be identified by the Town to help implement recommended policies.

Plan Implementation

The Plan of Conservation and Development should be *a working document* used to identify desirable policies and action steps for the community. As implementation proceeds, it is normal and expected that policies and action steps will be refined and new actions steps identified.

Implementation of the Plan will be *a gradual and continual process*. While some recommendations should (and will) be carried out in a relatively short period of time, others may be long-term in nature. Further, since some recommendations will involve additional study or a commitment of fiscal resources, their implementation will take place over several years or occur in stages.

If the Plan is to be successfully implemented, there should be *an organization established to coordinate implementation* of the Plan among the many different agencies and organizations with some responsibility for implementation. The Plan recommends that a Plan Implementation Committee (PIC) be organized and meet on a regular basis (perhaps quarterly) to coordinate implementation of Plan recommendations assess the status of specific recommendations, evaluate the priorities, and even suggest new implementation techniques. The PIC should include representatives of the key Town boards and commissions. While the PIC is referred to as a committee, it is intended that this be more of a modest “working group” focused on coordinating efforts and achieving results than a formal entity with broad membership or other responsibilities.



PLAN IMPLEMENTATION		
Objectives	Leader	Partners
1. Implement the POCD.	PZC	TC
2. Conduct regular meetings of all local Boards and Commissions to find ways to enhance intra-municipal coordination.	Town	Staff
3. Coordinate POCD implementation with programs and efforts of regional planning agencies and adjacent municipalities.	PIC	Town, Staff
4. Use the POCD to guide decisions on zoning map changes and zoning text changes.	PZC	Staff
5. Use the policies in the POCD to guide decisions on special permit applications.	PZC	Staff
6. Use the policies in the POCD to guide CGS 8-24 referrals.	PZC	Staff
7. Use the POCD to guide decisions on the Operating Budget, particularly regarding maintenance of existing improvements (roads, buildings, facilities, etc.).	TC	Staff
8. Use the policies in the POCD to guide decisions on the Capital Budget.	TC	PZC, Staff
9. Use the strategies in the POCD to guide preparation of the long-term Capital Improvements Program.	TC	PZC, Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
10. Establish a Plan Implementation Committee made up of representatives of various boards to prioritize, coordinate, and refine implementation of the Plan.	PZC	TC, Staff
11. Regularly review POCD strategies, policies and tasks to ensure they are relevant to community needs.	PIC	PZC, TC, Staff
12. Update local regulations to implement the Plan of Conservation & Development.	PZC	Staff



Implementation Legend

BOE	Board of Education	PRC	Parks and Recreation Commission
CRCOG	Capital Region Council of Governments	PW	Public Works
EDC	Economic Development Commission	PZC	Planning and Zoning Commission
FD	Fire Department	RHBC	Rocky Hill Bicycle Committee (NEW)
GMCT	Great Meadow Conservation Trust	RHHA	Rocky Hill Housing Authority
LAFP	Land Acquisition / Farmland Preservation Committee	HS	Rocky Hill Historical Society
MDC	The Metropolitan District Commission	RHLT	Rocky Hill Land Trust (NEW)
MH	Municipal Historian	RHRA	Rocky Hill Redevelopment Agency
OSCC	Open Space / Conservation Commission	STF	Sustainability Task Force
PD	Police Department	Staff	Town Staff
PIC	Plan Implementation Committee	TC	Town Council
		Town	Town Departments and Agencies

ROCKY HILL

2022-27 Affordable Housing Plan

Appendix A

The Rocky Hill Affordable Housing Plan



Planning & Zoning Commission

Adopted December 21, 2022

ROCKY HILL

2022-27 Affordable Housing Plan



Planning & Zoning Commission

Adopted December 21, 2022

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December 21, 2022

This document is the 2022-27 Affordable Housing Plan for Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

Section 8-30j of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that each municipality prepare and adopt an affordable housing plan and update it at least once every five years. This is Rocky Hill's first specific affordable housing plan.

This Plan was prepared with guidance from the Planning and Zoning Commission. The process of preparing this Plan included:

- Workshop meetings with the Planning and Zoning Commission,
- An on-line survey of Rocky Hill residents,
- Independent research and investigation by a planning consultant,
- Discussion and refinement of a variety of housing issues and possible strategies, and
- Preparation and refinement of an affordable housing plan.

With adoption of this Affordable Housing Plan, attention now turns to implementation as Rocky Hill continues to look for ways to provide for a variety of housing options throughout the community Hill to:

- expand housing options and choices, and
- help meet the housing needs of households of all ages, sizes, incomes, and characteristics.

Sincerely,

Planning & Zoning Commission

1

PLANNING FOR HOUSING CHOICES

Overview

In the last few years, housing has become an issue of increased public policy attention in America, in Connecticut, and in Rocky Hill. This is not to imply that housing was not an issue before, just that states and municipalities are now realizing that public policymakers need to take concrete steps to address housing issues related to quality, quantity, affordability, availability, and other factors.

In 2017, the Connecticut legislature enacted a requirement for each municipality in Connecticut to prepare an affordable housing plan and update it at least once every five years thereafter. In Rocky Hill, the Planning and Zoning Commission took on the responsibility of addressing this requirement.

As part of their work, the Commission recognized:

- Housing is a basic human right
- Housing affordability is an issue facing more and more people
- Housing affordability issues are expected to continue over time
- Providing for a variety of housing choices helps ensure that people of all incomes, ages, and other characteristics will be able to find housing in Rocky Hill to meet their needs.

“Housing is absolutely essential to human flourishing.”

Without stable shelter, it all falls apart.”

Matthew Desmond,
American Sociologist
Princeton University

GOAL

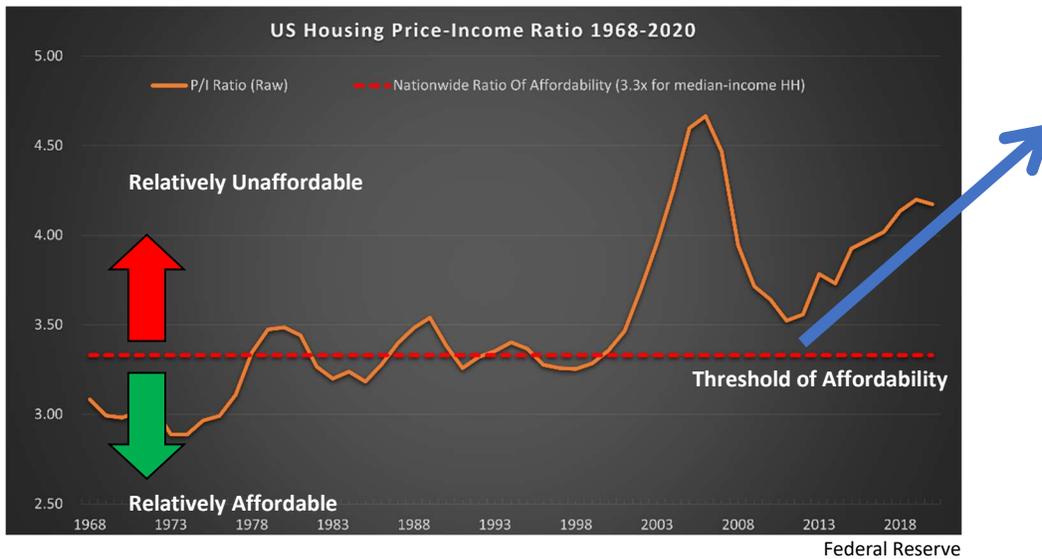
Continue to provide for a variety of housing options throughout Rocky Hill to:

- ***expand housing options and choices, and***
- ***help meet the housing needs of households of all ages, sizes, incomes, and characteristics.***

Housing Affordability Issues Generally

People who have housing may not be aware of or think about how housing has become unaffordable for many people.

The following graphic shows the **ratio** of median house prices to median incomes in America and how it has grown ever higher over time. Prior to 1980 or so, the median housing price was less than three times the median family income and was relatively affordable. However, since that time, the ratio has increased and housing has become relatively unaffordable.



Part of the reason for housing becoming unaffordable is that there has not been enough housing production to meet people’s needs. Since the “sub-prime mortgage crisis” in 2006 or so, there were 12 consecutive years when housing production fell below the historical rate. This housing shortage contributed to the situation where housing prices jumped significantly.



Cost Burdened

A household is generally considered to be “housing cost-burdened” if it spends more than 30% of its income on housing costs.

Households earning incomes above \$75,000 per year (a rough approximation of 80% of area median income) may choose to spend more than 30% of their income on housing and may be able to afford it.

The same cannot be said for households earning low or moderate incomes.

Spending more than 30% of household income on housing means that less money is available to meet other cost-of-living items:

- Transportation = 15-20%
- Food = 15-20%
- Health care = 10-15%
- Child care or higher education = varies

Housing Affordability Issues Specific To Rocky Hill

While Rocky Hill has a fairly diverse housing stock with a variety of ownership and rental housing units, many of these units are priced above levels considered affordable to people earning typical incomes. As a result, some existing Rocky Hill households may be “housing cost burdened” (see sidebar) paying for the housing they currently occupy.

Existing Households Which Are Cost-Burdened

For the 3,708 Rocky Hill households earning less than \$75,000 per year, about 55% of those households are housing cost burdened and may not have the financial resources for other life expenses (food, utilities, transportation, medical care, etc.).

OWNER HOUSEHOLDS	Number	Spend 30 Percent Or More On Housing	Percent
Less than \$74,999	2,167	1,047	48%
\$75,000 or more	3,508	209	6%
Income not computed	10	-	-
TOTAL	5,685	1,256	22%

American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimate (2020) (Table B25106)

RENTER HOUSEHOLDS	Number	Spend 30 Percent Or More On Housing	Percent
Less than \$74,999	1,541	999	65%
\$75,000 or more	1,357	0	0%
Income not computed / no cash rent	94	-	-
TOTAL	2,992	999	33%

American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimate (2020) (Table B25106)

Lack Of Affordability To Employees Of Local Businesses

While Rocky Hill has a strong tax base and local businesses employ thousands of workers, many of those workers do not earn enough to be able to afford to live in Rocky Hill. This may also mean the businesses may not be attracted to Rocky Hill in the future if employees cannot find housing they can afford.

Working Families Who May Be Struggling

In studying issues related to the high cost-of-living in Connecticut, the United Way developed an “ALICE” index which means Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed.

The index looks at the challenges faced by people with everyday jobs that other people often rely on (health care aides, waiters / waitresses, retail clerks, grocery store staff, school bus drivers, landscaping workers, etc.). ALICE households may work multiple jobs and still not be able to afford housing in Rocky Hill.

Town	% ALICE
Wethersfield	30%
Newington	28%
Cromwell	24%
Rocky Hill	22%
Glastonbury	20%

United Way Of Connecticut

About 22% of the households in Rocky Hill met the ALICE criteria.

Providing Better Opportunities

According to Habitat for Humanity and other housing organizations, decent and affordable shelter provides better opportunities for people – older persons, younger people, children and their parents, lower-income workers, everyone. In an affordable home, people and families can find better health, more independence, more financial freedom, and a stability and security that many simply can’t achieve without a helping hand.

There are many people being left behind in the housing market and that there will continue to be many people needing housing that is affordable. There will also be people seeking other housing options in Rocky Hill. This includes:

1. Current residents who want to continue to live here but want additional housing options (smaller, less maintenance, more affordable, etc.)
2. Parents or children of existing residents who want to live in Rocky Hill,
3. Elderly residents seeking lower costs and/or social engagement,
4. People who work in Rocky Hill and would like to live here (such as schoolteachers, “essential workers” in areas such as emergency services, health care, education, government, retail, etc.),
5. People who would like to enjoy the benefits of living in Rocky Hill.
6. People who want to stay in a community they love through whatever circumstances they may find themselves in.

Reasons Why Housing Needs And Desires Are Changing

- Changing age mix / composition with more senior households
- Seniors outliving their savings
- Housing cost rising faster than income growth
- Younger households struggling with student debt / high cost of renting / difficulty saving for a down payment
- Smaller households considering smaller units
- Some seeking lower maintenance housing options
- Some seeking housing options with more amenities / services
- Some seeking lower cost housing

2

BACKGROUND DATA

What Is Affordable Housing?

In this Affordable Housing Plan, the term “affordable housing” refers to housing units which are affordable to persons and families earning low- or moderate-incomes (see sidebar).

ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS - 2022 Maximum Income By Household Size

	1 person	2 people	3 people	4 people	5 people
Area Median Income	\$78,820	\$90,080	\$101,340	\$112,600	\$121,608
80% AMI	\$63,056	\$72,064	\$81,072	\$90,080	\$97,286
60% AMI	\$47,292	\$54,048	\$60,804	\$67,560	\$72,965

Terminology

Low- or moderate-incomes means persons or families (called households) that earn 80% or less of the area median income (AMI).

Affordable means that such households do not spend more than 30% of their annual income on housing.

GROSS RENT - 2022 Maximum Monthly Gross Rent By Unit Size

	Studio	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR
	1 person	1-2 people	3 people	4-5 people	6 people
80% AMI	\$1,038	\$1,265	\$1,562	\$1,931	\$2,288
60% AMI	\$865	\$1,054	\$1,302	\$1,609	\$1,907

2022 Maximum Sales Price By Unit Size At 5% Interest

(Based on 20% down payment, current mortgage rates, estimates for utility payments (based on unit size), and estimates for real estate taxes, insurance, common fees, etc. (based on unit value).

	Studio	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR
	1 person	1-2 people	3 people	4-5 people	6 people
80% AMI	\$200,621	\$205,038	\$241,342	\$273,363	\$299,307
60% AMI	\$139,754	\$165,294	\$188,738	\$181,096	\$197,120

2022 Maximum Sales Price By Unit Size At 6% Interest

	Studio	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR
	1 person	1-2 people	3 people	4-5 people	6 people
80% AMI	\$185,885	\$189,840	\$223,388	\$252,059	\$276,331
60% AMI	\$128,677	\$153,212	\$174,203	\$167,361	\$181,708

How Many NOAH Units Does Rocky Hill Have?

Based on the preceding calculations, Rocky Hill *may have had* thousands of housing units which naturally rent or sell at affordable prices. Such units are sometimes referred to as “naturally occurring affordable housing” (NOAH) units.

Rental Rate – The American Community Survey (ACS) estimated that, in 2020, about 1,701 units in Rocky Hill rented for less than \$1,500 per month at that time (although the specific bedroom configuration is not known).

Total Number of Rented Units:	Number	Cumulative
Less than \$500 (including no cash rent)	135	135
\$500 to \$999	79	214
\$1,000 to \$1,499	1,487	1,701
\$1,500 to \$1,999	1,167	2,868
\$2,000 to \$2,499	124	2,992
\$2,500 or more	0	

Unit Value (ACS Data) – Again from 2020, the American Community Survey estimated that about 3,498 units were valued at less than \$250,000 at that time although the specific bedroom configuration is not known.

Total Number of Owned Units:	Number	Cumulative
Less than \$100,000	192	192
\$100,000 to \$149,999	312	504
\$150,000 to \$199,999	619	1,123
\$200,000 to \$249,999	1,251	2,374
\$250,000 to \$299,999	1,124	3,498
\$300,000 to \$399,999	1,433	4,931
\$400,000 to \$499,999	457	5,388
\$500,000 to \$999,999	297	5,685
\$1,000,000 or more	0	

Overall, it is possible that Rocky Hill *may have had* 5,199 naturally occurring affordable housing units in 2020 (1,701 rental units plus 3,498 ownership units) which might have sold or rented at affordable prices at that time.

However, these estimates are deceiving because:

- Housing prices have escalated significantly since 2020,
- Many of the units are not restricted to affordable prices, and
- *the State Department of Housing does not recognize them for the purposes of the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure.*

NOAH Data Sources

There is no perfect data source of how much naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) there might be in Rocky Hill:

- The 2010 Census is already 12 years old
- The 2020 Census is not due to be released until May 2022 or later,
- The American Community Survey (ACS) is a 5-year average (2016-19) based on a small sample size and extrapolated to the community,
- The Assessor database reports estimated market value of ownership units but does not capture rental rates of individual units, and
- Multiple Listing Service (MLS) data only captures sales and rentals in a specific year (a subset of all housing units in the community) listed with realtors.

How Much State-Defined AH Does Rocky Hill Have?

The State Department of Housing recognizes 454 housing units in Rocky Hill qualifying as “State defined affordable housing units”:

- Assisted housing *units*,
- Deed-restricted housing *units*,
- *Households* using tenant rental assistance certificates in Rocky Hill,
- *Households* utilizing CHFA/USDA mortgages in Rocky Hill.

ASSISTED HOUSING	Street Address	Total	Family	Elderly / Disabled	Built
Rocky Hill Housing Authority					
Senior Center Housing	36 Willow Road	40	0	40	?
Harold J. Murphy	20 School Street	30	0	30	1989
Other					
Greenfield Village Co-Op	Marshall Road	10	10	0	1991
Elms Common	965 Elms Common Drive	155	155	0	1980
		235	165	70	

TENANT RENTAL ASSISTANCE	62	Locations not disclosed (<i>increase</i> of 10 units from prior year)
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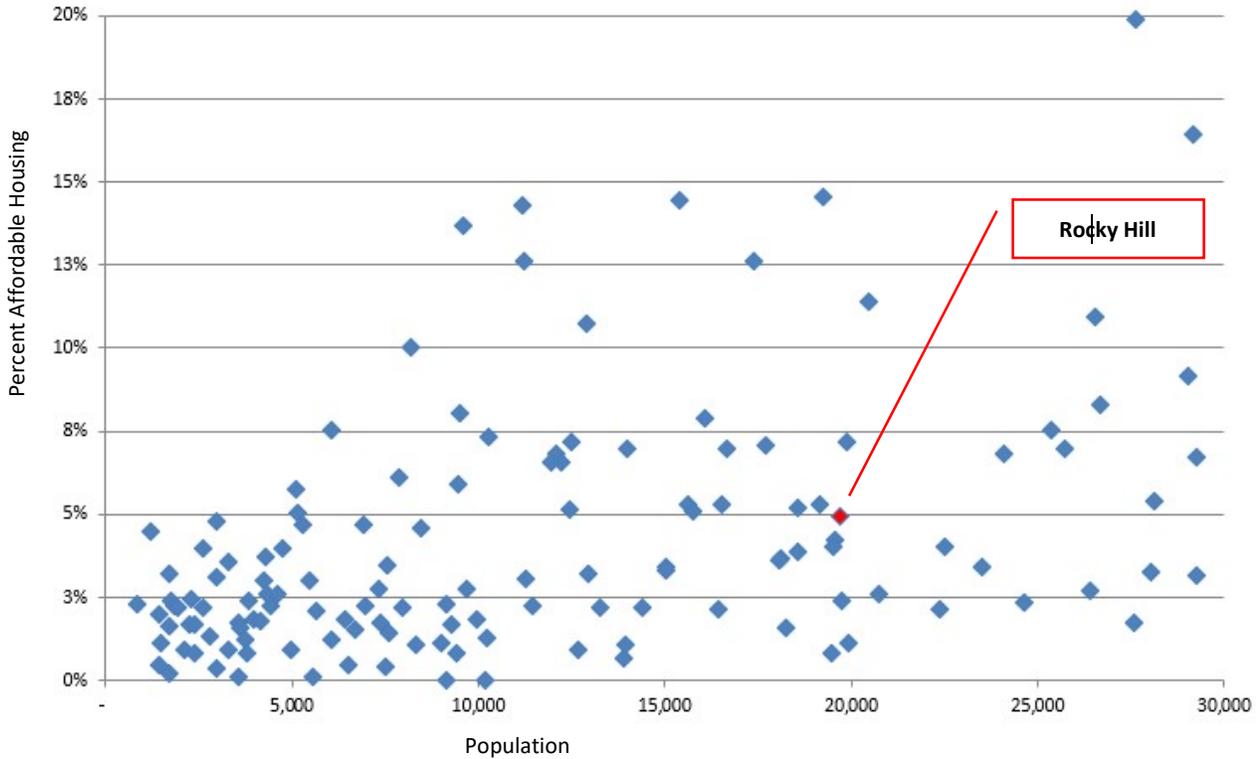
CHFA / USDA MORTGAGES	157	Locations not disclosed (<i>decrease</i> of 37 units from prior year)
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DEED-RESTRICTED HOUSING	Total	Start Date	Expiration Date
None	0		
	0		

TOTAL STATE-DEFINED	454 Units	5.13% Of 8,843 units in 2010 Census
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NOTE – Based on the preliminary 2020 Census housing count of 9,319 units, the affordable housing percentage for Rocky Hill will reset to 4.87%.

Comparison Of State-Defined Affordable Housing
 (Data is based on 2010 Census since 2020 Census not yet released)



SIMILAR SIZE	Ranked By 2010 Population	2010 % AH
Simsbury	23,511	3.40%
Watertown	22,514	4.00%
Guilford	22,375	2.12%
Darien	20,732	2.59%
Bloomfield	20,486	11.38%
Southbury	19,904	1.15%
Berlin	19,866	7.19%
New Canaan	19,738	2.42%
Rocky Hill	19,709	4.95%
Montville	19,571	4.21%
Waterford	19,517	4.03%
Monroe	19,479	0.81%
Ansonia	19,249	14.56%
East Lyme	19,159	5.31%
Bethel	18,584	5.20%
Stonington	18,545	3.86%
Madison	18,269	1.59%
Average	20,071	4.63%

SIMILAR AH %	2010 Population	Ranked By 2010 % AH
Ellington	15,602	5.27%
Bethel	18,584	5.20%
Trumbull	36,018	5.14%
Greenwich	61,171	5.13%
Coventry	12,435	5.12%
Suffield	15,735	5.10%
Wallingford	45,135	5.04%
East Granby	5,148	5.02%
Rocky Hill	19,709	4.95%
Sprague	2,984	4.81%
Westbrook	6,938	4.70%
North Haven	5,297	4.70%
Litchfield	8,466	4.58%
Canaan	1,234	4.49%
Montville	19,571	4.21%
Waterford	19,517	4.03%
Watertown	22,514	4.00%
Average	18,592	4.79%

NOTE – Percentages will reset in February 2022 when the 2020 Census housing count is included.

Why Is The Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure Relevant?

If less than 10 percent of Rocky Hill’s housing stock is State-defined affordable housing, then Rocky Hill is potentially subject to developer over-ride of local zoning. At the present time, Rocky Hill’s State-defined affordable housing stock is at about 5.13 percent (see page 10).

Connecticut passed a law in 1989 called the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure (codified as CGS Section 8-30g). Municipalities are subject to the Appeals Procedure when less than 10 percent of the housing stock meets State criteria (see CGS Section 8-30g):

- Assisted housing units (see glossary in Appendix A),
- Deed-restricted housing units which are restricted to sell or rent to households earning 80% or less of area median income and priced to not exceed 30% of that income,
- Households using tenant rental assistance certificates in Rocky Hill,
- Households utilizing CHFA/USDA mortgages in Rocky Hill.

BASED ON UNITS

Assisted Housing



Deed-Restricted Housing



BASED ON HOUSEHOLDS

Tenant Rental Assistance



CHFA/USDA Mortgages



Rocky Hill is subject to the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure since the State-defined affordable housing count is at 5.13% (454 qualifying units compared to the housing count of 8,843 units).

In communities subject to the Procedure, a qualifying development (see sidebar) containing affordable units does not have to comply with local zoning regulations and a denial will only be upheld by the courts if public health or safety is materially affected. If a qualifying affordable housing development is denied, the burden of proof is on the Town to justify the reasons for the denial.

There are two ways that a community would not be subject to the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure:

Approach	Requirement	Current Status
Four-Year Moratorium	Accumulating at least 186 “housing unit equivalent points” (HUEP) for units created since 1990 (an amount equal to 2% of the Census housing count)	Rocky Hill may not have accumulated any HUEP and would need 186 HUEP to achieve a four-year moratorium
Exemption	Having at least 932 State-defined affordable <u>units</u> (10% of the 2020 Census housing count)	Rocky Hill has 454 State-defined affordable units and would need 478 more units to become exempt

Set-Aside Development

If less than 10 percent of a community’s housing stock meets State criteria for affordable housing (Rocky Hill is at 5.13%), a “set-aside development” can be proposed without having to comply with local zoning regulations.

A “set-aside development” using the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure must provide:

- At least 15 percent of units for persons and families whose income is at or below 80 percent of the area median income
- At least 15 percent of units for persons and families whose income is at or below 60 percent of the area median income

3

BENCHMARKS

What Does The Plan of Conservation and Development Say About Affordable Housing?

A Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is a forward-looking document, required by State statutes (CGS Section 8-23), which is intended to guide the future physical, economic, and social development of a community.

The current POCD (adopted in 2015) contained the following housing recommendations:

Manage And Guide Residential Development

Maintain A Diverse Housing Portfolio - Rocky Hill is a diverse housing portfolio with a number of housing options for residents of the Town and the region. This diversity has helped make Rocky Hill the community it is today and this diversity should be maintained.

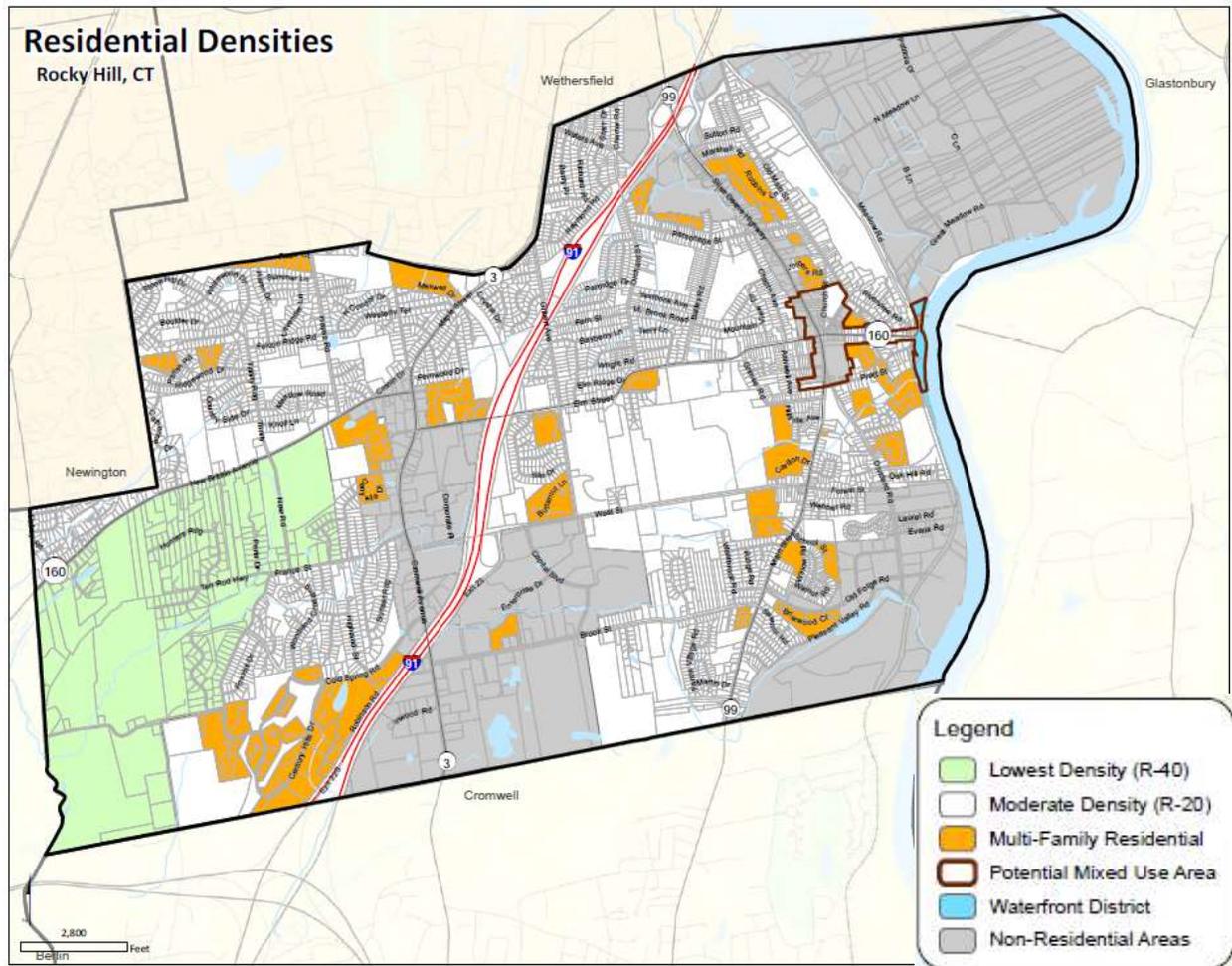
Protect Residential Neighborhoods and Areas - Rocky Hill is primarily a residential community. For this reason, the Plan of Conservation and Development recommends that the Town continue to protect the integrity of residential neighborhoods from encroachment by business activities and that appropriate buffers and transitions be provided between business uses and residential areas.

Provide For Housing Options - While Rocky Hill has a diverse housing stock today in terms of the number of multi-family units, most of those units were built in the 1970s and may not be well-designed for the housing needs of today or tomorrow. There is expected to be a need during the planning period for additional housing units in Rocky Hill that are:

- suitable for an aging population since there will be a larger number of people in the older age groups, and
- affordable to moderate income persons and households.

Whatever housing strategies are pursued, design will be an important consideration. While many people become concerned when there is discussion of higher density housing, density is just a number. The overall design of a housing development can make higher densities seem more attractive than lower densities. Design may be more important than density.

The 2015 POCD already contains recommendations for promoting affordable housing



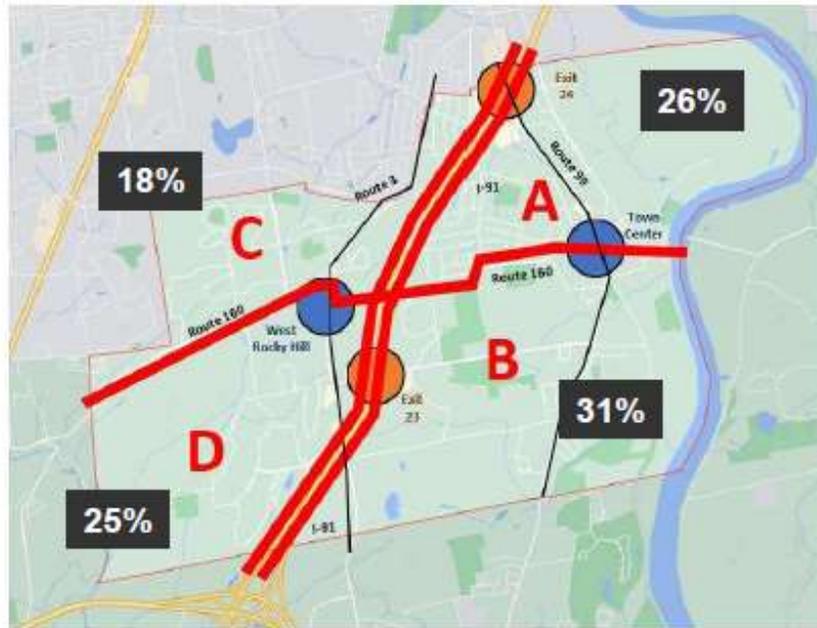
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain a diverse housing portfolio.	Town	Staff, RHHA
2. Protect the character and integrity of residential neighborhoods.	Town	PZC, Staff
3. Encourage conservation design subdivisions in the R-40 zoning district.	PZC	Staff
4. Explore appropriate opportunities to meet the housing needs of an aging population, and moderate income persons and households.	PZC	RHHA, Town, Staff
Action Steps	Leader	Partners
1. Plan for additional senior housing units managed by the Housing Authority to meet current and anticipated future needs for affordable housing for seniors.	RHHA	PZC, Staff
2. Modify the definition of “affordable housing” in the Zoning Regulations to be consistent with State statutes and ensuring consistency with other provisions of the regulations.	PZC	Staff

How Do Residents Feel About Affordable Housing?

As part of the process of preparing this affordable housing plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission authorized an on-line survey to obtain community input with regard to housing needs in Rocky Hill and possible housing strategies for the future. The survey was open for about seven weeks from early May to the end of June and 840 responses were received.

Overview Of Participants

1. Residents from all parts of Rocky Hill participated in the survey.

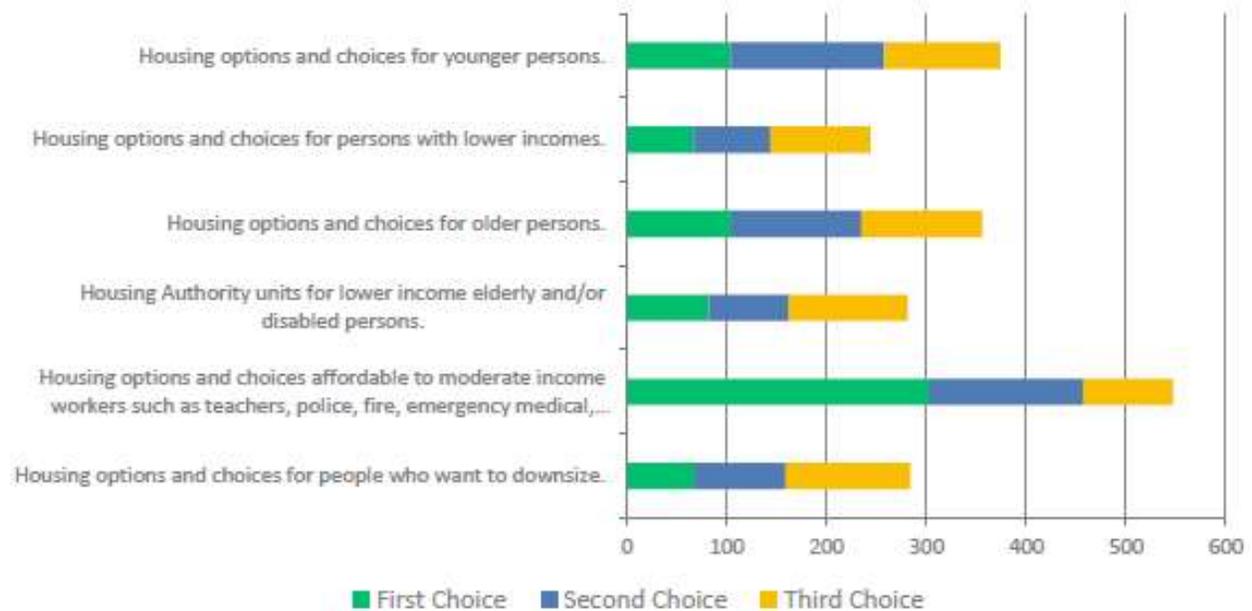


2. About 57% of participants were younger than 55 years old, about 16% were ages 55 to 64, and about 26% were older than age 65.
3. About 84% of participants owned their current place of residence. About 16% rented their current place of residence.
4. About 42% of participants had lived in Rocky Hill for 20+ years (may be less aware of some of the housing cost challenges facing people today).
5. About 60% of participants were female.
6. The largest race/ethnicity group (66%) was “White / Caucasian” with “Prefer Not To Answer” at 17%, and “Asian / Pacific Islander” at 9%..
7. About 20% of participants earn less than 80% of the area median income.

8. When people first moved to Rocky Hill, about 54% purchased a single-family home, about 26% rented, and about 18% bought a condominium or town-house.
9. While about 59% of participants still live in the first residence they occupied in Rocky Hill, about 40 percent have lived in two or more housing units in Rocky Hill (trading up, trading over, or trading down) over the years.
10. About 2/3rds of participants thought they would live in Rocky Hill for the next 10 years and 38% thought they would live here for the next 20 years.
11. About 57% of participants thought their next housing option would be smaller housing unit.
12. While about 56% of participants thought Rocky Hill had enough of the housing type they would want to live in next, about 44% did not feel there were enough options of their desired next housing type.
13. About 56% of participants indicated they were personally aware of someone that would benefit from having access to housing that is more affordable.

Priority Housing Needs

When asked about the housing needs they felt were the highest priorities to be addressed, participants identified “housing options and choices affordable to moderate income workers such as teachers, police, fire, emergency medical, store workers, trades people, waitstaff, etc..



Legend

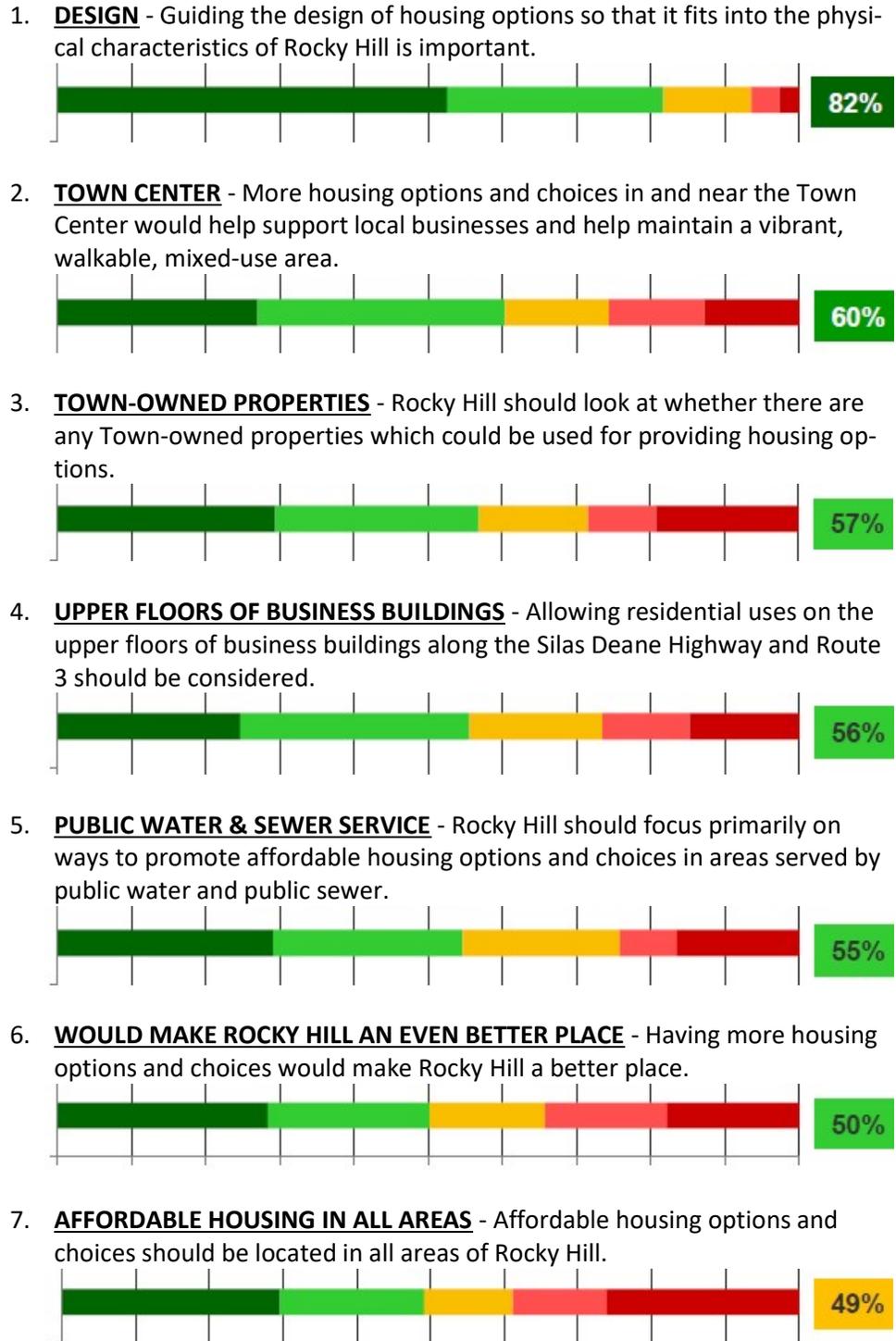
Vertical line represent 10% increments. Colors represent the following:

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Not Sure
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

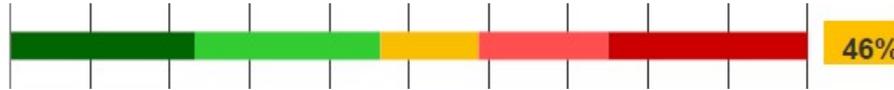
The number on the right-hand side represents the percentage indicating “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree”. The color of the box indicates the overall level of agreement or disagreement.

Housing Strategies

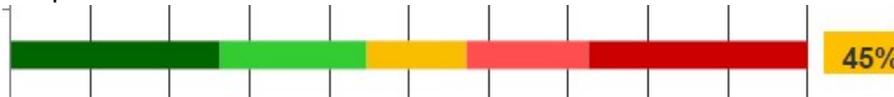
In the on-line survey, participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed (somewhat or strongly) with a variety of statements. The results are reported below in rank order based on the highest level of agreement.



8. **SHOULD INCREASE NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE UNITS** - Rocky Hill should seek ways to increase the number of housing units affordable to low- and moderate-income households.



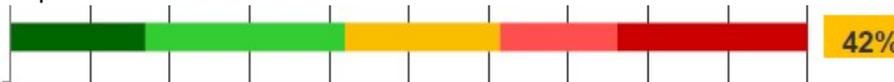
9. **REQUIRE NEW AFFORDABLE UNITS** - New residential development should be **required** to provide affordable housing as part of that new residential development.



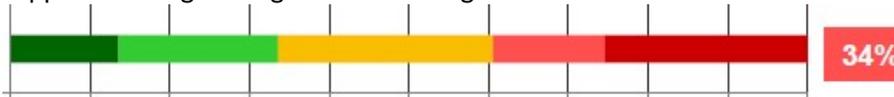
10. **ENCOURAGE NEW AFFORDABLE UNITS** - New residential development should be **offered incentives** and otherwise encouraged to provide affordable housing.



11. **TOWN SHOULD CREATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING** - The Town should create affordable housing units rather than seek ways for new development to help meet that need.



12. **ESTABLISH A HOUSING FUND** - Establishing a special Town housing fund to support housing strategies would be a good idea.



In an open-ended question, participants offered the following strategies and expressed some concerns:

Strategies (37)	Recognize The Need (28)	Concerns (119)
Re-use existing buildings	RH Needs Affordable Housing	RH Has Enough Housing
Town Center / Silas Deane Highway / Route 3	RH Needs Affordable Single-Family Housing	Will have negative impacts (crime, traffic, character, environment, schools, taxes, etc.)
Mixed use developments	RH Needs Affordable Senior Housing	Let the Market Decide
Zoning changes		Oppose "Low Income" Housing
Control Rents		Other / Miscellaneous
No Other Strategies To Recommend		



STRATEGIES

1. Organize Housing Efforts

a. Establish A Municipal Committee

To promote and guide efforts related to achieving the overall goals of this Affordable Housing Plan, there should be a municipal committee charged with overseeing those efforts.

Strategies	Leader / Partners
1. Establish an Affordable Housing Committee to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Advocate for and oversee affordable housing efforts, b. Educate the community about affordable housing, c. Raise awareness of what is needed, d. Manage the Special Housing Fund (if established), and e. Maintain and update the Affordable Housing Plan. 	TC TM

b. Establish A Special Housing Fund

The Town of Rocky Hill can establish a Special Housing Fund (such as a Housing Trust Fund) to serve as a repository for housing-related grants, fees, gifts, and bequests.

Strategies	Leader / Partners
1. Set up a "Special Housing Fund" which will establish a dedicated place for funds to support affordable housing efforts.	TC TM
2. Explore ways to fund the Special Housing Fund which might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Grants from State and/or Federal agencies, non-profit foundations, and/or other outside sources b. Gifts / bequests from residents c. Contributions from businesses (including contributions from banks as part of their Community Reinvestment Act obligations) d. A fee on any zoning permit (authorized by CGS 8-2i) e. Other sources. 	AHC PZC TC

Key To Leaders / Partners

- AHC** Affordable Housing Committee (Proposed)
- PZC** Planning and Zoning Commission
- RHHA** Rocky Hill Housing Authority
- Staff** Town Staff
- TC** Town Council
- TM** Town Manager

c. Prepare For Deed-Restricted Housing

It is likely that future affordable housing units will be “deed-restricted” units (see page 24). Deed-restricted units are managed through:

- A “housing affordability plan” governing eligible purchasers or renters, computation of sale prices or rental rates, and other important provisions,
- Deed restrictions (compliant with State law) filed on the land records, and
- An administrator to oversee both.

Establishing standard municipal documents and procedures (rather than different approaches for each development) helps ensure efficient oversight of approved developments and helps avoid loss of units wither intentionally or unintentionally.

Strategies	Leader / Partners
1. Prepare standard documents so that all deed-restricted developments follow the same parameters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Housing Affordability Plan (including annual reporting) b. Fair Housing Marketing Plan c. Affordability Deed Restrictions (including protection from foreclosure of affordability restrictions) 	AHC
2. Require municipal approval of the administrator of the Housing Affordability Plan (and any change thereof) to ensure that the administrator is independent, qualified, capable, and experienced to oversee deed restricted unit sales and rental.	AHC
3. Adopt requirements in the Zoning Regulations that such standard documents be used and that the PZC shall review and approve any administrator.	PZC
4. Over the long term, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Extending the term of deed restrictions beyond the statutory minimum of 40 years (such as “the life of the unit”), or b. Requiring the deed restrictions be automatically renewed at the end of each affordability term unless the municipality releases the restriction for a portion of any “value increment” which occurs when the unit resets to market rate. c. Possible ways to address the “value increment” which can occur at the expiration of the deed restriction. 	AHC

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2. Guide Design / Location Of Affordable Housing

a. Guide The Design Of Affordable Housing

Survey results clearly indicate Rocky Hill residents strongly support the idea of guiding the design of higher density development. The 2015 POCD also recommended a design review process be activated in Rocky Hill. Although the Town Council adopted an ordinance in 2013 establishing an “Architectural Review Advisory Board”, no members have been appointed. The 2015 POCD also contains some related procedural recommendations.

In addition, Appendix B contains some additional information on design guidelines.

Strategies	Leader / Partners
1. Establish design guidelines or requirements for multi-family housing based on written guidelines / graphic guidelines.	PZC AHC

b. Guide The Location Of Affordable Housing

Survey results clearly indicate Rocky Hill residents also strongly support the idea of guiding the location of higher density development.

Strategies	Leader / Partners
1. Investigate ways to allow more housing options and choices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In and near the Town Center to establish and maintain a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use area, b. On the upper floors of business buildings along the Silas Deane Highway and Route 3, and c. In areas served by public water and public sewer. 	PZC AHC

3. Increase Assisted Housing

Assisted housing is housing which receives financial assistance (such as loans, grants, low-income housing tax credits, etc.) under any governmental program for the construction or substantial rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income housing. See page 10 for a listing of assisted housing developments in Rocky Hill.

Assisted housing provided by a housing authority is generally targeted to households earning up to 50% of area median income and is configured as:

- Housing for the elderly and/or disabled, or
- Housing for families.

The demand for such units is higher than the number of units available and the waiting period for a unit can be quite lengthy.

Key To Leaders / Partners

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- TM** Town Manager



**Rocky Hill
Housing Authority**

Strategies	Leader / Partners
1. Work with the Rocky Hill Housing Authority to create additional units of assisted housing.	AHC RHHA
2. Investigate if there are ways to make more efficient use of the land the Housing Authority currently occupies by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adding more units b. Replacing one-story buildings with multi-story buildings in a phased approach (including temporary units during construction) 	AHC
3. Investigate whether adjacent land could be obtained to enhance the Housing Authority campus and set the stage for additional units in the future.	RHHA AHC Staff
4. Investigate whether money from a Special Housing Fund or other source could be given / loaned to the Housing Authority to accelerate design / permitting / financing of projects.	AHC
5. Investigate whether any Town-owned land could be dedicated or obtained to support Housing Authority efforts.	AHC TC
6. Investigate whether any State-owned land could be obtained to support Housing Authority efforts.	AHC TC
7. Over the longer term, encourage the Housing Authority to explore providing “family” units in addition to “elderly/disabled” units.	AHC RHHA
8. Work with other entities to create additional units of assisted housing.	AHC

Key To Leaders / Partners

- AHC** Affordable Housing Committee (Proposed)
- PZC** Planning and Zoning Commission
- RHHA** Rocky Hill Housing Authority
- Staff** Town Staff
- TC** Town Council
- TM** Town Manager

4. Increase Deed-Restricted Housing

Deed-restricted housing is housing which has restrictions on the deed for a certain number of years requiring that some or all units sell or rent at or below prices affordable (30 percent or less of annual income) to persons and families whose income is less than or equal to 80 percent of the area median income.

Deed restrictions are important. In the absence of deed restrictions, housing prices can escalate over time and become unaffordable for the people who need the housing – maybe even keeping it permanently out of their grasp.

Possible Incentives

1. More units overall (density bonus)
2. Greater building height
3. Greater lot coverage
4. Lower parking requirement

Possible Options When AH Unit Required

1. Build a comparable new unit on site
2. Build a comparable new unit elsewhere in Rocky Hill
3. Deed-restrict a comparable existing unit elsewhere in Rocky Hill
4. Pay a “fee-in-lieu-of affordable housing” for units not built
5. Pay a “fee-in-lieu-of affordable housing” for fractional unit requirements not built (and possible credit for fractional units built)

Strategies	Leader / Partners
1. Investigate whether to adopt an “inclusionary zoning” regulation which would <i>require</i> provision for affordable housing, as part of new residential development AND / OR Seek ways to <i>incentivize</i> the creation of deed-restricted affordable units as part of new developments. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Remove impediments / limitations in the Zoning Regulations b. Consider modifying the Zoning Regulations to allow higher density for higher percentage of affordable units 	PZC
2. Investigate whether Rocky Hill might allow smaller-scale housing developments with affordable housing through a Special Permit (or other) process under certain conditions.	PZC
3. Investigate ways that Rocky Hill may be able to deed-restrict <i>existing</i> housing units: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Monetary payment b. Tax abatement c. Cooperative purchase where the Town purchases the land and leases it back to homeowners to reduce the cost of the housing unit. 	AHC
4. Investigate ways to use tax incentives to support creation of <i>new</i> deed-restricted units: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tax credits – A subtraction of a set amount from a local, state, or federal tax liability. b. Tax abatements – Fixing property assessment (CGS 12-65b) c. Tax abatements – Abatement of tax payment (CGS 8-215) eligible for State reimbursement (CGS 8-216) d. Tax -increment financing - Redirecting increases in real estate taxes which will result from new developments into infrastructure improvements, etc. 	TC
5. Evaluate properties obtained for open space or through foreclosure / tax sale / eminent domain for opportunities to create affordable housing on at least part of the property.	AHC

5. Increase Other State-Recognized Units

There are two other type of housing which count to the State Affordable Housing Appeals list:

- Tenant Rental Assistance, and
- CHFA/USDA mortgages.

Tenant Rental Assistance – Rental assistance certificates are granted to people and allow the tenant to pay 30% of their income on rent with the State making up the rent difference for approved units. Rocky Hill currently has 62 rental certificates in use in the community.

CHFA/USDA Mortgages – Such mortgages are offered to eligible borrowers with favorable terms (reduced down payment, interest rate, etc.) to facilitate entry to home ownership. Rocky Hill currently has 147 units in the community with CHFA/USDA mortgages.

Key To Leaders / Partners

- AHC** Affordable Housing Committee (Proposed)
- PZC** Planning and Zoning Commission
- RHHA** Rocky Hill Housing Authority
- Staff** Town Staff
- TC** Town Council
- TM** Town Manager

Strategies	Leader / Partners
1. Acquire Housing Choice Vouchers (rental assistance certificates) funded for Rocky Hill.	RHHA
2. Investigate ways to attract tenants receiving rental assistance certificates since their residence in Rocky Hill will contribute to the Affordable Housing Appeals List.	AHC
3. Investigate ways to attract purchasers utilizing CHFA/USDA mortgages since their purchase in Rocky Hill will contribute to the Affordable Housing Appeals List.	AHC
4. Seek to align with banks located in Rocky Hill to help them meet their community Reinvestment Act obligations by assisting eligible households with down payments, closing costs, escrow accounts, and equity building (both social equity and financial equity).	AHC

Key To Leaders / Partners

- AHC** Affordable Housing Committee (Proposed)
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Changing Housing Needs

Housing needs and desires are changing as a result of a number of factors:

- Housing cost rising faster than income growth
- Changing age mix / composition with more senior households
- Younger households struggling with student debt / high cost of renting / difficulty saving for a down payment
- Smaller households considering smaller units
- Some households seeking lower maintenance housing options
- Some seeking housing options with more amenities / services
- Some seeking lower cost housing

6. Review Regulations / Increase Housing Options

More housing choices and options are a good way for communities to address changing housing needs/desires (see sidebar). While the primary housing need is for units which are restricted as affordable, unrestricted units which better meet people’s needs and/or naturally sell or rent at affordable prices would still provide housing diversity to help meet different housing needs.

Reviewing and revising the Zoning Regulations could provide an opportunity to expand housing choices and options and remove impediments to housing affordability.

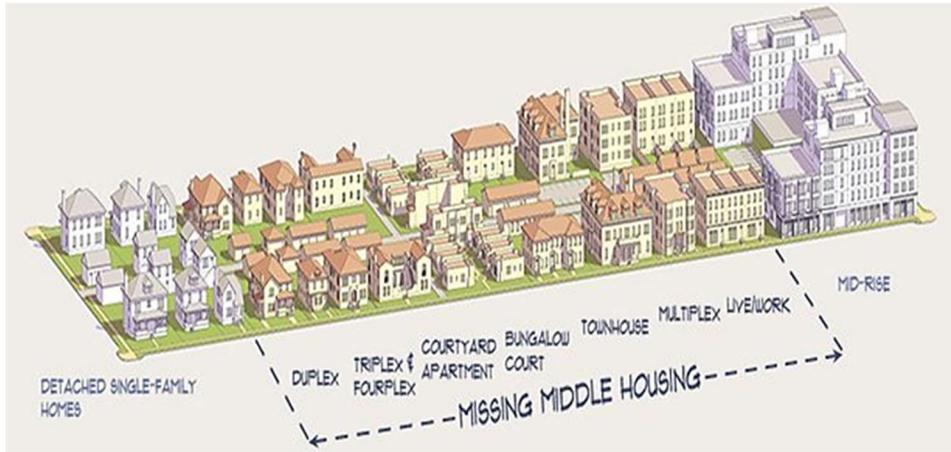
Reviewing the Zoning Regulations may also provide an opportunity to discuss enabling some forms of “middle” housing” in Rocky Hill. The term “middle housing” generally refers to housing types between single family homes at one end of the spectrum and larger multi-family developments at the other end.

Strategies	Leader / Partners
1. Review and update the Zoning Regulations with an eye to issues relating to housing affordability.	PZC
2. Explore ways to add “missing middle” housing (which can be naturally more affordable based on their design and size) into Rocky Hill.	PZC

Possible Areas For Exploration Of Zoning Regulation Changes

1. **Section 3.B** – Allow multi-family development (not limited to elderly or active adult) in residential districts provided at least 15% of the units are deed-restricted as affordable.
2. **Section 4.B** – Expand mixed use buildings / projects into other Business Districts (such as Regional Commercial and/or Commercial) provided at least 15% of the units are deed-restricted as affordable.
3. **Section 5.B** – Allow multi-family development in the Glastonbury Avenue Overlay District.
4. **Section 6.B** – Add an affordable housing requirement to the Conservation Design Subdivision regulations.
5. **Section 6.C** – Add an affordable housing requirement to the Active Adult Housing regulations.
6. **Section 6.D** – Add an affordable housing requirement to the Cluster Residence regulations.
7. **Section 6.E** – Add an affordable housing requirement to the Housing For The Elderly regulations.

Concept / Examples Of "Middle" Housing



Two Family



Three Family



Courtyard Buildings



Cottage Court



Streetfront Townhouses



Mixed-Use Building



7. Other Strategies

Other strategies to be considered are identified below.

Housing Units / Configuration

1. If warranted, make additional provision to allow accessory dwelling units.
2. Investigate ways to incentivize and preserve workforce housing units which would remain affordable to people earning 100 – 120% of area median income.
3. Provide for micro-units where smaller units are enabled (at a higher density within the same floor area) and deed-restricted as to size, occupancy, and price.
4. Adopt an ordinance or zoning regulation to require age-friendly “universal design” features be incorporated in new multi-family development
5. Monitor former lodging facilities being used for housing.

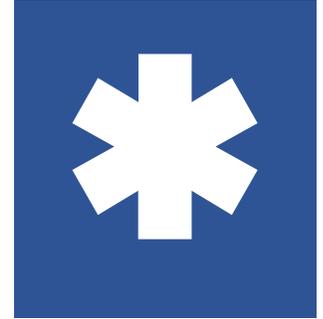
Supportive Community Services

6. Support the Rocky Hill Fair Rent Commission.
7. Support the Rocky Hill Commission on Inclusion and Innovation.
8. Maintain / enhance elderly tax relief.
9. Continue to provide social services.
10. Continue to help support people “aging in place” with home maintenance, home improvements, etc.

Supportive Regional Efforts Services

11. Continue to support organizations which help address special housing needs (emergency shelters, homelessness, etc.).
12. Help local banks meet their Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) obligations for meeting credit needs in communities served.
13. Continue to work with other organizations as “housing partners” to accomplish housing goals.
14. Continue to promote regional solutions to housing challenges.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A - Glossary Of Some Key Housing Terms

8-30g - A reference to the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure established by the State of Connecticut. See CGS Section 8-30g et seq. See “*Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure*”)

ACCESSORY APARTMENT – A separate dwelling unit that:

- is located on the same lot as a principal dwelling unit of greater square footage,
- has cooking facilities, and
- complies with or is otherwise exempt from any applicable building code, fire code and health and safety regulations;

ACCESSORY APARTMENT, AFFORDABLE - An accessory apartment that is subject to binding recorded deeds which contain covenants or restrictions that require such accessory apartment be sold or rented at, or below, prices that will preserve the unit as housing for which, for a period of not less than ten years, persons and families pay thirty per cent or less of income, where such income is less than or equal to eighty per cent of the area median income.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT – Another term for an accessory apartment. See “Accessory Apartment”

AFFORDABLE HOUSING - Housing for which persons and families pay thirty per cent or less of their annual income, where such income is less than or equal to 80 per cent of the area median income. (See CGS Section 8-39a)

AFFORDABLE HOUSING APPEALS PROCEDURE – As codified in CGS 8-30g, a series of procedures that developers, municipalities, and courts must follow with regard to a proposed affordable housing development with regard to:

- What constitutes an application.
- How such application is to be processed,
- A developer appeal of a decision by a local board or commission to reject such an application or approve such application with restrictions that would have a substantially adverse impact on the viability of the project.
- The “burden of proof” shifting to the municipality with regard to proving that:
 - The decision was necessary to protect substantial public interests in health, safety, or other matters the municipality may legally consider;
 - The public interests clearly outweigh the need for affordable housing; and
 - Such public interests cannot be protected by reasonable changes to the affordable housing development.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - As used in CGS 8-30g, a proposed housing development which is (A) assisted housing, or (B) a set-aside development. See CGS Section 8-30g et seq.

ANNUAL INCOME - In general, the adjusted gross income as defined for purposes of reporting under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 1040 series for individual federal annual income tax purposes.

AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI) - An "average" annual income for an area as determined by HUD which is used to calculate eligibility for certain affordable housing programs. Also see "median income".

AS OF RIGHT – Able to be approved in accordance with the terms of a zoning regulation or regulations and without requiring that a public hearing be held, a variance, special permit or special exception be granted or some other discretionary zoning action be taken, other than a determination that a site plan is in conformance with applicable zoning regulations.

ASSISTED HOUSING - Housing which is receiving, or will receive, financial assistance under any governmental program for the construction or substantial rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income housing, and any housing occupied by persons receiving rental assistance.

CGS - Connecticut General Statutes

CHFA/USDA MORTGAGE - Government-insured home loans with fixed-interest rates that enable qualified borrowers (such as those with low- and moderate-incomes) to purchase a home with reduced down payments and/or closing cost reduction.

COTTAGE CLUSTER - A grouping of at least four detached housing units, or live work units, *per acre* that are located around a common open area.

COTTAGE COURT - A group of small, detached structures arranged around a shared court visible from the street. Structures of less than 2 stories are oriented primarily to the shared court with automobile access to the side and/or rear.

COURTYARD BUILDING - A detached structure consisting of multiple side-by-side and/or stacked dwelling units oriented around a courtyard or series of courtyards which are generally open to the street. Building height can vary based on location / context but may be up to 3.5-stories.

DUPLEX (also called Two-Family) – A detached structure that consists of two dwelling units arranged side-by-side or one above the other. This type has the appearance of a small-to-medium single-unit house of up to 2.5 stories.

FAIR HOUSING – The right to choose housing free from unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, disability, marital status, and age (codified in the federal Fair Housing Act).

FAMILY – People related by blood, adoption, marriage, civil union, etc.

FEE-IN-LIEU-OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING (FILAH) – A scenario where a developer may satisfy a requirement to provide affordable housing by paying a fee into a housing trust fund in lieu of on-site production. The housing trust fund is used (along with other funding sources) to finance affordable housing elsewhere in the community.

FOURPLEX - A detached structure with the appearance of a medium-sized single-unit house which contains four dwelling units, two on the ground floor and two above, with shared or individual entries from the street.

HOUSEHOLD - All the people who occupy a housing unit.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER – See “Rental Assistance.”

HOUSING UNIT EQUIVALENT POINTS – A system created by the Legislature (see CGS Section 8-30g) whereby points are attained for different types of housing units newly created since 1990.

Housing Unit Equivalent Points

Housing Type	HUEP If Rented	HUEP If Owned
Family Units Affordable @ 40% AMI	2.50	2.00
Family Units Affordable @ 60% AMI	2.00	1.50
Family Units Affordable @ 80% AMI	1.50	1.00
Elderly Units Affordable @ 80% AMI	0.50	0.50
Market Rate Units In Set-Aside Development	0.25	0.25
Family Units In An Approved Incentive Housing Development	0.25	0.25
Mobile Manufactured Home In A Resident-Owned MMH Park		
MMH Units Affordable @ 60% AMI	2.00	2.00
MMH Units Affordable @ 80% AMI	1.50	1.50
Other Units In A Resident-Owned MMH Park	0.25	0.25
Potential Bonus Points		
Elderly Units (If at least 60% of the units submitted as part of the moratorium application are family units)	0.50	0.50
3-Bedroom Units	0.25	0.25

INCENTIVE HOUSING ZONE - A zone established to promote the creation of affordable housing. See CGS Section 8-13m et seq.

INCLUSIONARY ZONING - Municipal regulations which make some provision for housing affordable to people with low to moderate incomes as part of new development approvals – either in terms of establishment of units, a fee-in-lieu-of-units, and/or other approaches. Programs can be mandatory (required) or voluntary (incentivized). In the absence of such provisions, affordable housing may not be created due to municipal intent, builder choice, neighborhood opposition, financing practices, and/or other factors.

LIVE-WORK UNIT - An attached or detached structure consisting of one dwelling unit above or behind a ground floor space that can accommodate a range of non-residential use. The residential unit and flex space have separate outside entrances but are connected internally and maintain a firewall-separation.

MEDIAN INCOME - As used in CGS 8-30g, after adjustments for family size, the lesser of the state median income or the area median income for the area in which the municipality containing the affordable housing development is located, as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Also see “area median income”.

MEDIAN - A numerical value used to describe a dataset where one half of the dataset values are above the median value and one half are below.

MIDDLE HOUSING - Housing types which fit in the middle between single-family dwellings and larger multi-family developments (such as duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and multiplexes). Middle housing generally contains fewer than 8 units but may contain more units in more urban settings. The buildings are typically “house-scale” to fit into existing neighborhoods. They can be more naturally affordable than other housing types and can also support walkability, locally-serving retail, and public transportation. As per Public Act 21-29, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage clusters and townhouses.

MIXED-USE BUILDING – See mixed-use development.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT - A development containing both residential and nonresidential uses in any single building.

MULTI-PLEX - A detached structure that consists of 5 to 12 dwelling units arranged side-by-side and/or stacked, typically with a shared entry from the street. This 2 to 2.5-story structure has the appearance of a medium-to-large single-unit house.

NATURALLY OCCURRING AFFORDABLE HOUSING (NOAH) – Housing which sells or rents at affordable prices without government subsidies or deed-restrictions – often due to age, condition, location, market conditions, or other factors.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE - A program for helping -low-income households afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing by paying the difference between 30% of the household’s income and the rental rate of a unit that meets minimum standards of quality and safety as defined by the State of Connecticut.

SET-ASIDE DEVELOPMENT - As used in CGS 8-30g, a development in which not less than thirty per cent of the dwelling units will be conveyed by deeds containing covenants or restrictions which shall require that, for at least forty years after the initial occupation of the proposed development, such dwelling units shall be sold or rented at, or below, prices which will preserve the units as housing for which persons and families pay thirty per cent or less of their annual income, where such income is less than or equal to eighty per cent of the area median income. In a set-aside development, a number of dwelling units equal to not less than fifteen per cent of all dwelling units in the development shall be sold or rented to persons and families whose income is less than or equal to sixty per cent of the area median income and the remainder of the dwelling units conveyed by deeds containing covenants or restrictions shall be sold or rented to persons and families whose income is less than or equal to eighty per cent of the area median income.

SINGLE-FAMILY – A detached structure that consists of one dwelling unit.

TRIPLEX - A detached structure that consists of 3 dwelling units typically stacked on top of each other on consecutive floors, with one entry for the ground floor unit and a shared entry for the units above.

TOWNHOUSE - A residential building constructed in a grouping of three or more attached units, each of which shares at least one common wall with an adjacent unit and has exterior walls on at least two sides.

TOWNHOUSE, STREETFRONT - A townhouse placed in close proximity to a public or private street or courtyard with the entry to the unit on the narrow end of the unit. The street façades have entrances and avoid garages.

TWO-FAMILY – See “Duplex”

APPENDIX B- Examples Of Design Guidelines

In addition to some of the examples on this page, the Commission on Connecticut's Development and Future (a special committee established by the legislature in 2021 as part of Public Act 21-29) will be developing "model design guidelines ... that municipalities may adopt, in whole or in part, as part of their zoning or subdivision regulations" which will:

- identify common architectural and site design features of building types used in urban, suburban and rural communities throughout the state,
- create a catalogue of common building types, particularly those typically associated with housing.

Simsbury's Workforce Housing Overlay Zone Guidelines

Illustrative WHOZ Design Guidelines – Duplex / Townhouse Dwellings

Favorable Design Treatments	Unfavorable Design Treatments
<p>Duplex Dwellings</p>	<p>Townhouse Dwellings</p>
<p>Design Elements Which Are Encouraged / Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.0 to 2.5 story buildings (or as appropriate to site context) • Articulated forms and facades and materials • Good architectural details (porches, eaves, shutters, columns, dormers, chimneys, trim, etc.) • Well proportioned facades • Good building materials • Pitched roofs • Windows with vertical proportions • Strong relationship to street / sidewalk • Parking on street or behind buildings • Single family appearance for duplex buildings • Entrances face the street 	<p>Discouraged Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.0 story buildings • Monolithic forms • Overly repetitive forms • Monotonous materials • Flat facades • Limited architectural detailing • Plain facades • Flat roofs • Windows with horizontal proportions • Weak relationship to street / sidewalk • Dominant garages / parking • Entrances face parking areas

8

Affordable Housing Design Advisor Website

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Affordable Housing Design Advisor website. The header includes the title "Affordable Housing DESIGN ADVISOR" and the tagline "Bringing the power of Design to Affordable Housing". Navigation links include "Home", "9 Design Considerations", and "7 Steps to Design Quality". The main content area features a large image of a house with the text: "Welcome to the Affordable Housing Design Advisor. If you're part of the solution to America's critical affordable housing challenge, this site is for you. The Affordable Housing Design Advisor brings together experience and ideas from successful affordable housing projects all over the country. Good design can make a world of difference for the people who will live in the affordable housing you help build, and for the neighborhood surrounding it." Below this are links for "Quick Guide to Using This Site" and "WHAT is good design?", and "WHY is good design important?". The footer repeats "7 Steps to Design Quality" and "9 Design Co".

Pattern Book (Norfolk, VA)

DUPLEX — STANBURY

The Pattern Book for Stanbury, Norfolk, VA, displays six different duplex designs. Each design is accompanied by a small photograph and a brief description of the building's style and features.

Form-Based Code / Appearance Standards (Canton, CT)

6. ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS

600. INTENT

6.01. Chapter 6. These Architectural Standards are intended to preserve the character of historic areas governed by CDZ No. 6, Chapter 2.04 Zoning, § 2-2. Village districts which serve to protect the appearance of historic areas and to provide a sense of place and continuity within each district and village region, as well as the effectiveness of each regulation, new construction, substantial reconstruction and rehabilitation of properties within each district and village public residential.

6.02. The Architectural Standards are to establish a coherent character and appearance of historic areas through quality of construction, materials and techniques of the Canton region and Connecticut. Buildings shall be reviewed by the CDZ to ensure that they meet the Architectural Standards (as well as the balance of this Code).

6.03. In order to establish and maintain a sense of place, these standards specify an architectural appearance and building materials and building materials and require new specific properties. For example, stronger and heavier materials (especially) support light materials (wood).

600. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

6.01. Architectural style is restricted to particular historical periods.

6.02. Buildings with each district must be determined by the design architect to represent a defined style of the area.

6.03. Construction with respect to appearance of the subject matter shall apply to all applications and the architectural standards.

6.04. Each design style shall be determined by the architectural character - see Building Form Standards. But the materials and proportions appropriate to the region are not to be used.

6.05. Designs with the words "Colonial", "Tudor", or "Barn" shall not be used.

6.06. Construction with "Tudor", "Tudor", or "Barn" shall not be used.

6.07. Buildings, lot elements, facades, and other architectural elements shall be designed to be appropriate for the character of each Design Village District (as a historic scale to the general appearance and relationship with the composition of the entire building, and to relate to the size of other buildings in the surrounding area).

600. DIMENSIONS

6.01. Building height shall not exceed 35 feet.

6.02. Building height shall not exceed 35 feet.

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Participants

Thank you to the residents of Rocky Hill who participated in the on-line survey and other parts of the process of preparing this Housing Plan.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Dimple Desai *Chair*
 Victor Zarrilli *Secretary*

Giuseppe Aglieco
 Alan Mordhorst
 Ronald Robbins

Sean Hussey *Alternate*
 Stephen L. Lecco *Alternate*
 Nancy Mayeda-Brescai *Alternate*

Technical Assistance

Kimberley A. Ricci *Town Planner / Zoning Enforcement Officer*
 Glenn Chalder, AICP *Planimetrics, Inc.*

Index To Pictures On Front Cover

Alterra	Apple Grove	Beacon Place	Bel-Air Circle	Brimfield Village	Brookwood
Cedar Hollow	Century Heights	Glenbrook	Century Hills Tower	Century Ridge	
Cliffside	Cold Spring Village	Country Meadow	Elms Common	Fairways Edge	Ferry Landing
Forest Park	Green at Maple	Greenfield Village	Highpoint	High Ridge Estates	
Lexington Es-tates	Montage	Old Forge	Parsons Village	Prestige Apartments	Raintree
RHHA Murphy Apartments	RHHA Senior Center Apts.	Rhodes Landing	Ridge at Elm	Riverpark Crossing	
Rockwood Manor	Rolling Green 1	Rolling Green 2	Rolling Green 3	Rolling Green 4	Rose Court
Shipman Crossing	Skyview	Sprucewood	Stepney Place	The Oaks	
Village Center	Webster Hill Estates	Westage	Woodside	Worthington Arms	



Appendix B
The Rocky
Hill
Community
Resiliency
Plan

 **ROCKY HILL** 





Photo Credit: Connecticut History, Town of Rocky Hill, Rocky Hill Parks & Recreation, Rocky Hill, CT Patch

**Community Resilience
Building
Summary of Findings**

August 2024



ROCKY HILL



Photo Credit: Connecticut History, Town of Rocky Hill, Rocky Hill Parks & Recreation, Rocky Hill, CT Patch

Community Resilience Building Summary of Findings

August 2024



Town of Rocky Hill, Connecticut

Community Resilience Building

Summary of Findings

Overview

The need for municipalities, regional planning organizations, academic institutions, corporations, states, and federal agencies to increase resilience to extreme weather events and a changing climate is strikingly evident amongst the communities across the state of Connecticut. Relatively recent events such as Super Storm Sandy, severe winter storms (2013 & 2015), COVID-19 pandemic, and Tropical Storm Isaias have reinforced this urgency and compelled leading communities like the Town of Rocky Hill to proactively collaborate on planning and mitigating risks. Ultimately, this type of leadership is to be commended because it will reduce the vulnerability and reinforce the strengths of people, infrastructure, and ecosystems and serve as a model for other communities in Connecticut, New England, and the nation.

Recently, the Town of Rocky Hill embarked on certification with Sustainable CT. As part of that certification, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Sustainable CT provided the Town with a community-driven process to assess current hazard and climate change impacts and to generate potential and prioritized solutions to improve resilience and sustainability. In August 2024, Rocky Hill's Core Team helped organize a Community Resilience Building process and workshop facilitated by TNC in partnership with Sustainable CT. The core directive of this effort was the engagement with and between community members to define strengths and vulnerabilities and the development of priority resilience actions for the Town of Rocky Hill.

The Rocky Hill Community Resilience Building Workshop's central objectives were to:

- Define top local, natural, and climate-related hazards of concern.
- Identify existing and future strengths and vulnerabilities.
- Identify and prioritize actions for the Town.
- Identify opportunities to collaboratively advance actions to increase resilience alongside residents and organizations from across the Town, and beyond.

The Town of Rocky Hill employed an “anywhere at any scale”, community-driven process called Community Resilience Building (CRB) (www.CommunityResilienceBuilding.org). The CRB’s tools, reports, other relevant planning documents, and local maps were integrated into the workshop process to provide both decision-support and visualization around shared issues and existing priorities across Rocky Hill. The Rocky Hill Plan of Conservation and Development (2015) and the Capital Region Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2024) were particularly instructive as references. Using the CRB process - rich with information, experience, and dialogue - the participants produced the findings presented in this summary report. This includes an overview of the top hazards, current concerns and challenges, existing strengths, and proposed actions to improve Rocky Hill’s resilience to hazards and climate change today, and in the future.

The summary of findings transcribed in this report, like any that concern the evolving nature of risk assessment and associated action, is proffered for comments, corrections and updates from workshop attendees and other stakeholders alike. The leadership displayed by the Town of Rocky Hill on community resilience building will benefit from the continuous participation of all those concerned.

Summary of Findings

Top Hazards and Vulnerable Areas for the Community

Prior to the CRB Workshop, the Rocky Hill Core Team identified the top hazards for the Town, which were flooding and extreme precipitation events, extreme cold snaps and heat waves, and heavy wind events. Additional hazards highlighted by participants during the CRB Workshop included Nor’easters and blizzards during fall, winter, and spring months as well as storm conditions generated by hurricanes and tropical storms. These hazards have direct and increasing impacts on the infrastructure, environment, and residents of and visitors to Rocky Hill. These effects are seen within residential areas, natural areas (wetlands, rivers, forests, preserves), roads, bridges, businesses, farms, municipal facilities, churches, social support services, arts and culture, and other critical infrastructure and community assets within Rocky Hill.

Current Concerns and Challenges Presented by Hazards

The Town of Rocky Hill has several concerns and faces multiple challenges related to the impacts of natural hazards and climate change. In recent years, Rocky Hill has experienced a series of highly disruptive and damaging weather events including the 2011 Halloween nor'easter, large snowfall events winter 2015-2016 (84" cumulative), extreme wind events (October 2017), ice jams along Connecticut River (January 2018), Tropical Storm Isaias (August 2020), and other less impactful but more frequent events. Impacts from the 2011 Halloween nor'easter resulted in power outages across Rocky Hill for up to 10 days. Major blizzards dropped several feet of snow on the Town knocking out power and isolating residents and neighborhoods. The magnitude and intensity of these events and others across Connecticut have increased awareness of natural hazards and climate change, while motivating communities such as Rocky Hill to proactively improve their resilience.

This recent series of extreme weather events highlights that the impacts from hazards are diverse. In Rocky Hill this included riverine flooding of critical infrastructure, roads, and low-lying areas; localized flooding from stormwater runoff during intense storms and heavy precipitation events; and property damage and utility outages (lasting several days or more) from wind, snow, and ice. Longer periods of elevated heat, particularly in July and August, have raised concerns about vulnerable segments of the population, including elderly and/or disabled community members. The combination of these issues presents a challenge to preparedness and mitigation priorities and requires comprehensive, yet locally specific actions for the Town.

The workshop participants were generally in agreement that Rocky Hill is experiencing more intense and frequent storm events and heat waves. Additionally, there was a general concern about the increasing challenges of being prepared for the worst-case scenarios (e.g., major thunderstorms and hurricanes (Cat-3 or above)) particularly in the late summer and in the fall/winter months when more intense storms coincide with colder weather (i.e., snow/ice storms, Nor'easters, blizzards).

Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges

As in any community, Rocky Hill is not uniformly vulnerable to hazards and climate change. Certain locations, assets, and populations have been and will be affected to a greater degree than others. Workshop participants identified the following items as their community's key areas of concern and challenges across several broad categories. Vulnerabilities and associated mitigation actions identified in the current Capital Region Council of Governments Hazard Mitigation Plan Update – Rocky Hill Municipal Annex (2024) are provided in Appendix A for cross reference.

Municipal Functions, Operations, & Growth:

- Rocky Hill is dependent on volunteers for functions, resources, and services which can present a challenge if the volunteer pool shrinks due to the shifting interests amongst the younger generations, among others. Overdependence on volunteers which can result in “burn out” alongside a longer-term decline in the overall available of the volunteer base.
- Increases in population promoted via the increase in single and multi-family residences places greater demand on municipal services such as emergency services, human services, public works and roadways, among others.
- Currently limited information regarding the increased demand on municipal services in Rocky Hill due to the increases in population in recent years, which would help to potentially illuminate the need for additional staff and support resources.
- State data suggests Rocky Hill is more affluent (i.e., relatively high median income) than it actually is due to high number of private pay, assisted living facilities, which has affected the Town's ability to access state and federal funding.
- New apartment complexes provide temporary housing for transient populations such as young professionals and immigrant families that may be less likely to volunteer due to other time commitments.
- Fire Department has experienced a huge increase in call volumes lately which is becoming more difficult to manage due to capacity limitations amongst the volunteers.
- Concerns about the impact on local taxes and municipal budgets in the event the Town is required to hire professional fire service personnel due to a decline in the volunteer base.
- Pushback amongst residents regarding the need to increase the amount and availability of affordable housing from the current 5% towards the state's 10% target for municipalities. Demand for affordable units far exceed availability per the Rocky Hill Housing Authority.

Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges (cont'd)

- Growing concerns about the number of unhoused individuals in Rocky Hill and adjoining municipalities and the limited available resources to adequately support this population.
- Limited understanding of the scale and distribution of unhoused individuals in Rocky Hill. Recognition that unhoused individuals occupy spaces along Silas Deane Highway, Walmart Plaza, Dinosaur State Park, and Elmridge Park as well as many living in parked cars. General lack of clarity about the full scope and location of the unhoused population in Rocky Hill.
- Unhoused community in Rocky Hill is feeling the impacts of extreme shifts in weather including heat waves, cold snaps, and intense rainstorms.
- Ongoing and mounting challenges of food insecurity for segments of the Rocky Hill population.
- “Weather intensification” has become more pronounced especially with extreme cold snaps that have had notable effects on aging infrastructure and buildings (i.e., heat and water supply system failures).
- Limited and disjointed sidewalks and bike lanes from southwest corner to schools and the downtown area of Rocky Hill.
- Limited municipal incentives for owners of parking lots to take steps reduce the amount of stormwater runoff into municipal storm drains.
- Declining number of people interested in pursuing a career in the trades which has resulted in a limited workforce pool to fill critical maintenance and service position within municipal departments in Rocky Hill and the Capital Region in general.
- Escalating costs to process household non-recyclable waste (including food scraps that could be removed from waste stream) that is incorporated into local taxes that will become an increasing burden on residents.
- Multimillion dollars losses in agricultural crops in the last two years due to flooding of the Great Meadows, among other areas in Rocky Hill.
- Concerns about the ability of the agricultural community in Rocky Hill to be adequately prepared for both flooding and drought conditions all in a single season.
- Federal relief funding for agricultural losses are designed for large scale farms and are not reflective of smaller scale, New England farming models.
- Annual flooding from the Connecticut River brings large woody debris and entire trees down from upstream sources resulting in challenges and costs to manage for the Town. Impacts include reduced accessibility of public boat launches and damage to docks.

Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges (cont'd)

Emergency Management & Preparedness:

- Concerns about the reoccurrence, frequency, and duration of drought conditions in central Connecticut and the impacts it is having on people, agriculture, and natural ecosystems.
- Cycles of drought and intense rainstorms coupled with a warming climate is increasing the risk of vector borne diseases across Connecticut including Rocky Hill.
- Predominance of above ground power lines resulting in ongoing high exposure to impacts from trees and tree limbs.
- Aging population has raised concerns about evacuation process and managing special needs of the population during emergencies including natural disasters.
- Increasing emergency call volumes and complexity of calls to Police Departments over last few years.
- Growing number of accidents on Interstate 91 (every 2-2.5 days) resulting in a response by the Rocky Hill emergency management services personnel, which places additional burden on local departments. Municipalities have expressed this concern with Connecticut Department of Transportation, but no resolution has been offered by the state of Connecticut. Rocky Hill Fire Department has received some compensation from the state for service calls on Interstate 91, to date.
- Aging of equipment needed to adequately address emergencies including equipment such as trucks and plows requires ongoing maintenance and eventual replacement.
- Proximity to Interstate 91 can present a vulnerability from external crimes.
- Emergency services is being stressed by the rising population in Rocky Hill with increases in the number of apartment complexes and new businesses.
- Town Garage is on Eversource's priority power restoration list, but any delays during power restoration wait periods could present life threatening circumstances amongst residents in Rocky Hill and adjoining communities.
- Concerns about previous and potential future flooding issues on Beach Road due to the undersized culvert potentially trapping residents with limited egress on a dead-end road.
- Rocky Hill Public Library does not have a back-up generator in place.

Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges (cont'd)

Roads, Bridges, Road Networks, & Dams:

- Flooding on Silas Deane Highway near Exit 24 results in routine flooding of the Dialysis Center on Waterchase Drive.
- Combined flooding along the Mattabesset River and the Saw Mill Brook can result in impacts and inaccessibility to the western portion of France Street and residences in that area.
- Flooding issues at the end of Exit 24 off Interstate 91 has resulted in the need for water rescue of people via inflatable boats.
- Recent flooding along Main Street (near old Ames Headquarters) due to an inadequate pipe caused basement flooding up to 8 feet deep in adjoining condominiums.
- Elevated levels of traffic in recent years, especially along Main Street, which can be a concern due to accidents and speeding.

Stormwater, Wastewater Systems, & Drinking Water Supply:

- Current capacity of the stormwater drainage system may be inadequate to effectively manage current runoff volumes given the recent higher duration and intensity storms; particularly in the last two years. Much of the drainage system in Rocky Hill (pre-2014) was originally designed for peak 10-year storm events using data developed in the 1950's based on rainfall data between 1905 and 1951. A major design criteria update was issued in 2014 and is now continually updated based on recent storm events.
- Last town-wide drainage system study was conducted in 1974 and does not reflect current conditions 50 years later.
- Inability to define priorities for improvements to stormwater drainage system due to lack of adequate information about vulnerabilities and concerns that would come from a town-wide assessment.
- General lack of comprehensive monitoring of the current condition and capability of the stormwater drainage system across Rocky Hill.
- Majority of culverts in need of repair, retrofit, or replacement are below size thresholds required to be eligible for state and federal funding opportunities.
- Concerns that the new regional stormwater grant from Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to the Capital Region Council of Governments will focus primarily on the city of Hartford versus the other seven municipalities in the study area including Rocky Hill.

Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges (cont'd)

- Limited use of alternative techniques to trap and retain stormwater runoff such as green stormwater infrastructure (i.e., rain gardens, bioswales, tree pits, etc.) to help elevate the stress from major storms on the existing stormwater drainage system.
- Large number of privately-owned parking lot spaces that are current underutilized due to more people working from home. Impervious parking surfaces increase the amount of stormwater runoff required to be managed by current stormwater drainage system.
- The Metropolitan District wastewater treatment facility is situated within the Connecticut River floodplain and at risk from 1% annual chance of flood event.
- Sewer pump station down by Ferry Landing is susceptible to riverine flooding from the Connecticut River.

Watersheds, Wetlands, Rivers, Open Space, Forests, Agricultural Lands, & Trees:

- Concerns about the impacts of more intense and extended droughts on forest species diversity and distribution over time in the forested landscapes of Rocky Hill and the entire Connecticut River corridor.
- Open space and undeveloped areas in Town continuously vulnerable to establishment of invasive species that can compromise native flora and fauna and the integrity of natural ecosystem.
- Great Meadows in Rocky Hill is subjected to flooding from the Connecticut River on a routine basis; particularly during the summer of 2023.
- Trees in certain areas along transportation corridors with power lines and/or near buildings present issues during more intense winter storms particularly when accompanied by high winds.
- Impacts to street trees due to a severe ice storm in 2011 coupled with elevated rainfall patterns and soil saturation has resulted in a less than healthy urban tree canopy. It is projected more street trees along major corridors like Main Street as well as along other road rights-of-ways will need to be cleaned up after future storms due to this decline in health and condition.
- Concerns that the community character of Rocky Hill will be affected if the tree canopy continues to decline.

Current Strengths and Assets

Just as certain locations, facilities, and populations in Rocky Hill stand out as particularly vulnerable to the effects of hazards and climate change, other features are notable assets for Rocky Hill's resilience building. Workshop participants identified the following items as their community's key strengths and expressed interest in centering them as the core of future resilience building actions.

Municipal Functions, Operations, & Growth:

- Clearly, the responsive and committed engagement exhibited by leadership, staff, and residents is a very appreciated strength within and across Rocky Hill. Ongoing collaboration between municipal staff, committee/commission/board volunteers, business community, faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, adjoining municipalities, Council of Government, health district, and various state-wide organizations (i.e., Sustainable CT, The Nature Conservancy), among others, on priorities identified herein will help advance comprehensive, cost-effective, community resilience building actions.
- Municipality and residents really care about their community with a “sense of community” where people come together and help one another as well as voicing their opinions in support or opposition of issues effecting their community.
- Town culture is focus on helping one another and making Rocky Hill a better due in part to the large number of long-stand, multi-generational households and families.
- Strong volunteer presence, despite declines over time, that are well qualified to manage issues and needs of the community.
- Dedicated municipal staff with a supportive work environment that lends itself to comradery within Town Hall and a willingness to collaborate with other municipalities on resource sharing and problem solving.
- Rocky Hill has services and access to resources that other municipalities consider a luxury (bulky waste, leaf and brush pick-up, clinical services, etc.) while maintaining a strong mill rate.
- Good balance of tax base between residential, commercial, and industrial, which helps to increase the economic resiliency of Rocky Hill.
- Located just outside of Hartford yet retains a small-town feel, which is appreciated by residents.

Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)

- Great place to raise children because of the schools, community programming, and caring and supportive neighbors and staff.
- Excellent and award-winning school system in Rocky Hill.
- Rocky Hill is well positioned to attract and retain a diverse and skilled workforce given local employment opportunities and the proximity to Hartford.
- Town Departments are well staffed with resourceful and knowledgeable staff that work well together.
- Public Works Department is comprised of capable and skilled staff that can handle infrastructure issues effectively and efficiently in-house.
- Communications across Departments in Rocky Hill which lends itself to a high degree of collaboration.
- The Rocky Hill Community Center is recognized and respected as a true asset to the community by residents, staff, and visitors.
- Strong ties to the rich historical significance of Rocky Hill (three historic districts) including the archaeological sites such as the Dinosaur State Park.
- Town is well maintained including both public facilities as well as privately owned properties.
- Abundance of nursing homes and facilities with skilled staff in Rocky Hill.
- Twenty years of consistent and dedicated efforts and millions of dollars of funding focused on revitalizing the downtown area of Rocky Hill.
- Concerted effort directed to addressing the stigma amongst residents around the unhoused issue in the community.
- Great sense of community among residents and businesses resulting in a high level of community involvement and support for municipal events and activities.
- Electrical substation in Rocky Hill has been expanded to ensure additional capacity is available as economic development continues to increase.
- Close working relationship and ongoing coordination between the Town and the Metropolitan District.

Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)

- Senior Center is a hub of activities throughout the year with affordable lunches, holiday meals, and opportunities to socialize with other Rocky Hill residents.
- Senior Center has a bus to assist with bringing residents to the Center.
- Increasingly diverse community with large number of residents of southeast Asian decent over the last 25 years.
- Town is responding to evolving needs of new residents including the upcoming installation of cricket pitch and the provisioning of culturally diverse meals in the schools (i.e., Halal hot lunches).
- Municipality celebrates Diwali with a school holiday and local celebrations.
- Board of Education and the Community Center are well supported and provide a draw for new families to Rocky Hill.
- Municipality is wired with fiber optic cable which represents a long-term commitment to newer internet technology that will not need to be replaced for several decades.
- Engineering and Planning Departments review all private development plans and make suggestion and offer alternatives to designs that integrate sustainable materials and practices such as green stormwater infrastructure. Feedback from developers has been favorable and is helping to build resilience and sustainability in Rocky Hill.
- Rocky Hill is actively engaged with pavement preservation efforts in hope of using less raw materials and reducing costs on paving needs.
- Sustainable Rocky Hill has engaged with the community and has become a recognized asset to the Town responsible for stimulating critical discussions about the future of municipality and ways to balance growth with cost efficiency.

Emergency Management & Preparedness:

- Staffing in strong across Departments resulting in collaboration between fire fighters, public works staff, and Police Department. To date there has not been an emergency that couldn't be address via this collective in a timely fashion.
- Volunteer Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services, which is supported by full-time, professional service personnel. Other Departments in Rocky Hill provide additional support to these entities in times of crises.

Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)

- Rocky Hill is geographically well positioned to receive aid and resources during major events given proximity to major transportation corridors including Interstate 91.
- Strong partnership with Hartford Fire Department that provides access for Rocky Hill to the Hartford Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to help manage events.
- Strong group of local contractors that are very responsive to urgent project needs of the Town such as quickly paving parking lots and installing playground spaces so a school could open on time as well as conducting recovery efforts after major storm events.
- Establishment of a Community Emergency Management Team (CERT) for Rocky Hill is currently being considered.
- Close working relationship with Eversource on tree canopy management and emergency response and recovery with routine quarterly meeting as well as embedded utility staff during and after major disasters. This ensures a smooth and functional exchange of information, either electronically or via phone, and enhanced communications.
- Electronic signboards in Town and websites/social media helps disseminate information regarding planned maintenance, closures, and updates.
- Reverse 911 or door-to-door outreach, plus mailings this past year to communicate upcoming and ongoing projects and situations in Rocky Hill.
- Rocky Hill Public Library and the Community Center can be opened to the public as cooling centers, as needed.
- Rocky Hill Human Services maintains a list of residents with special needs (i.e., mobility, special medical care needs (oxygen), etc.) and have assigned check-ins during storm events to ensure the proper care is provided in a timely fashion. Police Department assists with checking on listed residents at their homes during times of crises.
- Incoming calls to emergency medical services (EMS) are flagged if household is identified with individual with special medical needs.
- Eversource maintains a self-identified, voluntary, list of residents with medical needs requiring electricity. During outages Eversource staff will call directly to check-in and provide information regarding power outage status. If contact is not made with resident, Eversource staff will provide address to emergency management staff in Rocky Hill for further door-to-door visits as an added layer of service.

Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)

- Department of Veterans Affairs is the second largest provider training for police and Federal Bureau of Investigation staff in the state and is in a trial phase for providing training to Rocky Hill Fire Department volunteers.

Stormwater, Waste Systems, & Drinking Water Supply:

- Rocky Hill has an abundant and protected drinking water supply (provided by The Metropolitan District) that has not been subjected to contamination from per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Redundancies in the supply line enhance service coupled with extra capacity to accommodate additional growth in demand for drinking water.

Watersheds, Wetlands, Rivers, Open Space, Forests, Agricultural Lands, & Trees:

- Strong community desire to preserve and maintain the character of Rocky Hill through open space protection and working agricultural landscapes.
- Updated map of all open space with current interest in identifying privately owned and vacant parcels over 5 acres in size for acquisition by the Town. Approximately 7 million dollars available for allocation to open space acquisition per a 2017-2018 community referendum for 10 million (3 million has been spent on open space acquisition since referendum). Open space committee manages the funds and makes recommendations regarding privately owned parcels to acquire.
- Municipality, residents, and businesses place a great deal of emphasis on growing things in Rocky Hill from the urban tree canopy, agricultural produce, and community gardens (“we grow a lot of things in Rocky Hill – the historic roots of our community”).
- Town acquired a 80-acre farm with 60-acres being leased to active farmers along with the development of community gardens and a barn as a place to further educate residents and visitors on the value of farming.
- Eversource’s tree trimming operations in the center of Rocky Hill and along easements has resulted in a reduced number of outages and increase reliability of service.
- Curbside brush and leaf pickup events in place each year with some material being turned into mulch and compost for further use by residents.

Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)

- Dividend Pond was recently cleaned up and now has many outdoor activities available to residents.
- Well maintained and used municipal park system in Rocky Hill including Elm Ridge Park, Dividend Pond, Quarry Park, and Surwilo Park.
- The riverfront along the Connecticut River is an important, unique, and valuable resource to Rocky Hill.



Credit: AllTrails

Recommendations to Improve Resilience

A common theme among workshop participants was the need to continue community-based planning efforts focused on developing adaptive measures to reinforce Rocky Hill's strengths and reduce vulnerability to extreme weather, climate change and other common concerns raised. To that end, the workshop participants helped to identify several priority topics requiring more immediate and/or ongoing attention including:

- **Long-term vision and growth** (i.e. sustainable growth, volunteerism, conservation & recreation, affordable housing, agriculture, transportation, workforce development);
- **Infrastructure improvements** (i.e. roads/bridges/dams/road crossings, green stormwater infrastructure/management systems);
- **Quality of life improvements** (i.e. parks and recreation, open space & accessibility, sustainability, health & safety, economic prosperity, housing, education, regionalization);
- **Emergency management** (i.e. communications, outreach, education, continuation of services, business recovery, evacuation, vulnerable populations).

In direct response, the Community Resilience Building workshop participants developed the following actions and identified, but not ranked, them as priority or as additional actions. Mitigation actions from the Rocky Hill Municipal Annex within the Capital Region Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2024) are provided in Appendix A for cross reference with actions presented herein. Maps provided during the CRB Workshop, gathered from the Rocky Hill Plan of Conservation and Development (2015) and the Capital Region Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2024) are provided in Appendix B.

Priority Actions

- Establish a committee to generate new, creative, and different approaches to encouraging and securing additional volunteers for serve across Rocky Hill including participation on boards, commissions, and committees as well as with the Fire Department. Explore successful volunteer recruitment and retention models/programs amongst other neighboring communities and the Capital Region Council of Governments.

Priority Actions (cont'd)

- Conduct a town-wide stormwater drainage and associated utilities study that identifies the current capacity (both under-sized and adequate) and condition of those systems. Use outputs of study to prioritize projects and work to advance implementation over time.
- Explore opportunities to amplify and expand the current social services efforts with additional funding with a focus on engagement with and care for issues such as mental health, housing, and food insecurity, among others critical issues in Rocky Hill.
- Ensure that the upcoming Plan of Conservation and Development update is conducted in a highly inclusive manner to ensure the community helps to guide the future development and growth in Rocky Hill.
- Develop a community-wide strategic and operational plan in concert with monthly budget reviews (budgeted to actual costs) and guided by the overarching Plan of Conservation and Development.
- Explore new opportunities to cost share and collaborate on staffing, critical resources, and equipment with neighboring communities.
- Consider expanding municipal departments and services as Rocky Hill continues to grow. This may require the Town being open to new ideas and approaches to operating that help to meet the current and future needs of the community.



Credit: Wikipedia



Credit: Kelson Row



Credit: Tripadvisor

Additional Actions

- Engage with neighboring municipalities regarding priority actions generated during Community Resilience Building workshops in hopes of fostering more regional approaches and projects over time.
- Conduct outreach to help increase the education on personal and group preparedness (i.e., emergency grab bags, phone trees, etc.) for elderly residents and elderly housing facilities.
- Work to increase the number of community wide events to help increase community awareness and prevention associated with drug abuse, mental health issues, among others (i.e., Prevention Palozza).
- Utilize information and actions generated during Rocky Hills Community Resilience Building process to help inform the upcoming update to the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development.
- Ensure that the upcoming update to the Rocky Hill Plan of Conservation and Development places ample emphasis on engagement residents and businesses and utilization of information collected during the process (i.e., online surveys, public workshops, report out meetings, etc.).
- During the Plan of Conservation and Development update ensure that green stormwater infrastructure and low impact development approaches and projects are fully integrated in hopes of increasing the overall resilience of Rocky Hill.
- Continue to work with the Capital Regional Council of Governments on a grant from Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to conduct regional stormwater study. Look to ensure Rocky Hill is including in the study area for that grant along with the other seven municipal within The Metropolitan District's service area.
- Work with the agricultural community in hopes increasing planning and preparedness for flooding on farmlands in Rocky Hill.

Additional Actions (cont'd)

- Explore grant and other funding opportunities to help the agricultural community in Rocky Hill recover from losses associated with the escalation of major flooding events.
- Look to further educate the residents of Rocky Hill on what affordable housing is and the ongoing need for additional construction of affordable housing to meet the state mandate of 10% of housing stock given the current 4.6-5% in Rocky Hill.
- Increase responses to needs between the Affordable Housing Sub-committee's efforts and plan with increases in affordable housing via the Rocky Hill Housing Authority.
- Promote programing to help residents assess the home energy use and potential improvements (i.e., heat pumps) to increase energy efficiency to make the community more resilient given the escalating periods of extreme heat.
- Continue to advance Complete Streets priority planning and projects in Rocky Hill including reducing the disjointed nature of sidewalks and installation of bike lanes where possible. Ensure focus is placed on providing better connections from the southwestern portions of Rocky Hill to schools and the downtown area.
- Work with the Capital Region Council of Governments to reduce municipal solid waste (household trash) due to the increasing cost and mounting burden on Rocky Hill's annual budget (i.e., Trash Talk Forums, etc.).
- Continue to advance newly adopted MS4 stormwater runoff regulations in hopes of reducing peak flood flows as well as localized water quality benefits.
- Work to better understand the location and size of the unhoused population in Rocky Hill in coordination with neighboring municipalities such as Wethersfield along the Silas Deane Highway.
- Given reliance on volunteers and the "work-from-home" culture, consider including workspaces in firehouses to accommodate the needs of residents that would otherwise be willing to volunteer.

Additional Actions (cont'd)

- Continue to advance plans to renovate two of the four Firehouses in Rocky Hill and look to move forward to plans to build an additional facility to help better serve growing community needs.
- Work to obtain funding for the design and construction of a new Town Garage Facility with back-up generator to better accommodate community needs year-round.
- Continue to participate in regional information sharing opportunities with partners including Capital Region Council of Governments and other municipalities with a focus on collaboration to secure funding and solve issues.
- Explore a microtransit option in addition to minibus service for seniors in partnership with neighboring municipalities.
- Ensure that critical municipal equipment is routinely maintained and replaced prior end of stated life cycle.
- Work via the Capital Improvement Subcommittee to the Town Council to integrate stated priority actions and identify supplemental, external funding sources to get resilience-related plans and projects advanced and implemented.
- Explore opportunities to underground important transmission lines and infrastructure to prevent impacts from high winds and winter storms on overhead transmission wires.
- Continue to expand wireless communication coverage and capabilities in Rocky Hill.
- Work to complete all priorities identified in the sidewalk plan for Rocky Hill.
- Ensure that green stormwater infrastructure and other ways to reduce risk and improve the environment are incorporated into new projects and development during municipal review of plans and permits.

CRB Workshop Participants: Department/Organization

Town of Rocky Hill – Office of the Mayor
Town of Rocky Hill – Office of the Town Manager
Town of Rocky Hill – Planning and Zoning Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Building and Permits Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Fire Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Police Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Emergency Management Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Public Works Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Engineering Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Community Development Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Human Services Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Parks and Recreation Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Finance Department
Town of Rocky Hill – Information Technology
Town of Rocky Hill - Facilities
Town of Rocky Hill – Sustainable Rocky Hill Task Force
Town of Rocky Hill – Planning and Zoning Commission
State Representative – Connecticut’s 29th House District
Capital Region Council of Governments
Central Connecticut Health District
The Metropolitan District
Connecticut Veterans Home and Hospital
Eversource

Rocky Hill Core CRB Project Team

Kim Ricci – Town Planner and Zoning Enforcement Officer

Ray Carpentino – Town Manager

Phil Cyr – Director of Facilities

Mike Garrahy – Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director

Joe Lentini – Field Operations and Highway Superintendent

Steven Sopelak – Director of Community Development Services

Jason Scott – Civil Engineer and Inspection Coordinator

Online CRB Workshop Facilitation Team

The Nature Conservancy – Adam Whelchel, Ph.D. (Lead Facilitator)

Sustainable CT – Jessica LeClair (Small Group Facilitator)

The Nature Conservancy – Kai Lo Muscio (IT Coordinator/Manager)

Sustainable CT – Inez Ortiz (Scribe)

The Nature Conservancy – Margaret Broughton (Scribe)

Sustainable CT – Dorothy Piszczek (Scribe)

The Nature Conservancy – Eve Robinson (Scribe)

Recommended Citation

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Appendix A

Rocky Hill

Mitigation Action Plan and Actions*



25 Rocky Hill

Community Overview

Rocky Hill covers 13.9 square miles with a population of 20,845 (2020 Census). Elevation ranges from 30 feet to 400 feet. Land drains primarily to the Connecticut River Watershed, though the southwest portion of Town drains to the Mattabeset River. Major watercourses include the Connecticut River and Dividend, Goff, Hog, and Saw Mill Brooks. Principal transportation routes include Interstate 91 and State Routes 99, 3, 160 and 400. An active freight rail line, owned by Providence-Worcester Railroad, runs north-south along the Connecticut River. Paralleling the rail line is the Buckeye Jet Fuel line which runs from New Haven to Bradley International Airport. The State Veterans Home and Hospital and Dinosaur State Park are among approximately a dozen State agencies located in Town. Rocky Hill's major industries include professional, scientific and technical services, finance and insurance, warehouse/distribution, health care and construction.

In Rocky Hill, development patterns are guided by stringent building codes and planning and zoning ordinances that prohibit construction within flood plains. Over the recent five-year period, the town has witnessed a moderate level of development, and this trend is expected to continue for the next three years. Predominantly, the development over the past half-decade has revolved around residential projects, and this emphasis on residential development is projected to persist in the foreseeable future. Development/redevelopment is not increasing risk to natural hazards.

Critical Facilities

A number of critical facilities in Rocky Hill include the Police Station (Emergency Operations Center), Town Hall/Community Center, Public Library (back-up shelter and warming/cooling center), three volunteer fire stations, the High School (primary shelter), and West Hill School.

***Gathered from the Rocky Hills Municipal Annex within the Capital Region Council of Governments Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2024).**

Table 25-4: Active Mitigation Strategies and Actions, Rocky Hill

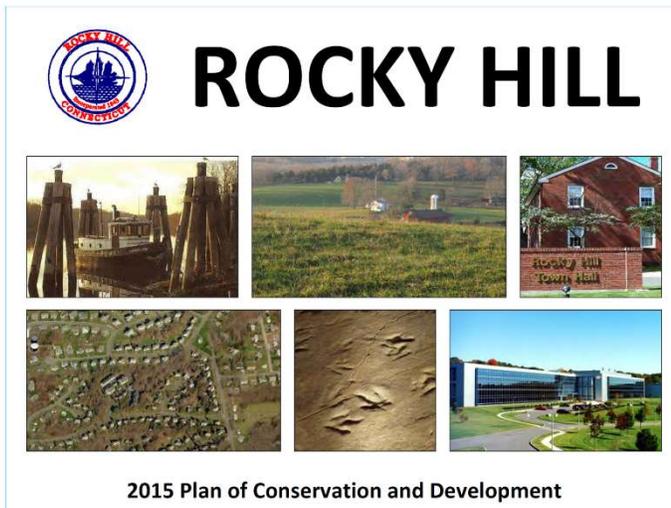
Number	Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Actions	Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Goal	Type of Action	Responsible Department	Approx. Cost Range	Potential Funding Sources	Timeframe	Priority	Hazard(s)	EJ?	PERISTS Score	STAPLEE Score	PERISTS x STAPLEE =
RH1	Assess the capacity of the shelters and ensure the town has the capability to meet the needs of different vulnerable populations.	Ensure that critical facilities are resilient, with special attention to shelters and cooling centers.	Preparedness & Emergency Response	Emergency Management	\$0-\$10,000	Municipal Operating Budget	01/2025 - 12/2025	High	All Hazards	No	19	7	133
RH2	Acquire a generator for the town library.	Ensure that critical facilities are resilient, with special attention to shelters and cooling centers.	Preparedness & Emergency Response	Emergency Management	\$100,000 - \$500,000	FEMA HMA; STEAP	07/2024 - 06/2025	High	All Hazards	No	19	5	95
RH3	Ensure that transportation and transit options are available to bring people to cooling centers.	Address risks associated with extreme heat events, especially as they interact with other hazards.	Preparedness & Emergency Response	Emergency Management	\$10,000 - \$50,000	Transit; IJJA BBFP	07/2024 - 06/2026	Medium	Extreme Heat	No	18	3	54
RH4	Apply for funding to install a box culvert on Beach Road and raising the road above the 1% annual-chance flood elevation.	Reduce flood and erosion risks by reducing vulnerabilities and consequences, even as climate change increases frequency and severity of floods.	Structural Project	Public Works	\$500,000 - \$1M	STEAP; IJJA AOP; FEMA HMA	07/2024 - 06/2026	High	Riverine and Pluvial Floods	No	19	4	76
RH5	Conduct an assessment of France Street, situated near the Berlin line in Rocky Hill, to address access concerns and	Invest in resilient corridors to ensure that people and services are accessible during floods and that development along	Structural Project	Public Works	\$50,000 - \$100,000	STEAP; Municipal CIP Budget	07/2025 - 06/2027	Medium	Riverine and Pluvial Floods	No	18	6	108

Number	Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Actions	Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Goal	Type of Action	Responsible Department	Approx. Cost Range	Potential Funding Sources	Timeframe	Priority	Hazard(s)	E/P	PERISTS Score	STAPLEE Score	PERSISTS x STAPLEE =
	determine necessary road improvements.	corridors is resilient over the long term.											
RH6	Conduct a town wide assessment of stream crossings to identify vulnerabilities and develop a priority list for maintenance and upsizing.	Reduce flood and erosion risks by reducing vulnerabilities and consequences, even as climate change increases frequency and severity of floods.	Structural Project	Public Works	\$10,000 - \$50,000	DCRF; Municipal CIP Budget	07/2025 - 06/2027	Medium	Riverine and Pluvial Floods/Tidal Connecticut River Flooding	No	18	6	108
RH7	Work with MDC to address flooding concerns at the Rocky Hill Water Pollution Control Facility, Waterchase Drive, the Pump station on Main St and Brook St and Pratt St.	Reduce flood and erosion risks by reducing vulnerabilities and consequences, even as climate change increases frequency and severity of floods.	Water & Wastewater Utility Projects	Planning	\$500,000 - \$1M	CWSRF; FEMA HMA; STEAP	07/2026 - 06/2027	High	Riverine and Pluvial Floods	No	19	6	114
RH8	Work with MDC to address flooding concerns at Waterchase Drive.	Reduce flood and erosion risks by reducing vulnerabilities and consequences, even as climate change increases frequency and severity of floods.	Water & Wastewater Utility Projects	Public Works	\$500,000 - \$1M	CWSRF; FEMA HMA; STEAP	07/2026 - 06/2027	High	Riverine and Pluvial Floods	No	19	6	114
RH9	Work with the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) to develop an appropriate scope of work to address flooding and extreme heat concerns in Resilient Opportunity Areas (ROARs).	More than one goal.	More than one type	Public Works	\$0-\$10,000	CIRCA	07/2024 - 06/2027	Medium	Riverine and Pluvial Floods/Extreme Heat/Tidal Connecticut River Flooding	No	18	5	90
RH10	Contact the owners of Repetitive Loss Properties and nearby properties at risk to inquire about mitigation undertaken and	Reduce flood and erosion risks by reducing vulnerabilities and consequences, even as	Property Protection	Planning	\$0-\$10,000	Municipal Operating Budget	01/2026 - 12/2026	High	Riverine and Pluvial Floods	No	19	7	133

Number	Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Actions	Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Goal	Type of Action	Responsible Department	Approx. Cost Range	Potential Funding Sources	Timeframe	Priority	Hazard(s)	EJ?	PERISTS Score	STAPLEE Score	PERSISTS x STAPLEE =
	suggest options for mitigating flooding in those areas. This should be accomplished with a letter directly mailed to each property owner.	climate change increases frequency and severity of floods.											
RH11	Conduct outreach to local small 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.	Reduce flood and erosion risks by reducing vulnerabilities and consequences, even as climate change increases frequency and severity of floods.	Prevention	Emergency Management	\$0-\$10,000	Municipal Operating Budget	01/2025 - 12/2025	Low	Riverine and Pluvial Floods	No	18	7	126
RH12	Review the Connecticut Cultural Resource Information System (ConnCRIS) to identify and understand historic and archaeological resources in areas of hazard risks found here: https://conncris.ct.gov .	Reduce flood and erosion risks by reducing vulnerabilities and consequences, even as climate change increases frequency and severity of floods.	Property Protection	Planning	\$0-\$10,000	SHPO; Municipal Operating Budget	01/2026 - 12/2026	Medium	Wildfires /Tornadoes and High Winds/Riverine and Pluvial Floods	No	18	9	162
RH13	Participate in EMI courses or the seminars and annual conference held by the Connecticut Association of Flood Managers.	Reduce flood and erosion risks by reducing vulnerabilities and consequences, even as climate change increases frequency and severity of floods.	Education and Awareness	Floodplain Manager	\$0-\$10,000	Municipal Operating Budget	01/2025 and annually during this month	Medium	All Hazards	No	17	6	102
RH14	Update town website to include hazard mitigation and emergency preparedness tips for town residents, including sections corresponding to each hazard considered in this Plan Update.	More than one goal.	Education and Awareness	Planning	\$0-\$10,000	Municipal Operating Budget	01/2025 - 12/2025	Medium	All Hazards	No	17	7	119

Appendix B

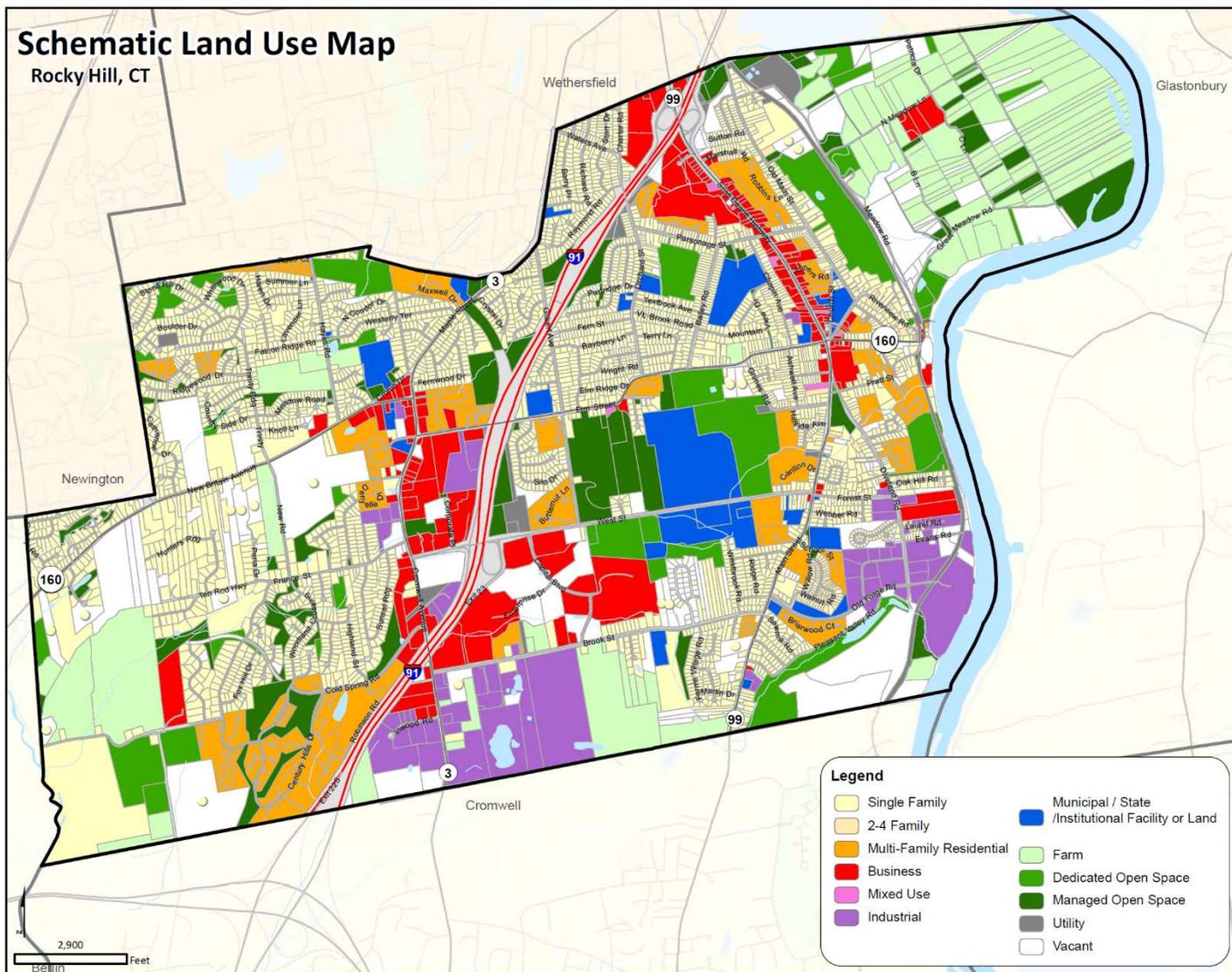
Rocky Hill Map Resource Packet* Used During Workshop



***Gathered from Rocky Hill's Plan of Conservation and Development (2015) and the Capital Region Council of Governments Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2024).**

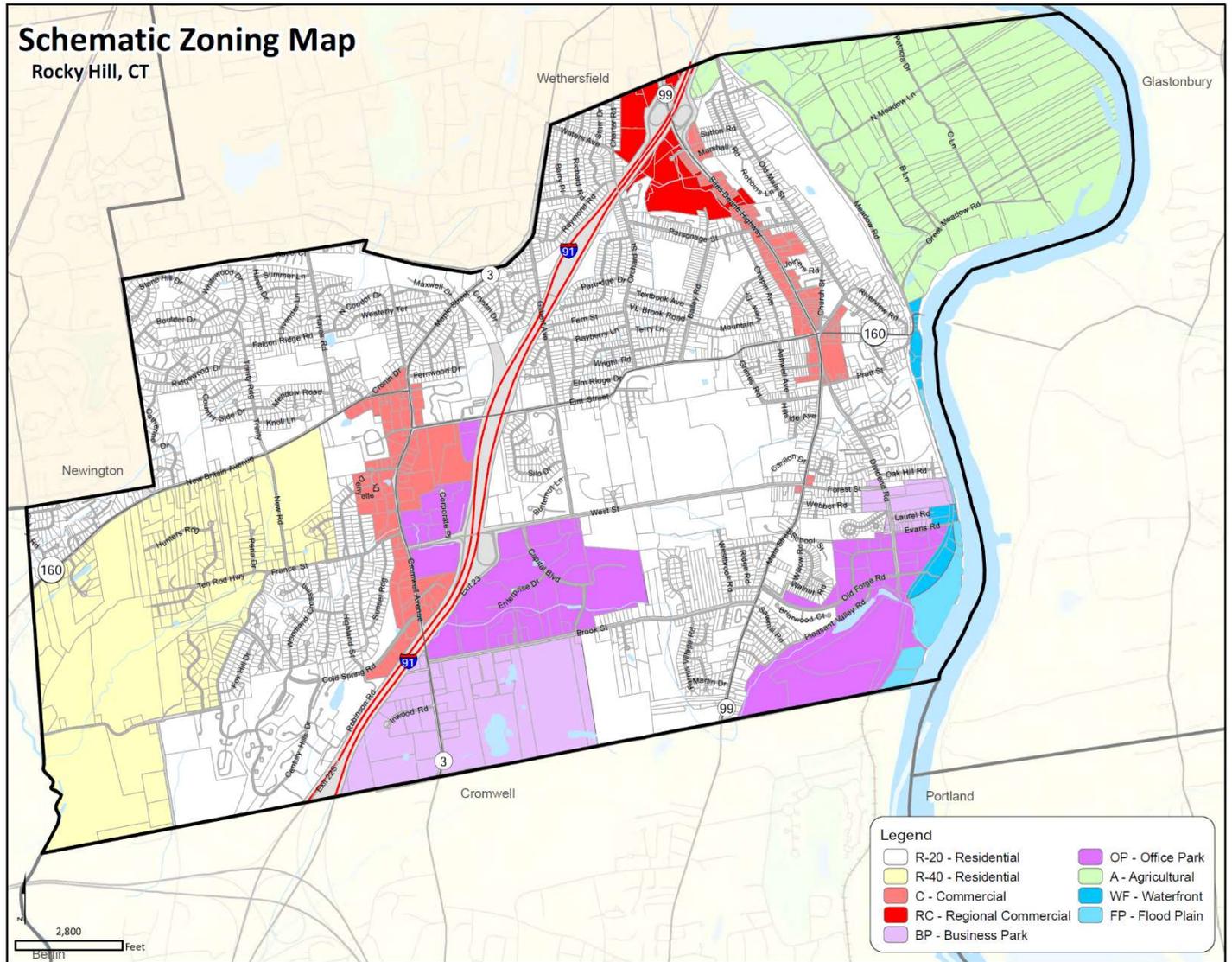
Schematic Land Use Map

Rocky Hill, CT



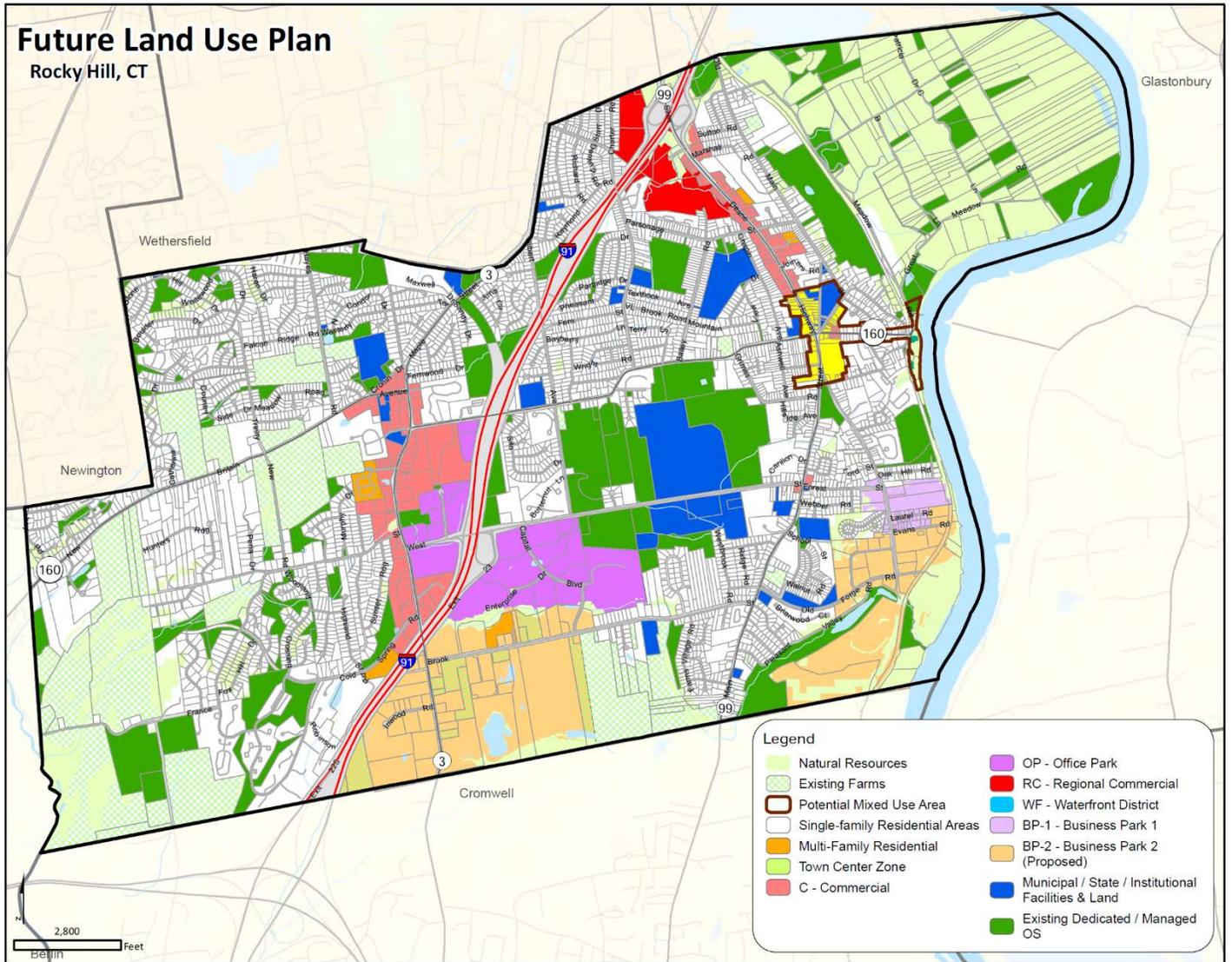
Schematic Zoning Map

Rocky Hill, CT



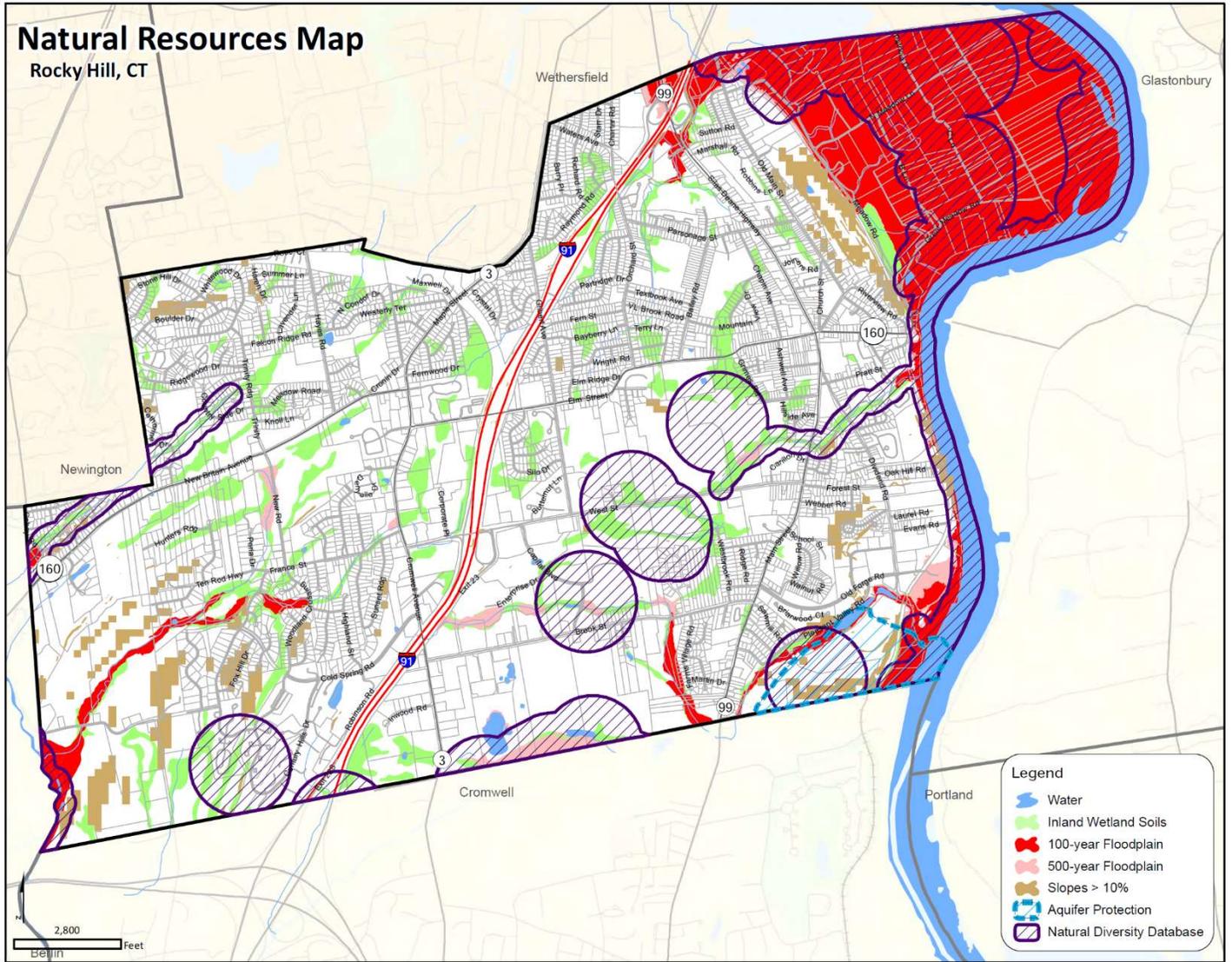
Future Land Use Plan

Rocky Hill, CT



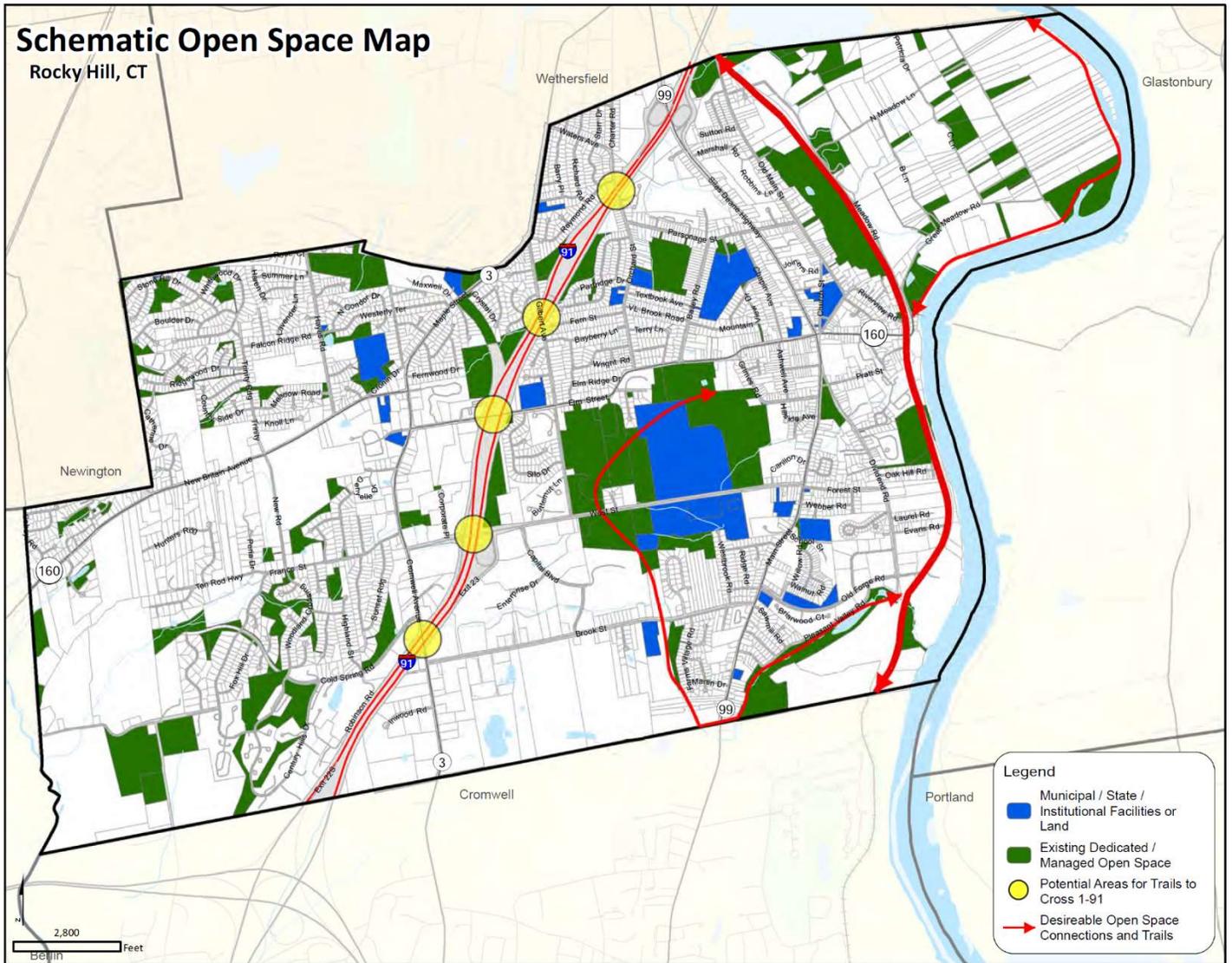
Natural Resources Map

Rocky Hill, CT



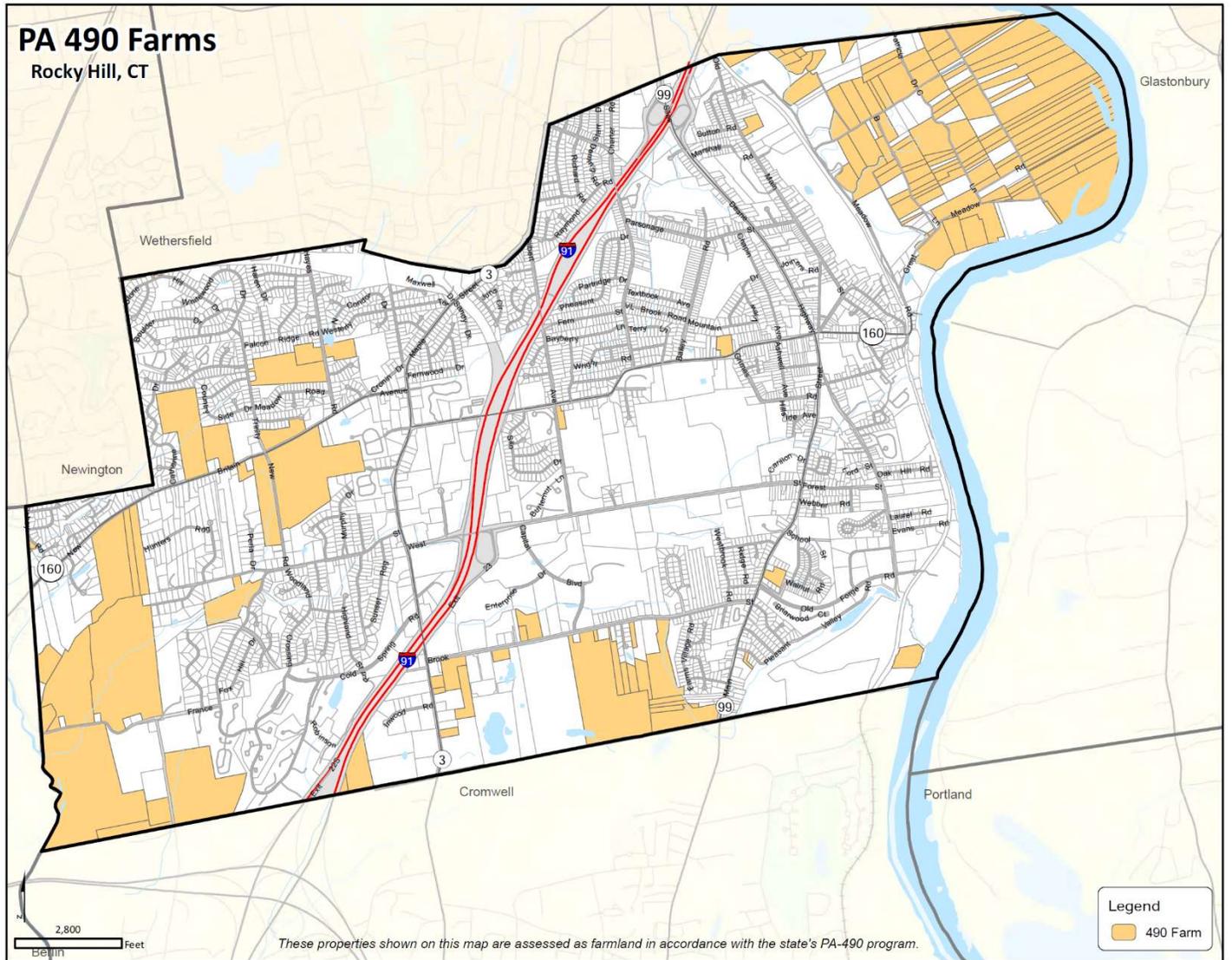
Schematic Open Space Map

Rocky Hill, CT



PA 490 Farms

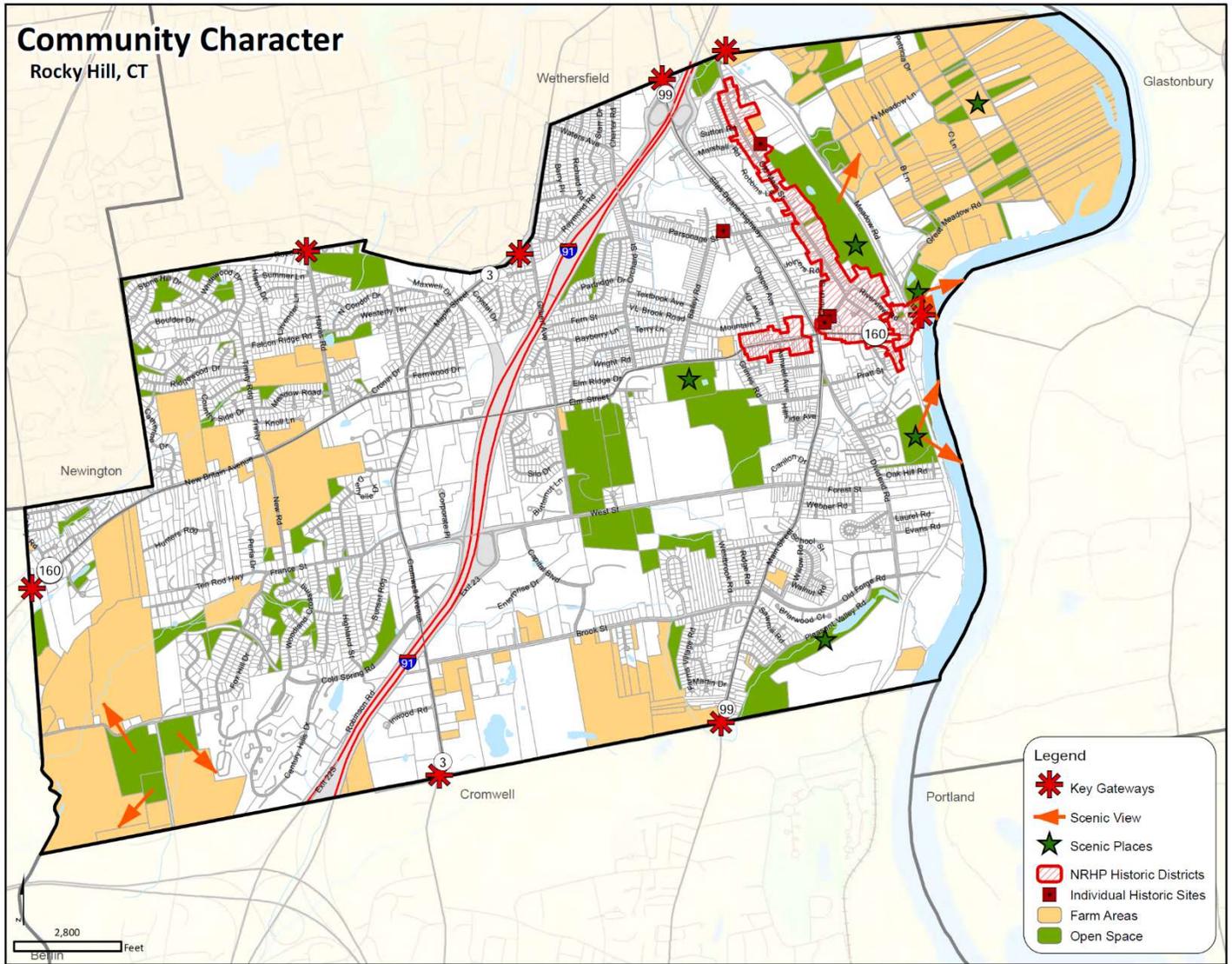
Rocky Hill, CT



These properties shown on this map are assessed as farmland in accordance with the state's PA-490 program.

Community Character

Rocky Hill, CT

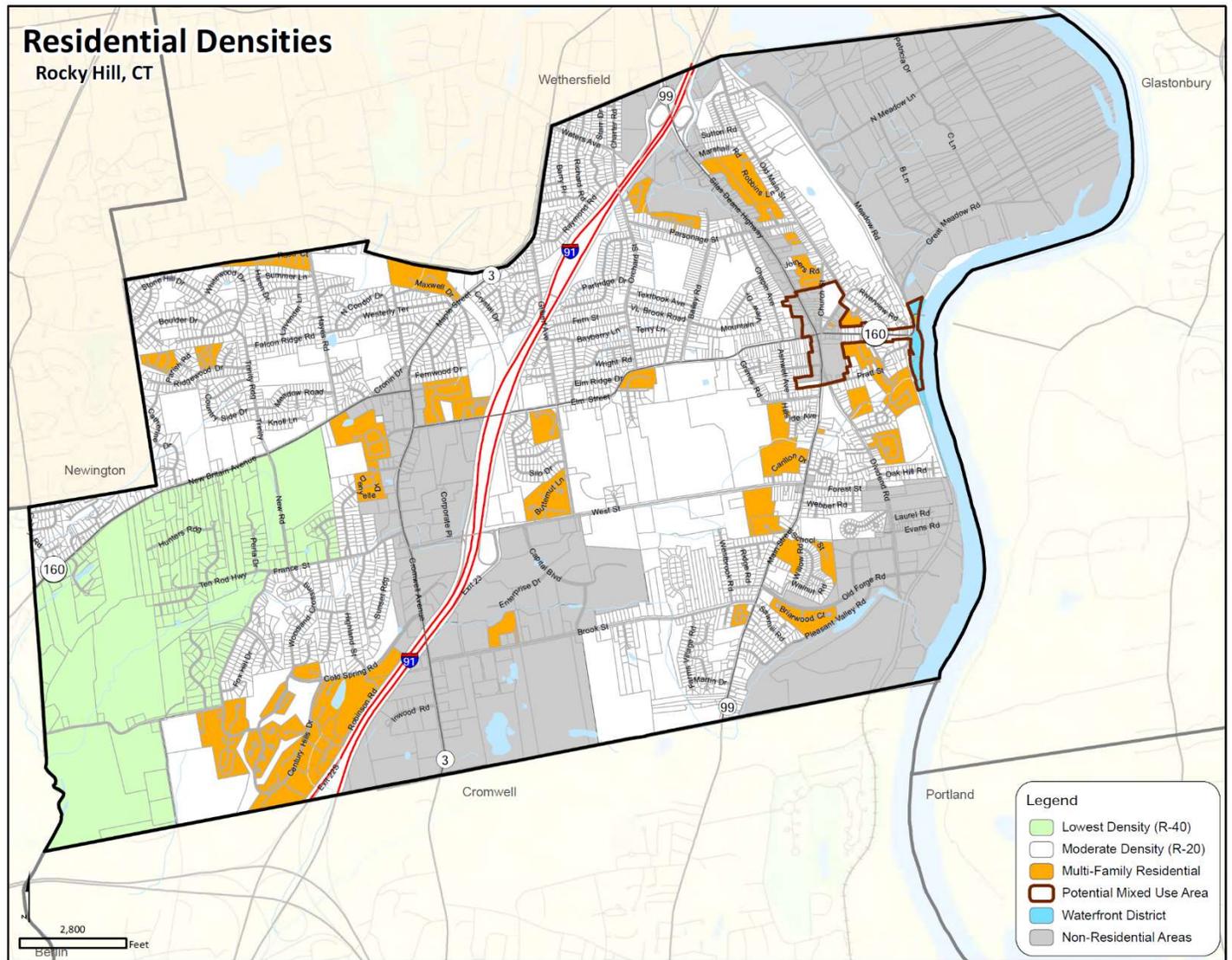


Legend

- Key Gateways
- Scenic View
- Scenic Places
- NRHP Historic Districts
- Individual Historic Sites
- Farm Areas
- Open Space

Residential Densities

Rocky Hill, CT

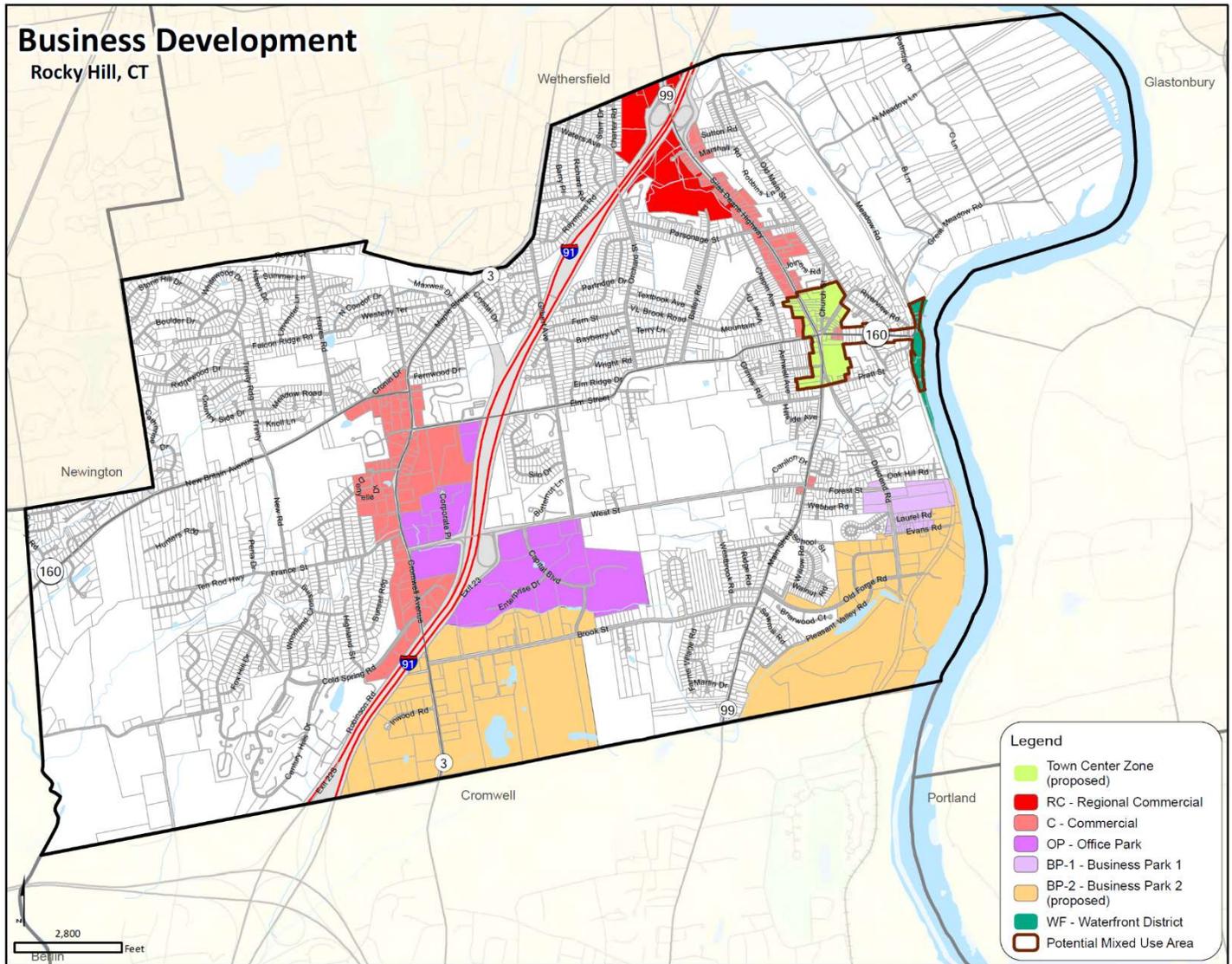


Legend

- Lowest Density (R-40)
- Moderate Density (R-20)
- Multi-Family Residential
- Potential Mixed Use Area
- Waterfront District
- Non-Residential Areas

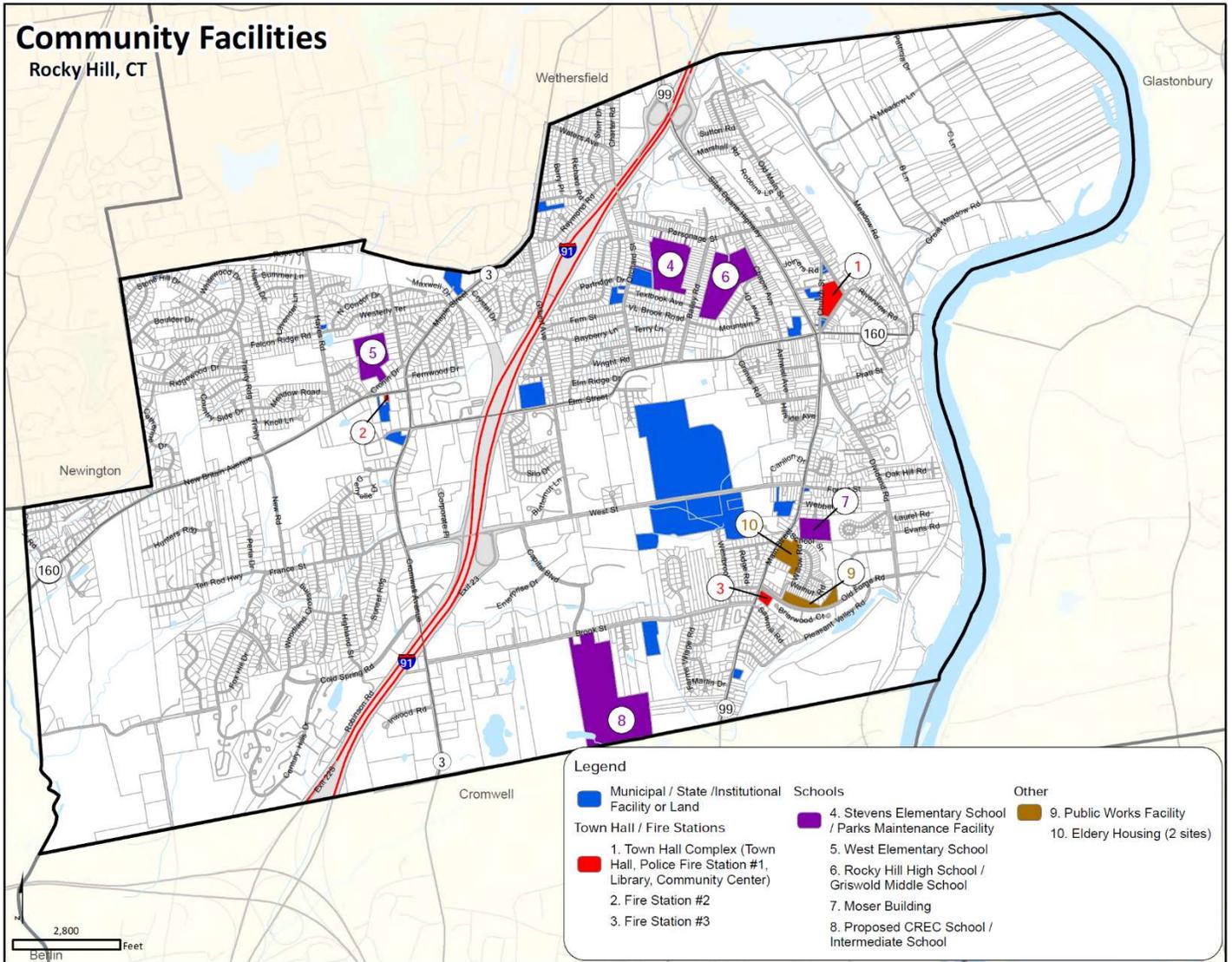
Business Development

Rocky Hill, CT



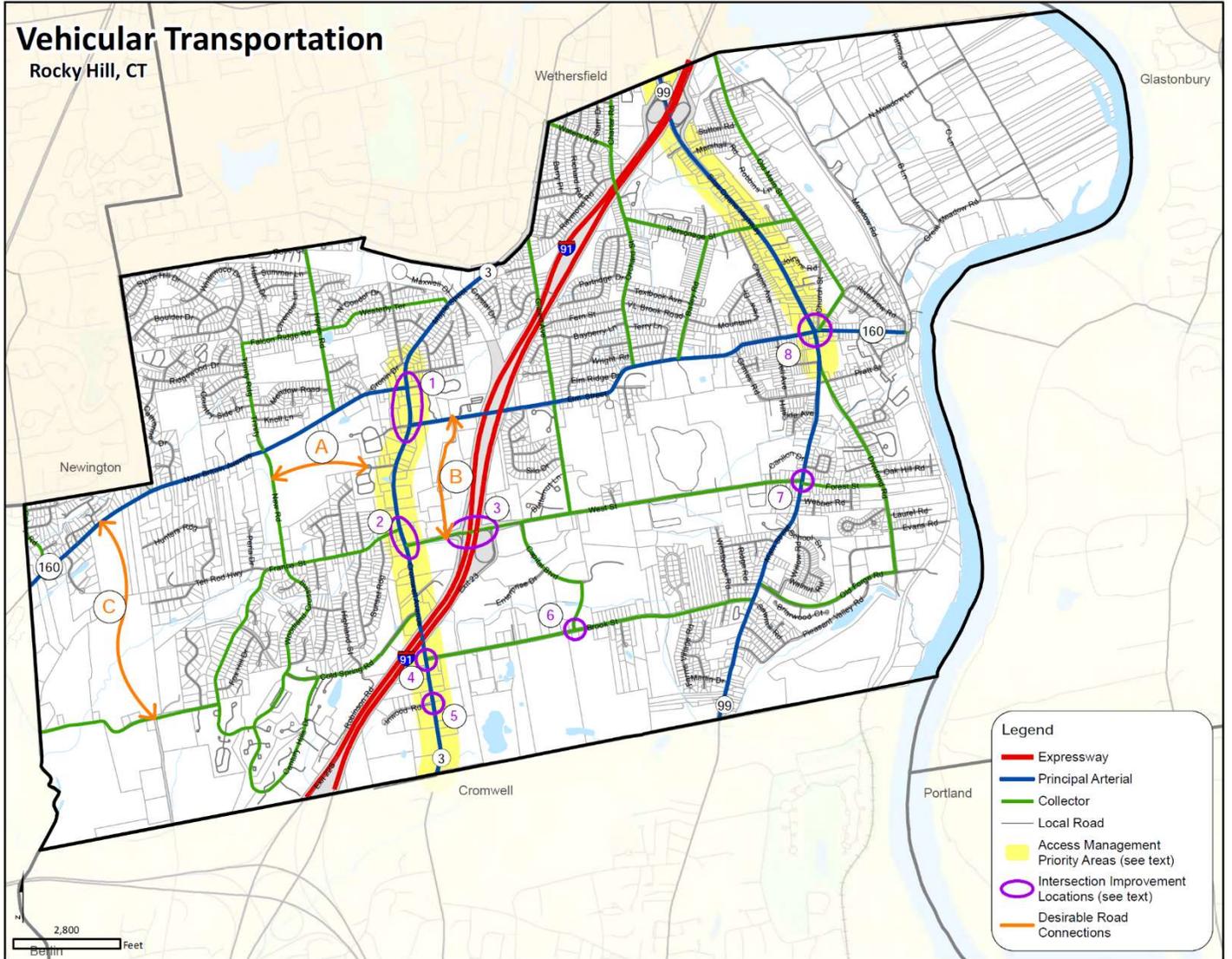
Community Facilities

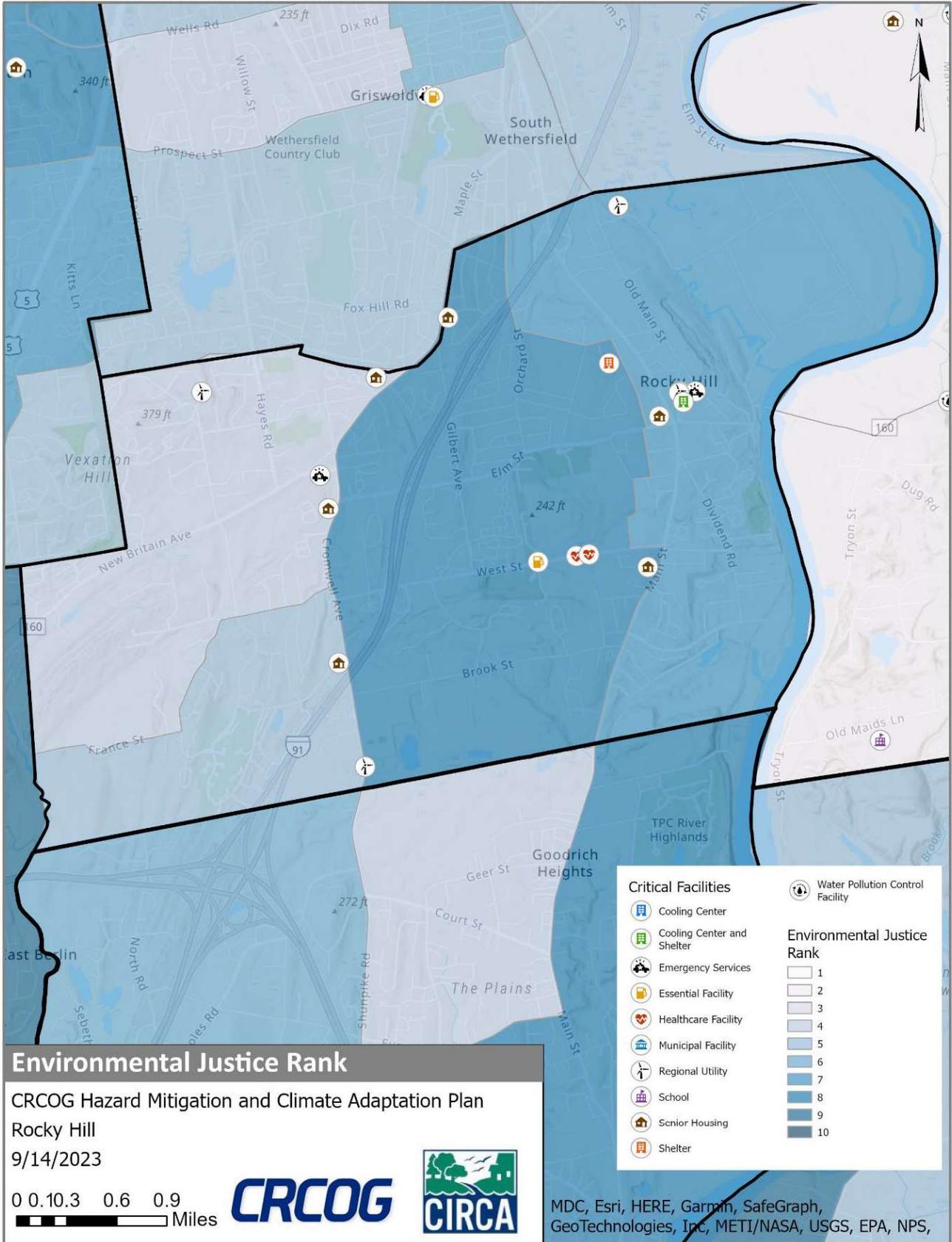
Rocky Hill, CT



Vehicular Transportation

Rocky Hill, CT





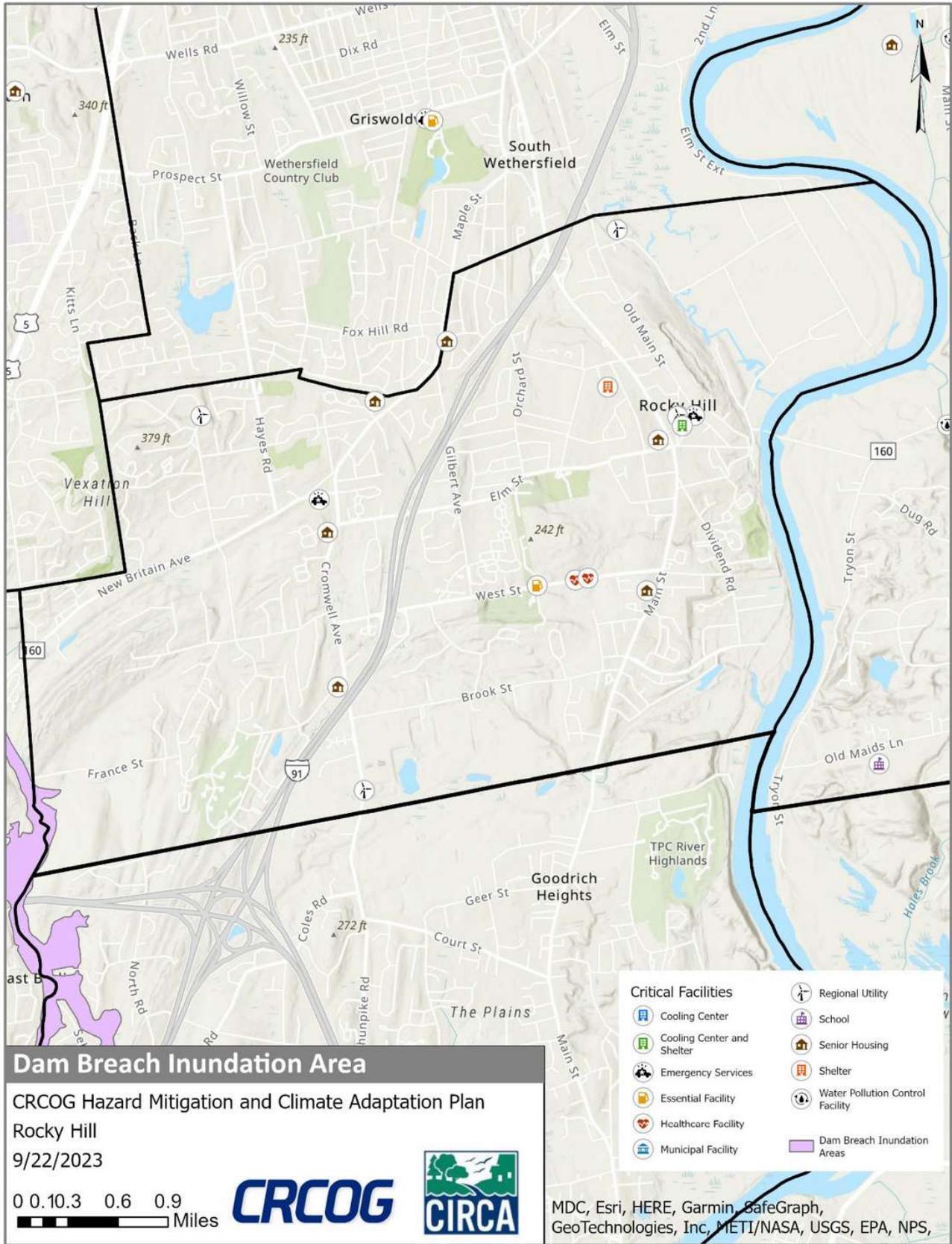
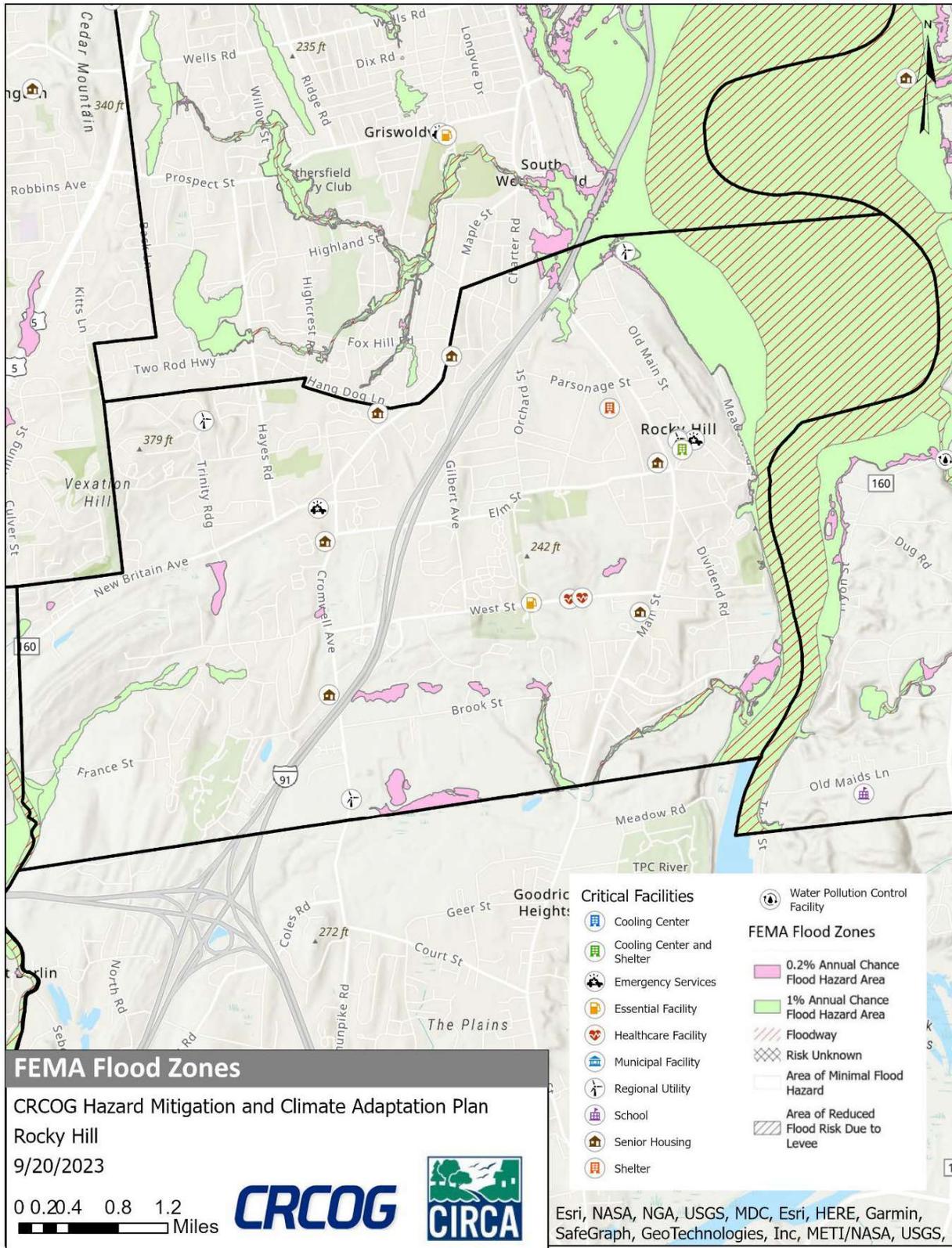


Figure 25-2: FEMA Flood Zones and Critical Facilities, Rocky Hill





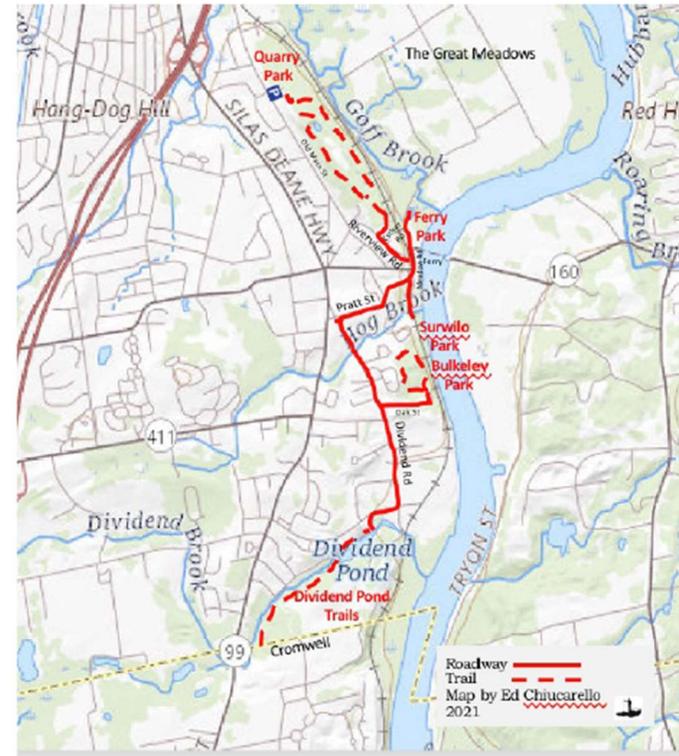
www.CommunityResilienceBuilding.org

Appendix C

The Rocky Hill Greenway Plan

The Rocky Hill Greenway

Compiled by
Edward Chiucarello and Sandi Kelly
for the Town of Rocky Hill
May, 2021



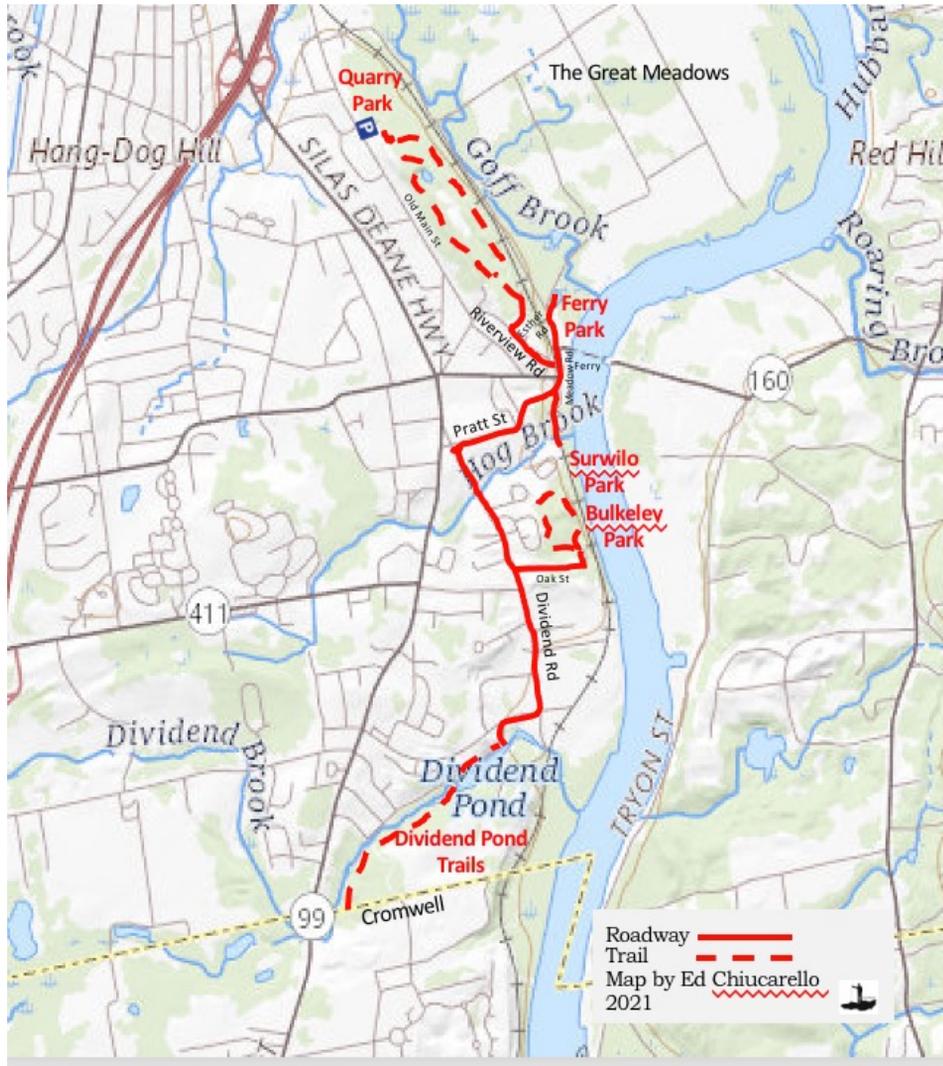
4 miles north to south

A Nomination
For the CT State Greenway System



The Rocky Hill Greenway

Compiled by
Edward Chiucarello and Sandi Kelly
for the Town of Rocky Hill
May, 2021

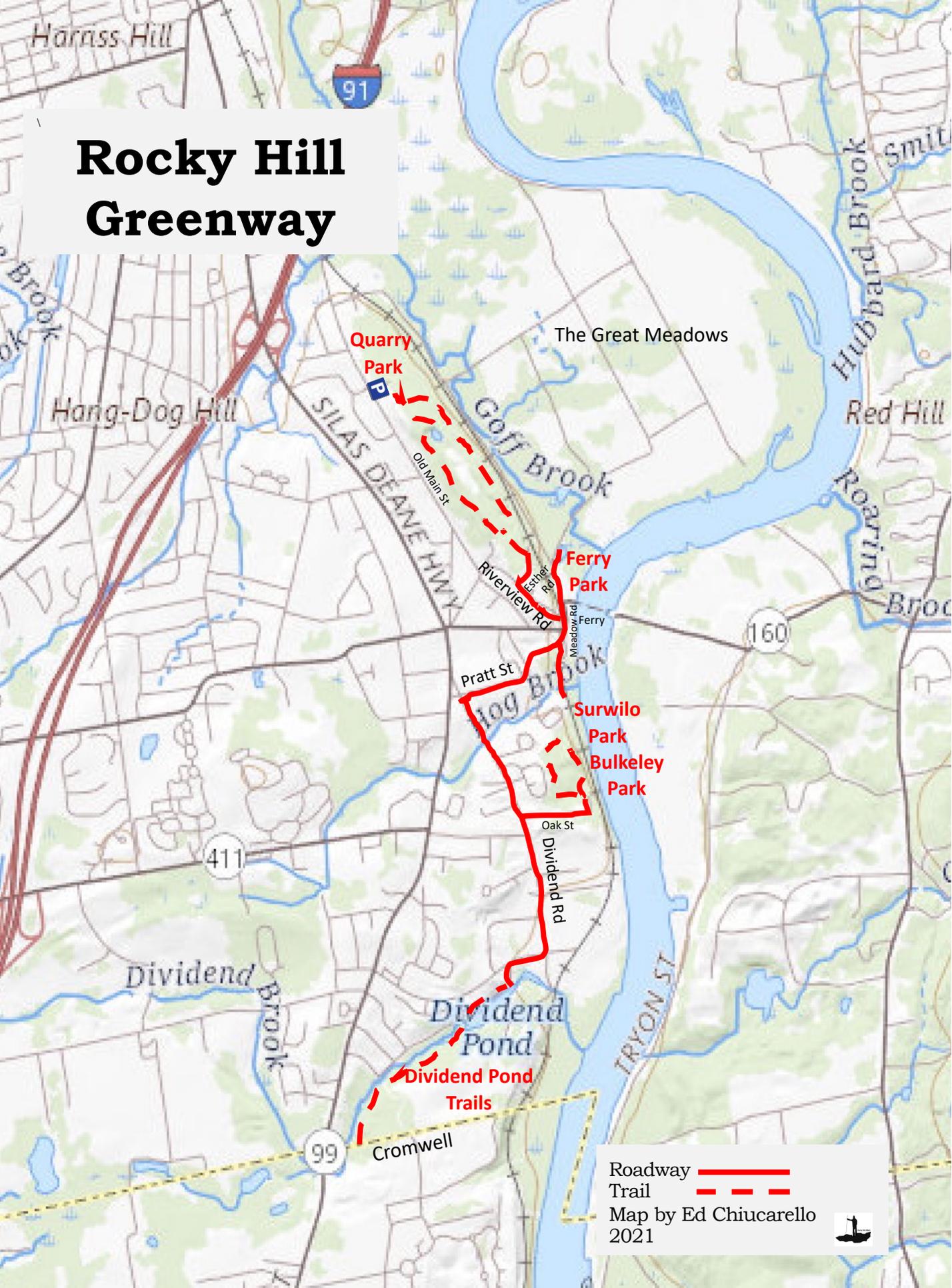


4 miles north to south

**A Nomination
For the CT State Greenway System**



Rocky Hill Greenway



Roadway 

Trail 

Map by Ed Chiucarello
2021



Rocky Hill's 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

encourages Rocky Hill to seek to interconnect open space areas into an overall system. Further, it suggests that Rocky Hill should seek to preserve as much open space as possible along the Connecticut River.

Excerpts from the Rocky Hill POCD

Establish a Riverway Trail

- Re-establish a connection between the community and the Connecticut River by preserving public access, and open space along and near the riverfront.

Create an Open Space System

- Interconnect open space areas into an overall system, an integrated greenbelt.
- Establish a series of trails.
- Establish a signage program.
- Establish community gateway features.



ROCKY HILL



The Rocky Hill Greenway

Description and Connections

Quarry Park

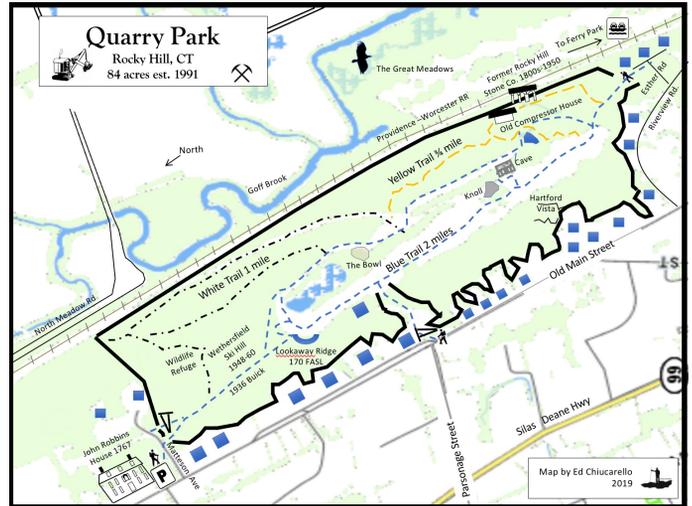
Starting at the northern most point of the Rocky Hill Greenway the public can walk or ride their bike on 3 miles of trails thru historic Quarry Park, home of the original “Rockie Hill” wherein our town gets its name.

It is bound by Old Main street to the west, a railroad line to the east, and residential properties to the south and north. Entrances are located on Old Main Street, across from Parsonage Street, and Esther Rd.

Quarry Park, which is state owned and town managed, is made up of 84 acres with wonderful views of Hartford, Glastonbury, the Great Meadows and the Connecticut River. The park offers passive and active recreational opportunities to the public such as hiking, mountain biking, and bird watching.

It is located on a former trap rock quarry that was worked from the late 1800's to the middle of the 1900s. The quarry floor covers 3 levels with the highest rock face near the north end measuring 170 feet high.

A number of archaeological digs at the Lone Pine Site in the Quarry found Native American artifacts dating back to 6,300 BC.



The Rocky Hill Greenway

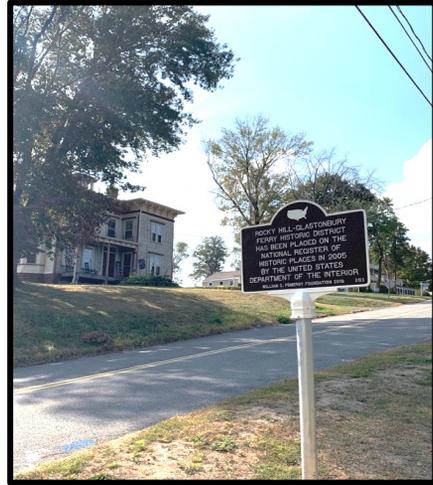
Description and Connections

Quarry to Ferry Park

The southernly exit of Quarry park brings you to Esther Rd., up to Riverview Rd. past beautiful old homes located in the Rocky Hill Center and the Glastonbury Ave. Historic Districts and to Ferry Park about .5 miles.

Walk down Riverview Rd. past Shipyard Park and take in a beautiful view of the Connecticut River. Around the corner to Glastonbury Ave. you might see a train as you walk by the railroad tracks, the old train depot, soon to be a restaurant, to Ferry Park on Meadow Rd. home of the oldest continuously running ferry service in the United States connecting Rocky Hill to Glastonbury.

The 2 acre Ferry Park is a very popular year round place for viewing the Connecticut River. With its shaded lawn and benches it is a perfect place for picnicking and socializing. A spacious public fishing dock creates a destination point for anglers and a public boat launch allows watercraft access to the Connecticut River, the nation's first National Blueway. The 410 mile long Connecticut River received this designation in 2012. Ferry Park hosts a series of farmers' markets held during the summer and also connects to the Great Meadows and Wethersfield a great place for walking, biking and cross country skiing.



The Rocky Hill Greenway

Description and Connections

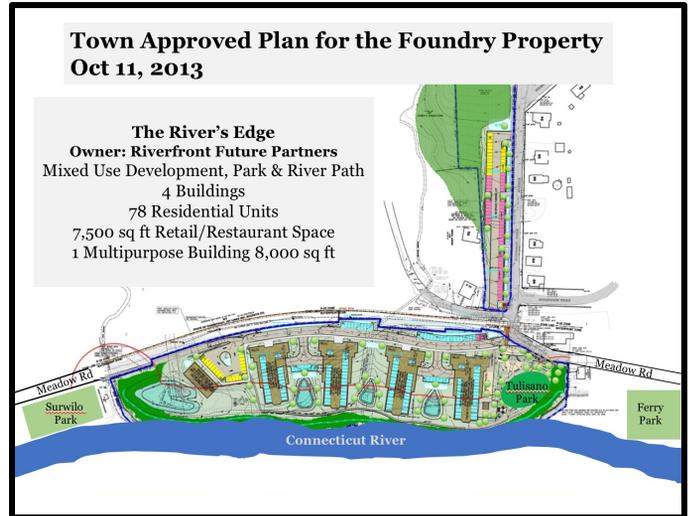
Ferry Park to Surwilo Park

Turning south from Ferry Park, head down Meadow Rd. past the Old Foundry, known as the River's Edge Development, the future home of Tulisano Park, a new restaurant and condos. The Old Train Depot has been redeveloped and is awaiting the opportunity to open as a new restaurant.

From Ferry Park south around the corner and over Hog Brook, in .25 mile you will enter Surwilo Park a place of quiet solitude along the Connecticut River.

In 2019, Rocky Hill formally dedicated this scenic park to Barbara Orsini Surwilo, the town's first female mayor and ardent advocate for the environment.

Surwilo Park is an .8 acre park, a wonderful place for viewing the river as well as bird watching, picnicking, fishing and kayaking.



The Rocky Hill Greenway

Description and Connections

Surwilo to Bulkley Park

Backtracking North up Meadow Rd. walk over the railroad tracks and head south up the hill along Pratt St. thru the Rocky Hill Center Historic District with houses dating back to the 1700s. Continuing up Pratt St. brings you past Brookwood Village and Cedar Hollow Condos and eventually to the Town Green and Historic Center Cemetery.

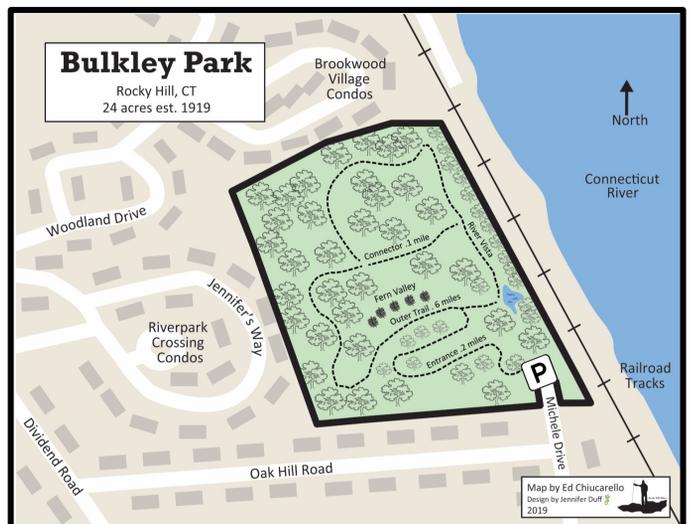


Continuing south down Dividend Rd. to Oak St. in 1.5 miles to Bulkley Park a 24 acre park with tall bluffs with majestic views of the Connecticut River.



It is a completely wooded park offering visitors one mile of easy to moderate hikes through hills and valleys.

Bulkley Park is Rocky Hill's second oldest public park. The land was deeded to the Town of Rocky Hill by Joseph E. Bulkley on September 8, 1919 for use in perpetuity as a "natural park."



The Rocky Hill Greenway

Description and Connections

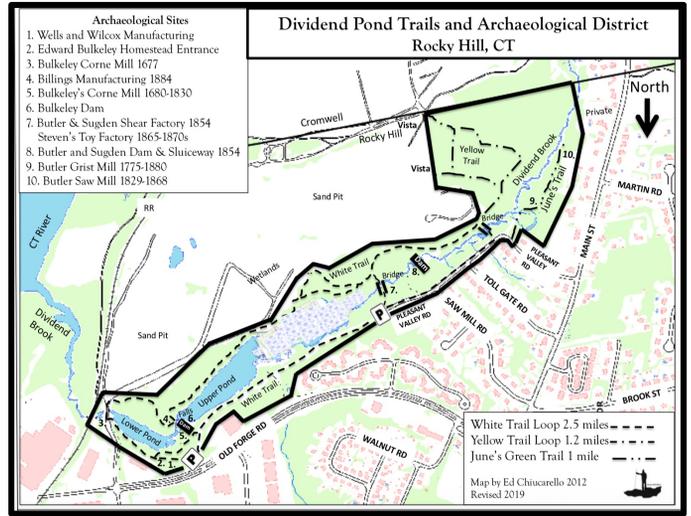
Bulkley to Dividend Pond Trails

Backtrack down Oak St. and head south on Dividend Rd. thru Rocky Hill's Industrial Park to Old Forge Rd. about .8 miles to Dividend Pond Trails and Archaeological District. This town park has 3 miles of trails connecting to the Connecticut River, the Town's Solar Farm, the TPC golf club and River Highland's State Park in Cromwell.

Dividend Pond Trails and Archaeological District comprises 68 wooded acres. A three tier waterfall connects Upper and Lower Ponds. Point of interest signs describe the ten archeological sites which chronicle the water powered manufacturing history of this land from the 1600s to the 1800s. Uncovering these sites was the culmination of research done by June Cooke of the Rocky Hill Historical Society.

In 2004, a successful town-wide referendum resulted in the town preserving this land as open space in perpetuity. In 2011, volunteers cleaned the trash and blazed trails and in 2012 it became a town park. A single track mountain bike loop was added recently in 2019 by members of NEMBA, New England Mountain Bike Association..

Hikers and bicyclists venture often into the serene woods, past two ponds and the waterfall in this the most southerly park on the greenway.



Appendix D
The Rocky Hill
Complete
Streets Plan



ROCKY HILL COMPLETE STREETS

INTRODUCTION

Complete Streets is a national movement that fundamentally changes how we view our community and how we design, build, and use our streets to further the health, safety, welfare, economic vitality, and environmental well-being of our town. Complete Streets are supported by several national organizations such as not but limited to the Federal Highway Administration, Institute of Transportation Engineers, American Planning Association, US Conference of Mayors, and other planning and public health professionals. The term “Complete Streets” describes a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, emergency responders, users and operators of public transportation, seniors, youth and families, etc.

Rocky Hill, Connecticut realizes there are benefits associated with the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy to enhance mobility, improve safety, expand transportation access/choice and related contributions toward building a healthy community. A Complete Streets approach to design contributes to an enhanced quality of life and economic vitality for residents and businesses alike. Benefits include reducing vehicle miles traveled and increasing transportation by walking, bicycling and public transportation, which can help address a wide variety of challenges, including pollution, climate change, traffic congestion, social isolation such as that brought about by the pandemic and physical inactivity. Complete Streets are an important component of transportation design, and economic and community development, by helping create walkable communities, which attract and retain businesses and residents, and allow for the option to safely walk or bicycle to school, work, parks, or other community events and destinations.

The 2015 Plan of Conservation Development provides roadway strategies to provide for safer roadways for motorists, pedestrians of all abilities, bicyclists and transportation modes of all types. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, the Town of Rocky Hill will meet those needs through the development of a user-friendly transportation network that accommodates, encourages, benefits and welcomes all users and transportation modes. Elements of the policy shall include the following:

1. Vision and intent
2. Diverse users
3. Commitment in all projects and phases
4. Clear, accountable expectations
5. Jurisdiction.
6. Design
7. Land use and context sensitivity
8. Performance measures:
9. Project selection criteria
10. Implementation steps

1. VISION

Rocky Hill, Connecticut will encourage a Complete Streets culture that promotes an inter-connected community, healthy lifestyle and modes of transportation to serve all in our diverse community and all who enter herein. A Complete Streets policy shall direct the design, construction, use, and maintenance of town roadways, pathways/ trails, and sidewalks creating a comprehensive, integrated transportation network that is safe, accessible, accommodating, and welcoming to all users regardless of all age, race, ethnicity, income, and ability, A Complete Streets approach will encourage non-motorized modes of transportation and a Complete Streets culture that promotes an inter-connected community and healthy living.

1. BARRIERS TO MOBILITY

Users throughout our community face the following barriers to access of complete streets:

- While growing, our sidewalk network does not yet connect the whole town.
- Bike riders in town do not yet have access to safe, clearly define biking lanes.
- Public transit networks do not fully extend to all corners of our community.

As such, the Town of Rocky Hill will be flexible in its approach to Complete Streets, recognizing the need for flexibility since all streets are different and user needs vary in each community

2. COMMITMENT IN ALL PROJECTS AND PHASES

Every street is unique, however the Town of Rocky Hill, recognizing that every street is to be considered as a Complete Street shall be guided by the following principles:

1. Shall be appropriate to the function and context of the transportation network and mode
2. Shall be sensitive to the neighborhood, it's residents and their needs
3. Shall be flexible in deign to ensure that All have basic safe access and use of the Town's Complete Streets
4. Shall be considered as a part of a comprehensive, integrated network that allows all users choices amongst the various modes of transportation
5. Shall be consistent with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development.
6. Shall consider public health during planning and design programs

3. EXCEPTIONS

The Town of Rocky Hill commits to applying Complete Streets principles at the outset of all transportation and roadway improvement projects. Each project shall be approached as an opportunity to improve the safety and accessibility of the street/right of way for all users. However, the Town realizes that the incorporation of Complete Streets may not always be possible and therefore exceptions shall be made if any of the following criteria render Complete Streets improvements unworkable:

1. Where specific users are prohibited by law from using the ROW (e.g. pedestrians and bicyclists within a limited access highway). However, exclusion of certain users on particular ROW's shall not exempt projects from accommodating other permitted users;
2. Cost is disproportionate to the current need or projected future need for Complete Streets improvements, or unusual circumstances, such as where natural features (e.g. steep hills, ledge, shorelines) make it very costly or impossible to accommodate all modes, or funding is not available;

3. There is an absence of current and future need (e.g. a rural road that carries low Average Daily Traffic (ADT) and is remote from neighborhoods, schools, or points of interest);

4. JURISDICTION AND COORDINATION

This Complete Streets Policy shall apply to all Town streets and land within public ROWs. All new private development projects, and retrofitted projects, which propose improvements within the public ROW, shall comply with this Complete Streets policy. Private development projects proposing privately owned rights-of-way shall be reviewed for consistency with the Complete Street policy as part of the approval process.

All Complete Streets improvements must be coordinated between all relevant Town departments as well as other government departments, Plan Implementation Committee and community groups.

5. DESIGN GUIDANCE

The Town of Rocky Hill will follow accepted design standards and using the best and most current design standards available which may include but not be limited to the following as may be amended periodically:

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

- Policy on Geometric Design of highways and Streets
- Guide for planning, design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities
- Guide for developing Bicycle facilities

American Planning Association (APA)

- Complete Streets: Best Policies and implementation Practices
- U.S. Traffic Calming Manual

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

- Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
- PEDSAFE-Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasures Selection System
- Incorporating on-Road Bicycle Networks into roadway resurfacing projects where feasible

Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)

- Designing Walkable Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach

U.S. Access Board

- Accessible Public Rights-of-way: Planning and Design for Alterations

National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)

- Urban Bikeway Design Guide

6. LAND USE AND CONTEXT SENSITIVITY

Land use context and flexibility shall be considered relative to all potential Complete Street improvements. The overall goal is to preserve and enhance the scenic aesthetic, historical and environmental resources while improving and/or maintaining safety, mobility an infrastructure condition.

It is the intent of this policy that the Town Council, Town Departments and Town Land Use Boards and Commission will endeavor to incorporate Complete Street policies into their respective Ordinances, Regulations, practices, the Plan of Conservation and Development and other planning

and regulatory documents to help support the Complete Streets vision. All initial planning and design studies of complete streets infrastructure projects are to consider opportunities to improve public health. Additionally, the Planning and Zoning Commission is encouraging to review all private development proposals with the goal of facilitating the Town's Complete Streets vision.

Where feasible, walking and biking to municipally-owned facilities shall be encouraged and facilitated.

7. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS AND ANNUAL REPORTING TO TOWN COUNCIL

Annually the measurement of all Complete Streets improvements for the previous calendar year are to be reported to the Town Council:

1. Funding: Total dollar amount spent on Complete Streets Improvements
 - Funding sources to be noted Town, grants, other
2. Sidewalks/Pedestrian/ Public Transportation
 - Linear feet, proximity to municipal facilities, ADA improvements, bus stops
3. Bicycle -related improvements
 - Trails, lanes, signage, bike racks
4. Traffic calming measures
5. Maintenance of existing infrastructure
6. User Data/Crash Data
7. Exceptions Requested

8. PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

When there are conflicting needs among users and modes, safety is the highest priority followed by mobility. The goal is to strive for balance among all modes. It is recognized that all modes cannot be accommodated within every right-of-way (publicly owns transportation corridors) but the overall goal is that all users of varying ability on varying modes can safely and conveniently use the transportation network.

9. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of Complete Streets will require the collaboration and cooperation of many stakeholders on a regular basis.

Community Development Services Department along with Public Works shall review and propose revisions where needed to applicable ordinances and regulations to further the implementation of Complete Streets.

The Municipality shall encourage professional staff development in Complete Streets through attendance at seminars and training sessions. The Municipality shall actively promote public information and education on Complete Streets through use of its website, social media, educational materials distributed to municipal buildings such as the library, community center, and community groups.

