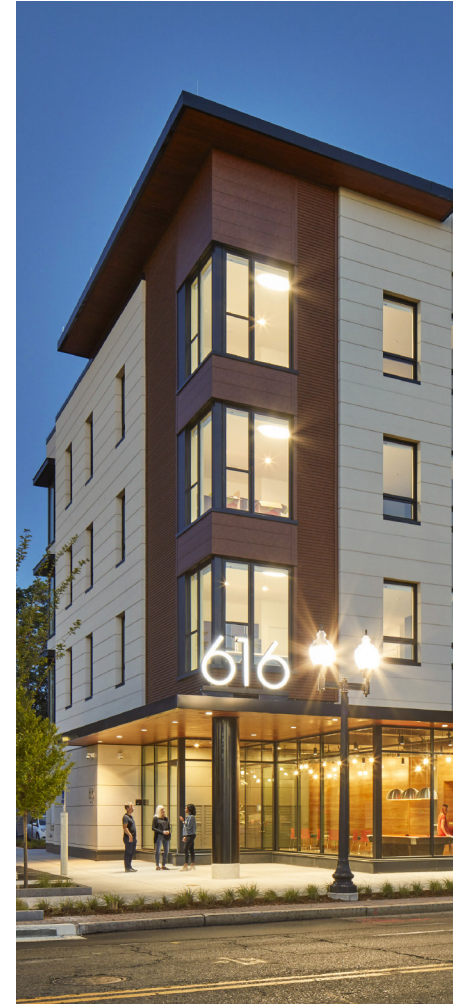


Town of West Hartford



Plan of Conservation and Development 2020 – 2030

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Town of West Hartford Boards & Commissions

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Conservation and Environment Commission
Design Review Advisory Committee
Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission
Persons with Disabilities Commission

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Plan Produced By:












Town of West Hartford

Plan of Conservation and Development

2020 – 2030

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1.0 Introduction

Welcome to West Hartford's Plan of Conservation and Development!

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2020-2030 Plan of Conservation and Development for the Town of West Hartford! This POCD was a true community project. The document is a product of not only countless hours of effort and dedication by the Commission and its staff, but of active engagement from all corners of the West Hartford community.

The 2020-2030 POCD reflects a vision for the next ten years to sustain, enhance, and celebrate the Town of West Hartford. But it can only come to pass through continued dedication and participation by all of our community stakeholders.

Welcome. This is (y)our Plan.

Sincerely,

Kevin Ahern, Chair
West Hartford Plan & Zoning Commission

About the Plan

The Plan is West Hartford's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The Plan documents the state of the Town and provides a guide for its future over the next ten years. It provides a future vision that is based in the realities of the resources and constraints that are present in West Hartford today.

The Plan establishes a vision for West Hartford's physical form, economic and social health, and quality of life. That vision provides a foundation for policy and funding decisions and informs the Town's zoning regulations, which protect the health, safety and welfare of the people of West Hartford. The Plan provides specific strategies and actions necessary to realize the vision.

The Plan was developed with extensive input from Town residents, businesses and stakeholders, elected officials, and Town staff. That outreach included multiple conversations at events throughout Town, a public workshop, key stakeholder meetings, focus group meetings, and an online survey. In total, the planning process received input from over one thousand stakeholders.

The State of Connecticut requires that communities (via their planning commission C.G.S Sec 8-23) rewrite or update their plans of conservation and development at least every ten years to remain eligible for discretionary State funding. The POCD for each municipality must:

- (A) be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality,
- (B) provide for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, sidewalks, multipurpose trails and other public ways as appropriate,
- (C) 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 and identify areas where it is feasible and prudent,
- (D) recommend the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation, agricultural and other purposes and include a map showing such proposed land uses,
- (E) recommend the most desirable density of population in the several parts of the municipality,
- (F) note any inconsistencies with the following growth management principles,
- (G) make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multi-family dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning Region,

(H) promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs identified in the State's consolidated plan for housing and community development, and

(I) consider allowing older adults and persons with a disability the ability to live in their homes and communities whenever possible.

Beyond meeting the State mandate, the planning process affords West Hartford an opportunity to:

1. Measure progress that the Town has made towards the goals of the prior plan (i.e., covering 2009-2019)
2. Identify any important Town-wide trends or concerns
3. Establish a dialogue with residents and stakeholders
4. Effectively communicate the strategic work and careful investments that the Town has made over the last ten years
5. Provide a foundation for new initiatives.

This Plan meets the State of Connecticut General Statutes' plan of conservation and development updated requirements and is consistent with both the State Plan of Conservation and Development and the Capitol Region Council of Government's (CRCOG) 2014-2024 Capital Region Plan.

How the Plan is Organized

Early on in the Plan development process, four key principles were identified for the Town's current and future success. These principles are described as the "guiding lenses" and serve as the filter for the creation of the vision, goals, strategies and actions of the Plan. The Plan identifies a broad vision for West Hartford to work towards and is organized by sections, and major thematic areas that together with the vision form the foundation of the Town and directly influence quality of life. This vision is supported by seven goals, each specific to its corresponding section of the Plan. The Plan also identifies strategies that provide guidance on how to achieve the goals. Specific actions are identified in the implementation section of the Plan. Actions are the step by step methods of implementing strategies and achieving goals. This is further described in the chart below.

Guiding Lenses

Guiding lenses are the analytical filters meant to inform the creation of the vision, goals, strategies and actions of this Plan.

Vision

The vision describes what the people of West Hartford value and what the Town will strive toward over the next 10 years. The vision is an expression of the desires and aspirations of the community in a statement that is meant to guide municipal leaders and organize the goals and strategies of this Plan.

Goals

Goals are commitments towards achieving the vision. They are consistent with the guiding principles and establish a desired impact.

Strategies

Strategies are the methods by which the goals will be achieved. They describe the interim outcomes that can lead to achieving the impact described in a particular goal.

Actions

Actions are specific steps that can be taken to accomplish strategies. They are the first steps to be taken toward achieving the Plan's vision.

Guiding Lenses

During the Plan development, four “Guiding Lenses” were identified as common themes across the Plan. For each section, the Plan’s analysis is filtered through the four Guiding Lenses, which are key principles to the Town’s current and future success.

Sustainability

West Hartford will continue to manage resources to promote welfare and equity for current and future generations by encouraging interconnected green space, a multi-modal transportation system, efficient mixed-use development, and protecting environmental resources.

Connectivity

West Hartford will continue to connect the community both physically and socially by strengthening the linkages between infrastructure, community groups, neighborhoods, business and public institutions.

Innovation

West Hartford will continue to embrace creative and innovative thinking to promote the Town’s continued successful evolution.

Equity

West Hartford will continue to respect the inherent value of each member of its community and each area in Town by eliminating structural and institutional inequities that impede any sector of our community from reaching its full potential.



West Hartford's Vision

West Hartford strives to be a welcoming, innovative, livable and prosperous community with a unique diversity across economic, religious, social, and cultural spectrums. We seek to maintain and promote our thriving community by providing equitable access to a variety of options for housing, employment, transportation, education and other amenities in a manner that reflects responsible stewardship of the environmental, sociocultural, and economic resources necessary for a vibrant quality of life for the Town's current and future residents.

Goals

Each of the seven sections of the Plan has its own goal as noted below.

Facilities and Infrastructure Goal

Promote practices that will maintain and modernize Town facilities and infrastructure in order to meet the evolving needs of the community in sustainable ways and recognize the need to provide services harmoniously with West Hartford's place in the greater Hartford Region and State at large.

Neighborhoods and Housing Goal

Enhance and maintain West Hartford's existing neighborhoods and encourage diversity of housing types and costs to provide access and availability of housing options to current and future residents.

Economic Development Goal

Promote growth and retention of existing businesses and development of new business opportunities to strengthen the community's tax base in an innovative manner, while preserving and protecting the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Transportation Goal

Promote an integrated and balanced transportation system, including "complete streets," to improve traffic flow; enhance parking opportunities; promote public transportation and car-pooling; enhance traffic calming efforts, pedestrian mobility and bicycle access; and meet the needs of the next generation of transportation technologies and infrastructure.

Cultural and Historic Resources Goal

Preserve, protect, enhance and promote, the cultural and historic resources of West Hartford.

Open Space and Environment Goal

Preserve, protect, enhance and promote our open space and our fragile natural systems in concert with managing responsible growth and development.

Land Use Goal

Sustain and preserve the Town of West Hartford as a balanced community, maintaining and promoting neighborhood quality and open space in conjunction with the principles of Smart Growth.

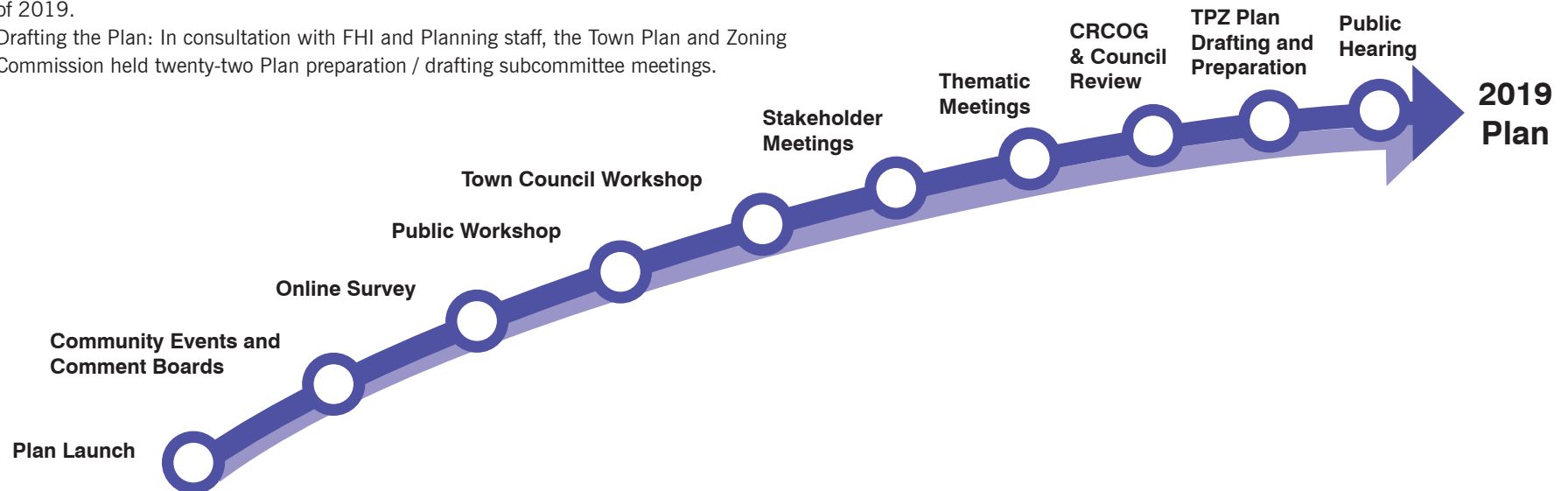
The Plan Development Process

The Plan development process was initiated in September of 2018. The Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ) acted as the steering committee for the project. Community engagement was a critical component of the Plan's development with the following engagement tools and strategies deployed:

- **Town Plan and Zoning Commission:** A subcommittee of the Commission was formed to guide the Plan's development. The subcommittee met regularly with the project team to guide the process and provide Plan content. In total the subcommittee met twenty-two times during the Plan development process.
- **Community Events:** The project team attended a housing event for seniors at the Elmwood Community Center and engaged attendees in a discussion regarding housing and other aspect of Town life relevant to the Plan.
- **Comment Boards:** Comment boards were placed at Town Hall, all three libraries, and at the Elmwood Community Center. Over one hundred comments were received.
- **Online Survey:** An online survey was conducted between September and November of 2018. Over 1,200 people from all areas of West Hartford participated.
- **Public Workshop:** A public workshop was conducted in October of 2018 and was promoted via local press, social media, flyers, and email blasts.
- **Town Council Workshops and Presentations:** A workshop was conducted with the Town Council in October of 2018 and a presentation was conducted in February of 2019.
- **Stakeholder Meetings:** Four stakeholder meetings were conducted with Town staff, board and commission members in October of 2018.
- **Thematic Meetings:** Four thematic meetings were held with residents, property owners, business owners, board and commission members, and Town staff in January and February of 2019.
- **Drafting the Plan:** In consultation with FHI and Planning staff, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission held twenty-two Plan preparation / drafting subcommittee meetings.



Project team engaging with attendees of September 2018 housing fair at the Elmwood Community Center.



Comment Board Findings

Post-It Note Comment Boards were placed in five (5) high traffic public facilities throughout Town: Town Hall, Noah Webster Library, Bishop's Corner Branch Library, Elmwood Community Center and Faxon Branch Library. The boards were utilized as a means of soliciting feedback from residents to gauge priorities for the Plan of Conservation and development in the following six (6) topical areas: Housing, Transportation, Facilities & Infrastructure, Economic Development, Open Space & Recreation and Sustainability & Environment. This outreach method was selected to provide an alternative form of public participation without requiring attendance at a public meeting or access to online surveys or email.

Each board included the following instructions:

We want to know what's important to you. Please use the post-it notes to comment on your priorities for the Town of West Hartford as we update the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development.

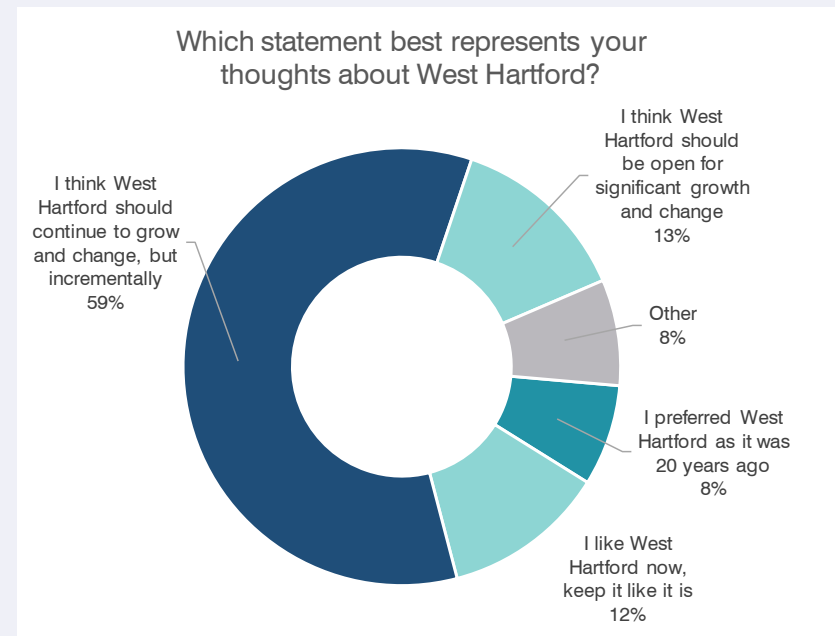
The Post-It Note Comment Boards were open to public comment for thirty (30) days and received two-hundred eighty-four (284) responses.



Comment Board from Noah Webster Library

Survey Response

The results of the online survey were extremely informative. The survey comprised of over forty questions, many which included an opportunity to provide comment. The broadest question asked participants to select one of five statements regarding the status and future of the Town. Of the selections provided, 59% of respondents selected "I think West Hartford should continue to grow and change, but incrementally" as the most appropriate response. This question was also presented to workshop attendees and received a similar distribution of responses.



"I support incremental change and growth as state above but growth should be consistent with principles that preserve West Hartford's unique charm and should protect the safety and quality of life in neighborhoods."

"I think WH should continue to grow and change but very cautiously with preservation of the key elements that make this town so great."

"I think West Hartford should continue to grow, but the town needs to remember that not everyone in this town is wealthy and the tax burden to the residents is unbearable. While I love change, it is getting difficult for seniors and the middle class to keep living here."

Public Workshop

A public workshop was conducted at the West Hartford Town Hall Auditorium in October of 2018. The workshop was promoted via the project website, online survey, social media posts, email blasts, flyer distribution, and local print media. The workshop included a presentation about the planning process and relevant trends affecting the community. The presentation was followed by an interactive survey and breakout sessions organized around the following topics:

- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Housing
- Town Facilities, Open Space, and Infrastructure
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Sustainability and the Environment

Discussions at the breakout sessions were organized around identifying strengths, issues, and ideas relative to each topic.



Town Planner Todd Dumais provides an introduction to the planning process

Town Council Engagement

The Plan development process in Connecticut places the responsibility of developing or updating a plan on a community's Planning Commission. Legislative bodies such as West Hartford's Town Council typically provide an advisory role by reviewing the Plan and providing comment. The Council was engaged early in the planning process to ensure that the Plan is reflective of the community's desires and will be more likely to have the support of elected officials in implementing the Plan's goals.



A workshop and presentation were conducted with the Town Council in October 2018 and February 2019. The Council was supportive of the direction of the Plan and provided feedback that was useful in shaping the Plan's vision and goals.

Stakeholder Meetings

Multiple stakeholder meetings were conducted as a means of identifying the key issues from the perspective of Town staff and board and commission members. These meetings were conducted in small group formats of twelve or less people and consisted of discussions about strengths, issues, and ideas relative to each topic.

Four meetings were conducted on the following topics:

- Open Space, Recreation, Sustainability and the Environment
- Transportation and Facilities
- Housing, Land Use, and Economic Development
- Retail Districts and Commercial Development



Open space, recreation, sustainability and the environment stakeholder meeting

Thematic Meetings

Thematic meetings were conducted in a large focus group setting as a means of expanding the stakeholder meetings to a larger and more diverse group of constituents. Residents, business owners, property owners, elected officials, and board and commission members were invited to attend meetings.



Transportation thematic meeting

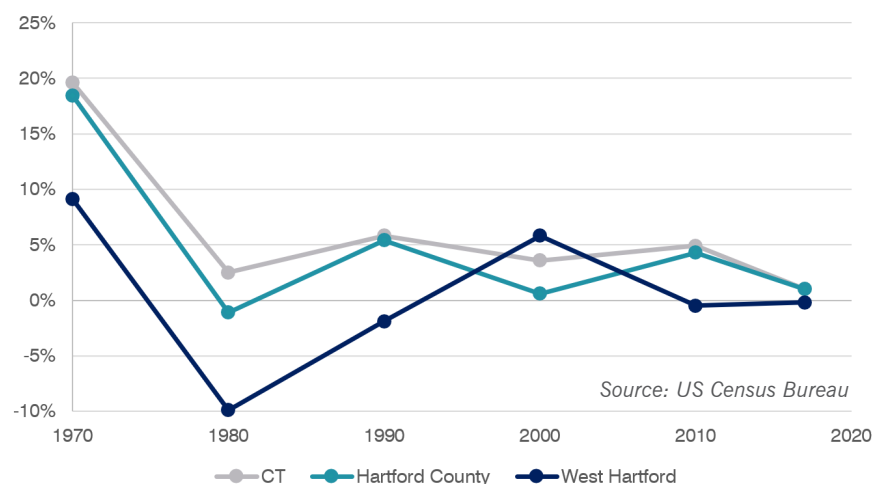
Similar to the stakeholder meetings, four meetings were conducted on the following topics:

- Environment, Sustainability and Open Space
- Economic Development
- Housing, Cultural Resources and Facilities
- Transportation and Infrastructure

Key Demographics and Trends

West Hartford has a population of approximately 63,000 residents; this population size has been stable since the year 2000 as reported by census data. Population growth in the Town has been consistent with that of both the Region and State. Year over year population declines have occurred in the Town since the mid 1970s with that trend reversing in the direction of modest growth in the early 1990s. Population growth has been flat over the last decade with modest growth projected by the Connecticut Economic Resource Center.

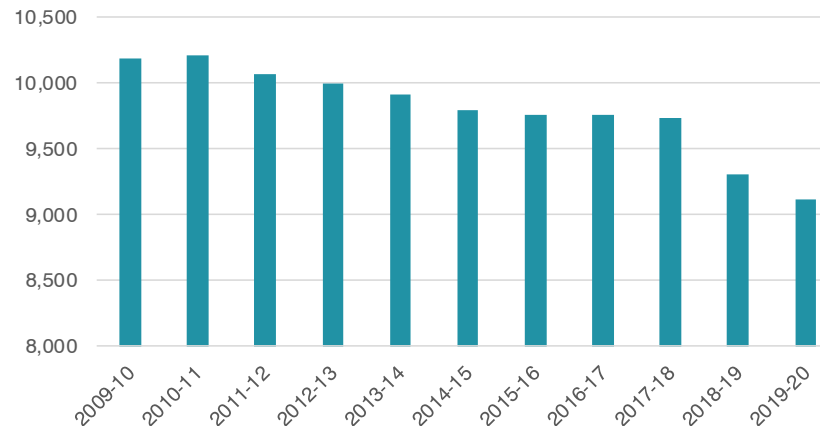
Population Growth Over Prior Decade
West Hartford vs Region 1970-2017



West Hartford Public School enrollment has mirrored the Town's population trends over the past fifteen years. Most recently, enrollment peaked in the 2010-11 school year at 10,207 students but has since contracted to 9,122 students as of October of 2019. Enrollment projections conducted by the school district suggest that enrollment will continue to decline over the next decade.

In comparison to both the State and Region, West Hartford has a higher median household income. In 2017, West Hartford had a median household income of \$95,298 versus \$70,429 in Hartford County and \$73,781 in Connecticut. Since 2010, West Hartford has seen an 8% decrease in households making less than \$100,000 per year and a 12% increase in households making over \$100,000 per year. Connecticut experienced similar shifts in household earnings over the same period with a 7% decrease in households making less than \$100,000 per year and a 16% increase in households making over \$100,000 per year.

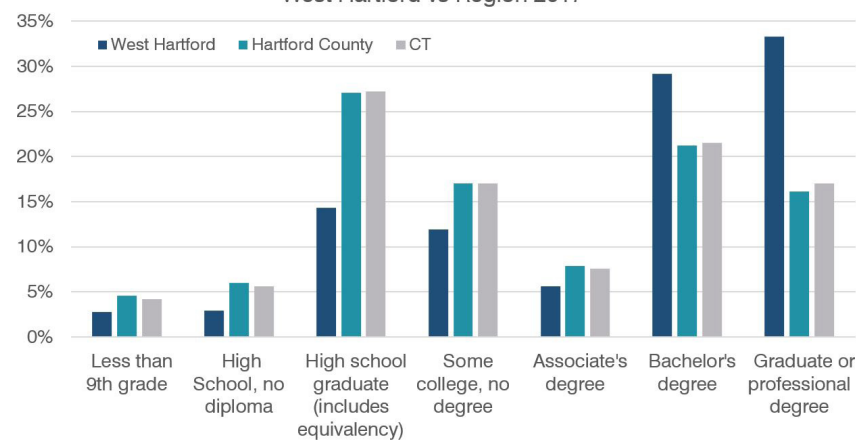
West Hartford Public Schools Enrollment
2009-10 to 2019-20



Source: CT Department of Education, West Hartford Schools

West Hartford residents also have higher educational attainment than residents of the Region and State. By example, 62% of adults in West Hartford have a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 37% of adults in Hartford County and 38% in the State. Educational attainment of the Town's residents is on a positive trajectory, improving between 2010 and 2017 with more residents who have bachelor's and graduate degrees and fewer residents with less than a bachelor's degree.

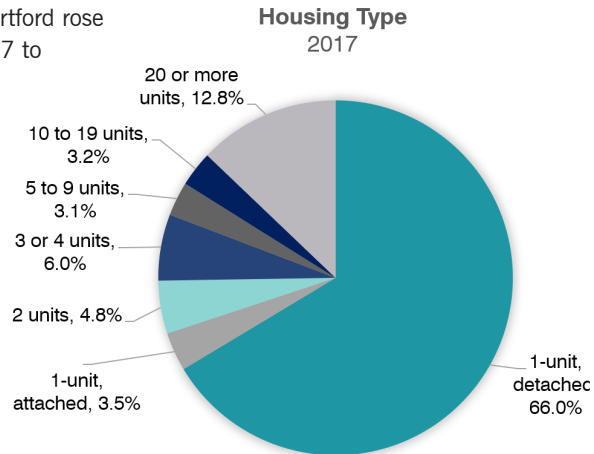
Educational Attainment
West Hartford vs Region 2017



Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017

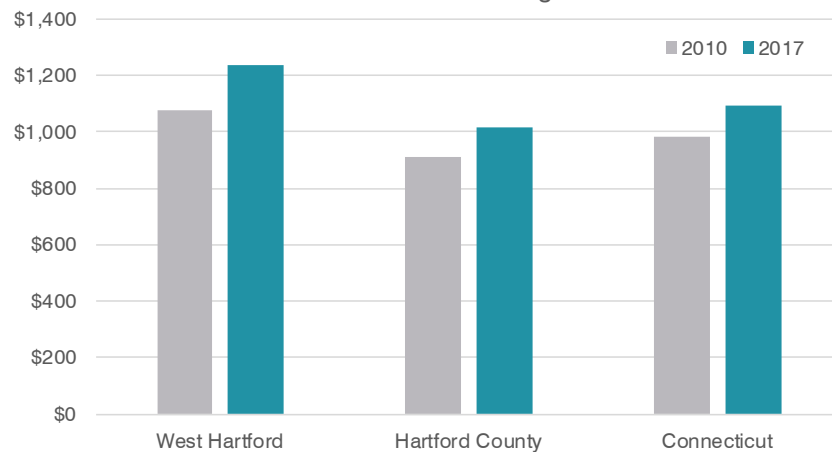
West Hartford has a diversity of housing types, although a majority (two-thirds) of housing is single-family (1-unit detached). Almost half of the Town's multi-family housing is found in buildings or complexes that have twenty or more units. Only 11% of the Town's housing is found in buildings with 2 to 4 units.

Median gross rent in West Hartford rose 15% between 2010 and 2017 to \$1,258. This exceeds both regional and state-wide median rents. West Hartford saw greater rent increases than both the Region and State over the 2010 to 2017 period. A significant share of rental households (43.5%) spent more than 30% of their household income on rent.



Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017

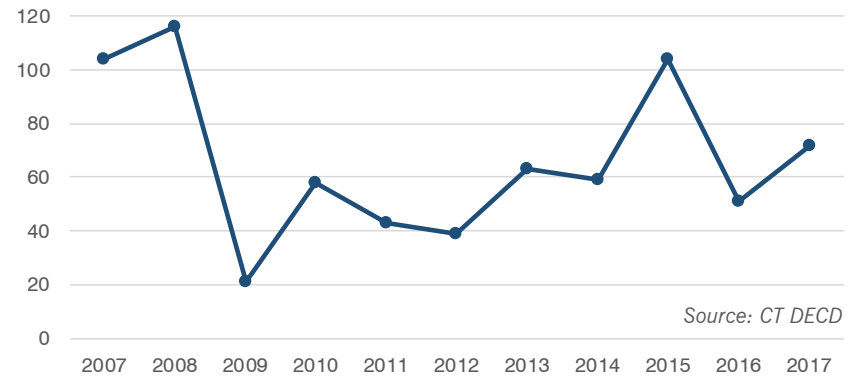
**Median Gross Rent
West Hartford vs Region**



Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017

Residential construction activity has fluctuated in West Hartford over the past decade. The most recent peak was in 2015 when 104 units were permitted.

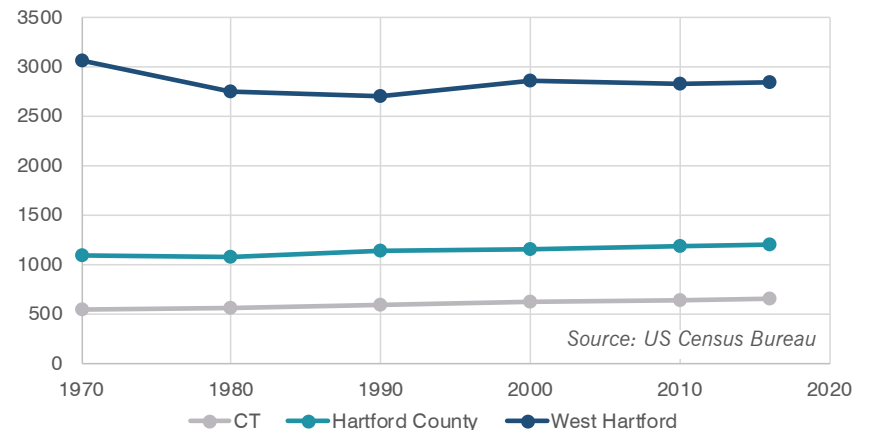
**West Hartford Residential Unit Construction Permits
2007-2017**



Source: CT DECD

West Hartford's population density is significantly higher than both the State and Region. Population density peaked in 1970 at slightly more than 3,000 residents per square mile but has since fallen to approximately 2,800 residents per square mile in 2017 compared to 1,200 residents per square mile in Hartford County.

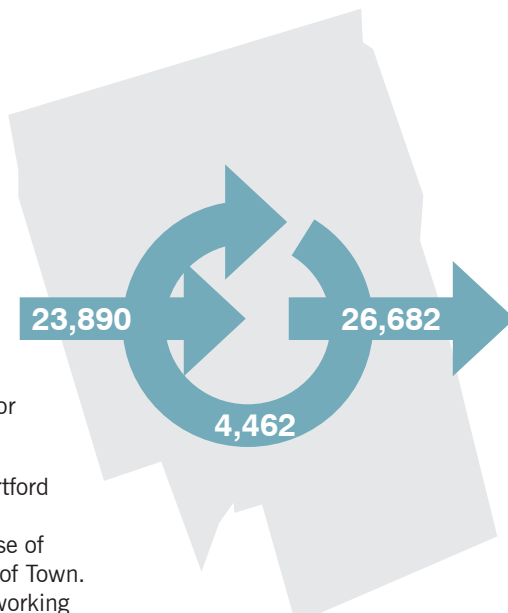
**Population Density per Square Mile
1970 - 2017**



Source: US Census Bureau

West Hartford has a total of 28,352 full and part-time jobs. Of those jobs, 4,462 (16%) are held by Town residents. 26,682 workers who reside in West Hartford commute to other communities for work. Next to working in Town, the most common work locations for West Hartford residents includes Hartford, New Britain, East Hartford, and Newington. While a significant share of the Town's residents work in nearby cities and towns, many of West Hartford's residents also commute as far as Springfield, MA and New York City for work.

West Hartford 2017 Employment Inflow/Outflow

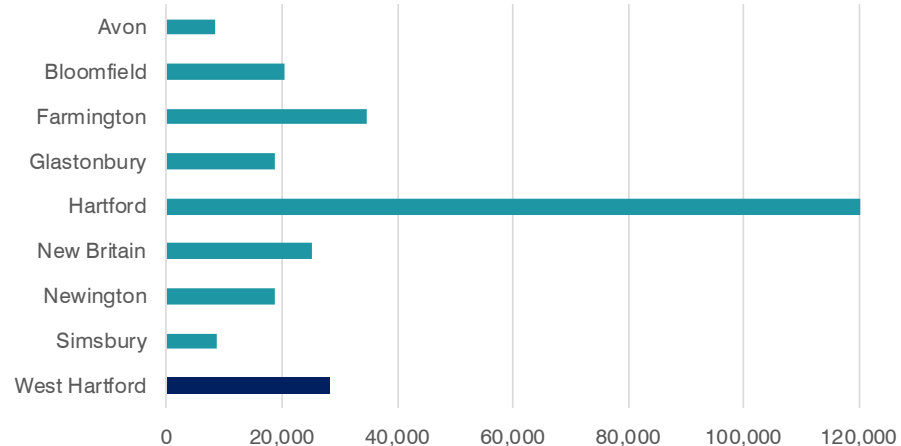


Between 2008 and 2017, West Hartford saw an increase of 1.2% in workers commuting into Town and an increase of 10.1% in residents working outside of Town. The number of residents living and working in Town fell by 10.3% over that period and the number of jobs in Town contracted by 0.9%.

Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

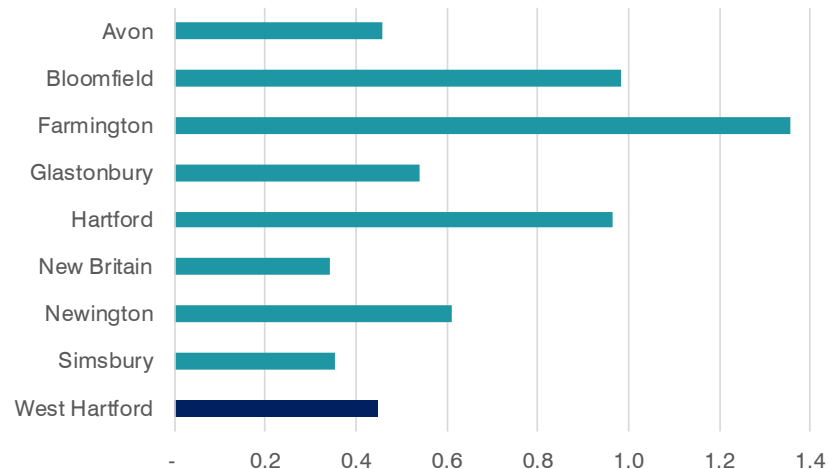
With the exception of Hartford (a major employment center), West Hartford has a comparable number of jobs as surrounding towns and cities. West Hartford has a more robust employment base than adjacent communities such as Avon and Simsbury, but the Town lags behind Farmington in jobs. When adjusted for residential population, West Hartford has less jobs per resident than towns such as Bloomfield, Glastonbury, and Newington.

Jobs in the Region by Town or City 2017



Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

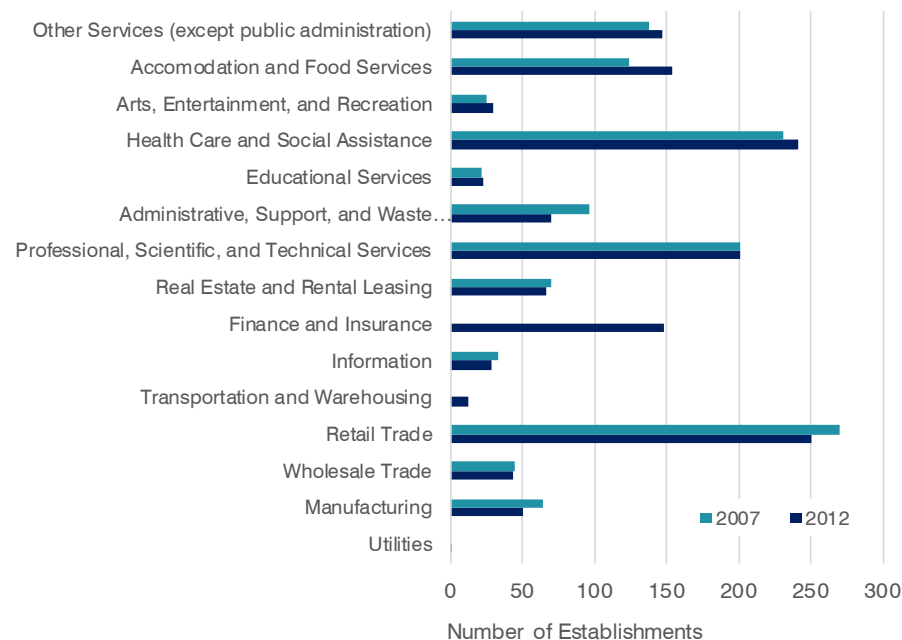
Ratio of Jobs to Population 2017



Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

West Hartford has a diversity of business establishments with the greatest concentration of businesses in the retail trade category. Other establishment types that are well represented in West Hartford include health care and social assistance, professional, scientific, and technical services, accommodation and food services, and finance and insurance. Between 2007 and 2012, West Hartford saw growth in the accommodation and food services and healthcare and social assistance categories. Wholesale trade, manufacturing, and administrative, support and waste disposal and remediation saw declines over that same period.

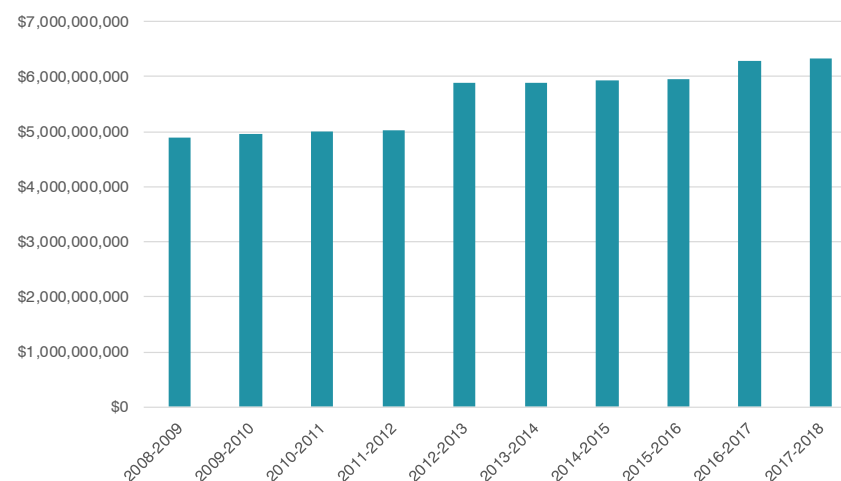
West Hartford Business Establishments 2007, 2012



Source: 2007, 2012 Economic Census of the U.S

The Town's grand list grew from \$4.89 billion in the 2008-2009 fiscal year to \$6.32 billion in the 2017-2018 fiscal year. This represents a 29% increase over a 10 year period. Sof-Ix Blueback Square Holdings LP is the Town's highest valued property, assessed at \$80.0 million in 2018. Westfarms Mall is the second highest valued property on the grand list, assessed at \$52.6 million.

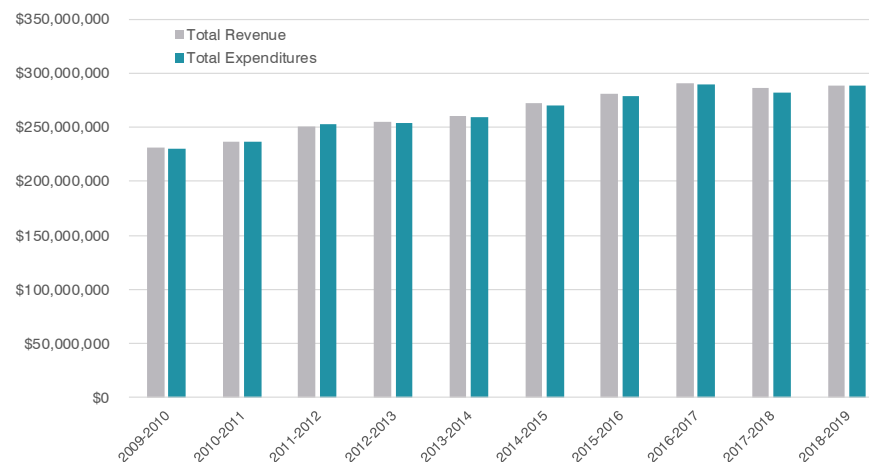
Net Grand List 2008 - 2018



Source: CT Data Collaborative, CERC Town Profile, Town of West Hartford

The Town's revenues and expenditures rose consistently between the 2009-10 fiscal year and the 2016-17 fiscal year. The Town's 2018-19 expenditures were \$288.1, matching revenue for the year. Total annual revenue grew by 24.8% between the 2009-10 and 2018-19 fiscal years; inflation was 17% over that same period.

Revenues and Expenditures 2009 - 2019



Source: CT Data Collaborative, CERC Town Profile, Town of West Hartford



Image Credit: Perkins Eastman

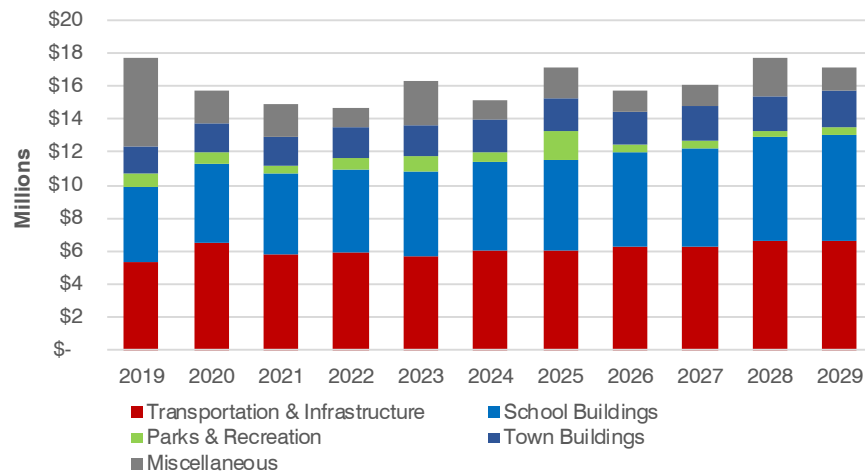
2.0 Facilities and Infrastructure

The Town's facilities and infrastructure include multiple municipal buildings such as Town Hall and the libraries, school buildings, parks and playgrounds, golf courses and recreation facilities, transportation infrastructure, and the Town's stormwater system. In total, the Town owns approximately 2.9 million square feet of buildings and structures. Most of that inventory was constructed in the 1950's and 1960's in response to substantial population growth following the Second World War. The average age of a Town-owned building is 78 years and the median age of a Town-owned building is 52 years. Transportation infrastructure (e.g., roads, traffic signals and sidewalks) is a critical component of the Town's infrastructure but is addressed separately under Section 5.0 Transportation.

The Town's facilities are well-maintained, but the aging infrastructure requires substantial capital improvements on an annual basis. The Town's 2018 to 2029 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects annual investments between \$14.5 million and \$17.5 million over the next decade. The most substantial share of that spending is allocated to transportation and infrastructure and school buildings. The Town utilizes four main financing sources for projects in the CIP: long-term debt (General Obligation Bonds), the Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditure Fund, State and Federal grants, and "other" funds, many of which come from user fees at facilities.

Capital improvements to School and Town buildings include upgrades and maintenance to buildings, furnishings and equipment, and site improvements while capital improvements to parks and recreation include facility and site improvements. Other capital improvements (miscellaneous improvements) include communications infrastructure and public works' equipment and Town facilities.

Town Capital Improvement Budget (2018 - 2029)



Source: Town of West Hartford



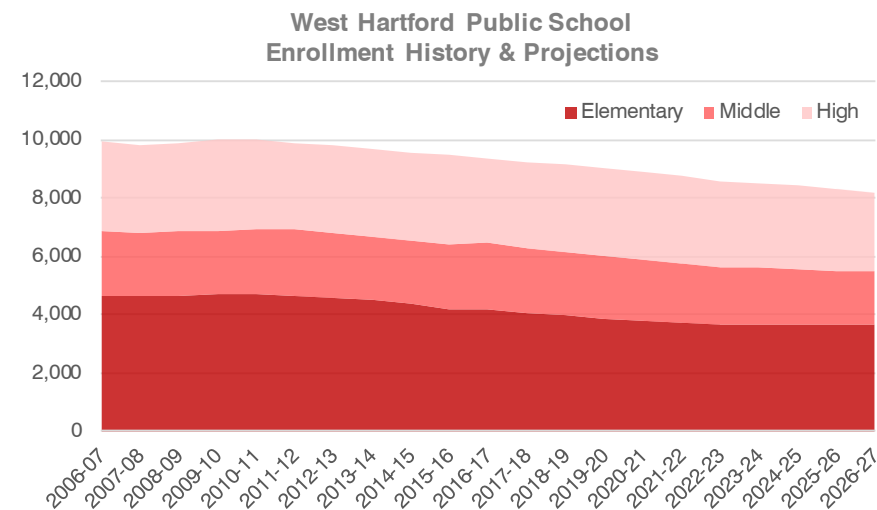
Source: Town of West Hartford

School Facilities

The West Hartford Public School system has sixteen schools with 1.8 million square feet of building space on 320 acres of land. Half of the Town's schools were built in the 1950's and the average age of a West Hartford school building is 62 years and the median age of a West Hartford school building is 64 years. The Town's oldest school is Smith School built in 1915. Several older schools without recent major renovations include Bugbee, Duffy, King Phillip, and Morley. The Town's newest school is the Charter Oak International Academy built in 2016. This school, a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certified building, replaced the former structure built in 1929.

Given the age of the Town's schools, infrastructure improvements are anticipated to range from \$10 to \$12 million per year over the next decade. Typical improvements include flooring replacement, roof replacement and repair, painting, HVAC upgrades, and grounds improvements.

Total school enrollment as of October of 2019 was 9,122 students. This was a reduction of over one thousand students (10%) from the most recent enrollment peak of 10,207 over the 2010-11 school year. By comparison, school enrollment approached 13,000 students in the late 1960's. School enrollment is projected to continue to marginally decline over the next decade, contracting to approximately 8,100 students in the 2026-27 school year. Given these enrollment projections, the Town's schools are expected to have sufficient space to meet enrollment needs over the next decade.



Data Source: West Hartford Public Schools Capital Improvement Plan 2017-2018



Charter Oak International Academy Image Credit: Perkins Eastman

School	Level	Year Built	Rehab	Area (sf)
Aiken	Elementary	1964	2003	62,028
Braeburn	Elementary	1956	2003	59,742
Bugbee	Elementary	1950		68,165
Charter Oak	Elementary	2016		87,700
Duffy	Elementary	1952		78,991
Morely	Elementary	1927	1976	61,085
Norfelt	Elementary	1957	2000	61,715
Smith	Elementary	1915	1995	66,329
Webster Hill	Elementary	1949	1999	77,701
Whiting Lane	Elementary	1954	1997	107,771
Wolcott	Elementary	1957	2003	78,850
King Philip	Middle	1954		192,897
Sedgwick	Middle	1931	2004	183,399
Bristow	Middle	2003		101,456
Conard	High	1957	1998	288,145
Hall	High	1970	1999	277,802

West Hartford Public Schools Source: Town of West Hartford

Town Buildings

In addition to schools, the Town owns over twenty buildings such as Town Hall, public safety building, fire stations, libraries, public works facilities, garages, and historic homes that account for approximately one million square feet of space. These structures, which have an average age of 97 years and a median age of 65 years, have undergone major rehabilitation over the past thirty years and require ongoing maintenance and improvements.

Ongoing projects provide for the general maintenance of these facilities. Typical improvements include replacement of interior finishes, completion of minor carpentry work, replacement of building equipment, repair of building fixtures, replacement of building roofs and other exterior surfaces, and other minor projects of a recurring nature.

Energy Conservation

The Town tracks the use and cost of energy and water for all Town facilities and plans and implements energy conservation projects as a means of reducing energy costs and improving the sustainability of the Town's operations.

The Town has an active Clean Energy Commission that is appointed by Town Council. The Clean Energy Commission promotes the use of clean energy, assists the Town in achieving energy consumption reduction goals, and recovers any financial, environmental, and educational benefits from doing so. West Hartford's Clean Energy Commission is also responsible for authoring and updating the Town's adopted Comprehensive Energy Plan, which envisions a 100% renewable energy future for the Town.

As outlined in the Comprehensive Energy Plan, the Town's energy management strategy prioritizes reducing energy use through conservation behavior and energy efficiency measures, as well as increasing the use of renewable energy. Projects may include education, more efficient equipment, control system upgrades, new technologies, and renewable generation (e.g., solar, geothermal). Utility programs and incentives are a key part of this strategy, as is collaboration with West Hartford's Clean Energy Commission, and external partners like other towns, CT Department of Energy and the Environment (CTDEEP), CT Green Bank, Sustainable CT, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).



Other Municipal Facilities	Year Built	Rehab	Area (sf)
Blue Back Square Garages	2007		322,000
Cold Storage Building	-		12,000
Dog Pound	1971		750
Elmwood Community Center	1928	1978	68,744
Fairview Cemetery (all buildings)	1920-72		5,083
Faxon Branch Library	1954	1997	12,435
Fire Station #1	1915		7,892
Fire Station #2	1992		5,380
Fire Station #3	1930	1991	9,015
Fire Station #4	1954	1995	6,274
Fire Station #5	1963		4,477
Fire Training Tower	1959		1,920
Hub Building	2000		6,864
Noah Webster Library	1937	1962/2007	59,790
Noah Webster Museum	1750		8,861
Bishop's Corner Library	1966	2012	14,992
Public Safety Building	1910	1981/2007	68,855
Public Works Facilities	1958-97	1998	59,050
Sara Whitman Hooker House	1720		4,214
Stanley-Woodruff-Allen House	1752		1,994
Troutbrook Pump House	1963		1,080
Town Hall	1922	1987/2007	142,615

Source: Town of West Hartford

Parks and Recreation Facilities

West Hartford has a significant system of neighborhood parks, playgrounds and recreational fields and venues. The Town has six major parks (Beachland, Eisenhower, Fernridge, Kennedy, Westmoor, and Wolcott). Within these parks are numerous pools (4 full-size and 4 splash pads) as well as eleven major playground structures. The Town also has an aquatic center, ice rink, numerous athletic fields, two golf courses, and fifteen ponds. Overall, 80% of residents live with a ten-minute walk of the over 400 acres of parks, golf courses and athletic fields.

The Town's Leisure Services Department manages and provides recreational programming at the park facilities while routine maintenance is generally performed by Public Works. Most of the Town's park buildings and facilities were built in the 1960's and 1970's and have an average age of 63 years and a median age of 52 years. West Hartford plans and implements recurring and individually identified projects to support the maintenance and operation of parks and recreation facilities. Additionally, the Town, in conjunction with UConn's Community Research and Design Collaborative, has completed two recent Master Plans for Fernridge Park and Wolcott Park; additional Master Planning is contemplated for each of the remaining parks.

Park Grounds

The Town's parks require regular investment in the maintenance of parking lots, walkways, fencing, water features, landscaped areas, tennis courts, hard surface play areas, exterior lighting and signage. The underlying policy is to provide funding in the parks for maintenance activities only and to minimize the resources required. Individual projects are identified and implemented on an as-needed basis.

Athletic Fields

The Town's athletic fields require regular improvements for safety purposes. Fields become uneven, resulting in playing surfaces that can cause injuries to users of the fields. Full refurbishment includes stripping fields to the sub-surface and bringing in proper materials to create a sub-surface that improves the drainage of the fields. Drainage soils and topsoil are brought in over the sub-surface material and the field is sodded or seeded. Irrigation systems may also be considered to reduce long term maintenance costs.

Playgrounds

Playscape and playground equipment periodically require replacement for safety, maintenance and play value. With the exception of Fernridge and Wolcott Parks, a long-range plan for improvements to playgrounds and playscapes for both the Town and Schools was last done in the late 1990s and needs to be updated. The Town includes funding to maintain and upgrade playgrounds where necessary, as well as to meet accessibility requirements including hard surface access routes, transfer points on the playground and signage. Additionally, the Town periodically funds the replacement

and repair of playground structures. Existing structures are removed and new structures installed over an appropriate surface when necessary. All new structures meet current accessibility requirements.

Pools

The major investment areas in the Cornerstone Aquatic Center and outdoor pools include the pool tank, pool decking, bathhouses and the filtration systems. The concrete shells and decking deteriorate over time create safety and integrity issues. The filtration systems also deteriorate over time resulting in cracked pipes and leaks, as well as the inability to maintain water quality and chemical balance. The Town's long-term pool replacement program addresses the need to plan major renovations to meet changing State regulations on the disbursement of pool water and filtration systems.

Golf Courses

Improvements required at the two golf courses have been identified in recently completed long-range plans. Improvements will include fairways, tees and greens to improve the playability of the course and maintenance projects including paving, bridge upgrades, watercourses and buildings, as well as other such projects to enhance the courses' appeal and attractiveness to customers. Golf course projects are generally funded through a surcharge program begun in fiscal year 2000.

Parks & Recreation Facilities	Year Built	Building Area (sf)	Acres
Beachland Park	1967	21,171	28.2
Buena Vista Recreation Center	1926,1979	5,944	75.0
Cornerstone Pool	1961	47,930	-
Eisenhower Park	1969	9,733	15.0
Fernridge Park	1963-75	18,464	26.6
Kennedy Memorial Park	1964	12,680	21.8
Rockledge Golf Club	1973	15,039	152.0
Sterling Field	1980	1,099	11.0
Veterans Memorial Rink	1968	37,765	-
Westmoor Park	1873-1993	18,790	52.0
Wolcott Park	1973	2,385	26.6

Source: Town of West Hartford

Stormwater Infrastructure

West Hartford has a stormwater infrastructure system that includes 13 bridges, 8,000 drainage structures (e.g., catch basins, manholes, culverts, portions of Trout Brook), and 180 miles of pipe. In the last few years, the Town recently completed a comprehensive mapping project of the entire drainage system.

All of the Town's bridges and some of its culverts are inspected every two years by the State Department of Transportation. The Town's Engineering Division performs periodic inspections of the remaining culverts. All Town bridges and culverts are in safe, working order. Inspections of the Town's stormwater pipes occur annually and on an as-needed basis to investigate flooding or pavement failures (especially prior to a road repaving project) and to perform repairs, where necessary.

Each year, the Town implements improvements to the stormwater drainage system including but not limited to small repairs in response to flooding complaints, minor improvements, and occasionally a major storm drainage upgrade. West Hartford's stormwater drainage system is effective and meets most design standards. Despite this, periodic street flooding occurs during higher intensity storms.

The improvements to the stormwater drainage system are prioritized based upon elimination of flooding of private property; elimination of icing and water build up problems; and improving system capacity. On average, 180 catch basins are replaced every year in association with road reconstruction projects.

The Town's current plans provide funding to meet short term repair, maintenance and minor upgrade needs of the Town's stormwater infrastructure. The Town has recently initiated a large scale drainage study. The study is called the West Hartford Drainage Study and covers approximately 10% of the Town's drainage system. The primary objective of the study is to analyze the Town's drainage system and identify alternatives to reduce or, if possible, eliminate street flooding occurrences, which may also contribute to property and basement flooding. The results of the study will provide recommended improvements and cost estimates.



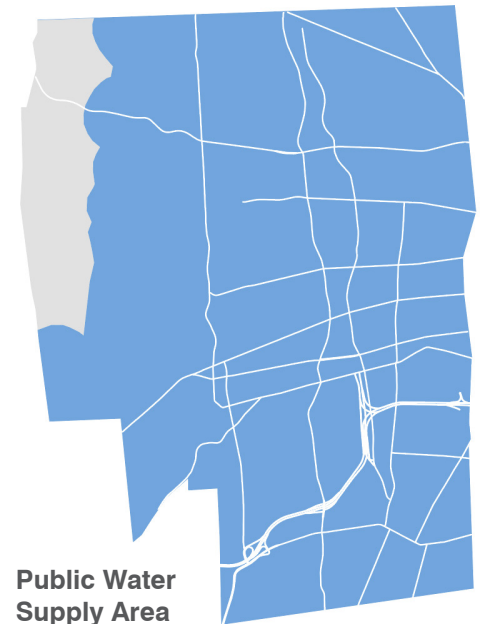
Culvert at Fernridge Park
Image Credit: Patch.com

Public Water Supply

All developed areas in West Hartford have access to public water supply serviced by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC). Public water supply covers over 90% of the Town's area with the exception of the MDC reservation on the northwest border of the Town. Because all developed and developable areas are served by public water supply, there is no need for expansion of this system. Improvements to the system, regularly conducted by the MDC, primarily involve water main repair and replacement.

Sewer Service Area

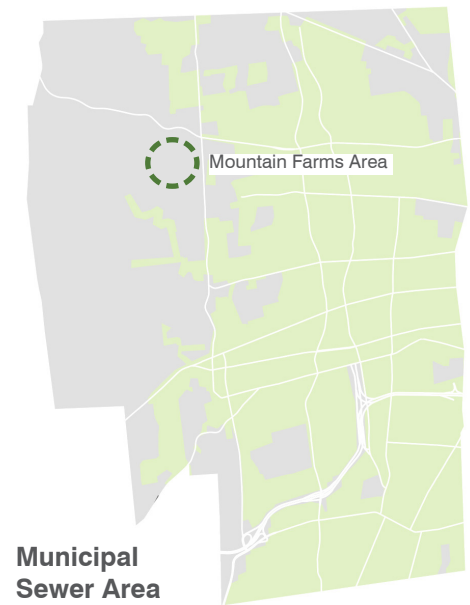
West Hartford has an extensive municipal sanitary sewer system operated by the MDC. The system provides service to 60% of the Town. Improvements to the system have been focused on repair and replacement of sewer mains and laterals and work related to the MDC's Clean Water Project. An expansion of the system to the Mountain Farms Area of West Hartford is planned by the MDC for 2021 as presented in their 2019 Capital Improvement Program.



Public Water Supply Area

Public Water Supply Area

Source: Connecticut Department of Public Health



Municipal Sewer Area

Municipal Sewer Area

Source: CT DEEP

The Community's Perspective on Town Facilities & Infrastructure

Through the Plan's community engagement process, the community expressed a number of ideas and desires regarding facilities and infrastructure. The Town is recognized by its residents as having good, well-maintained facilities and infrastructure. Other strengths identified by residents and stakeholders include good parks with public pools, good community and senior centers, and great libraries.

Residents also expressed concerns about weaknesses and threats to Town facilities. These include the need to update and improve facilities at the Elmwood Community Center and Faxon Branch Library. Residents also expressed concern about the age and condition of many school buildings.

Many ideas and opportunities for regarding Town facilities and infrastructure were identified by residents and stakeholders. A complete detailing of the community's perspective on Town facilities and infrastructure is available in the POCD supplemental information document.

State Growth Management Principle

Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas with existing or currently planned physical infrastructure.

Regional Goal

Guide growth to regional centers and areas of established infrastructure.

Local Facilities & Infrastructure Goal

Promote practices that will maintain and modernize Town facilities and infrastructure in order to meet the evolving needs of the community in sustainable ways and recognize the need to provide services harmoniously with West Hartford's place in the greater Hartford Region and State at large.

Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.

Strategies

1. Prioritize improvements to the Town's school facilities to meet program needs.
2. Prioritize sustainable practices at all Town facilities, including energy conservation and the use of renewable energy, that provide for greater adaption and resiliency to a changing climate.

Actions

- 2a. Support the efforts of the West Hartford Clean Energy Commission and the implementation of the Town's Comprehensive Energy Plan.
- 2b. Explore adopting a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification requirement for Town facilities construction and maintenance projects.
3. Prioritize improvements to the Town's facilities to meet diverse program needs.

Actions

- 3a. Conduct a Town Facilities Master Plan to assess capacity to meet current and anticipated program needs, to identify energy and other efficiency improvements, and to explore opportunities for consolidation and reuse.
- 3b. Support and continue to utilize the West Hartford Design Review Advisory Committee in reviewing Town facilities improvement projects.
4. Prioritize improvements to the Town's stormwater infrastructure that reduce flooding and improve water quality in the Town's surface waters.

Actions

- 4a. Continue to invest in stormwater infrastructure improvements throughout Town. Emphasis on sustainable, green infrastructure improvements should be prioritized.
- 4b. Implement the Best Management Practices of the 2017 West Hartford Stormwater Management Plan with a priority to:
 - 4b.1. Create a robust public education & outreach program on flooding and water quality.
 - 4b.2. Develop Low Impact Development Guidelines for new development and redevelopment.
 - 4b.3. Complete Directly Connected Impervious Area mapping.
 - 4b.4. Continue to adequately fund required monitoring of stormwater outfalls.
- 4c. Continue to participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Community Rating System (CRS) program and work towards increasing the Town's rating to a Class 7.
5. Prioritize sustainable waste management practices.

Actions

- 5a. Continue to evaluate opportunities and implement solutions that lead to more fiscally and environmentally sustainable materials (solid waste) management that attain the goal of the Connecticut Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy for a 60 percent diversion of materials from disposal.

6. Continue to preserve, enhance, and maintain parks and recreational facilities.

Actions

- 6a. Continue to engage residents and stakeholders in parks master planning initiatives.
 - 6b. Implement recommendations of the parks master planning initiatives.
 - 6c. Continue to participate in the Ten Minute Walk campaign, a national effort to engage communities in their local parks and ensure that everyone in the community lives a 10-minute walk from a public park or playground.
 - 6d. Continue to invest in, and convert to, integrated pest management in parks.
7. Continue to work collaboratively with local utilities, including Connecticut Natural Gas, Eversource and the MDC, on the development of their infrastructure in accordance with this Plan.

Actions

- 7a. Support and coordinate efforts, where appropriate, to assist Eversource's commitment to environmental sustainability and carbon neutrality.



Image Source: trulia.com

3.0 Neighborhoods and Housing

West Hartford is a community of residential neighborhoods. Many of the Town's neighborhoods date back to the 1920's and 1930's and are characterized by tree and sidewalk lined streets with stately homes and attractive landscaping. The Town's land use is dominated by residential development, with residential properties occupying almost half of the Town's land area. The Town has approximately 27,000 housing units, nearly two-thirds (63%) of which are single-family units.

West Hartford is mostly associated with older single-family neighborhoods, although the majority of recent residential development has been multi-family complexes or buildings. These developments have occurred throughout Town including commercial areas such as New Park Avenue, Bishop's Corner, and the Center. The Town's variety of housing options is central to a healthy and vital community and its housing options are more diverse than many neighboring towns in the Region.

Home ownership is valued by the community. Ownership protects residents from rising rental costs, builds equity that provides financial security, and provides a stable environment for families with children. Ownership also provides neighborhood stability by minimizing resident turn-over, providing incentive for reinvestment, and providing stable school-aged populations. Home ownership in West Hartford has long been desirable due to the beauty of the Town's neighborhoods, the quality of its public school system, and the overall high quality of life. To maintain this desirability, public and private reinvestment in neighborhoods is vital.

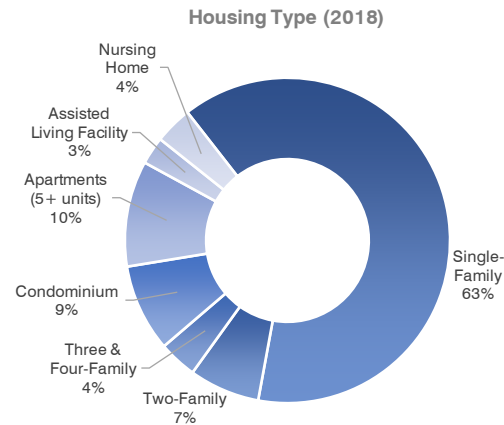
Maintaining an appropriate balance of owner and renter occupied homes contributes to the Town's stability and helps to provide appealing housing options for residents. Overall, the quality and appeal of West Hartford's neighborhoods and the homes within those neighborhoods, as well as the diversity of housing options, is a cornerstone of West Hartford's desirability and a key to its vitality.



Housing Type

Most of West Hartford's land area is occupied by single-family residences, but there are clusters of multi-family housing units in Town. Slightly more than one-third (37%) of the Town's housing stock is non-single-family detached housing. This includes condominiums, 2 to 4 family homes, apartment buildings, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes.

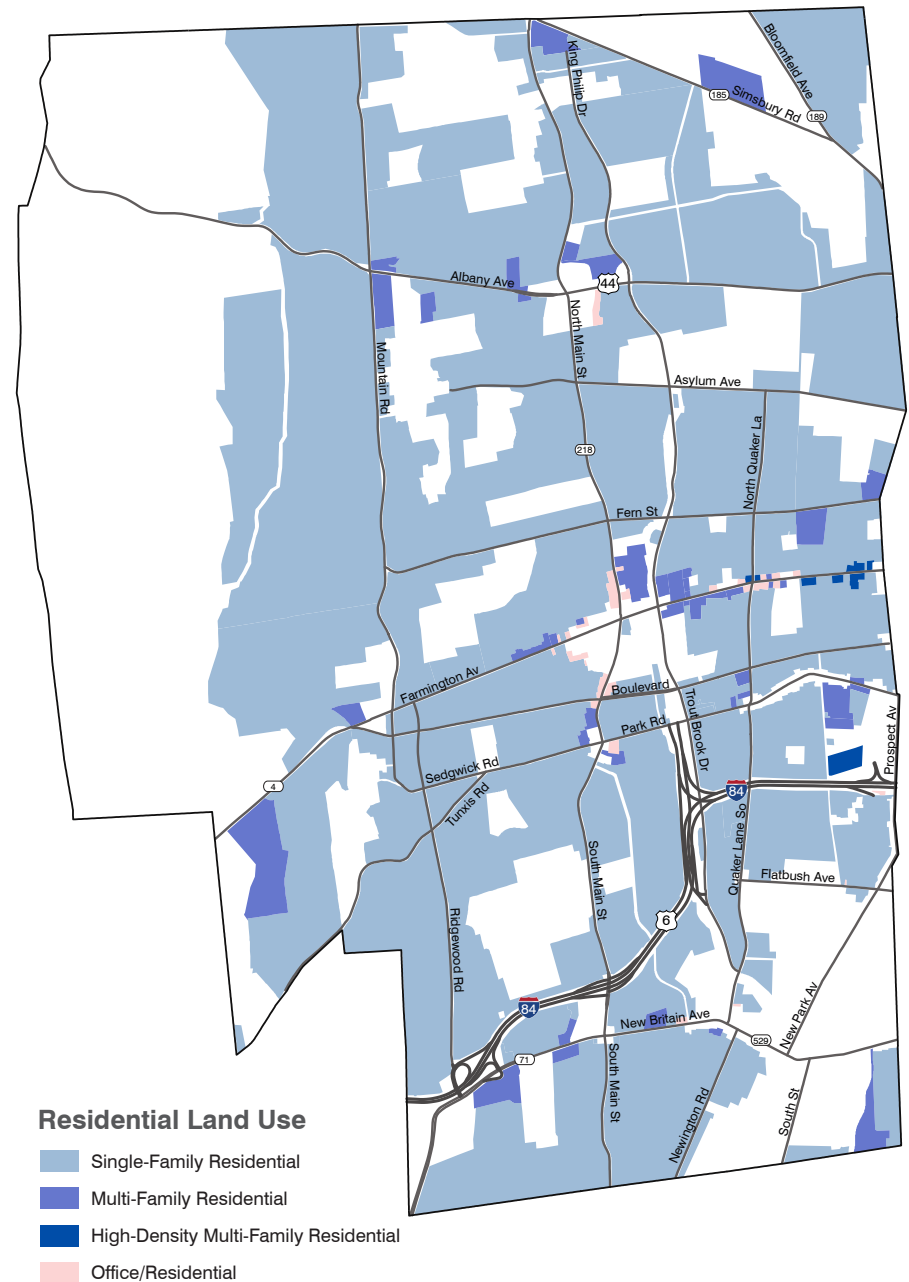
A relatively sizable share (10%) of multi-family units are in buildings or on properties with five or more units. These properties are primarily located along arterial corridors such as Albany, Farmington, and New Britain Avenues. Additionally, 9% of housing units are condominium units including both townhouses and units in large buildings. Seven percent of the Town's housing units are found in assisted living or nursing home facilities.



Source: Town of West Hartford Assessor's Database



Pre-1960 single-family houses comprise most of West Hartford's housing stock

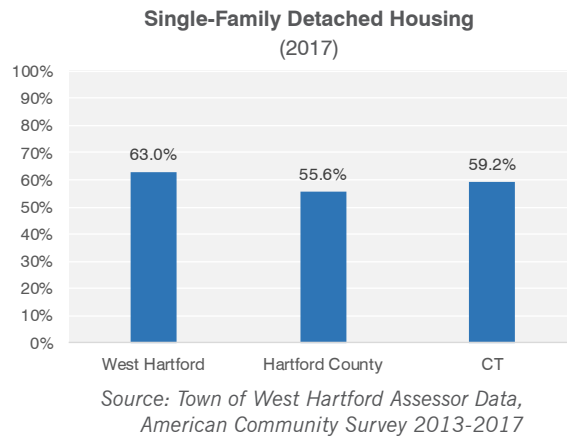


Source: Town of West Hartford

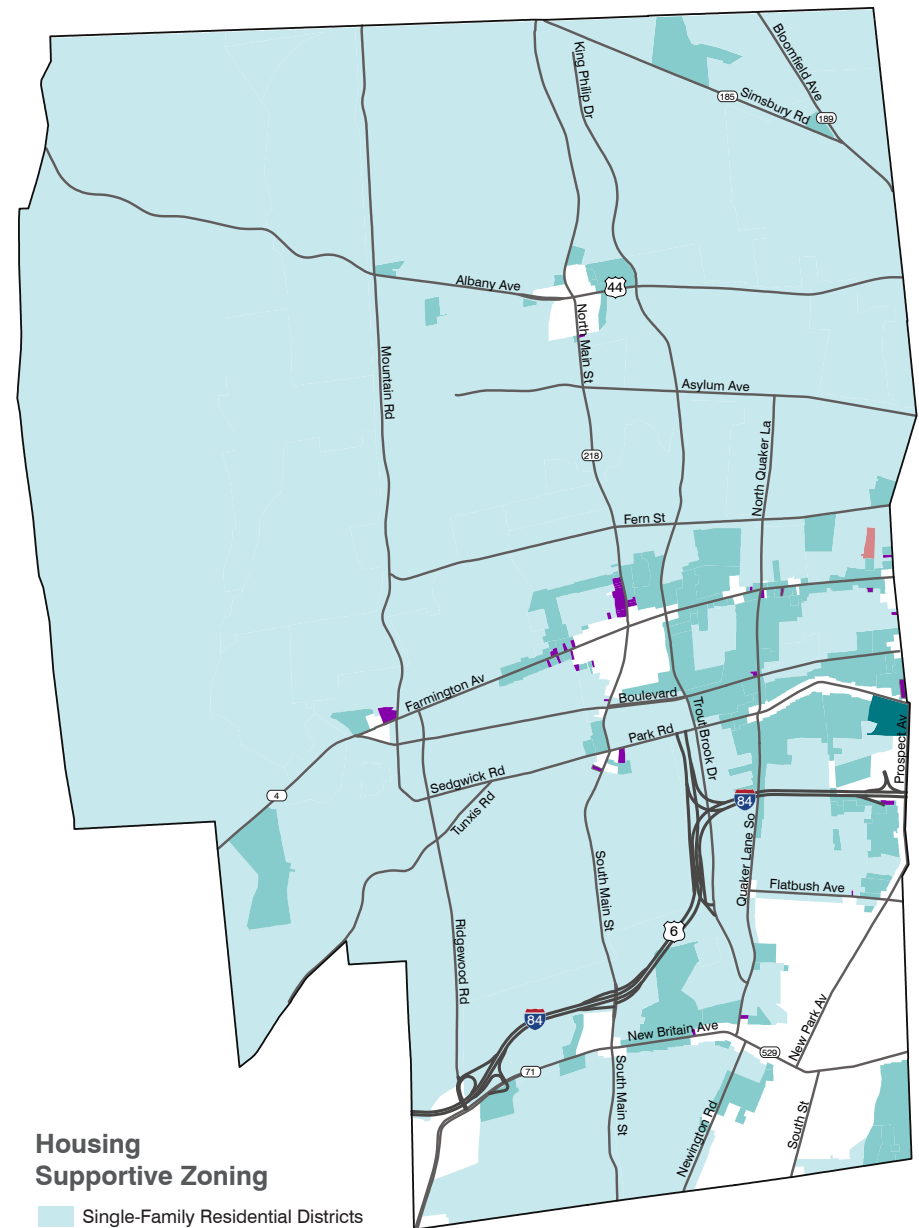
Zoning

West Hartford's zoning is dominated by single-family residential districts that cover most of the Town's geography with the exception of commercial nodes such as Bishop's corner, the Center, Corbin's Corner, and industrial areas along New Park Avenue and South Street. Multi-family residential districts are concentrated on the eastern side of Town, primarily between Fern Street and New Britain Avenue with multiple small multi-family districts scattered across other locations in Town. Multi-family, multi-story residential districts and mixed-use residential districts are limited to individual properties, many of which are located along Farmington Avenue. Additionally, the Special Development District permits the development of high-density housing, multiple examples of which are present throughout the Town.

While West Hartford has a number of multi-family residential districts and properties, the Town has a higher share of single-family homes than Hartford County and the State. Recent and proposed high-density multi-family housing projects will shift the Town's balance of housing but its share of single-family housing is unlikely to change much relative to the Region.



High-density multi-family housing comprises approximately 10% of the Town's housing stock



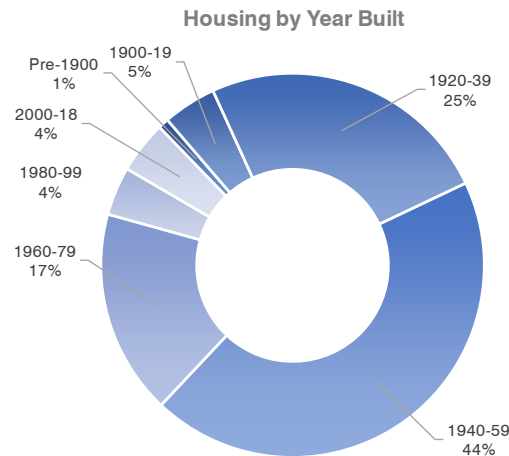
Housing Supportive Zoning

- Single-Family Residential Districts
- Multi-Family Residential Districts
- Multi-Family, Multi-Story Residential Districts
- Residential Institutional Districts
- Residential Office Districts

Source: Town of West Hartford

Age of Housing

Like most communities in Connecticut, the Town's housing stock is relatively old. Thirty-one percent of housing is 80 years old or older and seventy-five percent of the Town's housing stock is 60 years old or older. The average age of a single-family house in West Hartford is 71 years old while the average age of a 2 to 4-family building is 95 years. Condominiums are the youngest housing type in West Hartford with an average age of 41 years.

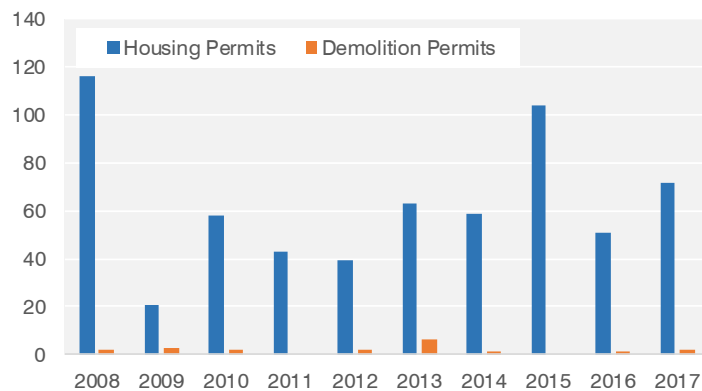


Source: Town of West Hartford Assessor's Database

Housing Construction

Between 2008 and 2017, 626 housing unit permits were issued with only 19 housing unit demolition permits issued over that same period of time. This suggests a net gain of 607 housing units over that ten-year period. Housing permits have varied year over year, plummeting following the 2008 real estate crash with only one year (2015) with more than one hundred permits issued since then. As a community that is largely built out, development activity is likely to fluctuate significantly from year to year, with large numbers of permits associated with the development of high-density housing development on individual properties.

Housing & Demolition Permits (2008-2017)



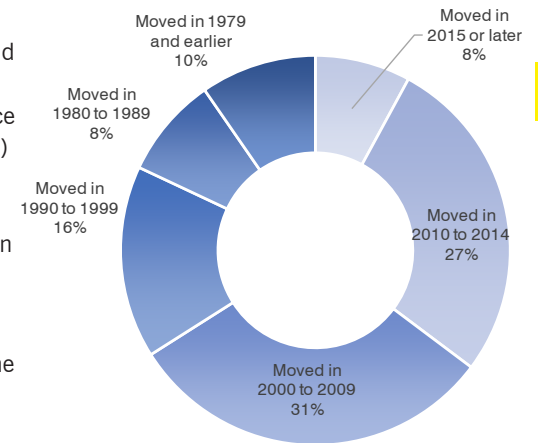
Source: Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development

Housing Tenure

West Hartford's housing tenure is comparable to both Hartford County and the State. Roughly one-third (34%) of residents have lived in their homes since 1999 or earlier, almost one-third (31%) of residents moved into their homes between 2000 and 2009, and slightly more than one third (35%) have lived in their current home nine years or less.

This distribution suggests a healthy turn-over in housing which affords home ownership and rental opportunities for existing residents seeking different housing in Town and for prospective residents seeking housing in West Hartford.

Tenure in Housing

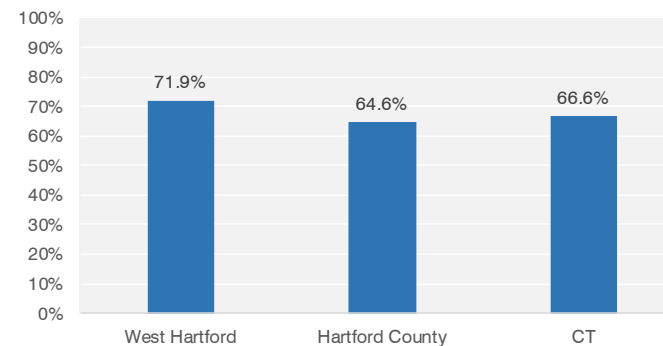


Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017

Home Ownership

A majority of homes in West Hartford (71.9%) are owned by their occupants. This is higher than the share of single-family detached homes, suggesting a low rental rate of single-family homes and a significant share of attached and multi-family units that are owned by their occupants. West Hartford's home ownership rate is several percentage points higher than home ownership rates in both Hartford County and the State. This is directly related to the Town's higher share of single-family detached housing which is associated with higher ownership rates than multi-family housing.

Home Ownership Rate (2013-17)

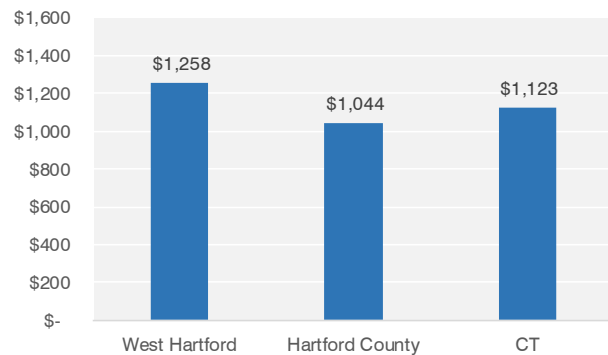


Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017

Housing Cost

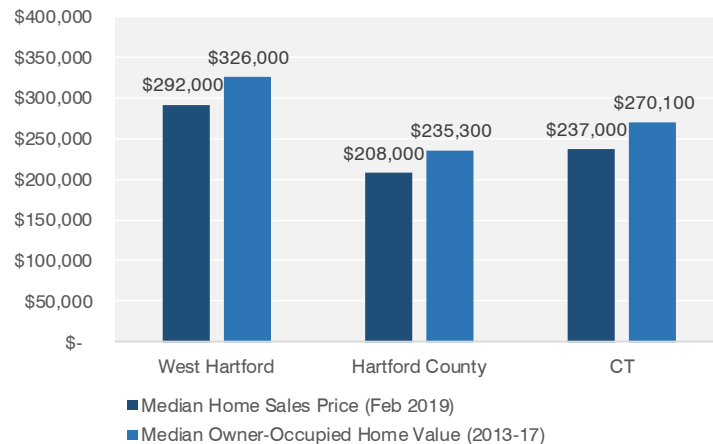
The cost of entry to West Hartford's housing market is higher than both Hartford County and the State. The Town's median gross rent of \$1,258 is twenty percent higher than the county and twelve percent higher than the State. Home sales prices are also higher in West Hartford than Hartford County or the State. The median home sales price in Town was \$292,000 in February of 2019 compared to \$208,000 in Hartford County and \$237,000 in the State. Additionally, the Town's median owner-occupied home value of \$326,000 is significantly higher than home values in Hartford County (39% higher) and the State (20% higher).

Median Gross Rent
(2013-17)



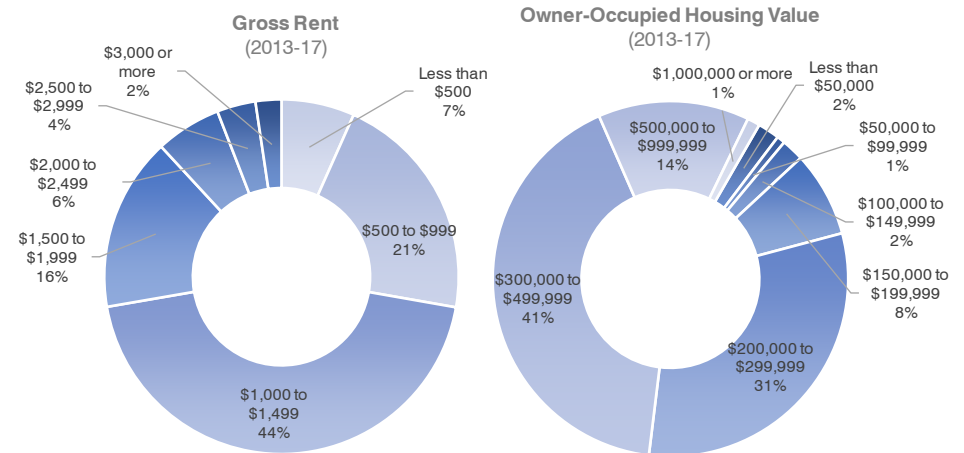
Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017

Median Home Sales Price and Value



Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017, Zillow.com

West Hartford's housing stock varies considerably in cost as measured by both rental cost and housing value. Most of the Town's rental housing (72%) costs less than \$1,500 per month, with 28% of rental housing costing less than \$1,000 per month. Owner-occupied housing values are well distributed with 45% of housing valued at less than \$300,000. Fourteen percent of housing is valued at less than \$200,000.



Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017

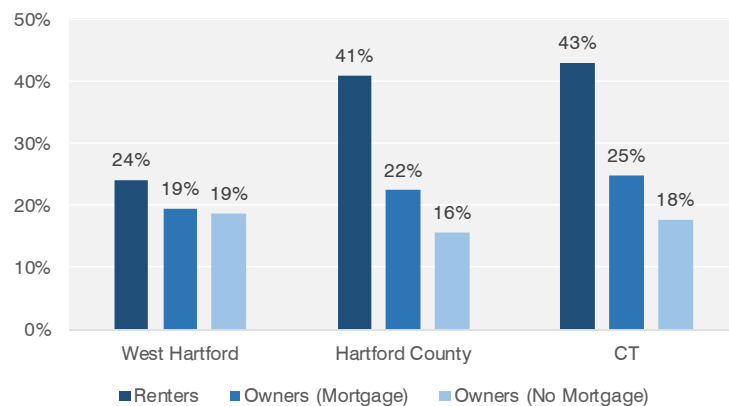


Rental units with a gross rent of less than \$1,500 per month comprise 65% of the Town's rental units.

Housing Affordability

West Hartford is less housing cost burdened than Hartford County or the State. Only 24% of rental households spend thirty-five percent or more of their income on housing compared to 41% in Hartford County and 43% in the State. The share of housing cost burdened homeowners with a mortgage in West Hartford is slightly lower than Hartford County and the State. However, the share of housing cost burdened homeowners without a mortgage in West Hartford is slightly higher than Hartford County and the State.

Share of Households with Housing Costs of 35% or more of Household Income (2013-17)

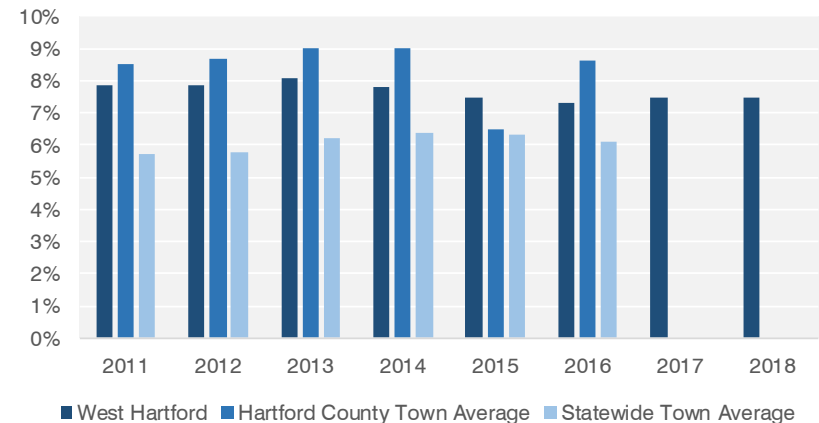


Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017

West Hartford's share of affordable housing, as classified under C.G.S. Section 8-30g, is 7.5% of its housing stock as of 2018. This is comprised of government assisted housing units, tenant rental assistance households, CHFA/USDA mortgages, and deed restricted units. These combine for a total of 1,928 assisted units in Town. The share of affordable housing units in West Hartford has been relatively stable over the last several years although it has slightly contracted since 2013. However, because West Hartford does not have an affordable housing stock of at least 10%, it is not exempt for the State's affordable housing appeals process.

The share of affordable housing in Hartford County is 1.3 percentage points higher than West Hartford's although the share of housing in the County has also decreased since 2013. Statewide, the average rate of affordable housing has been consistent and is currently 6.1%, 1.4 percentage points below West Hartford.

Share of Affordable Housing



Source: Connecticut Department of Housing

3.0



616 New Park Avenue is a new mixed-use transit-oriented development project managed by the West Hartford Housing Authority. The building has mix of market-rate and workforce housing; eleven of the units are set aside as supportive housing for veterans.

The Community's Perspective

Through the Plan's community engagement process, the community expressed a number of ideas and desires regarding neighborhoods and housing. The Town was characterized by residents as being walkable with well-maintained homes and properties located in residential neighborhoods of varying and distinctive character. Residents identified the Town's diversity of housing types, styles and density as contributing to the Town's stable housing market. Residents also expressed concerns about weaknesses and threats to the Town's neighborhoods and housing. These include high property tax rates, housing choice and cost for seniors and young adults, and commercial creep into certain neighborhoods from adjacent commercial areas.

Many ideas and opportunities regarding neighborhoods and housing were identified by residents and stakeholders including the need to promote more diversity in housing options and prices and focusing mixed-use development to provide greater residential in appropriate locations. A complete detailing of the community's perspective on neighborhoods and housing is available in the POCD supplemental information document.

State Growth Management Principle

Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.

Regional Housing Goals

- Increase the range of choice in housing for people of all incomes and all ages, but especially for those who have the least choice in achieving their locational preference
- Enforce federal and State fair housing laws and promote fair housing through the creation of housing opportunities
- Encourage and support the maintenance and revitalization of viable residential neighborhoods
- Encourage and support rental housing stock, and the expansion of housing opportunities for renters
- Continue to improve the capitol Region transportation system in order to better link housing, jobs and services, thus expanding individuals' housing choices

Local Neighborhoods & Housing Goal

Enhance and maintain West Hartford's existing neighborhoods and encourage diversity of housing types and costs to provide access and availability of housing options to current and future residents.

Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.

Strategies

1. Protect and enhance the quality and safety of West Hartford's residential neighborhoods by investing in infrastructure, continuing and strengthening code compliance, and taking other measures necessary to support those neighborhoods

Actions

- 1a. Continue to invest in neighborhood infrastructure including sidewalks, streets, street trees, stormwater and other streetscape enhancements. Improvements that enhance connectivity and sustainability should be prioritized and all improvements should be consistent with the Town's Complete Street Policy.
- 1b. Explore innovative approaches and techniques to strengthen code compliance.
- 1c. Continue to work collaboratively with neighborhood organizations and groups to address quality of life concerns.

- 1d. Create more effective educational tools for residents, real estate professionals and other stakeholders that provide guidance on the building permit process and the enforcement process.
- 2. Support mixed-use development within commercial areas and adjacent to transit facilities.

Actions

- 2a. Review the commercial zoning districts and associated zoning ordinance standards and identify potential areas for targeted modification that better facilitate mixed-use development.
- 3. Encourage appropriate development and redevelopment within transitional zones between current commercial and residential boundaries in a manner that promotes pedestrian-friendly, contextually-sensitive design at an appropriate scale that enhances and compliments the quality of the neighborhoods.

Actions

- 3a. Review current multi-family residential and commercial zoning districts and associated zoning ordinance standards and identify potential areas for targeted modification that better facilitate transitional land usage and development.
- 4. Review the zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to encourage the availability of a range of housing types and affordability levels to meet the diverse needs of the community.

Actions

- 4a. Conduct a Town-wide housing needs assessment.
- 4b. Review the multi-family zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modification and innovative opportunities that increase the availability of range of housing types and affordability levels.
- 4c. Review the single-family zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modification and innovative opportunities, such as accessory dwelling units, that increase the availability of range of housing types and affordability levels.
- 4d. Continue to support the efforts of nonprofit groups and for-profit developers to expand housing choice options in the community.
- 5. Promote the maintenance, rehabilitation and improvement of the Town's existing housing stock.

Actions

- 5a. Expand the Town's Housing Rehabilitation Program and its Elderly Assistance Program by identifying additional needed resources.
- 5b. Create more effective educational tools for residents, real estate professionals and other stakeholders that provide guides on the building permit process and the enforcement process.

- 5c. Create more effective educational tools that highlight the Town's Housing Rehabilitations programs to increase resident participation.
- 5d. Promote residential Energize Connecticut programs, including Home Energy Solutions that seek to reduce residential energy usage and save money.
- 5e. Create more effective educational tools for residents, real estate professionals and other stakeholders that provide guides on the financial options and rebates available for energy savings projects.

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Image Source: trulia.com

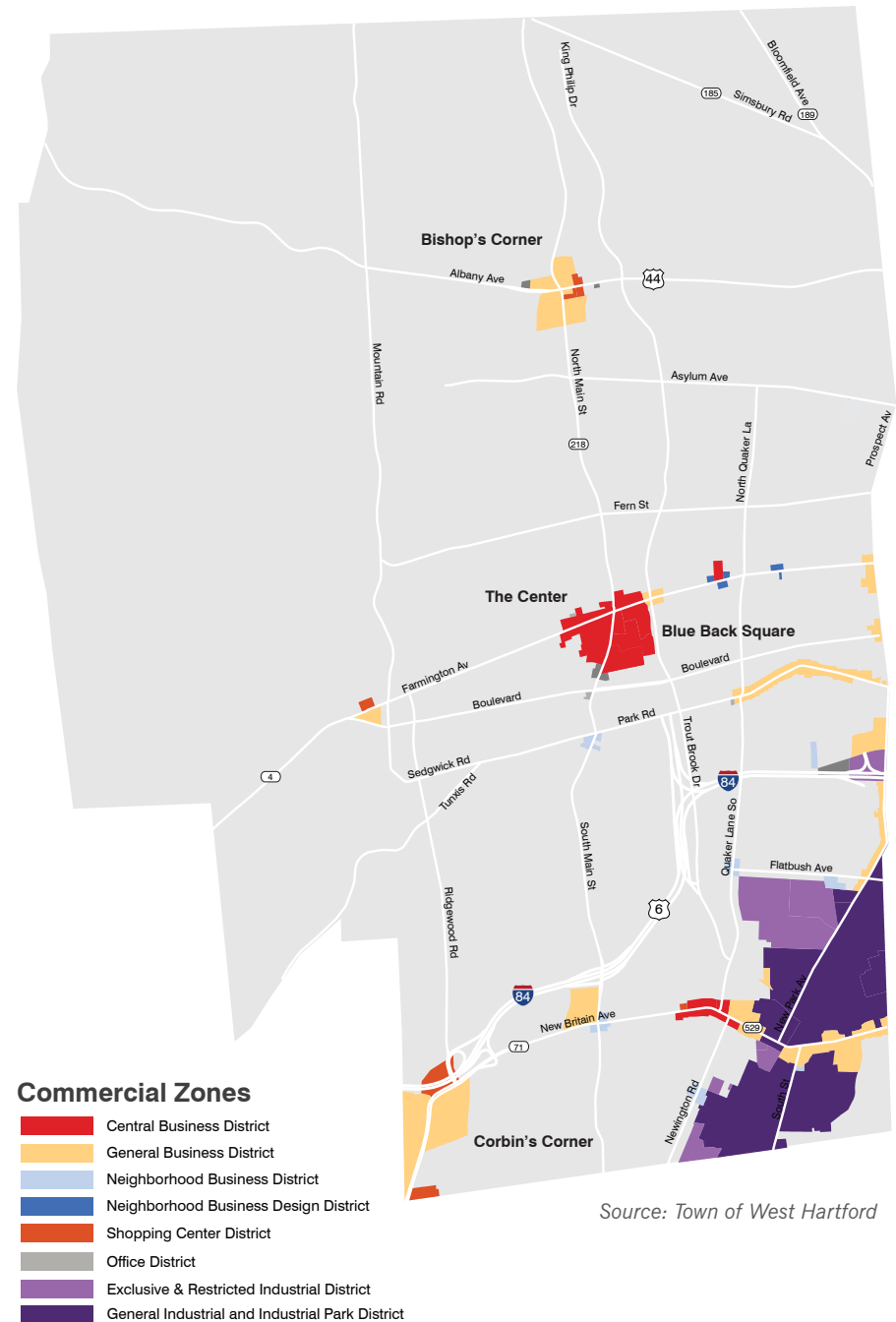
4.0 Economic Development

West Hartford has benefited from tremendous investment and reinvestment in its commercial areas. The Town's commercial districts have been maintained and improved by property owners, business owners, and the Town. The Town's many pedestrian oriented commercial districts distinguishes West Hartford from other communities in the Region. The focus on walkable retail commercial districts extends beyond the Center and Blue Back Square. The Town has worked with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) to improve the streetscape, pedestrian connectivity and safety in other commercial districts including, New Britain Avenue, Park Road, Bishop's Corner and New Park Avenue. Additionally, the Town has strengthened this focus through the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy which promotes an integrated and balanced transportation network that provides the best possible blend of service, mobility, convenience and safety while reinforcing positive social, economic and environmental influence in the community.

Over the past several years, West Hartford has seen investment in, and redevelopment of, commercial properties and shopping centers at Corbin's Corner, Kane Street, and Bishop's Corner. These shopping centers continue to be vibrant and popular places with low vacancy rates whereas many similar properties in other communities have lacked reinvestment.

The Town has proactively worked to ensure that its commercial districts are best serving its residents and the future of West Hartford. In 2017 the Town conducted a visioning process for the Center that engaged residents and stakeholders in a discussion about what they value about the Center and what opportunities they see for change. This outreach was part of the Town's commitment to guide and manage development in the Center as it evolves from a traditional town center retail environment to a cultural destination that is home to the Region's greatest diversity and concentration of restaurants. The Town has also engaged property and business owners along New Park Avenue as it seeks to promote and foster unique opportunities for transit-oriented, mixed-use development around CTfastrak stations to enhance the district by complementing the existing successful commercial and industrial businesses along this important and unique corridor.

The Town's focus on economic development serves multiple purposes: it ensures that residents have convenient access to goods and services; that there are employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for residents and non-residents; and that the Town is not over-reliant on residential properties to support its tax base. The Town has made some progress towards reducing reliance on residential properties for its tax base and this must remain a primary focus of its economic development strategy. In 2006 the residential share of real property on the grand list was 83% with commercial/industrial comprising 15%, but by 2018 the share of real property on the grand list shifted two percentage points from residential properties (81%) to commercial/industrial properties (17%). The Town has several commercial zones that are responsive to and shape the unique characteristics of the Town's commercial areas. These include multiple



central business districts, general business districts along corridors, small neighborhood business districts, office districts, and large industrial districts in the southeast corner of Town. The Town has also deployed the use of special development overlay districts as a means of exercising greater control over building design, use, and tenant mix.

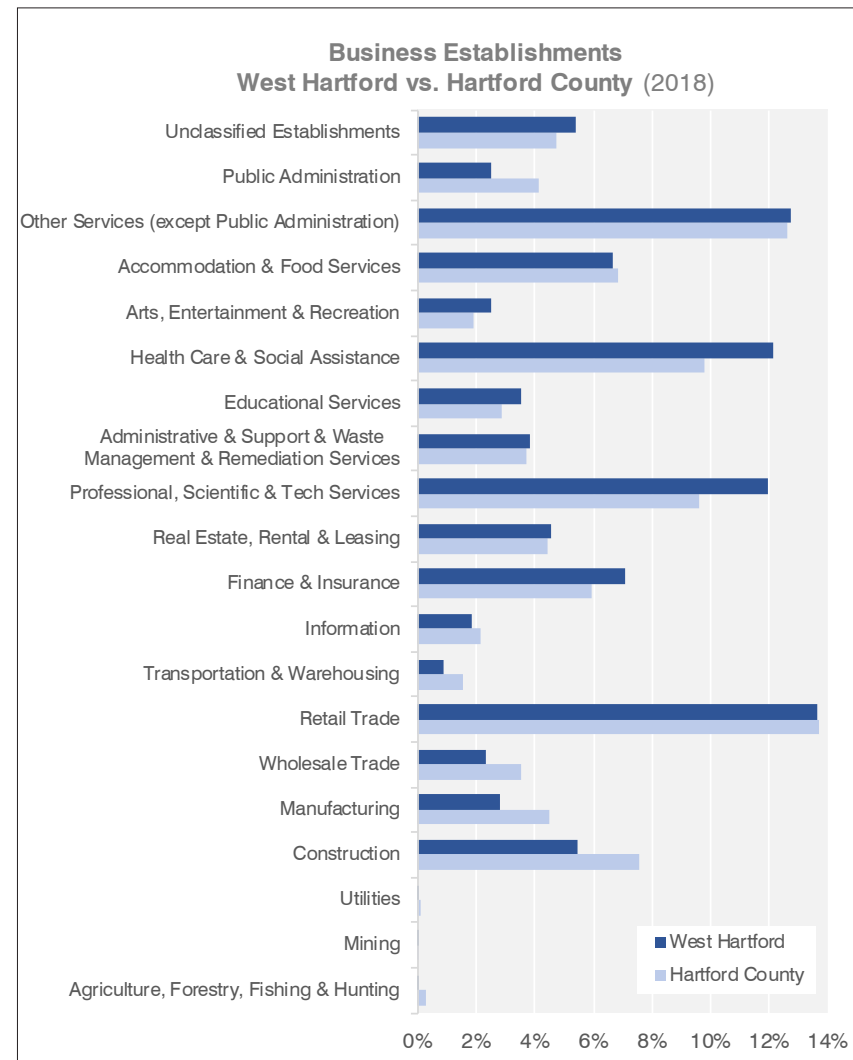
Economic Trends and Conditions

West Hartford is comparable to the Region (Hartford County) with respect to its composition of businesses across industry sectors. Although the Town has several retail districts and is known for its concentration of restaurants, West Hartford slightly lags the Region in its share of accommodation & food service and retail establishments (see chart at right).

The Town also has a smaller share of industrial and heavy commercial establishments such as transportation & warehousing, wholesale trade, manufacturing, and construction than the Region. This is a factor of the Town's limited industrial space. West Hartford has a notably greater share of establishments than Hartford County in a number of sectors including health care & social assistance, professional, scientific & technical services, and finance & insurance.

West Hartford has benefited from a number of positive economic regional trends as well as a strong national economy over the past several years. Positive economic trends in West Hartford and the Region include:

- **Employment Growth:** In West Hartford, employment has grown in construction (8.5% growth year over year) and the leisure & hospitality sector (5.3% growth year over year).
- **Increase in Average Rents:** Average rents for office in West Hartford increased slightly, with the peripheries increasing slightly more (0.5% increase from 2017 to 2018).
- **Growth in Tech:** 20-25% of all new leasing is coming from tech firms (STEM jobs are being created at a much faster pace).
- **Growth in Coworking:** Flexible office space represents approximately 2% of all office space. Forecasts suggest it will rise to 5-10% of office inventory in many markets.
- **Low Industrial Vacancy:** There is a lack of large available industrial space in Central Connecticut; industrial vacancy is the lowest it has been in over 20 years.
- **High Industrial Rents:** Industrial rents are at their highest level since 2008, and show little signs of slowing. In Central CT, asking rents for industrial spaces continue to rise as the amount of available space shrinks.



Source: ESRI and Infogroup

Retail Assessment

Compared to nationwide averages, West Hartford has a higher share of retail sales in multiple categories including furniture and home furnishings, electronics and appliance stores, grocery stores, clothing & accessories, and sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores. Much of this is attributed to the Corbin's Corner area including a portion of Westfarms Mall. West Hartford is below the national average in retail sales in two notable areas: building materials & garden supplies and restaurants. West Hartford's lagging restaurant sales may come as a surprise given the proliferation of restaurants in the Center and Blue Back Square, but compared to many communities in the U.S., West Hartford has very few franchise and fast food restaurants. Additionally, West Hartford has significantly higher grocery and clothing sales which shifts the share of retail sales away from restaurants.

The Town's retail gap (difference between surplus of sales relative to demand and deficit of sales relative to demand) is largely consistent with the distribution of retail sales. The Town has a surplus of clothing & accessories and grocery store sales relative to purchases by West Hartford residents. This is attributed to West Hartford being a regional draw for shoppers in the retail categories. The Town experiences leakage (less value of sales in Town compared to value of purchases by West Hartford residents) in categories such as miscellaneous retail (florists, office supplies, stationery, office stores, etc.), building & garden supplies, and specialty food stores and services. Contrary to a lower share of restaurant sales when compared to the U.S. average, West Hartford has a slight excess of restaurant sales compared to spending exhibited by its residents.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau & ESRI 2010, 2015, 2018

West Hartford Retail Gap



*Westfarms Mall not included in data, with the exception of a portion of Macy's located in West Hartford

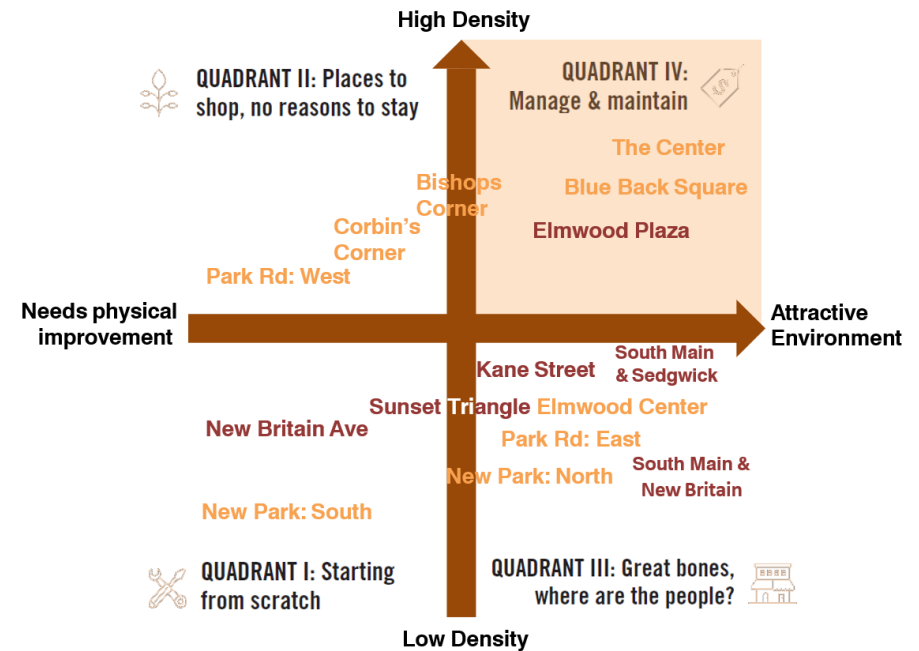
Source: ESRI Retail Marketplace Profile

Commercial & Retail Districts

The Town's retail areas are located in a number of commercial zoning districts that vary considerably by character and function. West Hartford has a range of retail types including regional malls, shopping centers, neighborhood retail, strip & convenient stores, and power centers. The districts are spread geographically through the Town, serving Town residents and the Region. These districts and their characteristics are summarized in the table below.

Type of Shopping Center	Characteristics	West Hartford Districts
Super Regional Mall	5-25 mile trade area; national owners	Bishop's Corner/Westfarms Mall
Regional Mall/Center	5-15 mile trade area	The Center & Blue Back Square
Community Center/Large Neighborhood Center	3-6 mile trade area	Bishop's Corner Corbin's Corner
Neighborhood	Approximately 3 mile trade area	Park Road Elmwood Center Sunset Triangle Kane Street New Britain Avenue Elmwood Plaza
Strip/Convenience	Less than 1 mile trade area	South Main & Sedgwick South Main & New Britain
Power Center (single category of goods)	5-10 mile trade area	New Park Ave

The Town's retail districts can also be classified by other characteristics including density, quality of the physical environment, and activity. The chart below shows how the retail districts compare when categorized by these standards. Districts and areas such as the Center and Blue Back Square are high density areas within an attractive environment. Other retail areas such as those along New Park Avenue and New Britain Avenue have low density and require physical improvement to make them more attractive to shoppers.



Bishop's Corner

Bishop's Corner is located in the northern section of Town, at the intersection of Albany Avenue (Route 44) and North Main Street. This district serves as both a neighborhood and community retail center that attracts patrons from West Hartford and the Farmington Valley. Bishop's Corner is comprised of a mixture of general retail, supermarkets, gas stations, banks, dry cleaners, pharmacies, medical offices, and dining establishments. Bishop's Corner also has municipal and government services including a post office, library, and senior center.



Image Source: West Hartford Chamber of Commerce

Buildings within this district were mostly constructed in the 1950's and 1960's and have undergone significant renovation since. Over the past several years, The Shops at Bishop's Corner (southwest corner of the district) has undergone a multi-million dollar renovation that has seen a recomposition of its tenant mix including a retenanting of the former Walmart space with a Target store. Overall, retail vacancy is relatively low in Bishop's Corner. Office vacancy is, however, an issue with approximately 30,000 sf of Class B vacant office space. Challenging the reuse of space in the area is the poor pedestrian connections within the district; for example, walking from one plaza to another by crossing Albany Avenue is inconvenient and uncomfortable.

In response to these issues, the Town has made extensive streetscape improvements in this district to make the area more pedestrian friendly. Despite these improvements, the district continues to function as four separate subdistricts each separated from the other by large expanses of surface parking, wide roadways, and heavy traffic. The Town is currently working with the CTDOT to improve pedestrian comfort and safety at the North Main Street and Albany Avenue intersection.

District Strengths

- Combined traffic counts of 17k - 22k from each approach result in high visibility for retailers, making this an attractive location for commercial activity.
- Well-tailored to the diversity of needs in the area. There is a range of incomes in the surrounding area and an adequate mix of offerings and price points.
- Denser residential uses to the northeast present an opportunity to offer neighborhood-serving goods.

District Challenges

- The district functions as four discrete shopping areas with limited connections between each.
- Pedestrians unable to conveniently cross-shop, which increases car reliance, congestion, and diminishes size of trade area.
- Inability to cross-shop also undermines attractiveness of area as a potential location for commercial office and coworking space. Office workers depend on amenities that in this case are only accessible by crossing a busy, unsafe street.
- Congested and unsafe entrances & exits to the SW and SE corners makes leaving easier than crossing to another area to shop.

Potential Opportunities

- Build out additional street-fronting commercial space on North Main Street and Starkel Road.
- Explore development of co-working space at the vacant office space above the Big Y plaza (northeast corner of the area) and other office buildings in Bishop's Corner.
- Provide additional protected pedestrian crossings.
- Additional mixed-use residential

Corbin's Corner

Corbin's Corner is located in the southwest corner of Town, along New Britain Avenue (Route 71). The retail district functions as a regional center with national chain retailers as the predominant tenants. The original shopping center was constructed in the 1960's. Opposite of this shopping center is Westfarms Mall, a third of which is located in West Hartford. The mall opened in 1975 and was expanded in the late 1990's to over 1.6 million square feet of retail space.



The district is primarily automobile oriented. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are minimal with sidewalks absent from most of Route 71 and few protected pedestrian crossings.

District Strengths

- Single-owner shopping areas manage & maintain their holdings with greater ease
- Proximity to I-84 offers regional advantage
- Well-tailored to serve both regional visitors and local needs. There is a range of incomes in the surrounding area and an adequate mix of offerings and price points

District Challenges

- Private sector holdings with limited opportunities for public investment.
- Few bus shelters and few pedestrian pathways from bus stops to retail sites. This makes it a challenge for workers to walk to and from the bus and to wait for the bus, especially in inclement weather.

Potential Opportunities

- Improve pedestrian conditions by providing more sidewalks along Route 71, additional crosswalks and curb ramps, and additional bus stop waiting areas with benches and shelters.
- Denser residential to the northeast may present an opportunity to offer more neighborhood-serving goods and uses.

Elmwood Center

Elmwood Center is in the southeast corner of Town, along New Britain Avenue between Mayflower Street and New Park Avenue. The district functions as a neighborhood shopping center, primarily attracting patrons within a three mile radius. Commercial structures in Elmwood Center date from the 1930's to the 1950's. The area is now home to a mix of local and franchise retailers, restaurants, and services. Also located in Elmwood Center is the Elmwood Community Center and the Faxon Branch Library.



Image Source: West Hartford Chamber of Commerce

Automobile accessibility is balanced with pedestrian connectivity in the district. The Town worked with the Connecticut DOT to improve traffic operations, pedestrian safety, and streetscape conditions along New Britain Avenue; these improvements were constructed in 2012 and 2013. The district is immediately west and within walking distance of the Elmwood CTfastrak Station where service debuted in 2015. CTfastrak service places Elmwood Center within four stops (ten minute ride) of Downtown Hartford and five stops of Downtown New Britain.

District Strengths

- Convenient automobile access with high traffic counts.
- Ample, accessible parking. Parking is positioned in front of most stores with convenient access.
- Proximity to major employers (Legrand, Abbot & Ball).
- High density of workers creates demand.
- CTfastrak station and service.
- Beachland Park and Blanchfield Park

District Challenges

- Poor connection between Elmwood Center and New Park Avenue commercial district.
- Dated buildings in need of upgrades.
- Commercial core is a patchwork of zoning districts

Potential Opportunities

- Improve connection between retail areas and the Trout Brook Trail.
- Infill development on vacant lots.

New Park Avenue

The New Park Avenue commercial district is located on the eastern border of the Town extending from Flatbush Avenue to New Britain Avenue. The area has its origins in industrial land uses but has been shifting towards a retail environment for decades. The predominant type of retailer attracted to New Park Avenue are those that require large spaces and are destination based, versus convenience based, retailers.



Local merchants have branded the area as the “Home Design District”, building upon Home Depot as an anchor. Multiple home design, decor, and home supplies and remodeling businesses have located along New Park Avenue, attracted by relatively low rents, good access, and colocation with similar businesses.

The commercial district is now home to the Flatbush Avenue CTfastrak station and is proximate to the Elmwood CTfastrak Station and planned CT Rail station. This places the district within a several minute ride of Downtown Hartford. The State’s significant investment in the CTfastrak service, along with its planned CT Rail station, has changed the development environment providing a transformative opportunity in the proximity of the stations. In 2018 the West Hartford Housing Authority completed a \$20 million mixed-use development with 54 residential units and 3,000 sf of street level retail at the site of former Pontiac dealership on New Park Avenue near Elmwood Station. While sidewalks are present along both sides of New Park Avenue, the district

is generally not comfortable for pedestrians. Other amenities such as bus shelters and benches and bicycle facilities are absent in the district. In response to these conditions the Town produced a Complete Streets plan in 2017. The plan calls for traffic calming improvements in the form of a “road diet” and improved pedestrian, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and amenities. Since 2018, the Town was awarded multiple grants to build out the planned improvements.

District Strengths

- CTfastrak Station(s).
- Proximity to major employers (Colt, Triumph). High density of workers creates demand.
- Available land for development.
- Access to the Trout Brook Trail.
- Access to I-84.
- Active and engaged business associations.

District Challenges

- Very low residential density.
- Auto-oriented district, but moderate traffic counts, particularly in southern part of district.
- Limited visibility from New Park Ave. On the north end of New Park Ave, the business are set far back from the west side of the street.
- Potential development space locked up in parking (Home Depot/BJ’s site by example).
- Little connection between businesses.
- Older businesses to the south need reinvestment.

Potential Opportunities

- Develop areas of excess surface parking.
- Infill development on vacant and underutilized parcels.
- Strengthen connection to Trout Brook Trail.
- Development of an intermodal transit station with the proposed Flatbush CT Rail station.
- Opportunity to partner with the City of Hartford on transit-oriented development opportunities, particularly around the Flatbush CTfastrak station.
- Opportunity Zone designation

Park Road

The Park Road commercial district is located in the east central section of Town between South Quaker Lane and Prospect Avenue. The majority of buildings along Park Road date to the 1930's and are comprised of a mix of commercial and former residential structures. Park Road's origins are as a streetcar corridor connected to Downtown Hartford. Park Road emerged as a thriving retail district in the 1990's following a major public works project that reconstructed the streetscape providing brick sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lamps, and improved roadway crossings.



This district is an eclectic mix of local businesses including grocers, retail stores, health and beauty spas, restaurants, and a community theater. The district is supported by the Park Road Association, a neighborhood group comprised of local merchants, property owners, and residents. Its mission is to “improve the quality of life for the Park Road neighborhood by maintaining the aesthetics and safety of the community, bringing people together through events, and improving business promotion on Park Road and the surrounding streets.”

District Strengths

- High residential density.
- Pedestrian friendly.
- Moderate density of retail offerings.
- Businesses along Park Road are fairly close together and the sidewalks are well-kept and well-lit.
- Affordable price point of existing offerings reflects the income and retail spending levels of the surrounding neighborhoods.

District Challenges

- Low retail visibility. Many shops along Park Road (especially on the eastern end) do not look like traditional retail establishments and lack clear, visible signage.
- Limited parking; limited visibility/access to existing parking. Park Road has large back lots with parking that are poorly signed and marked.
- Excess curb cuts/driveways reduces walkability and limits the amount of available street parking.
- Little vegetation and public space for shoppers to rest. The district is walkable in scale and density, but the lack of vegetation, shade, public space, and seating makes the district less pedestrian friendly.
- No bike lanes and lack of bicycle parking limits alternative ways for local residents to access district.

Potential Opportunities

- Pool private parking resources to allow patrons to park once and access multiple businesses.
- Increase retail visibility with better signage.
- Improve storefronts and increase public space by eliminating private storefront parking.
- Improved connections to Trout Brook trail via a bike lane or pathway would increase trade area.
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities and amenities.

West Hartford Center and Blue Back Square

West Hartford Center is located at the geographic center of the Town, at the intersection of Main Street and Farmington Avenue. The Center has its origins as a traditional town center with commercial development located mostly to the west of Main Street. Commercial buildings were primarily constructed in the 1930's and 1940's. The Center has long since evolved from its origins as a town center to a regional center that attracts patrons from other towns in the Region.



Image Source: The Delamar

The development of Blue Back Square in the mid-2000's added hundreds of thousands of square feet of commercial space and residences as well as two large Town-managed parking garages on the east side of South Main Street. Blue Back is largely comprised of national retailers and restaurants, complementing the generally locally owned businesses present in the Center.

The Center has long been valued for its pedestrian-friendly environment. Sidewalks are wide and paved with brick with direct access to storefronts. Amenities such as pedestrian lamps, street trees, and benches are found throughout the Center. Traffic is well-managed, although traffic volumes are high. Traffic speed is also well-managed and pedestrians are well protected from traffic. The Town effectively manages parking in the Center with surface parking, on-street parking, and two parking garages contributing to the municipal parking supply. As such, patrons typically park once and walk when frequenting more than one destination in the Center. These characteristics along with changes in the retail market have seen the Center transition from a traditional

retail and service-based town center to a restaurant destination that draws visitors from around the Region.

In addition to its prominence as a commercial center, the Center is home to the Town's civic institutions. Town Hall, the Noah Webster Library, the Town's public safety complex, the West Hartford Center post office, and public spaces such as the Connecticut Veteran's Memorial are located within the Center.

District Strengths

- Walkable, pedestrian-oriented district.
- High density of offerings encourages cross-shopping.
- High traffic counts (14,600 ADT on N. Main Street).
- Growth in food & entertainment. The Center is transitioning from a Community Center (traditional goods and local-serving) to a dining/entertainment district. This will strengthen business opportunities as more customers arrive from a larger trade area.
- Center open spaces like Veteran's Park, the Town Green and Town Hall grounds.

District Challenges

- Limited common area amenities that provide opportunities for events, that encourage shoppers to linger, and increase average spending.
- Weak connection between The Center and Blue Back Square. The primary connection between the Center and Blue Back Square aligns with the "Town Center," a building with an inactive street-front.
- Lack of bicycle facilities and amenities.

Potential Opportunities

- Increase awareness of parking availability. The Center has a large trade area and high traffic counts, drivers should be able to spot entrances/exits to parking easily.
- Activate storefronts at Town Center building.
- Develop parklets in underused areas.
- Improve connection to the Trout Brook Trail.

Neighborhood Districts

In addition to its larger commercial districts, West Hartford has several smaller neighborhood districts located throughout the community. Included among these are South Main Street at Park Road, Sunset Triangle, the Boulevard Shops at Prospect Avenue, the eastern end of Farmington Avenue, the Flatbush/South Quaker intersection, and the South Main Street/New Britain Avenue intersection.

Each of these areas have unique characteristics that contribute to the character of each neighborhood and provide convenience not necessary found in the larger retail districts.

Industrial Districts

The Town's industrially zoned districts (the Exclusive & Restricted Industrial District and the General Industrial and Industrial Park District) are concentrated in the southeast corner of Town, adjacent to and interwoven with the New Park Avenue and Elmwood commercial districts. This includes areas on both sides of New Park Avenue and South Street and areas along Flatbush Avenue, Newington Avenue, New Britain Avenue, Newfield Avenue, Oakwood Avenue, and Talcott Road. Land uses within the industrial districts are characterized by older industrial buildings and properties that are home to a mixture of commercial services, auto repair and sales, machine shops, construction yards, storage, and manufacturing facilities. Start-up spaces are also a sought after use in the industrial area. The industrial area is anchored by major establishments such as Colt Manufacturing, Legrand, Triumph, and Abbott Ball.

While West Hartford has an established industrial presence, the Town is less competitive in attracting and retaining larger industrial tenants than many other suburban communities. This is attributed to many factors including a lack of available space, few large parcels, indirect access to the highway, and the Town's mill rate. Recognizing the value that an industrial presence adds to West Hartford, the Town has actively promoted the reuse and adaption of industrial properties and seeks to balance shifting market trends that favor mixed-use development with the importance of preserving land for future generations of industry.



Office Districts

West Hartford has few areas that are exclusive to office uses. While the Town has several office zoning districts, these zoning districts are parcel-specific and cover a very small geographic area. Many of the Town's larger office and medical office buildings are located within the Central, General, and Special Development Districts. Much of West Hartford's office stock is "Class B" space which is older, smaller, and less flexible space with fewer amenities than modern "Class A" office space.

While West Hartford has a relatively small volume of "Class A" space, the regional office market is weak. There has also been a shift towards demand for office space within mixed-use environments and for working space in co-working environments. Recent developments such as Spaces at Blue Back Square are meeting this demand.



Image Source: Figure 8 Properties

The Community's Perspective on Economic Development

Through the Plan's community engagement process, the community expressed a number of ideas and desires regarding economic development. The Town is recognized by its residents as having vibrant and successful retail districts and a small but important manufacturing base. Other strengths identified by residents and stakeholders include West Hartford is increasingly a regional destination for shopping and dining and that the Town government works with and is responsive to the business community.

Residents and stakeholders also expressed concerns about weaknesses and threats to economic development. These include perceived lack of affordable commercial space, lack of available commercial and industrial property, loss of industrial uses, perceived over-saturation of restaurants and concern regarding the potential for commercial gentrification related to future Transit-Oriented Development.

Many ideas and opportunities for economic development were identified by residents and stakeholders. Notable ideas included opportunity for a mixed-use, multi-modal centers around the Elmwood and Flatbush CTtransit stations and bring a more diverse range of uses into commercial districts. A complete detailing of the community's perspective on economic development is available in the POCD supplemental information document.

State Growth Management Principle

Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas with existing or currently planned physical infrastructure.

4.0

Regional Economic Development Goals

- Coordinate and promote regional land use, infrastructure and fiscal policies for economic development.
- Maintain a focus on workforce development.
- Support and improve regional business development strategies and efforts.
- Guide growth to regional centers and areas of established infrastructure.

Local Economic Development Goal

Promote growth and retention of existing businesses and development of new business opportunities to strengthen the community's tax base in an innovative manner, while preserving and protecting the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.

Strategies

1. Encourage the growth and retention of existing businesses in Town.

Actions

- 1a. Encourage and support shared-use parking arrangements in commercial districts but protect adjacent residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of commercial and retail parking on residential streets.
- 1b. Encourage property owners to invest in and rehabilitate commercial structures and provide support and assistance in pursuing State and Federal funding opportunities.
- 1c. Create more effective educational and marketing tools for the business community and other stakeholders that provide guides on the building permit process and the enforcement process.
- 1d. Continue to work collaboratively with the business community through the proactive efforts of the Economic Development Specialist.
- 1e. Promote Opportunity Zone investment by supporting the efforts of regional, State and Federal partners.

- 1f. Continue to work collaboratively with neighborhood and business organizations to identify the distinctive needs of each commercial district while balancing the interests of adjacent residential neighborhoods.
 - 1g. Review the Town's land use development and building permit processes to continue to improve efficiency.
 - 1h. Support the efforts of the West Hartford's Clean Energy Commission's goal to reduce commercial energy use.
 - 1i. Review the industrial zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to strategically protect areas for industrial and heavy commercial.
2. Encourage public infrastructure improvements that support and stimulate private investment and redevelopment in the Town.

Actions

- 2a. Strengthen the connections of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities routes, including the Trout Brook Trail, to commercial districts as a means of boosting bicycle and pedestrian access.
 - 2b. Continue to invest in and support infrastructure improvements that improve the quality and safety of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities in commercial districts.
 - 2c. Conduct a Town-wide commercial district usable-open space study to identify opportunities for the creation of new pocket parks, parklets and other innovative usable open spaces and to identify improvements to existing usable open space areas.
 - 2d. Conduct a Town-wide wayfinding study to encourage connectivity within and to the Town's distinctive commercial districts.
 - 2e. Enhance connectivity between anchor institutions and major employment and commercial districts centers and through targeted public infrastructure improvements. Improvements that enhance sustainability should be prioritized and all improvements should be consistent with the Town's Complete Street Policy.
3. Encourage the diversification and growth of the Town's tax base.

Actions

- 3a. Encourage infill development on vacant and underutilized lots.
- 3b. Encourage the expansion of co-working spaces in commercial districts.
- 3c. Support the development of Class A office space within existing Office, General Business and Central Business Districts while ensuring that office space compliments and does not displace existing retail and service uses
- 3d. Promote Opportunity Zone investment by supporting the efforts of regional, State and Federal partners.

- 3e. Continue to promote and market commercial and industrial properties through the efforts of the West Hartford Department of Community Development and utilize tools such as the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) Sitefinder.
 - 3f. Encourage mixed-use and higher density development in proximity to existing and planned transit stations and existing commercial districts.
 - 3g. Continue to work collaboratively with the business community and neighborhood organizations and groups to address the concerns and needs of each group.
 - 3h. Continue to support the vision and guiding principles of the West Hartford Center Central Business District Planning Initiative.
 - 3i. Implement the recommendations of the New Park Avenue Transit Area Complete Streets Study.
4. Formulate a Holistic Economic Development Strategy.
5. Review the zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to support the current and future needs of the business community while preserving and protecting the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Actions

- 5a. Review the parking zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modification that modernize the Town's approach to commercial parking requirements.
- 5b. Review the signage zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modifications to allow for improved visibility of storefronts while ensuring compatibility with the character of West Hartford.
- 5c. Review the commercial zoning districts and identify potential areas for targeted modifications that provide for innovative approaches to bulk standards and use restrictions.
- 5d. Review the industrial zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to strategically protect areas for industrial and heavy commercial.



5.0 Transportation

West Hartford's transportation network is comprised of sidewalks, bike lanes, Town roadways, State roadways, an interstate highway, a bus rapid transit corridor, and a commuter rail corridor. West Hartford is well connected to the Region and enjoys strong connections to major employment centers such as Downtown Hartford.

With its many "street car" neighborhoods, West Hartford's transportation network has long been multimodal. Embracing this legacy, the Town adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2015. The goal of the Complete Streets Policy is to ensure that Town roadways complement and enhance surrounding land use and neighborhood character and accommodate all users, including drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians and transit patrons, older residents, children and persons with mobility impairments.

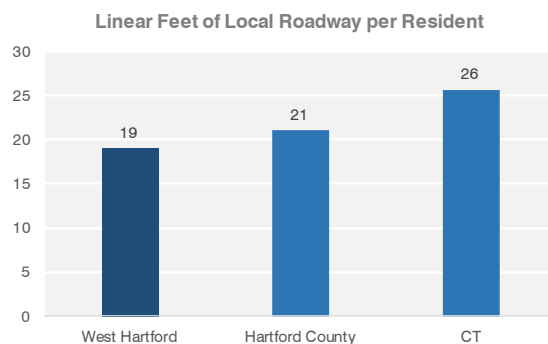
West Hartford continues to embrace a high quality transportation system and recognizes it as a defining characteristic of a community in which people want to live and conduct business. Providing current and future residents with the ability to maintain their independence regardless of mode of transportation is a core factor in West Hartford's evolution into a connected, sustainable, and innovative community and sets the Town apart from neighboring municipalities.

Street Network

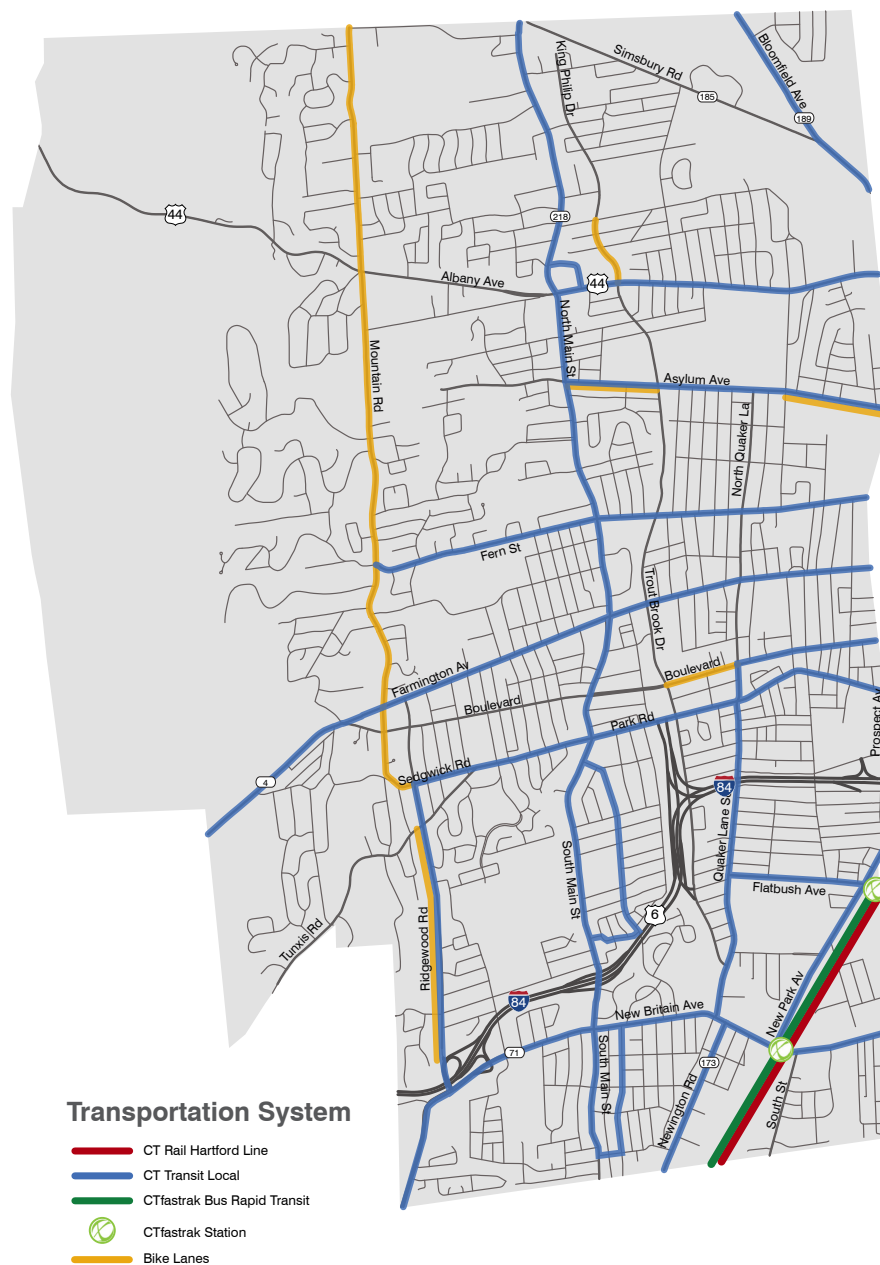
There are 224 miles of Town and State roads in West Hartford, the majority of which (217 miles) are maintained by the Town. This roadway network has a grid orientation which is effective in distributing traffic without overburdening the Town's arterial corridors. State routes are located on many of the arterial corridors; those roadways are managed and maintained by the CTDOT. The State routes include:

- Route 4 (Farmington Avenue)
- Route 44 (Albany Avenue)
- Route 71 (New Britain Avenue)
- Route 173 (South Main Street, New Britain Avenue, Newington Road)
- Route 185 (Simsbury Road)
- Route 189 (Bloomfield Avenue)
- Route 218 (North Main Street)

West Hartford is traversed by Interstate 84 which stretches east/west across the southern half of Town. Access to and from I-84 is available at several locations. Interchanges are located at Ridgewood Road/New Britain Avenue, South Main Street, Quaker Lane, Park Road, and Prospect Avenue/Kane Street/Caya Avenue.



Data Source: State level GIS data, 2013-17 ACS



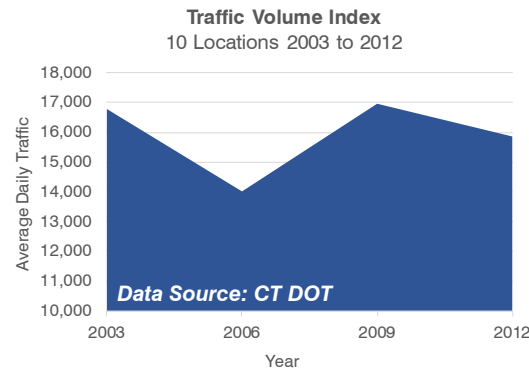
Source: Town of West Hartford,
CT Transit

While West Hartford has more miles of roadway than neighboring communities such as Farmington, Avon, or Bloomfield, the Town also has a greater population than those communities. Compared to Hartford County, which has 21 linear feet of local roadway per resident, West Hartford only has 19 linear feet of local roadway per resident.

Motor Vehicle Traffic

Excluding I-84, the Town's most heavily traveled corridors are arterial roads such as Albany Avenue, Farmington Avenue, New Britain Avenue, New Park Avenue, North Main Street, South Main Street, Trout Brook Drive, and Mountain Road. These roads carry 15,000 or more vehicles per day on segments of the roadway. Additionally, there are 105 traffic signals in the Town, 42 of which are maintained by the State and 63 of which are maintained by the Town. The Town has undertaken efforts to improve level of service at these intersections by providing turning lanes and improving traffic signal technology.

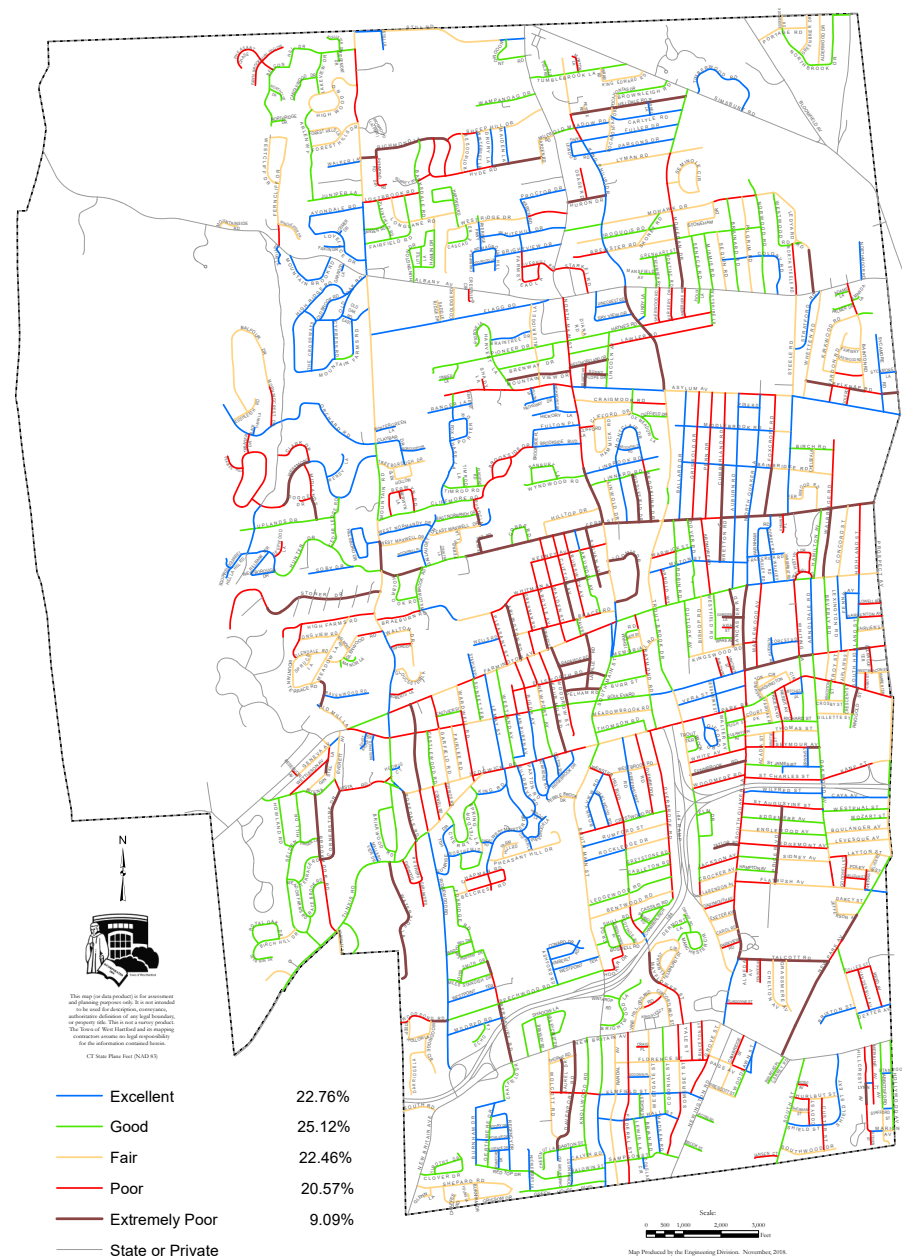
An analysis of the most recent traffic data available from CTDOT revealed that traffic volume on ten of the busiest roadways in Town fluctuated between 2003 and 2012; only slightly exceeding 2003 volumes in 2009. This analysis suggests that overall traffic volume is not increasing in Town, although congestion may be more acute at specific locations or during peak periods of the day.



Roadway and Sidewalk Maintenance

The Town resurfaces or reconstructs approximately 8 miles of roadway per year which equates to a 27-year expected pavement lifespan. Roadway improvement projects often include curb repair or replacement, drainage improvements, sidewalk improvements, and ADA compliance measures. The Town coordinates with the MDC and other utility providers in scheduling roadway improvements, but utility-related construction still challenges the Town's ability to sufficiently maintain pavement and achieve the expected lifespan of roadway pavement. Approximately nine percent of Town roads were classified as "extremely poor" in 2018 (see map at right).

West Hartford is known for, and appreciated by its residents as, a walkable community. Sidewalks along public roadways are constructed and repaired or replaced by the Town, unlike many communities which place this responsibility on property owners. The Town has also made substantial investments in its major and arterial streetscapes



2018 Pavement Conditions Map, Source: Town of West Hartford

to calm traffic and make them comfortable for pedestrians. Improvements include ornamental pedestrian lighting, concrete pavers, street trees, bus shelters, pedestrian refuge islands, and benches. While many of these improvements have been concentrated in the Center, the Town has improved several miles of corridors such as Farmington Avenue, the Boulevard and Park Road. The Town has also worked effectively with CTDOT and neighborhood associations to coordinate pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvements on New Britain Avenue in Elmwood, and is currently working with CTDOT and neighborhood associations to provide pedestrian safety and streetscape enhancements in the Bishop's Corner area and New Park Avenue.

Bicycle Accommodations

Bicycle accommodations are an important aspect of Complete Streets. As part of its Complete Street Policy, the Town adopted a Bicycle Facilities Plan (BFP). The BFP is a comprehensive plan and accompanying map that identifies a vision and framework for bicycle facility improvements to implement a continuous and easily accessible bicycle route network throughout the Town. This vision seeks to provide a seamless network of on and off-street bicycle routes linking destinations such as schools, parks, shopping and public transportation from one end of West Hartford to the other in an accessible and comfortable manner for people of all ages and abilities.

Since the adoption of the BFP, West Hartford has been recognized as a Bronze Level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists which recognizes communities based upon their investment in, and commitment to, expanding bicycle ridership and improving safety. The Town has demonstrated its commitment to bicycle mobility by installing 15 miles of bicycle lanes over the past decade. Other bicycle-related improvements include the installation of bicycle parking throughout Town, the creation of recreational bicycle routes, expansion of the Trout Brook Trail, and the installation of shared roadway signage and pavement markings.

The Town also has an active Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission. The Commission is an advisory group appointed by the Town Council and is dedicated to issues related to safe walking and bicycling in Town. Established in 2017, the Commission reviews, recommends and promotes various activities, policies and improvements related to the development of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

The goals of the Commission are as follows:

1. To promote pedestrian and bicycle safety through education.
2. To promote pedestrian and bicycle awareness to motorists.
3. To promote the development of the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure of West Hartford.
4. To promote the positive impact that pedestrians and bicycles have on the local economy.
5. To promote the health benefits and cost savings associated with pedestrian or bicycle transportation.

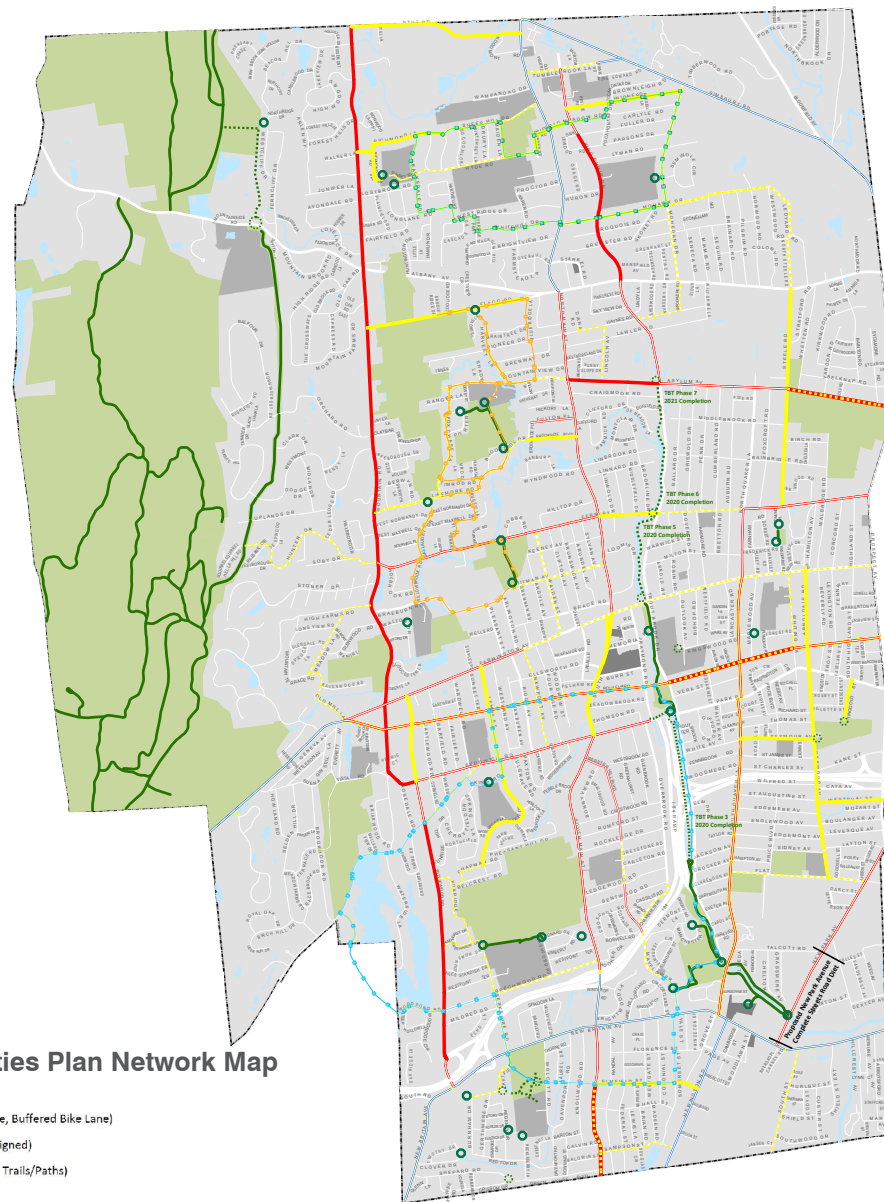
Bicycle Facilities Plan Network Map

Existing Routes

- **Separated** (Bike Lane, Buffered Bike Lane)
- **Shared** (Sharrows, Signed)
- **Off Street** (Multiuse Trails/Paths)
- **Bicycle Connection**

Intended Routes

- **Separated Town Roadway** (Bike Lane, Buffered Bike Lane, Protected Bike Lane, Cycle Track)
- **Separated State Roadway** (Bike Lane, Buffered Bike Lane, Protected Bike Lane, Cycle Track)
- **Shared** (Sharrows, Signed, Bicycle Boulevards)
- **Off Street** (Multiuse Trails/Paths)
- **Bicycle Connection**



2019 Bicycle Facilities Plan Network Map,
Source: Town of West Hartford

Transit

The southeast corner of Town is crossed by the Hartford Line/Amtrak rail line with the nearest stations located in Hartford and Berlin. A future station has been planned in West Hartford, across from West Hartford's Flatbush CTfastrak Station. CTfastrak, the bus rapid transit line connecting New Britain to Hartford, has two stations in West Hartford: Flatbush Avenue and in Elmwood.

CTtransit provides local bus service connecting West Hartford to Hartford and other surrounding communities. There are twelve routes in total which travel the Town's primary corridors. Bus shelters are located in commercial areas such as Elmwood, the Center, and Bishop's Corner, as well as heavily frequented corridors and stops.

The Town provides Dial-A-Ride services which assist West Hartford residents, who have difficulty using public transportation, providing access to essential services in the area. Eligible riders must be age 65 or older or be permanently disabled. Paratransit services are provided by the Greater Hartford Transit District in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), to individuals who, because of their disability, are unable to travel on the fixed route system operated by CTtransit.



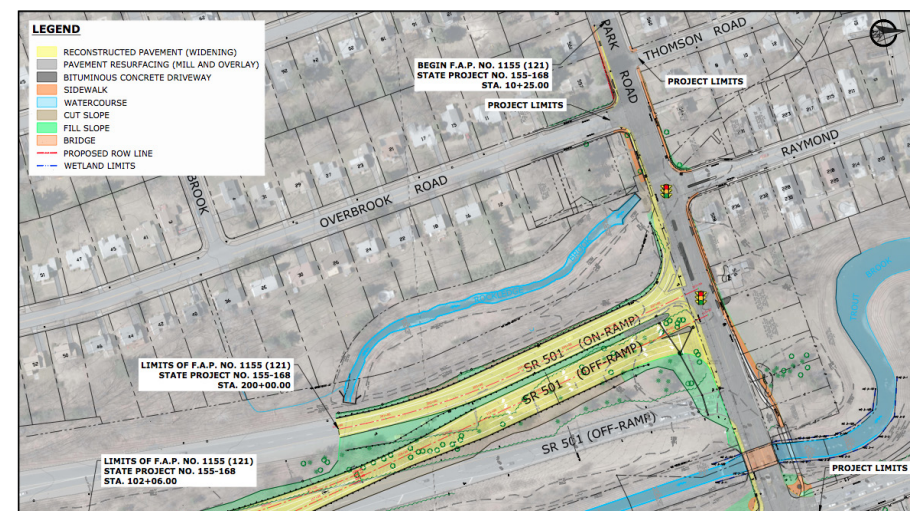
Flatbush Avenue CTfastrak Station Image Source: wikipedia.com

Planned and Ongoing Transportation Projects

The Town and State are active in planning improvements to, and reconstructing, the Town's transportation network. These projects include:

- **I-84 Park Road Interchange:** The Town has recently completed the reconstruction of this interchange to improve traffic operations and safety between the interchange and South Main Street and Trout Brook Drive. In addition to traffic improvements, the project provides new sidewalks and ADA compliant curb ramps and crosswalks and completes the multi-use path on the north side of Park Road.
- **Albany Avenue/Mountain Road Intersection:** The Town received a LOTCIP grant to improve traffic flow and safety at this location, the project is expected to commence in 2020 with anticipated completion in 2021.
- **New Park Avenue:** The Town received a \$2 million Responsible Growth and Transit-Oriented Development grant and a \$1.5 million LOTCIP grant to provide complete streets infrastructure improvements along New Park Avenue from New Britain Avenue to Oakwood Avenue. The improvements will be consistent with the recommendations of the 2017 New Park Avenue Transit Area Complete Streets Study. Improvements will include a road diet with center turn lane, landscaped medians, protected bike lanes, new street trees, lighting, wayfinding signage and other amenities, and a pocket park at the trail head to the Trout Brook Trail.
- **North Main Street:** The Town will rehabilitate the North Main Street bridge over the Trout Brook beginning in 2020 and will test a road diet after construction.

5.0



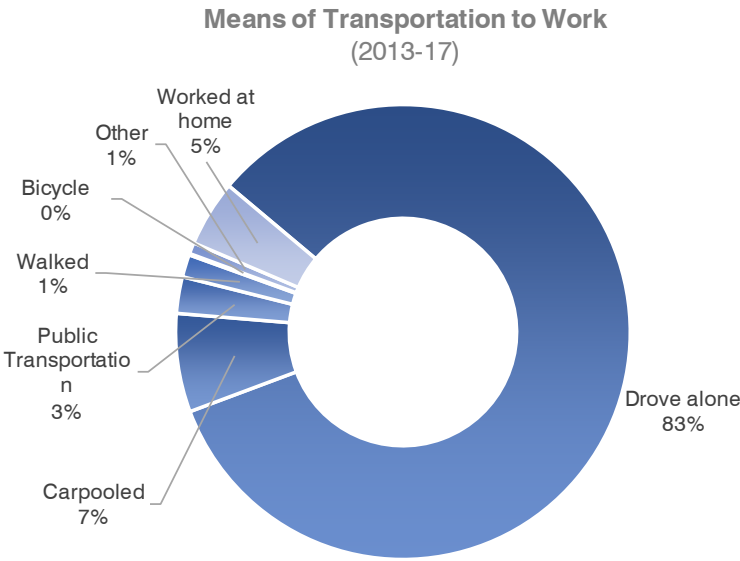
I-84 Park Road Interchange, Plan Source: CT DOT

Commuting Preferences and Patterns

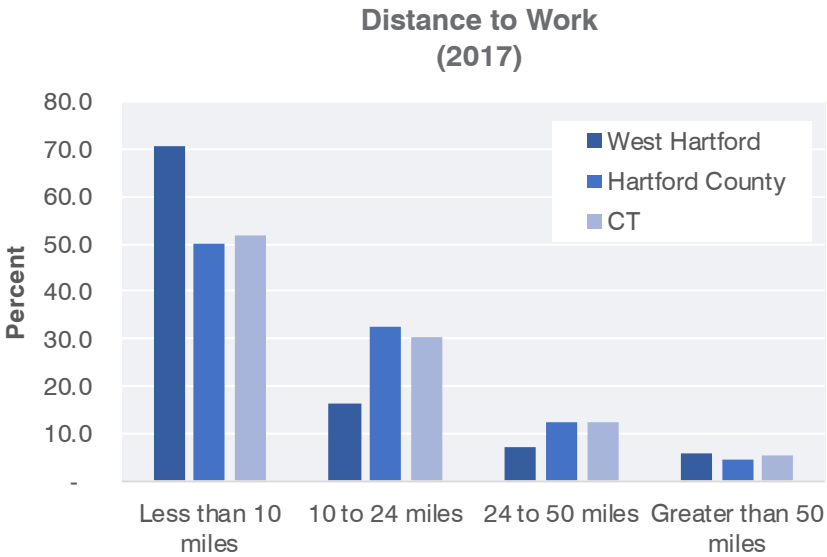
Like most of Connecticut's suburban communities, West Hartford's residents overwhelmingly drive to work alone. West Hartford does, however, have more residents (83%) driving to work alone than Hartford County (81%) or the State (78%). Only 17% of West Hartford residents travel to work by another means, this includes 7% of residents who carpool and 5% of residents who work at home. Only 3% of residents use public transportation to travel to work.

These statistics suggest that there is potential for commuter mode shift in West Hartford. This potential is reinforced by the fact that more than 70% of residents live less than ten miles from their place of employment. This is roughly twenty percentage points higher than Hartford County and the State which have lower rates of driving alone to work.

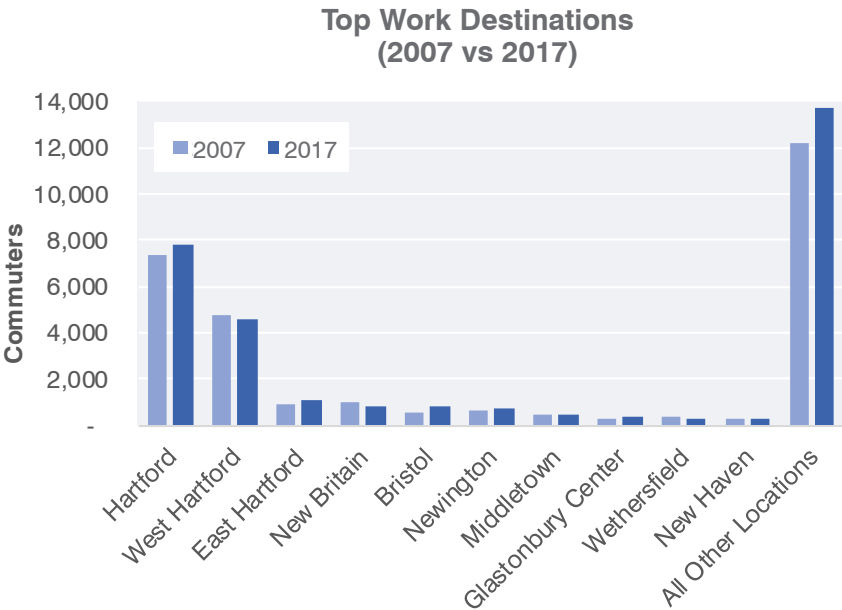
Hartford and West Hartford are the primary commuting destinations of West Hartford's workers. This shifted slightly between 2007 and 2017 with more residents commuting to Hartford in 2017 and less working in Town.



Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics



Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics



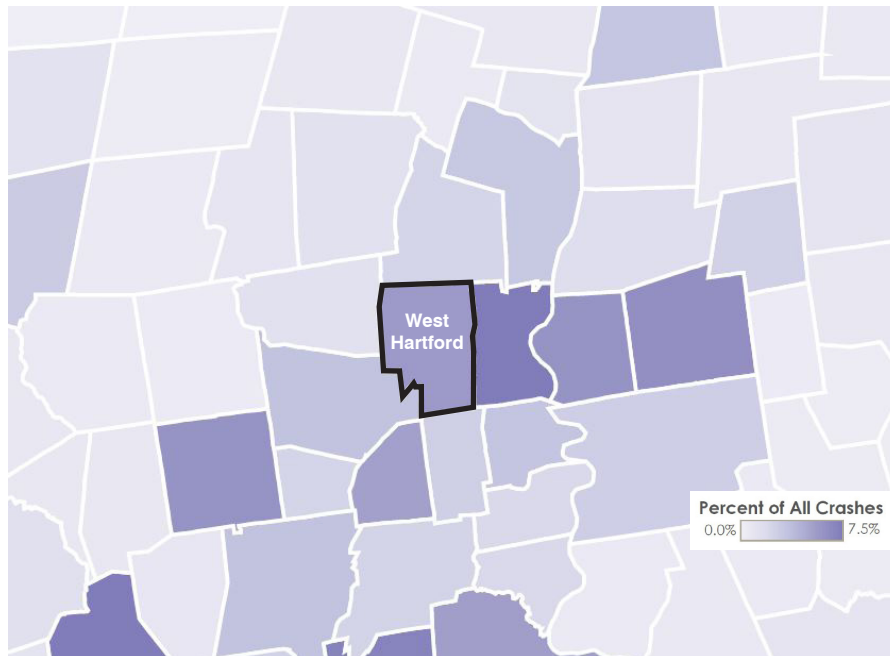
Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Transportation Safety

West Hartford's crash rate is one of the highest in the Region, well behind the City of Hartford but comparable to Bristol, East Hartford, and Manchester. Factoring into the crash rate is the miles of roadway in Town, the presence of I-84, traffic volume, number of signalized intersections, and active land uses along the Town's roadways.

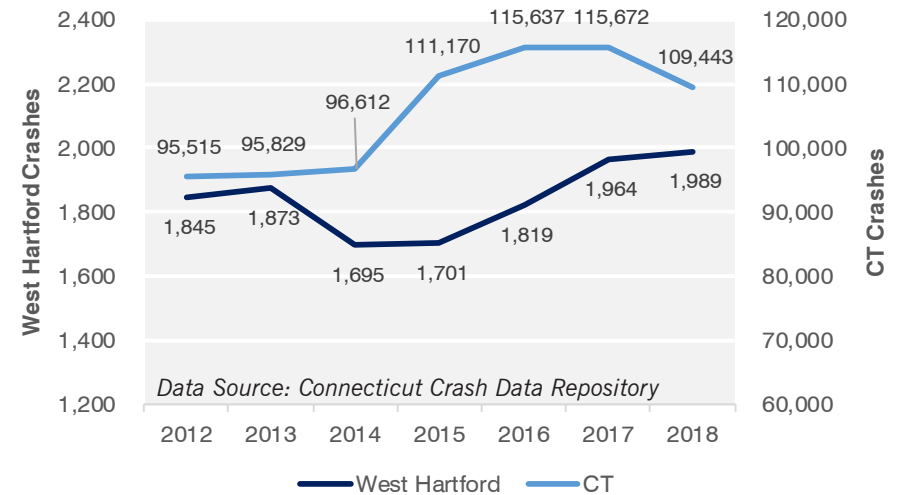
West Hartford had 1,989 motor vehicle related crashes in 2018. Of those crashes, there was one fatality, 550 injury crashes, and 1,438 property damage crashes. Seventeen percent of those crashes (334) occurred on I-84. Ten motor vehicle/bicycle crashes occurred in 2018, all of them resulting in injuries. Twenty-eight motor vehicle/pedestrian crashes occurred over the same period of time, all but two resulted in an injury.

West Hartford's crash volume has consistently increased since 2014 after experiencing a significant decline between 2013 and 2014. This trend mirrors a rise in crashes statewide, although statewide increases occurred earlier and were more pronounced. While the increase in crashes is likely attributed to the prevalence of distracted driving and the redistribution of some traffic patterns, more study is necessary. The increased crashes affect the livability and sustainability of the Town and the additional study is needed to identify the causes of the crashes, propose solutions, and monitor progress.



Crash Distribution in CT by Town, Source: 2015 Connecticut Crash Facts Book

West Hartford vs Statewide Crash Trends



5.0

The Community's Perspective

Through the Plan's community engagement process, the community expressed a number of ideas and desires regarding transportation. The Town is recognized by its residents as having an efficient street grid system with well-connected sidewalks lined with street trees and for having adopted a Complete Street Policy.

Residents and stakeholders expressed concerns about weaknesses and threats to transportation. These include traffic congestion in specific locations at peak commuting, lack of efficient intra-town public transit, the need for better traffic enforcement and improved roadway and sidewalk maintenance

Many ideas and opportunities for transportation were identified by residents and stakeholders. Notable ideas included implementation of a neighborhood traffic-calming program, exploring opportunities for road diets and an increased emphasis on pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure as a means of reducing traffic congestion. A complete detailing of the community's perspective on transportation is available in the POCD supplemental information document.

State Growth Management Principle

Concentrate development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options.

Regional Transportation Goals

- Provide a range of viable transportation options within the Region.
- Improve interregional transportation.
- Coordinate land use, environmental and transportation effort.

Local Transportation Goal

Promote an integrated and balanced transportation system, including “complete streets,” to improve traffic flow; enhance parking opportunities; promote public transportation and car-pooling; enhance traffic calming efforts, pedestrian mobility and bicycle access; and meet the needs of the next generation of transportation technologies and infrastructure.

Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.

Strategies

1. Encourage transportation infrastructure improvements that improve the accessibility and safety for all users and enhance the economic strength of West Hartford while protecting its residential neighborhoods.

Actions

- 1a. Explore opportunities to enhance and expand the street road network such as extending Oakwood Avenue to New Britain Avenue to improve accessibility and reduce traffic congestion.
- 1b. Continue to explore opportunities to enhance and expand the sidewalk network, including the identifying and filling in of existing gaps in the network, to improve accessibility and connectivity.
- 1c. Continue to explore opportunities to enhance and expand the bicycle facilities network to improve network density and connectivity both within Town and to surrounding communities.
- 1d. Continue to proactively manage public parking to support commercial districts and protect surrounding neighborhoods.
- 1e. Continue to invest in and support infrastructure improvements that both expand and improve the quality and safety of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout Town.

- 1f. Continue to work collaboratively with the State to expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities on State roadways throughout Town.
 - 1g. Establish a Town-wide Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.
 - 1h. Look for opportunities to extend the Trout Brook Trail system north and south. In particular, work collaboratively with the Town of Newington to examine the feasibility of extending the trail to connect to CTfastrak Multi-Use Trail.
 - 1i. Conduct a Town-wide road safety study, with a particular focus on high crash corridors, that identifies the causes of increased rates of crashes, proposes solutions, and provides a program for monitoring progress.
 - 1j. Continue to work collaboratively with residents, neighborhood groups and other stakeholders to address transportation needs or concerns throughout Town.
 - 1k. Continue to pursue State and Federal funding opportunities for transportation infrastructure improvements.
 - 1l. Improve, prioritize and promote the maintenance of the transportation infrastructure Town-wide to increase roadway lifespans.
 - 1m. Continue to work collaboratively with and support the efforts of the Pedestrian & Bicycle Commission in promoting the strategies of the Section.
2. Support transit improvements and service changes that will increase local ridership.

Actions

- 2a. Continue to work collaboratively with the City of Hartford, the State and other stakeholders on the development of the proposed Flatbush CT Rail station.
 - 2b. Work with CT Transit to identify improvements to increase accessibility and service on intra and inter Town transit routes.
 - 2c. Identify opportunities for physical improvements at high ridership CT Transit stops.
3. Review the zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to support multi-modal approach including, transit-oriented development, bikeability, walkability and innovative trends in the transportation field.

Actions

- 3a. Review the parking zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modifications that modernize the Town's approach to parking requirements.
- 3b. Revise the zoning ordinance to address the growing trends towards electrification and next generation technologies such as electric vehicles, rideshare and driverless cars.
- 3c. Revise the zoning ordinances to create requirements and standards for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and amenities.
- 3d. Consistent with the recommendations in the New Park Avenue Transit Area Complete Streets Study, review the zoning ordinances and consider the creation of a new transit-oriented district zoning.

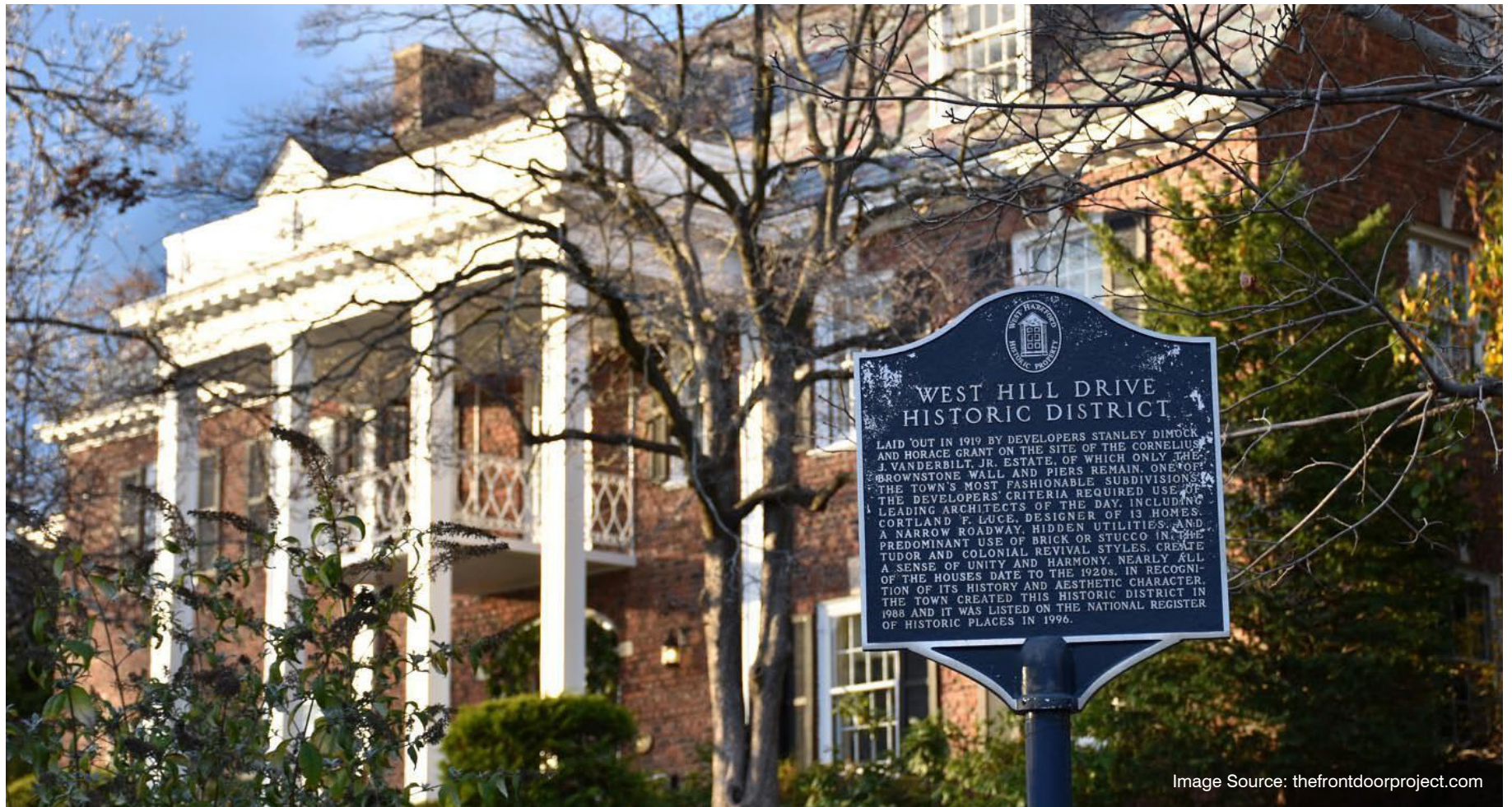


Image Source: thefrontdoorproject.com

6.0 Cultural and Historic Resources

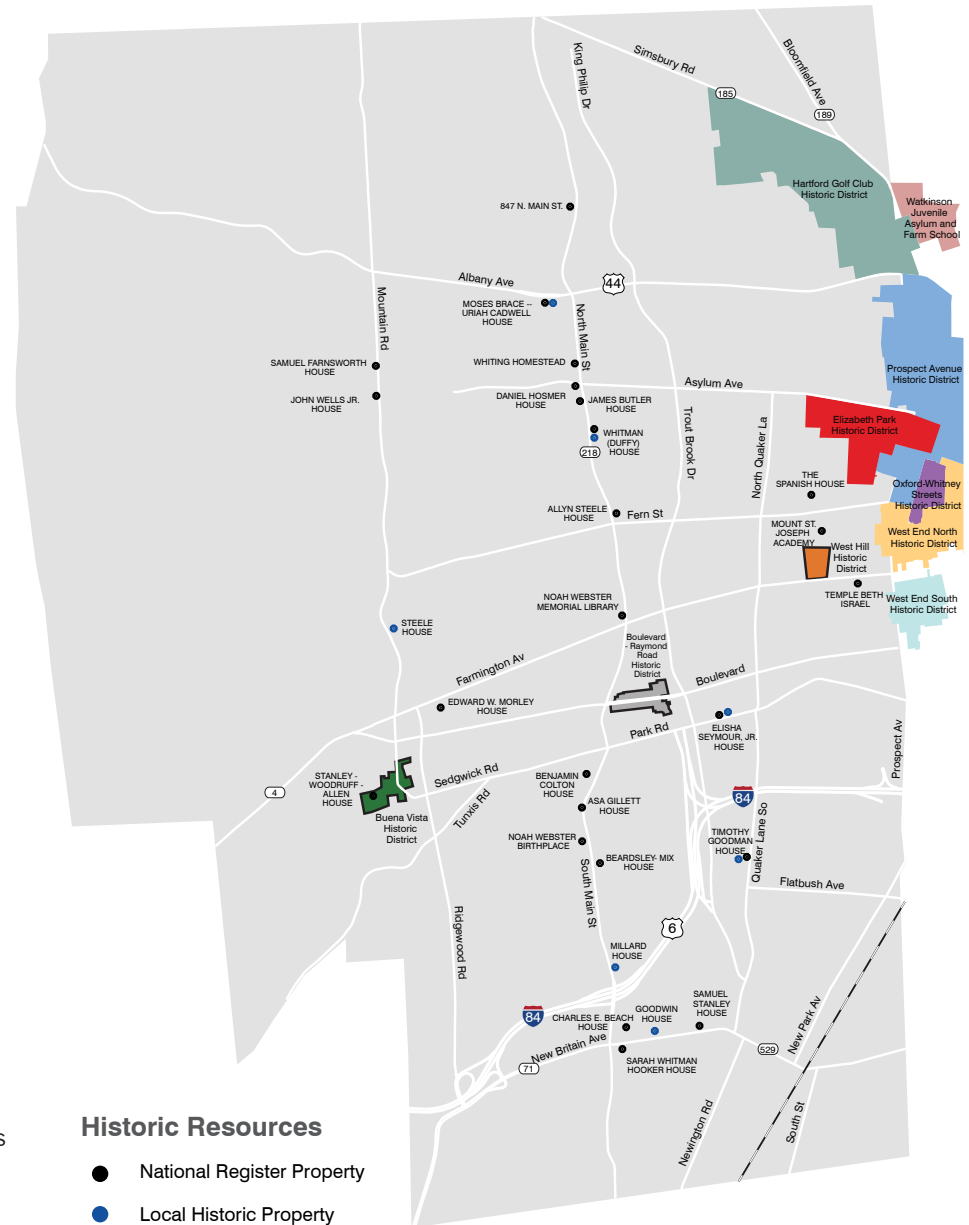
West Hartford enjoys considerable cultural and historic resources that contribute to its quality of life and sense of place. The Town's cultural resources are diverse and include a range of Town and private facilities, venues, landscapes and places. Organizations such as the West Hartford Art League maintain a physical presence in an historic school house, while private venues such as the Playhouse on Park provide live entertainment on Park Road, occupying space in the historic A.C. Petersen Farms building. These cultural resources are located throughout Town and are clustered in areas such as the Center, Park Road and Elmwood.



The Town's cultural assets reinforce its sense of place and contribute to its quality of life. Image source: CTCallboard

West Hartford's long and distinguished history is amply illustrated by its unique historic and architectural heritage. West Hartford has its historic roots in its colonial farmsteads, early roadways, 20th century trolley line transit-oriented development, post war development, and its vibrant commercial centers resulting in a wealth of historic and architecturally significant buildings, sites and streetscapes. All of these elements contribute to our distinctive charm and character. These important resources are recognized at the local, State and national levels and continue to deserve our protection.

Historic preservation contributes to West Hartford's sense of place by maintaining and protecting our irreplaceable historic and architectural heritage for current and future generations.



Historic Resources

- National Register Property
- Local Historic Property
- Local Historic District

Data Source: National Park Service, CT Trust for Historic Preservation

The preservation and protection of historic and architectural resources, can be achieved by listing on the State or National Register of Historic Places, or by designation as a local historic district or property. The level of protection varies with each designation.

National Register of Historic Places and Districts

The National Register is the official listing of the nation's cultural resources that are worthy of preservation. A listing on the National Register is a prestigious recognition of the importance of a site, but does not affect the owner's rights to make use of the property as he wishes. Protection and preservation tools available include the following:

- Provide for review of federally-funded, licensed or sponsored projects which may affect listed historic properties.
- Make owners of historic properties eligible to apply for federal grants-in-aid (when available) for preservation activities.
- Encourage the rehabilitation, through tax incentives, of income-producing historic properties that meet preservation standards.
- Provide protection from unreasonable destruction of historic/cultural resources through use of the environmental protection provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The West Hartford properties, sites and districts currently listed on the National Register are shown on the Historic Resources map on the preceding page and summarized in the table below.

District	National Register	Local Historic Property
Boulevard-Raymond Road Historic District		✓
Buena Vista Historic District		✓
Elizabeth Park Historic District	✓	
Hartford Golf Club Historic District	✓	
Prospect Avenue Historic District	✓	
West End North Historic District	✓	
West End South Historic District	✓	
West Hill Historic District	✓	✓

Historic Districts in West Hartford

Source: National Park Service, CT Trust for Historic Preservation

Property	National Register	Local Historic Property
Allyn Steele House	✓	
Asa Gillett House	✓	
Beardsley-Mix House	✓	
Benjamin Colton House	✓	
Center Burying Yard	✓	
Charles E. Beach House	✓	
Daniel Hosmer House	✓	
Edward Morley House	✓	
Elisha Seymour Jr. House	✓	✓
Elizabeth Park	✓	
Goodwin House		✓
James Butler House	✓	
John Wells Jr. House	✓	
Millard House		✓
Moses Brace-Uria Cadwell House	✓	✓
Mount St. Joseph Academy	✓	
Noah Webster Birthplace	✓	
Noah Webster Memorial Library	✓	
Revolutionary War Campsite	✓	
Samuel Farnsworth House	✓	
Sarah Whitman Hooker House	✓	
Stanley Woodruff Allen House	✓	
Steele House		✓
Temple Beth Israel	✓	
The Spanish House	✓	
Timothy Goodman House	✓	✓
Whiting Homestead	✓	
Whitman (Duffy) House	✓	✓
847 N. Main Street	✓	

Listed Historic Properties in West Hartford

Source: National Park Service, CT Trust for Historic Preservation

State Register of Historic Places

A listing on the State Register gives honorary recognition. The listing is an additional way to recognize the historic nature of a site or structure so that consideration is given to land use decisions which may impact upon these sites or structures. Special consideration is also available under the State Building Code for State Register-listed buildings. All of the sites on the National Register are also recognized on the State Register; currently there are no sites or structures in West Hartford listed separately on the State Register. However, because the listing process is generally quicker than that for the National Register, State Register listing can be used as an interim recognition for sites and structures while National Register recognition is being prepared or is pending.

Local Historic Districts and Historic Properties

Local designation carries with it the strength of the law as it applies to the regulation of the exterior appearance of sites and structures as viewed from public streets or places. The responsibility for regulation of Historic Districts and Historic Properties rests with the West Hartford Historic District Commission. The designation of a local historic district or property is intended to preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings, places of architectural and historical significance and streetscapes.

West Hartford has many historic resources that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which is administered by the National Park Service. The National Register is the official Federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The Town's historic resources include individual homes and properties as well as districts that are comprised of multiple properties and landscapes that contribute to each district's historic significance.

The Districts that are located primarily or entirely within West Hartford include the West Hill Historic District, the Hartford Golf Club Historic District and the Elizabeth Park Historic District. Other National Register Districts with properties in West Hartford include the Prospect Avenue Historic District, the West End North Historic District and the West End South Historic District as shown on the map on page 54.

West Hartford also has local historic districts including West Hill Historic District (both local and national), the Boulevard-Raymond Road Historic District and the Buena Vista Historic District.

At the local level, the Town has multiple properties that are recognized as Local Historic Properties by our local Historic District Commission and are listed on the State Historic Register. Some of these properties, such as the Elisha Seymour Jr. House, are local historic properties that are on both the State and National Registers.

The Historic District Commission is the Town body that works to protect and preserve the architectural integrity and character of the three Town-designated districts including the Buena Vista Historic District, the Boulevard-Raymond Road Historic District, and



Noah Webster Birthplace: A National Register property. Image credit: Peter Schaller

the West Hill Historic District, as well as eight individual properties composed of eighteenth and early nineteenth century farmhouses.

The Historic District Commission makes decisions on requests to build, remodel, enlarge, or demolish buildings and structures within the historic district and engages in activities to enhance historic and architectural preservation in the Town.

An important part of historic preservation is identifying and listing all structures and sites of architectural and historical significance. The resulting inventory of resources can be used by the Town Plan and Zoning and Historic District Commissions as a tool to set preservation priorities. A comprehensive survey and inventory of West Hartford resources was completed during 1979-1985.

Existence of local historic district creates community pride, fosters neighborhood stabilization and enhances the appearance and authentic historic character of an area which contributes to West Hartford's unique sense of place.

The Community's Perspective

Through the Plan's community engagement process, the community expressed a number of ideas and desires regarding cultural and historic resources. Residents acknowledged and valued the great cultural and historic assets of the Town. Overall, the community noted that the Town should do more to promote its cultural and historic resources. A complete detailing of the community's perspective on cultural and historic resources is available in the POCD supplemental information document.

State Growth Management Principle

Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources, and traditional rural lands.

Regional Goal

No directly applicable regional goal.

Local Cultural & Historic Resources Goal

Preserve, protect, enhance and promote, the cultural and historic resources of West Hartford.

Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.

Strategies

1. Promote the preservation of West Hartford's historically and architecturally significant resources.

Actions

- 1a. Encourage and support protection for all historic resources by creating local historic districts and properties and/or listing on the State Register of Historic Places and/or the National Register of Historic Places.
 - 1b. Promote public awareness and appreciation of local historic resources.
 - 1c. Maintain an updated Historic Resources Inventory.
 - 1d. Support the Historic District Commission in performing its duties to protect locally-designated historic districts and properties.
 - 1e. Ensure publicly-owned properties (sites, artifacts, structures and buildings) of historical and architectural significance are protected and preserved.
2. Promote and enhance the viability of historic and architectural resources for their continued use.

Actions

- 2a. Encourage adaptive re-use of existing historic sites, buildings and structures.
- 2b. Examine best practices and innovative zoning ordinances that encourage adaptive re-use of former residential and industrial properties for new commercial, business or multiple uses, especially in transitional areas.

- 2c. Encourage development strategies and plans that are sensitive to adjacent or nearby architectural and historic resources including those designated as local, State and national historic districts and properties and those identified in the Historic Resources Inventory.
 - 2d. Promote the protection of streetscapes by ensuring new buildings, particularly on infill lots, be of size and scale and quality similar to that of existing architectural fabric of a neighborhoods, particularly in areas with the potential for historic designation.
 - 2e. Encourage maintenance of the architectural integrity of historic and architecturally-significant sites, buildings and structures when adapted for re-use for commercial, industrial or residential purposes.
 - 2f. Pursue financial incentives for preservation, including State and Federal grants, tax incentive programs, preservation or facade easements, assessment deferrals and transfer of development rights.
 - 2g. Promote heritage tourism in West Hartford, showcasing the Town's house museums, art galleries, and parks. Encourage tourism of West Hartford's historic, architectural, recreational, and natural resources to support further economic development.
 - 2h. Promote West Hartford's historic and architectural resources in cooperation with the State and local agencies, associations and groups.
3. Continue to make Town-owned space accessible and available for use by community groups

Actions

- 3a. Review space use practices and applications for ease of use.
 - 3b. Compile and promote an inventory of available spaces.
4. Continue to make the event permitting process accessible and flexible.

Actions

- 4a. Review permitting process for ease of use and for adaptability for future uses.
5. Continue to make use of interaction with community groups in the formation of policy related to culture and historic resources.

Actions

- 5a. Actively bring together community stakeholders when studying adaptation of land uses and zoning.
 - 5b. Actively seek out and invite existing special interest community groups when studying adaptation of land uses and zoning.
6. Support and promote arts, entertainment and cultural organizations.

Actions

- 6a. Explore the need for an arts and cultural liaison or Arts & Culture Commission to facilitate the local arts and cultural organizations interests within the Town.

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7.0 Open Space and Environment



In fully developed communities such as West Hartford, balancing growth with preservation and enhancement of important environmental resources is critical to achieving a sustainable community. The Town's open space and environmental resources are diverse. They include Talcott Mountain, the MDC lands, the Trout Brook, privately-owned open spaces, wetlands, floodplains and conservation lands, as well as Town-owned parks and open spaces. In total, the Town has over 3,800 acres of land classified as open space which covers 27% of West Hartford, one of the highest open space proportion of for any town in the Region. The open space inventory is summarized in the table at right.

West Hartford's environmental resources are also a regional asset. The Capital Region Council of Governments regional plan of conservation and development identifies MDC lands and Talcott Mountain as a conservation corridor. Much of the western area of West Hartford falls within this corridor. Additionally, the Town owns five open space properties that are designated as natural areas. These include:

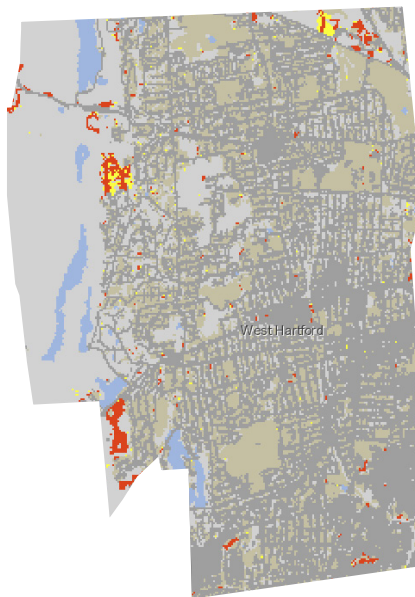
- Spicebush Swamp
- Mooney's Woods
- Bugbee Woods
- Caya Mozart Woods
- Rochambeau Campsite

With the exception of the Rochambeau Campsite, which is also a historical asset, these natural areas are predominately wetlands that serve a significant environmental role in flood control.

Landscape Change, Conservation and Open Space

The Town's open space assets, such as forest cover, contracted over the twenty-five year period between 1985 and 2010. According to a study by UCONN's CLEAR center, the Town lost 6% of its forest cover, primarily to development, over this twenty-five year period. Like West Hartford, Connecticut lost 6% of its forest cover over the same period.

Open Space Classification	Acres
Town Parks	287
Town Golf Courses	213
Private Golf Courses	380
Town School Campuses	335
Town Owned Natural Areas	105
State of CT/MDC Lands	2,500
Land Trusts	24
Total	3,844



Loss of Open Space 1985-2010

(Red areas indicate loss of naturalized area to development, yellow areas indicate loss of naturalized area to lawns)

Source: UCONN CLEAR Center



Open Space

- Town Park or Natural Area
- Land Trust
- State/ MDC/ CLP Property
- Wetland Soils
- Waterbody
- Trout Brook Trail

Source: CTDEEP, Town of West Hartford

Land trusts such as the West Hartford Land Trust and Wintonbury Land Trust have played an active role in protecting open space in West Hartford. Combined, the trusts hold seven properties that comprise 24 acres. While they are private organizations, their mission to protect open space is supported by the Town.

West Hartford has approximately 3,440 acres of publicly-owned open space and conservation and recreation areas in Town. These open space areas range from local neighborhood parks to natural areas. In addition, the school/park concept has historically been an integral element in the Town's overall network of public open space/recreation facilities. The school/park partnership concept provides use of fields for school use during school hours and public use thereafter. The remaining publicly-owned open space is comprised either of watershed areas of the MDC or State controlled flood control districts.

Wetlands and Watercourses

Wetlands and watercourses have been a regulated natural resource in the Town of West Hartford since 1974 with the adoption of the West Hartford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations. The West Hartford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA) is authorized to regulate activities affecting wetlands and watercourses and is responsible for enforcing all provisions of the West Hartford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations. The TPZ is also duly designated as the IWWA.

Wetland soils are defined by the Connecticut General Statutes as poorly drained, very poorly drained and floodplain soils. The protection of wetland soils and watercourses are important for a variety of reasons including:

- Wetlands provide habitat that is critical to a variety of plant and animal species, including threatened and endangered species;
- Wetlands often function like natural sponges, storing water (floodwater or surface water) and slowly releasing it to groundwater and surface waters, thereby reducing the likelihood of flooding and flood damage to personal property;
- Wetlands help improve water quality by interception of surface runoff and removing or retaining its nutrients, processing organic wastes and reducing sediment before it reaches open water;
- Wetlands provide outdoor recreational opportunities;
- Wetlands are essential to an adequate and safe supply of surface and groundwater and
- Wetlands provide resources for scientific study and education, serving as laboratories for research and as classrooms for teaching ecology and the role of wetland systems.

Watersheds

West Hartford lies within 19 local watersheds, the primary being the Trout Brook watershed. Stormwater runoff into Trout Brook degrades water quality in that system, contributing to the classification of all eight miles of Trout Brook as an impaired water body not supporting recreation or aquatic life by the Connecticut Department of Environment and Energy. Other watersheds within West Hartford include the Park River watershed covering the north and east sides of Town and the Piper Brook watershed in Elmwood. Like the Trout Brook, the Park River (both the North Branch and South Branch) and Piper Brook have impaired water quality due to bacterial loading. This is caused by combined stormwater overflows (CSOs) which flood the brooks and river with untreated wastewater during heavy storm events.

Based on the CT DEEP Surface Water Classifications the established total maximum daily pollutant loads, the South Branch Park River and Piper Brook are identified in the 2014 State of Connecticut Integrated Water Quality Report as surface waters that should take highest priority in the Town's efforts to address stormwater impacts.

Flooding

The Town has experienced significant flooding events, historically and recently. The Town's high percentage of impervious coverage, geography and geology are all significant contributing factors to flood susceptibility. According to 2014-2019 Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan, West Hartford has one of the highest overall and flood loss claims in the Region. An analysis conducted by CRCOG, indicated that a storm event inundating the 100-year flood plain could cause \$131 million in damage to residences, commercial properties and businesses.

To address its flood vulnerabilities, West Hartford proactively manages its floodplain resources. The Town is the only community in the Capitol Region that participates in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS is a voluntary program for communities participating in the National Flood Insurance Program. The CRS offers flood insurance policy premium discounts in communities that develop and execute extra measures beyond minimum floodplain management requirements to provide protection from flooding. West Hartford is a Class 8 rated community. Continued participation in this program and increasing the Town's community rating should be a priority.

The Town undertook significant structural mitigation projects in the early 1980s, including rechanneling Trout Brook to remove houses from the floodplain. Dredging and maintenance of Trout Brook was conducted by the CT DEEP in 2015 and the Town strictly regulates development in Special Flood Hazard Areas through its zoning ordinances.

Impervious Surface

The Town's open space assets help the community offset impervious surface (pavement and rooftops) coverage. Impervious coverage is the prominent factor contributing to stormwater runoff, which the Town is required to manage by the State of Connecticut under its MS4 General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater.

Twenty-three percent of West Hartford has impervious surface coverage greater than 50%. However, forty-two percent of the Town's land area has impervious coverage of 11% or less, this area helps to offset the areas with higher impervious coverage (see impervious coverage map at right).

7.0

Stormwater Management

Polluted stormwater runoff is the largest source of water quality problems in the nation today. Non-point source pollution comes from rainfall that accumulates contaminants and sediments from such sources as driveways, parking areas, roofs, construction sites and fertilized lawns.

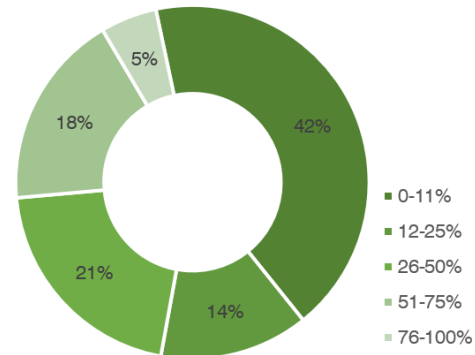
Historically, stormwater management techniques in West Hartford emphasized the efficient collection and removal of stormwater. This is typically achieved by employing a combination of curbs, catch basins and pipes to control runoff and discharge into a Town storm sewer system or directly to the nearest stream. This practice of emphasizing the conveyance of stormwater as quickly and efficiently as possible can contribute to non-point pollution.

To better manage its stormwater, the Town adopted a Stormwater Management Plan (SMP) in 2017 as part of its obligations under its (MS4) permit. The SMP seeks to plan (produced in 2017) to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater to improve water quality. The SMP addresses the following stormwater control measures with best management practices identified for these measures:

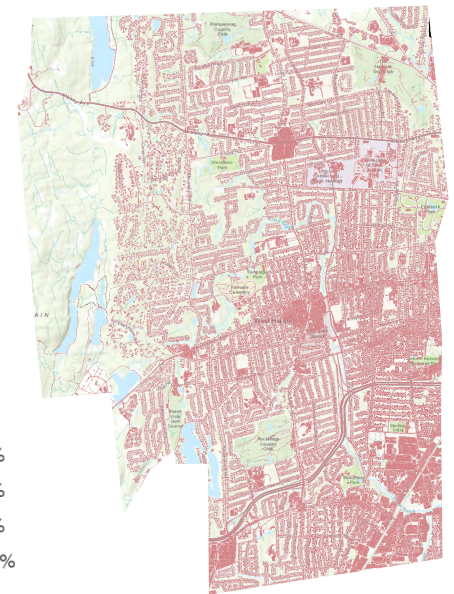
- Public education and outreach.
- Public involvement and participation.
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination.
- Construction site stormwater runoff control.
- Post-construction stormwater management in new development and redevelopment.
- Pollution prevention/good housekeeping for municipal operations.

The Town is required to submit an annual update outlining the steps being taken towards these measures. The public education and outreach requirement of the MS4 permit affords West Hartford residents an opportunity to play a role in protecting and improving water quality in the Town's surface waters. Specific measures that can be taken by residents include:

- Properly managing pet waste.
- Reduction and responsible application of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides.
- Reduction of impervious cover.
- Proper disposal of solid waste.



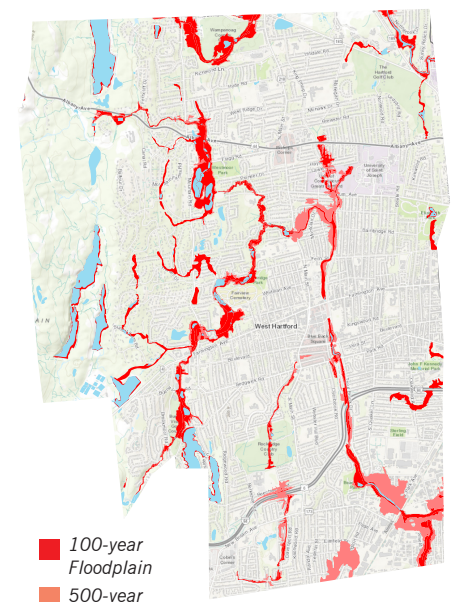
Impervious Coverage
Source: CTDEEP



Impervious Surface Coverage
(Red is impervious) Source: CT DEEP



West Hartford's Watersheds
Source: CT DEEP



100-year
Floodplain
500-year
Floodplain

FEMA Flood Areas
Source: FEMA



Trout Brook at Spice Bush Swamp. Image Source: activerain.com

The Town's Stormwater Management Plan identifies the following measures that should be taken by the Town to encourage the above practices by residents. These include:

1. Develop a public education program and all materials selected under the program.
2. Implement the program and distribute public education materials annually.
3. Summarize the types, sources, number of, and methods by which materials were disseminated.
4. Implement Low Impact Development (LID) standards that reduce the negative impacts of development on watershed areas and watercourses.

Additionally, a properly managed stormwater system helps reduce the overall volume and rate of stormwater discharged directly into a Town system waterbody. This can help minimize flooding and associated damage to public and private infrastructure and environmental resources.

Town Initiatives

The Town has been actively working towards improving water quality of Trout Brook and moving towards more environmentally sustainable practices. In addition to its stormwater management practices, the Town has implemented measures such as integrated pest management (IPM) on athletic fields and other Town-managed open spaces. IPM is an environmentally and economically responsible method of controlling pest populations. IPM incorporates multiple pest control techniques primarily relying on preventive measures and non-toxic controls.

Other measures that the Town has promoted as a means of protecting the environment include tree planting within Town right-of-ways and on Town properties and efforts to reduce solid waste. One of the solid waste reduction strategies deployed was a fifteen-week food waste composting pilot program that engaged 130 households. The program, which was conducted in late 2017 is being reviewed by the Town to assess the feasibility for permanent implementation. The Town and Board of Education have also made significant investments in energy efficiency in Town and School facilities (see Section 2.0 Facilities and Infrastructure for more information). These initiatives should be continued and expanded.

7.0

The Community's Perspective

Through the Plan's community engagement process, the community expressed a number of ideas and desires regarding open space and the environment. Residents acknowledged and valued the importance of well-managed and accessible open spaces and the need to continue to support sustainable land use practices. Overall, the community noted that the Town should do more to promote, protect and expand open space and maintain and enhance its environmental resources. A complete detailing of the community's perspective on open space and the environment is available in in the POCD supplemental information document.

State Growth Management Principle

Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources, and traditional rural lands.

Regional Open Space and Environment Goal

- Protect the air, water and soil quality of the Capitol Region.
- Grow and development in harmony with the natural resources.
- Promote active stewardship of natural resources
- Support protection of more open space in the Capitol Region
- Improve and maintain water quality

Local Open Space and Environment Goal

Preserve, protect, enhance and promote our open space and our fragile natural systems in concert with managing responsible growth and development.

Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.

Strategies

1. Preserve, maintain, enhance and expand open space, conservation or recreation areas.

Actions

- 1a. Support the efforts of conservation organizations to purchase and protect land with priority placed on properties with wetlands and floodplain areas.
- 1b. Explore Federal, State and Town funding opportunities to purchase open space, conservation or recreational lands with a priority on properties with ridgelines, wetlands, watercourses and floodplain areas or that provide connections between environmental resources.
- 1c. Support the Conservation and Environment Commission in performing its duties and strengthen the connection to and collaboration with the TPZ.
- 1d. Review and evaluate the development of require open space standards within the zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations

2. Promote stewardship of our fragile natural systems

Actions

- 2a. Educate residents about proper waste disposal and the responsible use of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides.
 - 2b. Promote awareness of and encourage innovative practices for materials management including the disposal of solid waste, recyclables, yard waste, and electronics.
 - 2c. Continue to evaluate opportunities and implement solutions that lead to more fiscally and environmentally sustainable materials (solid waste) management that attain the goal of the Connecticut Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy for a 60 percent diversion of materials from disposal.
 - 2d. Reduce solid waste by implementing a composting program for schools and residences.
 - 2e. Continue to work collaboratively with residents, neighborhood groups and other stakeholders to address open space or environmental needs or concerns throughout Town.
 - 2f. Continue to invest in, and convert to, IPM on Town-owned property.
 - 2g. Continue to invest in sustainable practices and energy-efficient infrastructure in Town and school facilities.
 - 2h. Support the efforts of the West Hartford Clean Energy Commission and the implementation of the Town's Comprehensive Energy Plan.
 - 2i. Continue to participate in Sustainable CT's municipal certification programs and work towards achieving a Silver Certification.
 - 2j. Encourage the creation of a municipal climate action plan.
3. Review the zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and inland wetlands and watercourses regulations, and revise as necessary, to support responsible growth and development while preserving and protecting the Town's environmental resources.

Actions

- 3a. Review and evaluate the development of ridgeline protection standards within the zoning ordinances.
- 3b. Review and evaluate the development of Low Impact Development (LID) standards within the zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and inland wetlands and watercourse regulations.
- 3c. Review and evaluate the development of additional environmentally sensitive land protection measures within the zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations, such as the exclusion of steep slopes, wetlands, and flood plains from lot area calculations.
- 3d. Review and evaluate the current Open Space Development zoning ordinances with a focus on modernizing and expanding the applicability of this zoning tool.

- 3e. Review and evaluate the current Screening and Landscaping zoning ordinances to provide for more innovative approaches and techniques requirements for use of native species.
- 3f. Review and evaluate the current drainage water zoning ordinances to ensure consistency with the State of Connecticut Stormwater Quality Control Manual.
- 3g. Comprehensively review and update the inland wetlands and watercourses regulations to ensure consistency with the model State regulations and current best management practices.
- 3h. Review the zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modifications that support sustainable development practices.
- 4. Continue to promote sustainable stormwater management and floodplain management to be resilient and adaptable to a changing climate.

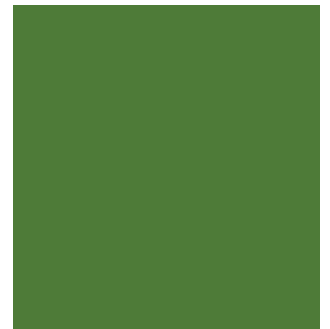
Actions

- 4a. Fully conduct and implement the best management practices of the Town's SMP.
- 4b. Review and evaluate the current Special Flood Hazard Area zoning ordinances to ensure consistency with the CT DEEP and FEMA recommended model ordinances.
- 4c. Continue to participate in the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) program and work towards increasing the Town's rating to a Class 7.
- 4d. Continue to invest in stormwater infrastructure improvements throughout Town. Emphasis on sustainable, green infrastructure improvements should be prioritized.
- 4e. Review current floodplain management procedures and identify opportunities that enhance sustainable practices and improve community resiliency.
- 4f. Implement the recommendations and continue to participate in updates to the CROCOG Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.

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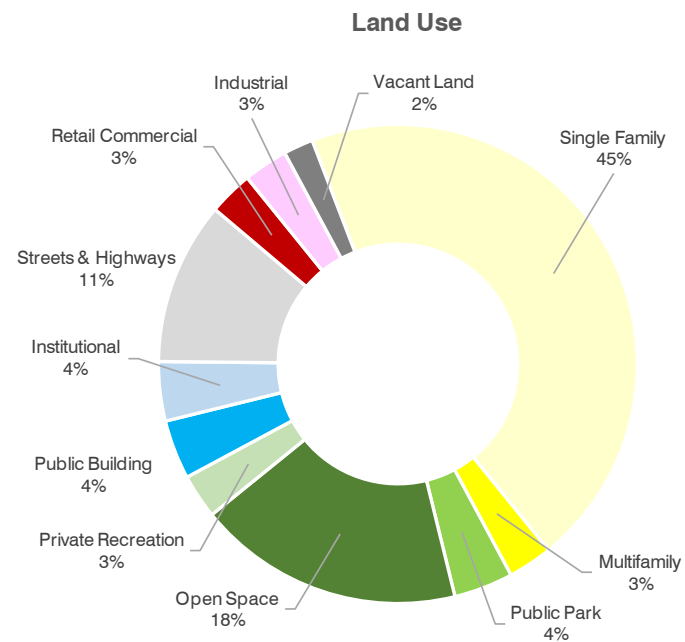


8.0 Land Use

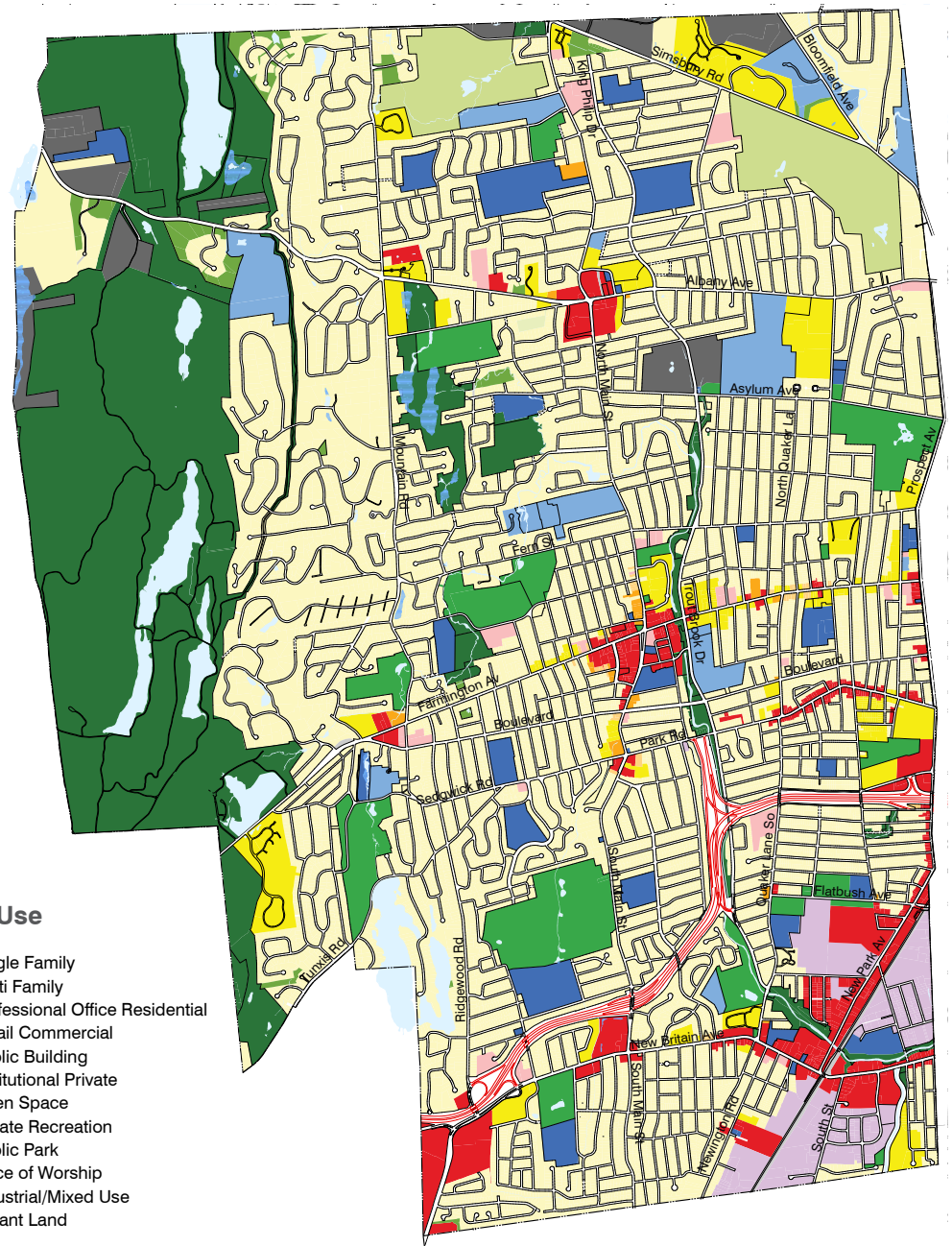


West Hartford's land use is dominated by single-family residential development and open space. Development in the Town is moderate density consistent with an inner-ring suburb. The densest areas of West Hartford are generally to the south and east. The Town's composition of land uses, combined with its street and sidewalk network, contribute to a relatively compact and walkable community which is consistent with "smart growth" principles. This represents a major competitive advantage of West Hartford over surrounding municipalities and the Town should work to maintain and increase this economic advantage over its neighbors. Many of the Town's current practices reflect this philosophy: streets are laid out in a grid; most streets have sidewalks; the Town has a growing bicycle facilities infrastructure, several existing group and mass transit options for residents; and multiple commercial locations in Town were developed in a dense, mixed use manner and others that are within walking distance of residential areas.

While the Town's residential development is primarily single-family, West Hartford has multiple properties and areas of multi-family development throughout Town. Residential densities also vary with small lot homes generally to the south and east and larger lot homes to the north and west.



Source: Town of West Hartford



Source: Town of West Hartford

In addition to residential development, the Town has a diversity of other land uses including commercial, industrial, institutional, and open space. Approximately six percent of West Hartford is occupied by commercial or industrial land uses and about twenty-five percent of the Town is occupied by various types of open space. The Town's open space includes the MDC's reservoir and flood control properties, public parks and private recreation areas.

One of the priorities of this Plan is to ensure that West Hartford continues to balance its diversity of land uses as properties are developed, redeveloped, or rezoned. The physical layout of the community is fundamental to sustainability. In mature, nearly fully developed communities such as West Hartford, existing land uses become one of the most important considerations in determining future land use policy. Reviewing and evaluating land use within a community is one of the most important tasks in determining its physical plan and ultimately its community character and quality of life. Land use options must be carefully analyzed to insure new uses support and complement the existing land use patterns throughout Town. The relationship between uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, educational and recreational, and the expanse and intensity of each use, directly impacts the Town's character and quality of life.

Considering the limited availability of land and the desire to achieve sustainable community growth, future growth should be thought of in terms of appropriate density, mixed land uses, and redevelopment within existing commercial districts. Due to the importance of the Town's neighborhoods, the impact of any change deserves diligent review. The quality and appeal of the neighborhoods are the Town's backbone, and their importance to the Town's future cannot be minimized. When opportunities for positive change emerge, the Town should encourage creative ideas and adaptive reuses and guide change to enhance the quality of the neighborhoods.

Residential Land Use

Approximately half of West Hartford's area is occupied by residential land uses with single-family residential development comprising most of that area. Most of this development occurred prior to 1960 but recent multi-family developments have occurred in or near commercial areas. While mostly built out, the Town has undeveloped vacant parcels, located along Albany Avenue, Simsbury Road, and Bloomfield Avenue. Those vacant parcels are in residential districts and many of them face significant development challenges related to topography, access, and wetlands.

The Town's residential neighborhoods are the foundation of the community with respect to accommodating residents, attracting new residents, and providing a substantial share of the Town's tax base. Neighborhoods vary in character from "suburban" style single-family homes to "urban" neighborhoods with small lot homes and multi-family buildings. The Town also has a growing share of mixed-use neighborhoods and properties that afford easy access to goods, services, jobs, and public transportation. Neighborhoods vary by age and architectural style with older residential areas on the east side of Town and along major corridors and younger neighborhoods found on the west side of Town. The Town's diversity of neighborhoods is highly valued as it allows residents to choose from a wide range of lifestyles, price ranges, and neighborhood character.

Priorities for neighborhoods differ based upon neighborhood type. Single-family neighborhoods are valued for their "quiet" lifestyle while neighborhoods that are denser and more urban are valued for their connectedness. Future development in the Town's neighborhoods should be sensitive to the character of those neighborhoods.



Typical residential street in West Hartford

Mixed-Use, Transit-Oriented Development, and Commercial Land Uses

Mixed-uses, transit-oriented development and commercial uses, which includes retail and office, are primarily located along arterial corridors such as Albany Avenue, North and South Main Streets, Farmington Avenue, Park Road, Prospect Avenue, New Britain Avenue and most recently New Park Avenue. The Town has ten commercial and/or mixed use zoning districts that vary from residential office districts to general business districts. Most of the Town's commercial areas were well established prior to 1960, but these areas continue to grow and change. By example, Blue Back Square and 616 New Park Avenue both replaced auto dealerships and smaller conversions are taking place in residential office districts where residences have been converted to small office uses.

The Town has prioritized transit-oriented development and mixed-use development in its commercial districts as a means of encouraging smart growth, providing a diversity of housing types and price points, and protecting existing residential neighbors from commercial creep. Permitting residential uses on the upper floors of commercial buildings creates a sense of community and an “urban” neighborhood environment. This type of mixed-use leads to a desirable increase in pedestrian activity during and after business hours and on weekends, contributing to the vibrancy of commercial districts. Market demand for housing in commercial retail districts has been, and continues to be, strong and will likely be a driver of residential development over the next decade. Successful examples of recent mixed-use developments are found throughout Town in Elmwood, the Center, Bishop's Corner, and along some of the Town's commercial corridors.



Retail and Office mixed-use in The Center

Industrial Land Use

Industrial development is clustered in the southeast corner of Town with its presence in that location owing to the rail corridor that traverses the area. This area is comprised of several hundred acres (3%) of the Town's area. With the exception of large manufacturers such as Abbot Ball, Colt, Legrand and Triumph, most of the uses within industrial areas are comprised of commercial services, auto-related repair garages, small machine shops, and storage yards.

The New Park Avenue section of the Town's industrial area has been branded as the Home Design District by local merchants as a means of promoting the home improvement and furnishing businesses that are located along the corridor. The New Park Avenue corridor has also seen the emergence of non-industrial uses such as a brewpub and a mixed-use residential building developed by the West Hartford Housing Authority.

The Town's industrial areas are proximate to the Town's CTfastrak stations at Flatbush Avenue and in Elmwood. The Town is seeking to promote transit-oriented development near those stations, while balancing the need to protect its industrial land.



Industrial Property in the Exclusive Industrial District. Image Source: Loopnet.com

Town, Institutional, and Open Space Land Uses

Together, Town properties such as schools and other Town buildings, parks, institutional uses, and open space land uses such as the MDC reservation occupy 29% of the Town's land area. While properties owned by the Town and MDC are unlikely to experience significant change, institutional land uses are subject to change.

Land uses under these broad categories significantly contribute to the Town's character and landscape. These uses are recognized as being part of the community regardless of ownership. As institutional uses or Town properties are changed or redeveloped, the Town will need to ensure that the character of nearby neighborhoods and the community as a whole are not adversely impacted by changes.



Community Event at University of St. Joseph

Zoning and Future Land Use

West Hartford's zoning guides the Town's land use and provides a framework for future land use. As such, this Plan adopts the zoning map and regulations as the Town's future land use plan.

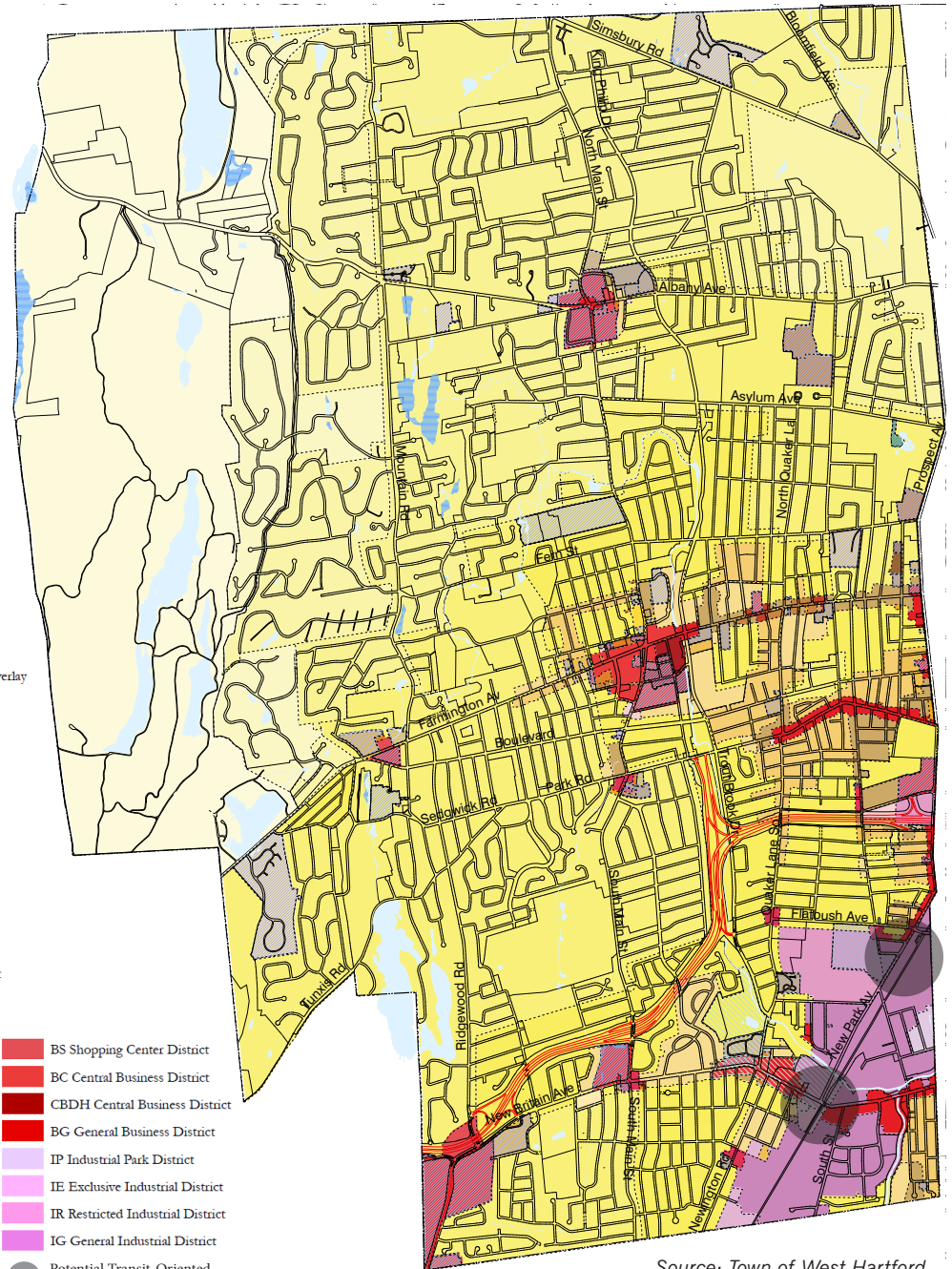
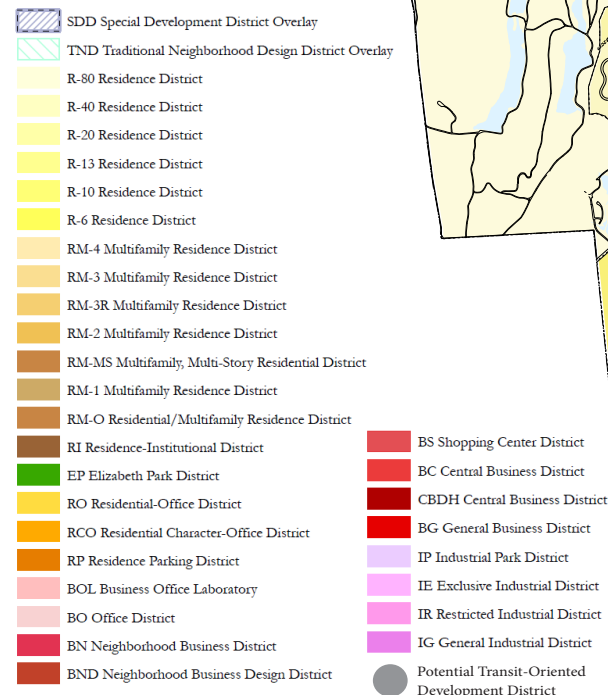
Much of West Hartford was developed prior to the adoption of zoning, consequently zoning districts are mostly consistent with existing land uses. Commercial, office, and multi-family residential districts are limited, tend to be clustered, and are sometimes specific to individual parcels.

Single-family residential districts (R-6 through R-80) cover most of the Town and are the base zoning districts for open space such as the MDC lands, Town parks, and private and public golf courses. Most Town buildings and schools, and private institutions are also located in residential districts.

Commercial and retail districts are concentrated around existing commercial areas such as Bishop's Corner, the Center, Farmington Avenue, Park Road, Prospect Avenue, Corbin's Corner, Elmwood Center, and New Britain Avenue. Industrial districts are concentrated in the southeast corner of Town along New Park Avenue, New Britain Avenue, and South Street.

The Town has two overlay districts, the Special Development District (SDD) and the Traditional Neighborhood Design District (TND). The SDD is a floating zone that can be applied to development sites throughout Town providing conditions are met. The origins of the SDD can be traced back to the Town's first zoning ordinance in the 1920s and was originally incorporated in the Zoning Ordinance to provide flexible design control for large parcel development. The SDD provides the Town greater regulatory authority over the site design and functional aspects of the land use. The ordinance provides specific controls over the designated parcel, including the arrangement of buildings, landscaping, and architectural design. This increased control, as well as the flexibility permitted by the ordinance not only serves to protect the adjoining areas from possible adverse impacts, but also achieves more desirable development plans that will be in harmony

Zoning



Source: Town of West Hartford.

with the objectives of this Plan. The SDD ordinance continues to be a valuable land use tool with one-hundred fifty (150) SDDs used to date.

The TND is currently applied to properties located in Elmwood. The purpose of the TND is to encourage the development of fully-integrated, mixed use, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods intended to support sustainable, long-term development which will enhance quality of life to ensure the highest possible economic and social benefits for all residents.

The Community's Perspective on Land Use

Through the Plan's community engagement process, the community expressed a number of ideas and desires regarding land use. Residents and stakeholders understand that the Town's land uses contribute significantly to the Town's unique character and landscape. Of note, residents acknowledged and value the mixture of land uses in Town and the walkable neighborhoods that are well-connected to one another and to commercial retail districts, parks, and other Town facilities, all of which contribute to quality of life and sense of place.

Overall, the community expressed concerns about threats to land use including the loss of open space and the importance of maintaining the Town's commercial districts. A complete detailing of the community's perspective on open space and the environment is available in the POCD supplemental information document.

State Growth Management Principle

Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas with existing or currently planned physical infrastructure.

Regional Land Use Goals

- Guide growth to regional centers and areas of established infrastructure.
- Increase sustainable redevelopment and infill development efforts.
- Revise zoning and subdivision regulations to address local and regional land use concerns.

Local Land Use Goal

Sustain and preserve the Town of West Hartford as a balanced community, maintaining and promoting neighborhood quality and open space in conjunction with the principles of Smart Growth.

8.0

Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.

Strategies

1. Support zoning and land use decisions in accordance with all of the goals and strategies of this Plan.
2. Promote sustainable and smart growth development that preserves and enhances the distinct character and sense of place of West Hartford.

Actions

- 2a. Review the commercial zoning districts and associated zoning ordinance standards and identify potential areas for targeted modification to support mixed-use development within commercial areas.
- 2b. Consistent with the recommendations in the New Park Avenue Transit Area Complete Streets Study, review the zoning ordinances and consider the creation of a new transit-oriented district overlay zone.
- 2c. Review and revise as necessary, the TND to ensure that its standards support the purpose of the district.
- 2d. Review the industrial zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to strategically protect areas for industrial and heavy commercial uses.
- 2e. Comprehensively review and evaluate the zoning ordinances and zoning map with focus on modernization to ensure equitable, innovative, sustainable techniques are used in accordance with the goals and strategies of this Plan.

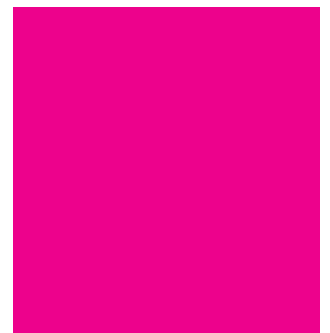
- 2f. Continue to support utilize the expertise of the West Hartford Design Review Advisory Committee in the planning and land development review process.
- 3. Protect and enhance the quality of West Hartford's well-established residential neighborhoods.

Actions

- 3a. Explore innovative approaches and techniques to strengthen code compliance.
- 3b. Continue to work collaboratively with neighborhood organizations and groups to address quality of life concerns.
- 3c. Preserve existing street trees and enhance the planting of new trees throughout the Town.
- 3d. Review current multi-family residential and commercial zoning districts and associated zoning ordinance standards and identify potential areas for targeted modification that better facilitate transitional land usage and development between those boundaries that promotes pedestrian-friendly, contextually sensitive design at an appropriate scale that enhances and compliments the quality of the neighborhoods.
- 3e. Review and evaluate the development of additional zoning standards that enhance and protect residential neighborhoods, such as review of the Special Permit Use standards, screening and landscaping, shielding of outdoor lighting, and drainage water.
- 3f. Continue to support utilize the expertise of the West Hartford Design Review Advisory Committee in the planning and land development review process.



9.0 Implementation Summary



Introduction to the Implementation Summary

The following implementation summary organizes this Plan's goals, strategies, and actions in a format that makes these items easy to reference. The summary also provides columns for tracking the Town's progress towards implementing the Plan's strategies and actions. It is expected that those strategies and actions will evolve as implementation of the Plan occurs and as conditions in West Hartford change.

This summary organizes the Plan's goals into unique tables based upon the preceding sections of this Plan. Listed below each goal are the strategies and actions necessary to make progress towards that goal. The strategies and actions are not ranked in order of importance or priority. Strategies that lack specific actions require initiation of the strategy to determine required actions. It is envisioned that these implementation tables will be working documents used by the Town to track progress and identify new strategies and actions that will support the Plan's goals. An annual Plan implementation progress report shall be submitted to the TPZ and Town Council.

9.0

Facilities Goal: Promote practices that will maintain and modernize Town facilities and infrastructure in order to meet the evolving needs of the community in sustainable ways and recognize the need to provide services harmoniously with West Hartford's place in the greater Hartford region and State at large.

	Strategies & Actions <i>Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.</i>	Complete	Underway	Incomplete
1	Prioritize improvements to the Town's school facilities to meet program needs.			
2	Prioritize sustainable practices at all Town facilities, including energy conservation and the use of renewable energy, that provide for greater adaption and resiliency to a changing climate.			
2a	Support the efforts of the West Hartford Clean Energy Commission and the implementation of the Town's Comprehensive Energy Plan.			
2b	Explore adopting a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification requirement for Town facilities construction and maintenance projects.			
3	Prioritize improvements to the Town's facilities to meet diverse program needs.			
3a	Conduct a Town Facilities Master Plan to assess capacity to meet current and anticipated program needs, to identify energy and other efficiency improvements, and to explore opportunities for consolidation and reuse.			
3b	Support and continue to utilize the West Hartford Design Review Advisory Committee in reviewing Town facilities improvement projects.			
4	Prioritize improvements to the Town's stormwater infrastructure that reduce flooding and improve water quality in the Town's surface waters.			
4a	Continue to invest in stormwater infrastructure improvements throughout Town. Emphasis on sustainable, green infrastructure improvements should be prioritized.			
4b	Implement the Best Management Practices of the 2017 West Hartford Stormwater Management Plan with a priority to:			
4b.1	Create a robust public education & outreach program on flooding and water quality.			
4b.2	Develop Low Impact Development Guidelines for new development and redevelopment.			
4b.3	Complete Directly Connected Impervious Area mapping.			
4b.4	Continue to adequately fund required monitoring of stormwater outfalls.			
4c	Continue to participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Community Rating System (CRS) program and work towards increasing the Town's rating to a Class 7.			
5	Prioritize sustainable waste management practices.			
5a	Continue to evaluate opportunities and implement solutions that lead to more fiscally and environmentally sustainable materials (solid waste) management that attain the goal of the Connecticut Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy for a 60 percent diversion of materials from disposal.			
6	Continue to preserve, enhance, and maintain parks and recreational facilities.			
6a	Continue conduct and engage residents and stakeholders in parks master planning initiatives.			
6b	Implement recommendations of the parks master planning initiatives.			
6c	Continue to participate in the Ten Minute Walk campaign, a national effort to engage communities in their local parks and ensure that everyone in the community lives a 10-minute walk from a public park or playground.			
6d	Continue to invest in, and convert to, integrated pest management in parks.			
7	Continue to work collaboratively with local utilities, including Connecticut Natural Gas, Eversource and the MDC, on the development of their infrastructure in accordance with this Plan.			
7a	Support and coordinate efforts, where appropriate, to assist Eversource's commitment to environmental sustainability and carbon neutrality.			

Neighborhoods & Housing Goal: Enhance and maintain West Hartford's existing neighborhoods and encourage diversity of housing types and costs to provide access and availability of housing options to current and future residents				
	Strategies & Actions <i>Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.</i>	Complete	Underway	Incomplete
1	Protect and enhance the quality and safety of West Hartford's residential neighborhoods by investing in infrastructure, continuing and strengthening code compliance, and other measures necessary to support those neighborhoods.			
1a	Continue to invest in neighborhood infrastructure including sidewalks, streets, street trees, stormwater and other streetscape enhancements. Improvements that enhance connectivity and sustainability should be prioritized and all improvements should be consistent with the Town's Complete Street Policy.			
1b	Explore innovative approaches and techniques to strengthen code compliance.			
1c	Continue to work collaboratively with neighborhood organizations and groups to address quality of life concerns.			
1d	Create more effective educational tools for residents, real estate professionals and other stakeholders that provide guidance on the building permit process and the enforcement process.			
2	Support mixed-use development within commercial areas and adjacent to transit facilities.			
2a	Review the commercial zoning districts and associated zoning ordinance standards and identify potential areas for targeted modification that better facilitate mixed-use development.			
3	Encourage appropriate development and redevelopment within transitional zones between current commercial and residential boundaries in a manner that promotes pedestrian-friendly, contextually-sensitive design at an appropriate scale that enhances and complements the quality of the neighborhoods.			
3a	Review current multi-family residential and commercial zoning districts and associated zoning ordinance standards and identify potential areas for targeted modification that better facilitate transitional land usage and development.			
4	Review the zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to encourage the availability of a range of housing types and affordability levels to meet the diverse needs of the community.			
4a	Conduct a Town-wide housing needs assessment.			
4b	Review the multi-family zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modification and innovative opportunities that increase the availability of range of housing types and affordability levels.			
4c	Review the single-family zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modification and innovative opportunities, such as accessory dwelling units, that increase the availability of range of housing types and affordability levels.			
4d	Continue to support the efforts of nonprofit groups and for-profit developers to expand housing choice options in the community.			
5	Promote the maintenance, rehabilitation and improvement of the Town's existing housing stock.			
5a	Expand the Town's Housing Rehabilitation Program and its Elderly Assistance Program by identifying additional needed resource.			
5b	Create more effective educational tools for residents, real estate professionals and other stakeholders that provide guides on the building permit process and the enforcement process.			
5c	Create more effective educational tools that highlight the Town's Housing Rehabilitations programs to increase resident participation.			
5d	Promote residential Energize Connecticut programs, including Home Energy Solutions that seek to reduce residential energy usage and save money.			
5e	Create more effective educational tools for residents, real estate professionals and other stakeholders that provide guides on the financial options and rebates available for energy savings projects.			

Economic Development Goal: Promote growth and retention of existing businesses and development of new business opportunities to strengthen the community's tax base in an innovative manner, while preserving and protecting the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

	Strategies & Actions <i>Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.</i>	Complete	Underway	Incomplete
1	Encourage the growth and retention of existing businesses in Town.			
1a	Encourage and support shared-use parking arrangements in commercial districts but protect adjacent residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of commercial and retail parking on residential streets.			
1b	Encourage property owners to invest in and rehabilitate commercial structures and provide support and assistance in pursuing State and Federal funding opportunities.			
1c	Create more effective educational and marketing tools for the business community and other stakeholders that provide guides on the building permit process and the enforcement process.			
1d	Continue to work collaboratively with the business community through the proactive efforts of the Economic Development Specialist.			
1e	Promote Opportunity Zone investment by supporting the efforts of regional, State and Federal partners.			
1f	Continue to work collaboratively with neighborhood and business organizations to identify the distinctive needs of each commercial district while balancing the interests of adjacent residential neighborhoods.			
1g	Review the Town's land use development and building permit processes to continue to improve efficiency.			
1h	Support the efforts of the West Hartford's Clean Energy Commission's goal to reduce commercial energy use.			
1i	Review the industrial zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to strategically protect areas for industrial and heavy commercial.			
2	Encourage public infrastructure improvements that support and stimulate private investment and redevelopment in the Town.			
2a	Strengthen the connections of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities routes, including the Trout Brook Trail, to commercial districts as a means of boosting bicycle and pedestrian access.			
2b	Continue to invest in and support infrastructure improvements that improve the quality and safety of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities in commercial districts.			
2c	Conduct a Town-wide commercial district usable-open space study to identify opportunities for the creation of new pocket parks, parkletes and other innovative usable open spaces and to identify improvements to existing usable open space areas.			
2d	Conduct a Town-wide wayfinding study to encourage connectivity within and to the Town's distinctive commercial districts.			
2e	Enhance connectivity between anchor institutions and major employment and commercial districts centers and through targeted public infrastructure improvements. Improvements that enhance sustainability should be prioritized and all improvements should be consistent with the Town's Complete Street Policy.			

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Economic Development Goal: Promote growth and retention of existing businesses and development of new business opportunities to strengthen the community's tax base in an innovative manner, while preserving and protecting the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

	Strategies & Actions <i>Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.</i>	Complete	Underway	Incomplete
3	Encourage the diversification and growth of the Town's tax base.			
3a	Encourage infill development on vacant and underutilized lots.			
3b	Encourage the expansion of co-working spaces in commercial districts.			
3c	Support the development of Class A office space within existing Office, General Business and Central Business Districts while ensuring that office space compliments and does not displace existing retail and service uses.			
3d	Promote Opportunity Zone investment by supporting the efforts of regional, State and Federal partners.			
3e	Continue to promote and market commercial and industrial properties through the efforts of the West Hartford Department of Community Development and utilize tools such as the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) Sitefinder.			
3f	Encourage mixed-use and higher density development in proximity to existing and planned transit stations and existing commercial districts.			
3g	Continue to work collaboratively work with the business community and neighborhood organizations and groups to address the concerns and needs of each group.			
3h	Continue to support the vision and guiding principles of the West Hartford Center Central Business District Planning Initiative.			
3i	Implement the recommendations of the New Park Avenue Transit Area Complete Streets Study.			
4	Formulate a Holistic Economic Development Strategy.			
5	Review the zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to support the current and futures needs of the business community while preserving and protecting the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods.			
5a	Review the parking zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modification that modernize the Town's approach to commercial parking requirements.			
5b	Review the signage zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modifications to allow for improved visibility of storefronts while ensuring compatibility with the character of West Hartford.			
5c	Review the commercial zoning districts and identify potential areas for targeted modifications that provide for innovative approaches to bulk standards and use restrictions.			
5d	Review the industrial zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to strategically protect areas for industrial and heavy commercial.			

Transportation Goal: Promote an integrated and balanced transportation system, including “complete streets,” to improve traffic flow; enhance parking opportunities; promote public transportation and car-pooling; enhance traffic calming efforts, pedestrian mobility and bicycle access; and meet the needs of the next generation of transportation technologies and infrastructure.

Strategies & Actions <i>Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.</i>		Complete	Underway	Incomplete
1	Encourage transportation infrastructure improvements that that improve the accessibility and safety for all users and enhance the economic strength of West Hartford while protecting residential neighborhoods.			
1a	Explore opportunities to enhance and expand the street road network such as extending Oakwood Avenue to New Britain Avenue to improve accessibility and reduce traffic congestion.			
1b	Continue to explore opportunities to enhance and expand the sidewalk network, including the identifying and filling in of existing gaps in the network, to improve accessibility and connectivity.			
1c	Continue to explore opportunities to enhance and expand the bicycle facilities network to improve network density and connectivity both within Town and to surrounding communities.			
1d	Continue to proactively manage public parking to support commercial districts and protect surrounding neighborhoods.			
1e	Continue to invest in and support infrastructure improvements that both expand and improve the quality and safety of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout Town.			
1f	Continue to work collaboratively with the State to expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities on State roadways throughout Town.			
1g	Establish a Town-wide Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.			
1h	Look for opportunities to extend the Trout Brook Trail system north and south. In particular, work collaboratively with the Town of Newington to examine the feasibility of extending the trail to connect to CTfastrak Multi-Use Trail.			
1i	Conduct a Town-wide road safety study, with a particular focus on high crash corridors, that identifies the causes of increased rates of crashes, proposes solutions, and provides a program for monitoring progress.			
1j	Continue to work collaboratively with residents, neighborhood groups and other stakeholders to address transportation needs or concerns throughout Town.			
1k	Continue to pursue State and Federal funding opportunities for transportation infrastructure improvements.			
1l	Improve, prioritize and promote the maintenance of the transportation infrastructure Town-wide to increase roadway lifespans.			
1m	Continue to work collaboratively with and support the efforts of the Pedestrian & Bicycle Commission in promoting the strategies of the Section.			
2	Support transit improvements and service changes that will increase local ridership.			
2a	Continue to work collaboratively with the City of Hartford, the State and other stakeholders on the development of the proposed Flatbush CT Rail station.			
2b	Work with CTtransit to identify improvements increase accessibility and service on intra and inter Town transit routes.			
2c	Identify opportunities for physical improvements at high ridership CTtransit stops.			
3	Review the zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to support transit-oriented development, bikeability, walkability and innovative trends in the transportation field.			
3a	Review the parking zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modifications that modernize the Town's approach to parking requirements.			
3b	Revise the zoning ordinance to address the growing trends towards electrification and next generation technologies such as electric vehicles, rideshare and driverless cars.			
3c	Revise the zoning ordinances to create requirements and standards for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and amenities.			
3d	Consistent with the recommendations in the New Park Avenue Transit Area Complete Streets Study, review the zoning ordinances and consider the creation of a new transit-oriented district zoning.			

Cultural & Historic Resources Goal: Preserve, protect, enhance and promote, the cultural and historic resources of West Hartford.				
	Strategies & Actions <i>Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.</i>	Complete	Underway	Incomplete
1	Promote the preservation of West Hartford's historically and architecturally significant resources.			
1a	Encourage and support protection for all historic resources by creating local historic districts and properties and/or listing on the State Register of Historic Places and/or the National Register of Historic Places.			
1b	Promote public awareness and appreciation of local historic resources.			
1c	Maintain an updated Historic Resources Inventory.			
1d	Support the Historic District Commission in performing its duties to protect locally-designated historic districts and properties.			
1e	Ensure publicly-owned properties (sites, artifacts, structures and buildings) of historical and architectural significance are protected and preserved.			
2	Promote and enhance the viability of historic and architectural resources for their continued use.			
2a	Encourage adaptive re-use of existing historic sites, buildings and structures.			
2b	Examine best practices and innovative zoning ordinances that encourage adaptive re-use of former residential and industrial properties for new commercial, business or multiple uses, especially in transitional areas			
2c	Encourage development strategies and plans that are sensitive to adjacent or nearby architectural and historic resources including those designated as local, State and national historic districts and properties and those identified in the Historic Resources Inventory.			
2d	Promote the protection of streetscapes by ensuring new buildings, particularly on infill lots, be of size and scale and quality similar to that of existing architectural fabric of a neighborhoods, particularly in areas with the potential for historic designation.			
2e	Encourage maintenance of the architectural integrity of historic and architecturally-significant sites, buildings and structures when adapted for re-use for commercial, industrial or residential purposes.			
2f	Pursue financial incentives for preservation, including State and Federal grants, tax incentive programs, preservation or facade easements, assessment deferrals and transfer of development rights.			
2g	Promote heritage tourism in West Hartford, showcasing the Town's house museums, art galleries, and parks. Encourage tourism of West Hartford's historic, architectural, recreational, and natural resources to support further economic development.			
2h	Promote West Hartford's historic and architectural resources in cooperation with the State and local agencies, associations and groups.			
3	Continue to make Town-owned space accessible and available for use by community groups.			
3a	Review, and update as necessary, space use practices and applications for ease of use.			
3b	Compile and promote an inventory of available spaces.			
4	Continue to make the event permitting process accessible and flexible.			
4a	Review permitting process for ease of use and for adaptability for future uses.			
5	Continue to make use of interaction with community groups in the formation of policy related to culture and historic resources.			
5a	Actively bring together community stakeholders when studying adaptation land uses and zoning ordinances related to culture and historic resources.			
5b	Actively seek out and invite existing special interest community groups when studying adaptation land uses and zoning ordinances related to culture and historic resources.			
6	Support and promote arts, entertainment and cultural organizations.			
6a	Explore the need for an arts and cultural liaison or Arts & Culture Commission to facilitate the local arts and cultural organizations interests within the Town.			

Open Space & Environment Goal: Preserve, protect, enhance and promote our open space and our fragile natural systems in concert with managing responsible growth and development.

	Strategies & Actions <i>Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.</i>	Complete	Underway	Incomplete
1	Preserve, maintain, enhance and expand open space, conservation or recreation areas.			
1a	Support the efforts of conservation organizations to purchase and protect land with priority placed on properties with wetlands and floodplain areas.			
1b	Explore Federal, State and Town funding opportunities to purchase open space, conservation or recreational lands with a priority on properties with ridgelines, wetlands, watercourses and floodplain areas or that provide connections between environmental resources.			
1c	Support the Conservation and Environment Commission in performing its duties and strengthen the connection to and collaboration with the TPZ.			
1d	Review and evaluate the development of require open space standards within the zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations.			
2	Promote stewardship of our fragile natural systems.			
2a	Educate residents about proper waste disposal and the responsible use of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides.			
2b	Promote awareness of and encourage innovative practices for materials management including the disposal of solid waste, recyclables, yard waste, and electronics.			
2c	Continue to evaluate opportunities and implement solutions that lead to more fiscally and environmentally sustainable materials (solid waste) management that attain the goal of the Connecticut Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy for a 60 percent diversion of materials from disposal.			
2d	Reduce solid waste by implementing a composting program for schools and residences.			
2e	Continue to work collaboratively with residents, neighborhood groups and other stakeholders to address open space or environmental needs or concerns throughout Town.			
2f	Continue to invest in, and convert to, IPM on Town-owned property.			
2g	Continue to invest in sustainable practices and energy efficient infrastructure in Town and school facilities.			
2h	Support the efforts of the West Hartford Clean Energy Commission and the implementation of the Town's Comprehensive Energy Plan.			
2i	Continue to participate in Sustainable CT's municipal certification programs and work towards achieving a Silver Certification.			
2j	Encourage the creation of a municipal climate action plan.			

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Open Space & Environment Goal: Preserve, protect, enhance and promote our open space and our fragile natural systems in concert with managing responsible growth and development.

	Strategies & Actions <i>Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.</i>	Complete	Underway	Incomplete
3	Review the zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and inland wetlands and watercourses regulations, and revise as necessary, to support responsible growth and development while preserving and protecting the Town's environmental resources.			
3a	Review and evaluate the development of ridgeline protection standards within the zoning ordinances.			
3b	Review and evaluate the development of Low Impact Development (LID) standards within the zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and inland wetlands and watercourse regulations.			
3c	Review and evaluate the development of additional environmentally sensitive land protection measures within the zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations, such as the exclusion of steep slopes, wetlands, and flood plains from lot area calculations.			
3d	Review and evaluate the current Open Space Development zoning ordinances with a focus on modernizing and expanding the applicability of this zoning tool.			
3e	Review and evaluate the current Screening and Landscaping zoning ordinances to provide for more innovative approaches and techniques requirements for use of native species.			
3f	Review and evaluate the current Drainage water zoning ordinances to ensure consistency with the State of Connecticut Stormwater Quality Control Manual.			
3g	Comprehensively review and update the inland wetlands and watercourses regulations to ensure consistency with the model State regulations and current best management practices.			
3h	Review the zoning ordinances and identify potential areas for targeted modifications that support sustainable development practices.			
4	Continue to promote sustainable stormwater management and floodplain management to be resilient and adaptable to a changing climate.			
4a	Fully conduct and implement the best management practices of the Town's SMP.			
4b	Review and evaluate the current Special Flood Hazard Area zoning ordinances to ensure consistency with the CT DEEP and FEMA recommended model ordinances.			
4c	Continue to participate in the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) program and work towards increasing the Town's rating to a Class 7.			
4d	Continue to invest in stormwater infrastructure improvements throughout Town. Emphasis on sustainable, green infrastructure improvements should be prioritized.			
4e	Review current floodplain management procedures and identify opportunities that enhance sustainable practices and improve community resiliency.			
4f	Implement the recommendations and continue to participate in updates to the CRCOG Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.			

Land Use Goal: Sustain and preserve the Town of West Hartford as a balanced community, maintaining and promoting neighborhood quality and open space in conjunction with the principles of Smart Growth.

	Strategies & Actions <i>Note: The Strategies and Actions listed below are not ranked in order of importance or priority.</i>	Complete	Underway	Incomplete
1	Support zoning and land use decisions in accordance with all of the goals and strategies of this Plan.			
2	Promote sustainable and smart growth development that preserves and enhances the distinct character and sense of place of West Hartford.			
2a	Review the commercial zoning districts and associated zoning ordinance standards and identify potential areas for targeted modification to support mixed-use development within commercial areas.			
2b	Consistent with the recommendations in the New Park Avenue Transit Area Complete Streets Study, review the zoning ordinances and consider the creation of a new transit-oriented district overlay zone.			
2c	Review and revise as necessary, the TND to ensure that its standards support the purpose of the district.			
2d	Review the industrial zoning ordinances, and revise as necessary, to strategically protect areas for industrial and heavy commercial uses.			
2e	Comprehensively review and evaluate the zoning ordinances and zoning map with focus on modernization to ensure equitable, innovative, sustainable techniques are used in accordance with the goals and strategies of this Plan.			
2f	Continue to support utilize the expertise of the West Hartford Design Review Advisory Committee in the planning and land development review process.			
3	Protect and enhance the quality of West Hartford's well-established residential neighborhoods.			
3a	Explore innovative approaches and techniques to strengthen code compliance.			
3b	Continue to work collaboratively with neighborhood organizations and groups to address quality of life concerns.			
3c	Preserve existing street trees and enhance the planting of new trees throughout the Town.			
3d	Review current multi-family residential and commercial zoning districts and associated zoning ordinance standards and identify potential areas for targeted modification that better facilitate transitional land usage and development between those boundaries to promotes pedestrian-friendly, contextually sensitive design at an appropriate scale that enhances and compliments the quality of the neighborhoods.			
3e	Review and evaluate the development of additional zoning standards that enhance and protect residential neighborhoods, such as review of the Special Permit Use standards, screening and landscaping, shielding of outdoor lighting, and drainage water.			
3f	Continue to support utilize the expertise of the West Hartford Design Review Advisory Committee in the planning and land development review process.			