

Vernon

Plan of Conservation and Development

Data Analysis and Community Survey Summary

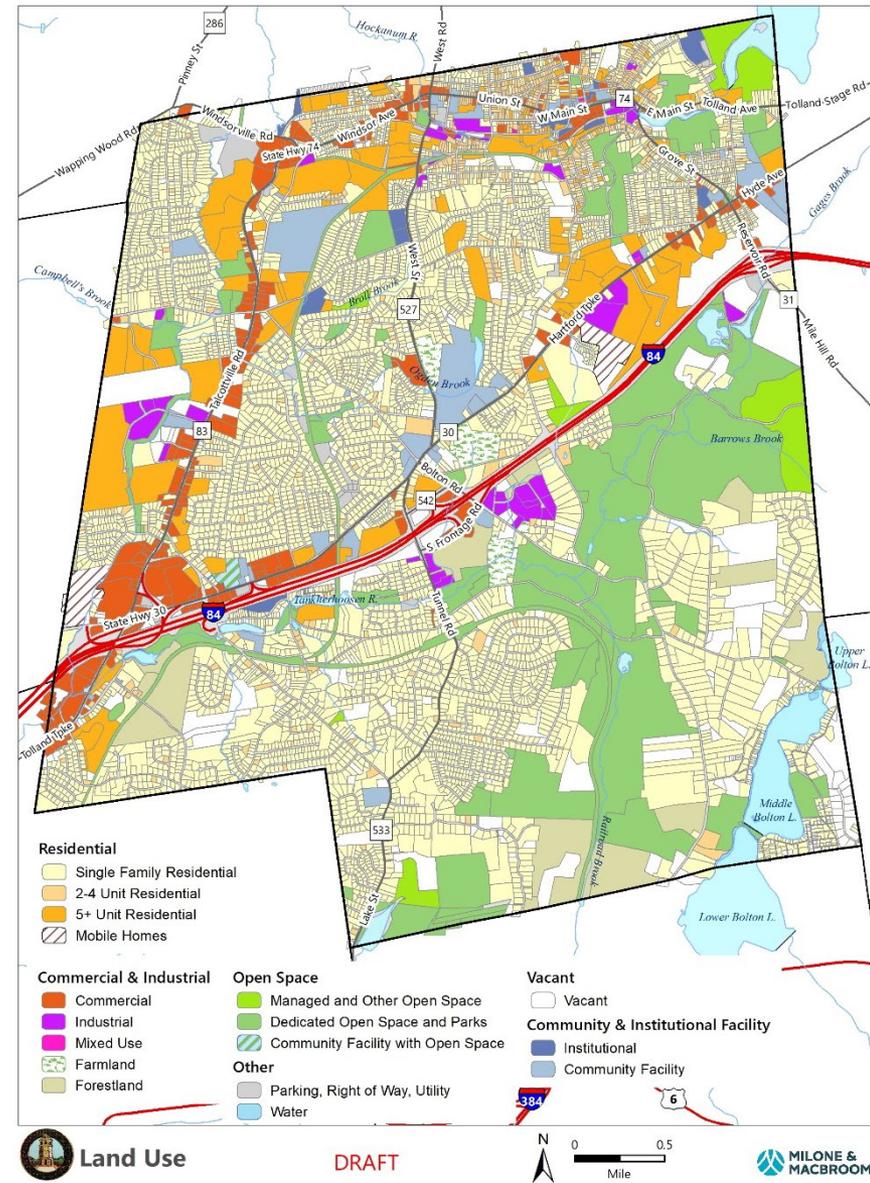
November 16, 2020



MILONE & MACBROOM

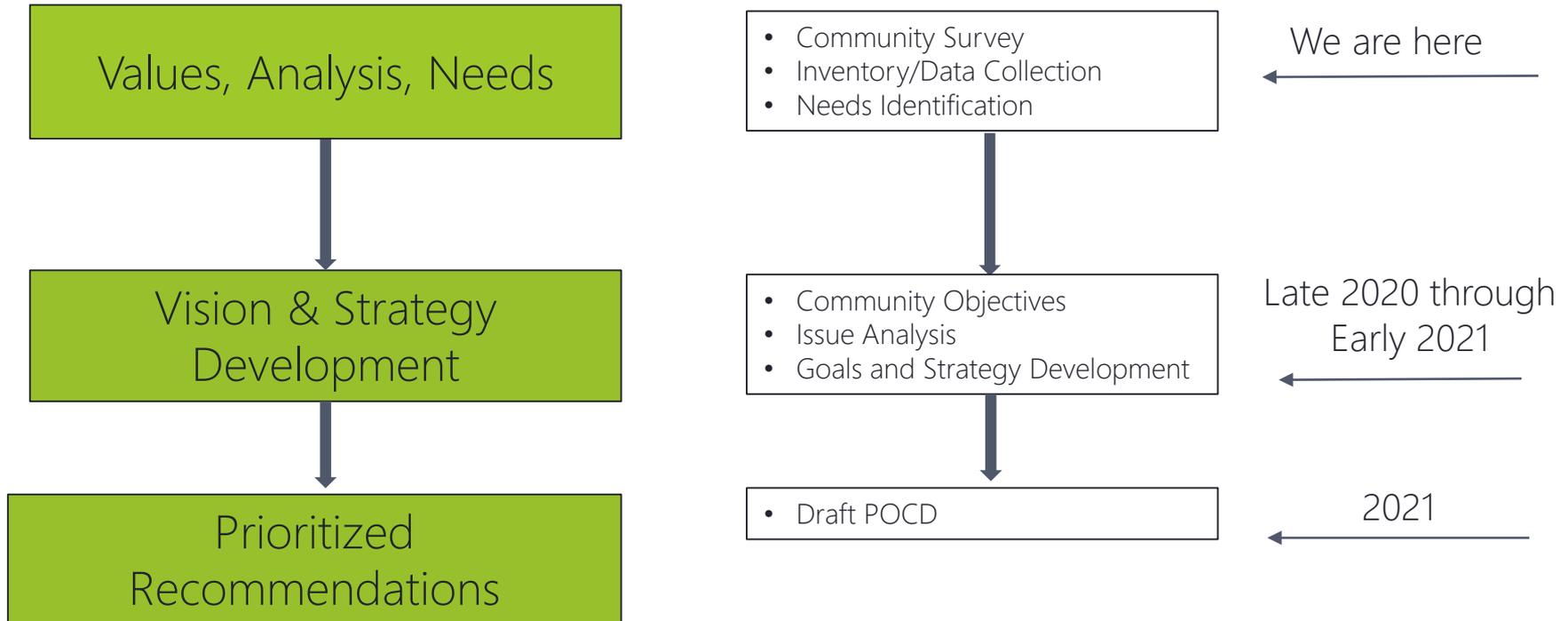
WHAT IS A POCD?

- Advisory document for long-term vision and short-term decision-making
- Provide policy guidance for the physical, economic and social future of the community
 - Determine through robust public engagement the community's vision, and the goals and strategies that will advance Vernon towards that vision
- States Town's Goals and Visions
- POCD **Does Not Have Authority** of a Law or Regulation but **Recommends Actions to Help Achieve Goals**



POCD PROCESS

- Anticipate completion next year
- Three stages
- Each stage gets more specific in nature



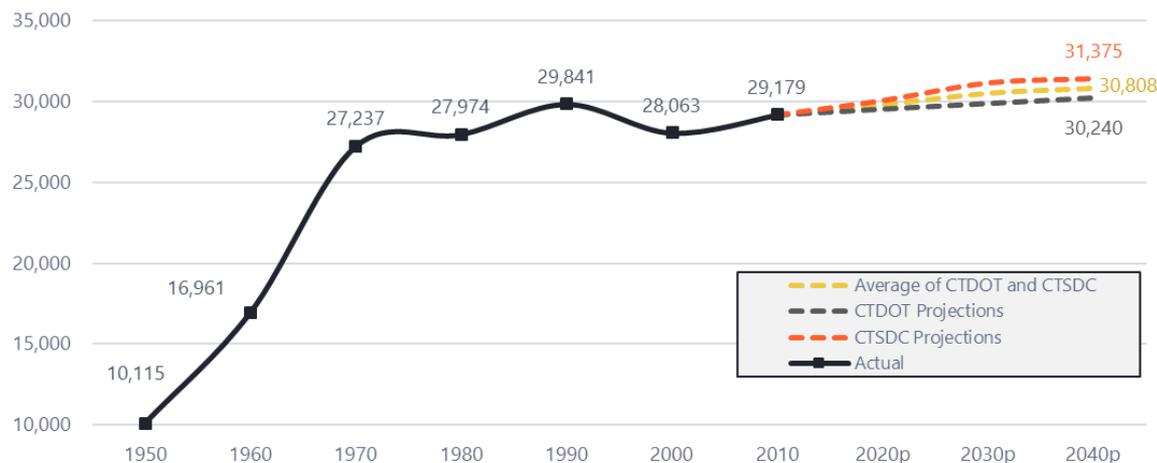
PROGRESS TO DATE

- Community Survey (1,057 respondents)
 - Ran from September 30th – November 1st
- Town Staff and Boards & Commissions Questionnaires
- Focus Groups:
 - Town Staff
 - Boards & Commissions
 - Development
 - Conservation & Preservation
- Data Analysis “Fact Book”

KEY FINDINGS: DEMOGRAPHICS

- Town population is stable. Largely built out community.
- Smaller household size and current multi-family demand may put upward pressure on the future demand for housing.
- Large and growing young adult population attracted by multifamily housing may demand starter homes in the future.
- Large and growing senior population may lead to additional demand for smaller housing units as well as services that can help them age in place.
- Population is diversifying with growth in Asian and Hispanic populations.

Historical and Projected Population in Vernon: 1950 to 2040

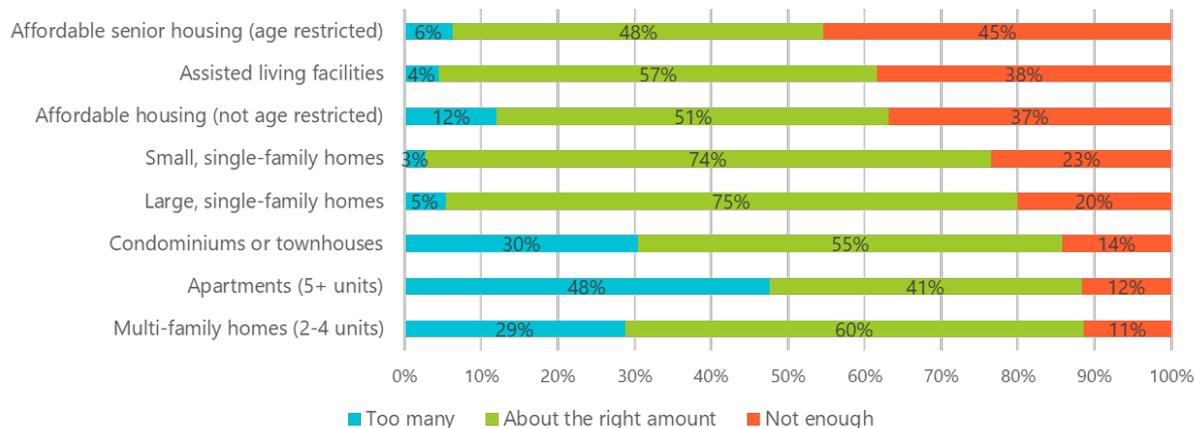


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census, 1950-2010. Projected Population by CTDOT and CTSDC.

KEY FINDINGS: HOUSING

- Diverse housing stock – range of styles, sizes, price points, and density
 - A third of survey respondents are likely to downsize to smaller units over the next decade
- Strong multi-family market. Significant new construction over the last 5 years
 - About half of survey respondents believe that Vernon has “too many” apartments.
 - POCD should identify areas where new multi-family development is desirable by type, number of units, density, scale, etc.
- Lack of vacant land to support new single-family construction
- Significant affordable housing stock, concentrated in Rockville
 - Over one-third of survey respondents feel Vernon has too few affordable units (both age restricted and not age restricted)

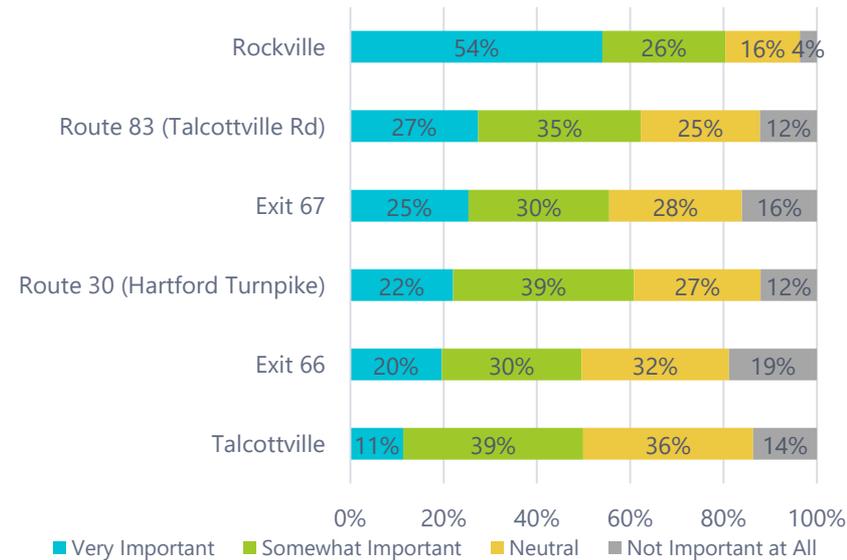
Does Vernon have too many, about the right amount, or not enough of the following housing types:



KEY FINDINGS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Largest employment sectors in health care, retail, and food services sectors
 - Local sectors, driven by local population
- Strong commercial tax base driven by retail
- Limited availability of industrial land
- Opportunity to better capitalize on land surrounding Exit 66 and Exit 67
- Downtown Rockville Revitalization remains a community priority
 - Leverage hospital and government employment base
 - Better integrate into larger community
 - Maintain historic character

Are there areas of Vernon that should be prioritized for economic development over the next 10 years?



KEY FINDINGS: TRANSPORTATION

- Highest traffic volumes on the Route 83 and 30 corridor – makes these areas most conducive to retail development.
 - Crash “hot spots” at several intersection in these corridors.
- Capital Improvements focused on asset protection such as road resurfacing and bridge repairs and replacements.
- Disconnected sidewalk network, especially within commercial corridors.
 - Survey respondents generally agreed on the need for sidewalks.
 - Survey respondents would prioritize sidewalk improvements near community facilities such as schools and in commercial corridors

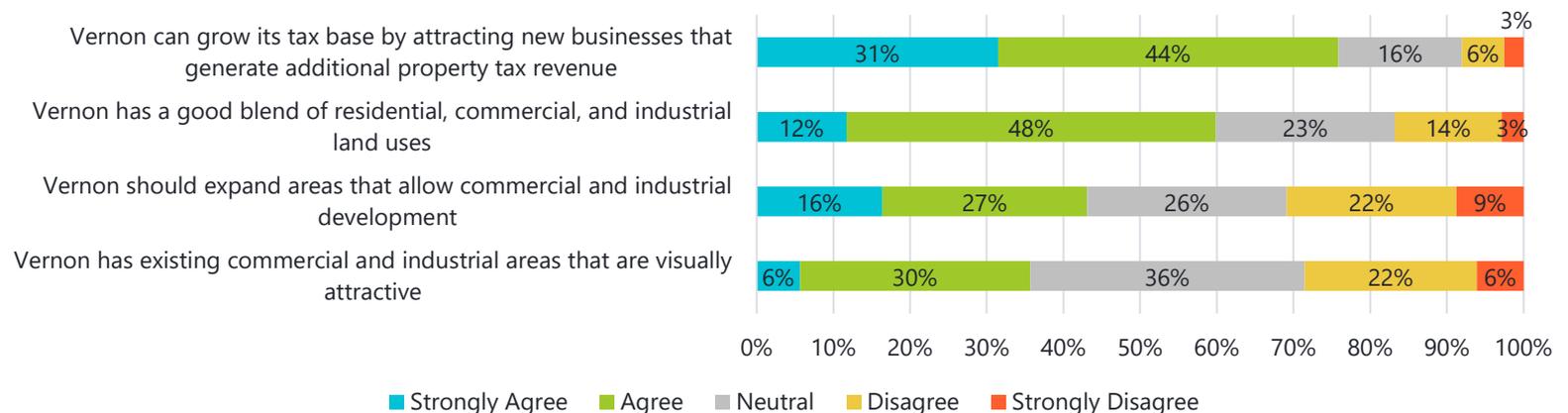
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Vernon's transportation system?



KEY FINDINGS: LAND USE & ZONING

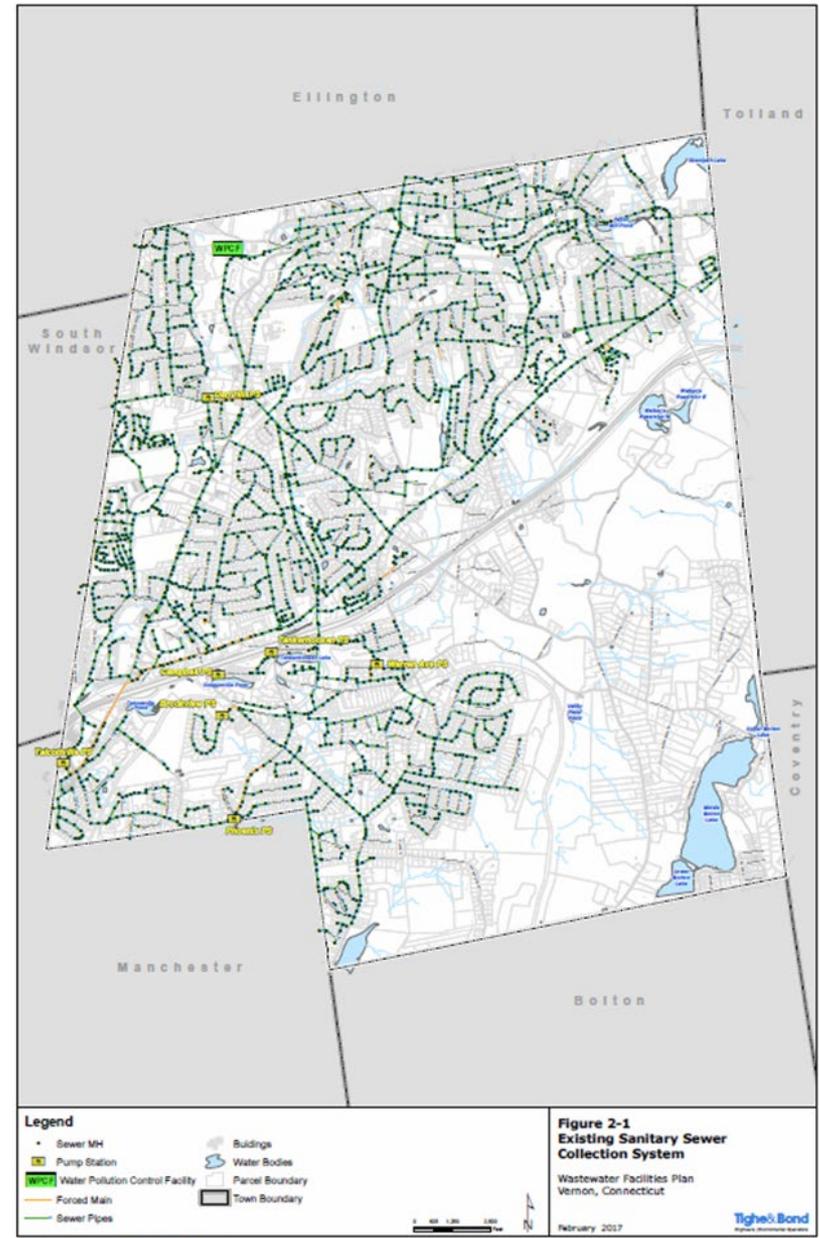
- Largely built out community - future development will mostly be through infill, reuse, or redevelopment
- Lack of vacant land to support industrial uses under current zoning
 - Many light industrial uses locate within commercial zones
 - Survey respondents are split on the expansion of commercial and industrial zones
- Lack of vacant land zoned for multi-family residential
 - Zone changes would be required for future projects
- Exit 67 Area – identified as an area with both conservation and development value. Current overlay zone for Exit 67 Area strives to balance these objectives
- Zoning in Rockville strives to retain traditional development patterns and protect historic character

Do you agree or disagree that....



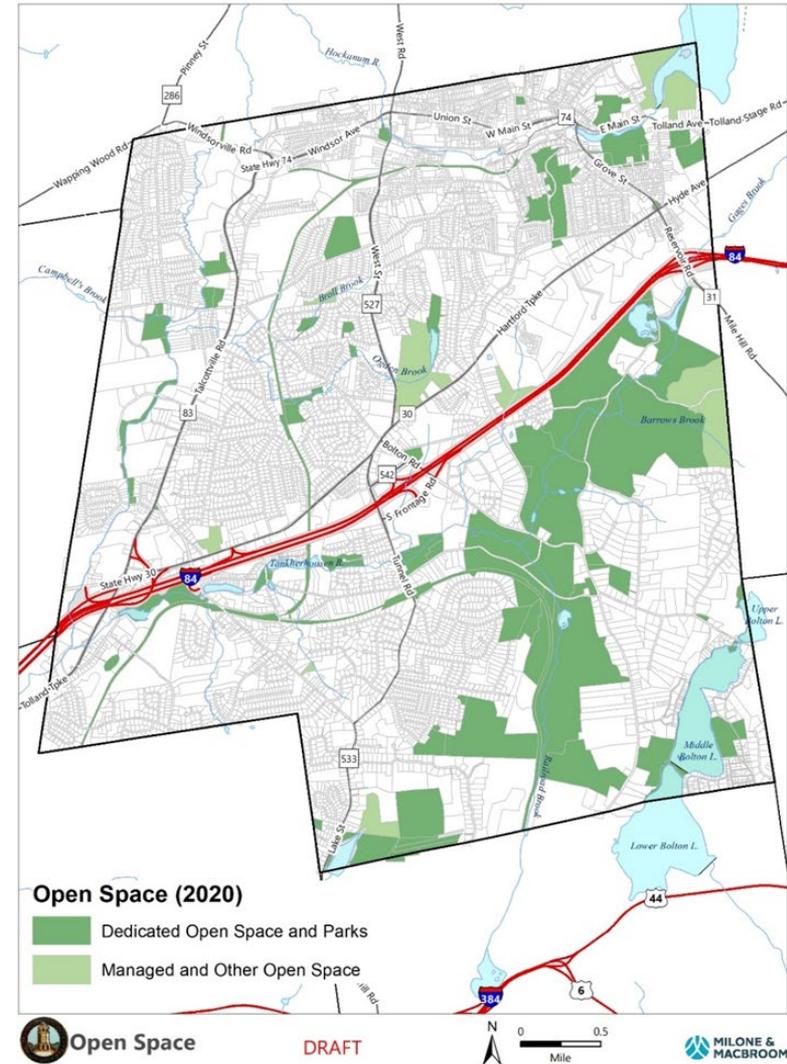
KEY FINDINGS: INFRASTRUCTURE

- Upgrades to the Water Pollution Control Facility will meet environmental standards and lessen environmental impacts
- Ample sewer capacity to support future development within the sewer service area, including identified expansion areas
- Lack of water and sewer service limits development potential near Exit 66 and Exit 67, and on Industrial Park Road



KEY FINDINGS: ENVIRONMENT & RECREATION

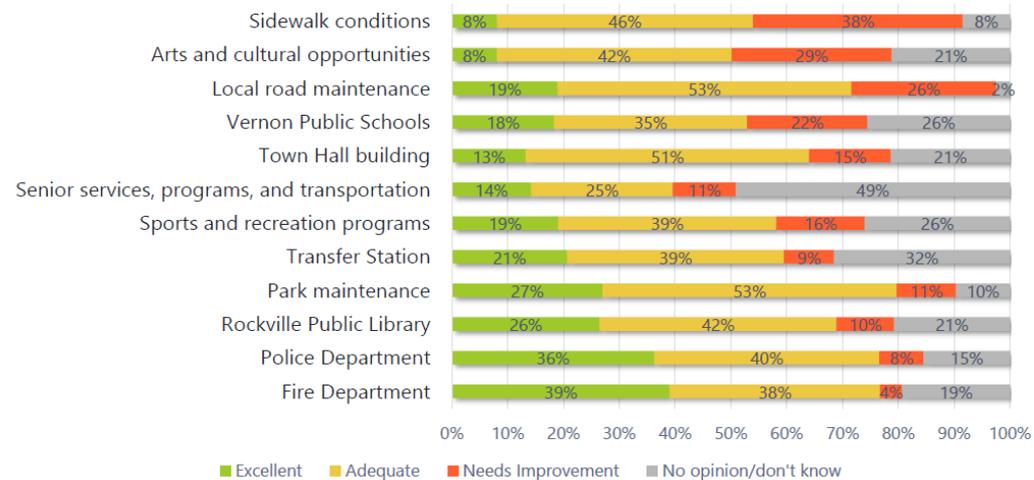
- Extensive open space network concentrated along waterbodies.
 - Opportunities to better serve and connect Rockville with the Town's open space network
- Excellent multi-use trail network is highly regarded by the community
- Continued focus on water quality protection and pollution reduction, particularly the Tankerhoosen River and Hockanum River corridors
- 2019 Hazard Mitigation Plan identified flooding, hurricane winds, and winter storms as primary hazards of concerns
 - Recommends actions the Town can take to make itself more resilient to natural hazards
- Vernon joined Sustainable Connecticut in 2018 and achieved Silver Certification in 2019



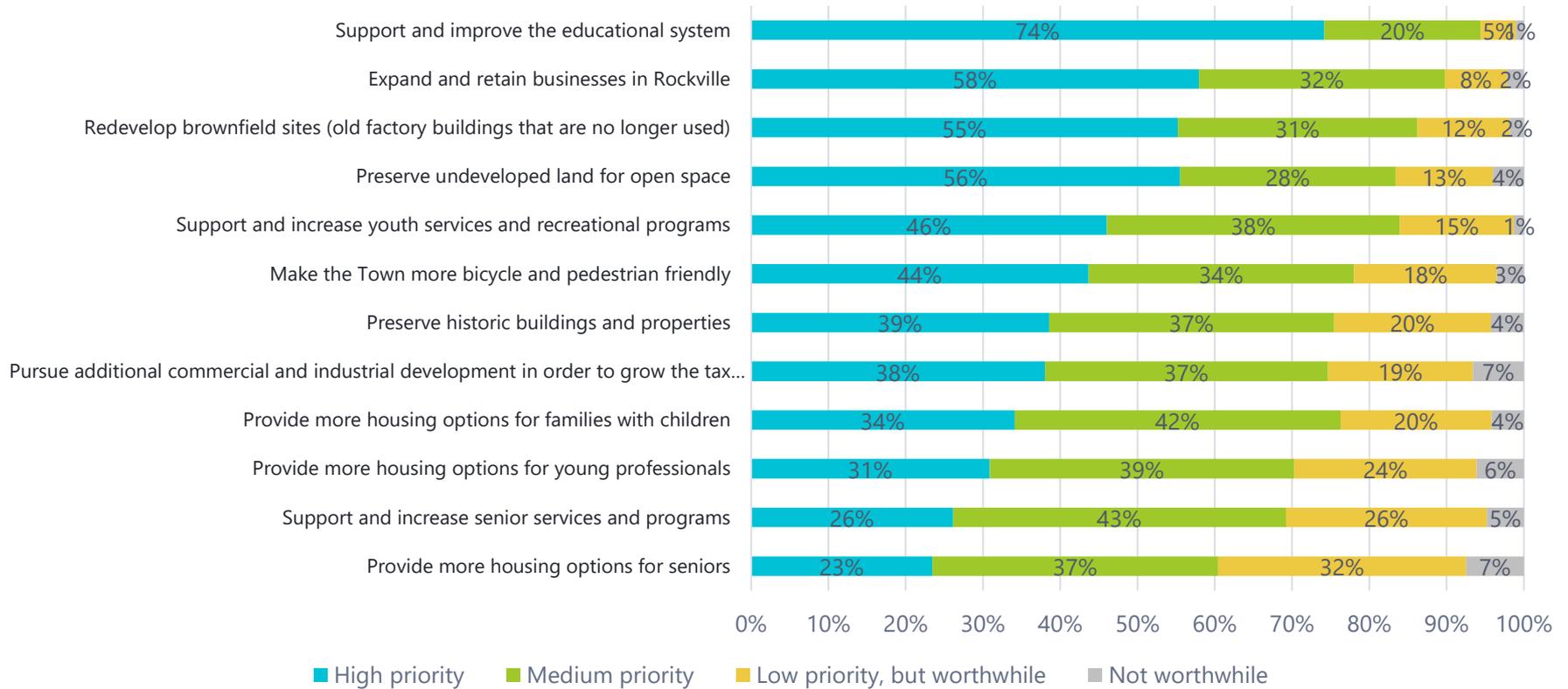
KEY FINDINGS: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Survey respondents are generally satisfied with town facilities and services
- Major facility and construction projects that are underway or planned include:
 - Citizens Block Project
 - Water Pollution Control Facility Upgrades
 - Replacement of Town Fueling Station (DPW)
 - Fox Hill Tower Repairs

How would you rate the quality of each of the following Town facilities or services?



KEY FINDINGS: PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE



- Support for and improvements to the education system are ranked highly by nearly all respondents
- Other highly ranked priorities include business expansion and retention in Rockville, brownfield redevelopment, and open space preservation

KEY FINDINGS: VALUES & STRENGTHS

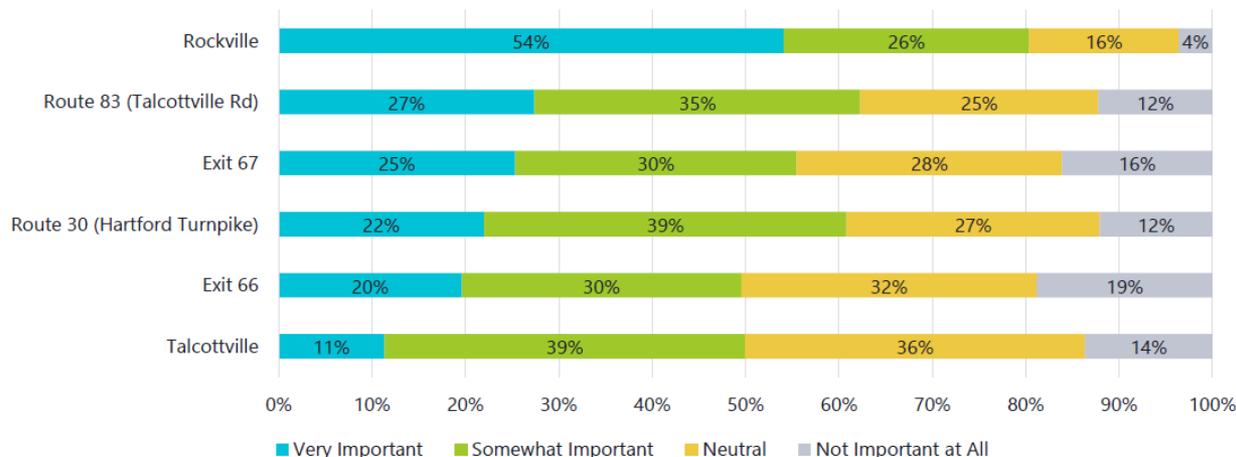
- Strong sense of community
- Reasonable cost of living
- Diversity of housing stock
- Excellent open space, recreation, parks, and trail system
- Convenience/location – proximity to shopping, services, entertainment, and jobs
- General satisfaction with Town services
- Historic character



KEY FINDINGS: OPPORTUNITIES

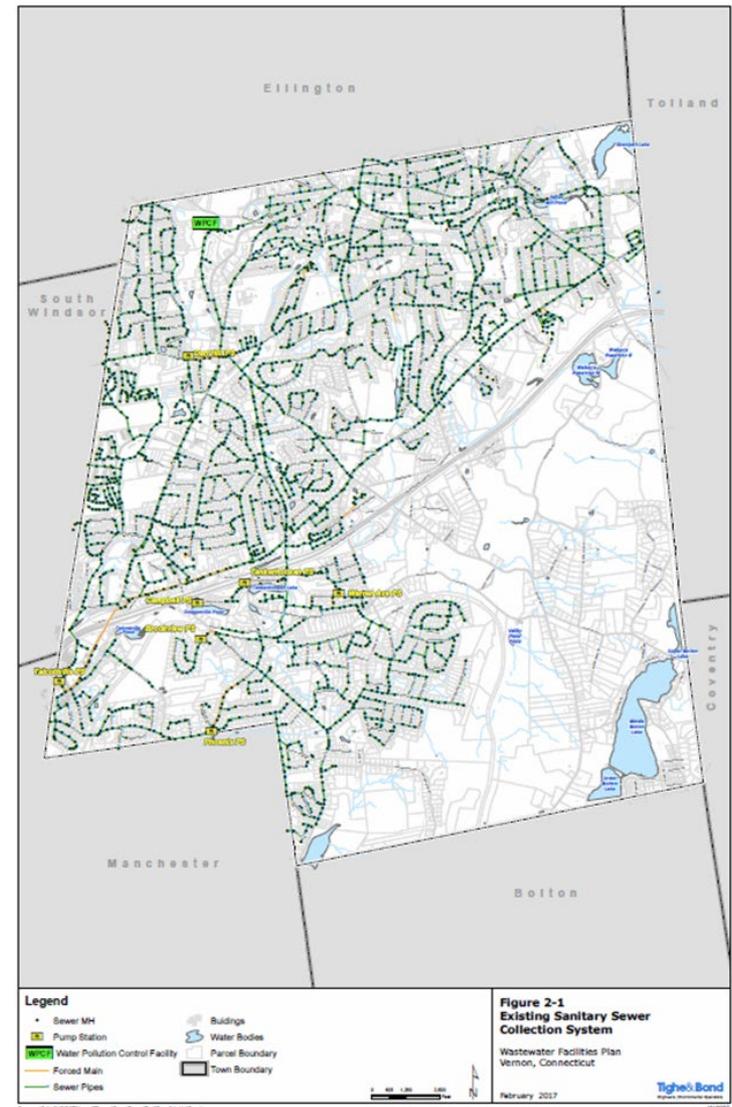
- Strong community support for Downtown Rockville revitalization
 - Leverage employment base
 - Mill redevelopment
 - Better connect to existing open space and trail network
 - Preserve historic character
- Strong multi-family housing market both regionally and locally
- Economic development opportunities near Exit 66 and Exit 67

Are there areas of Vernon that should be prioritized for economic development over the next 10 years?



KEY FINDINGS: CHALLENGES

- Largely built out community.
Limits development opportunities
- Limited availability of industrial land
 - Survey respondents are split on whether to expand commercial and industrial zones
- Lack of utility infrastructure limits development potential near Exit 66 and Exit 67
- Need to balance strong market for multi-family housing with split community sentiment



NEXT STEPS AND SCHEDULE

- Formulate vision and objectives
- Hold virtual community workshop in early 2021
 - Gather community feedback on vision, objectives, and key topics

Vernon POCD Updated Proposed Schedule

Tasks	2020						2021								
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Project Initiation / Data Collection	●														
Data Update				●											
Vision and Objectives						●									
Draft POCD								●							
Community Involvement			★				★				★				
Final Plans and Adoption													●	65 Day Public Comment Period ★	

-  Interviews and Focus Group
-  Community Workshop
-  Committee and/or PZC Meeting
-  Public Hearing for Adoption
-  Community Survey/ Pop-Up Event