

# Vernon

## Plan of Conservation and Development

Data Analysis and Community Survey Summary

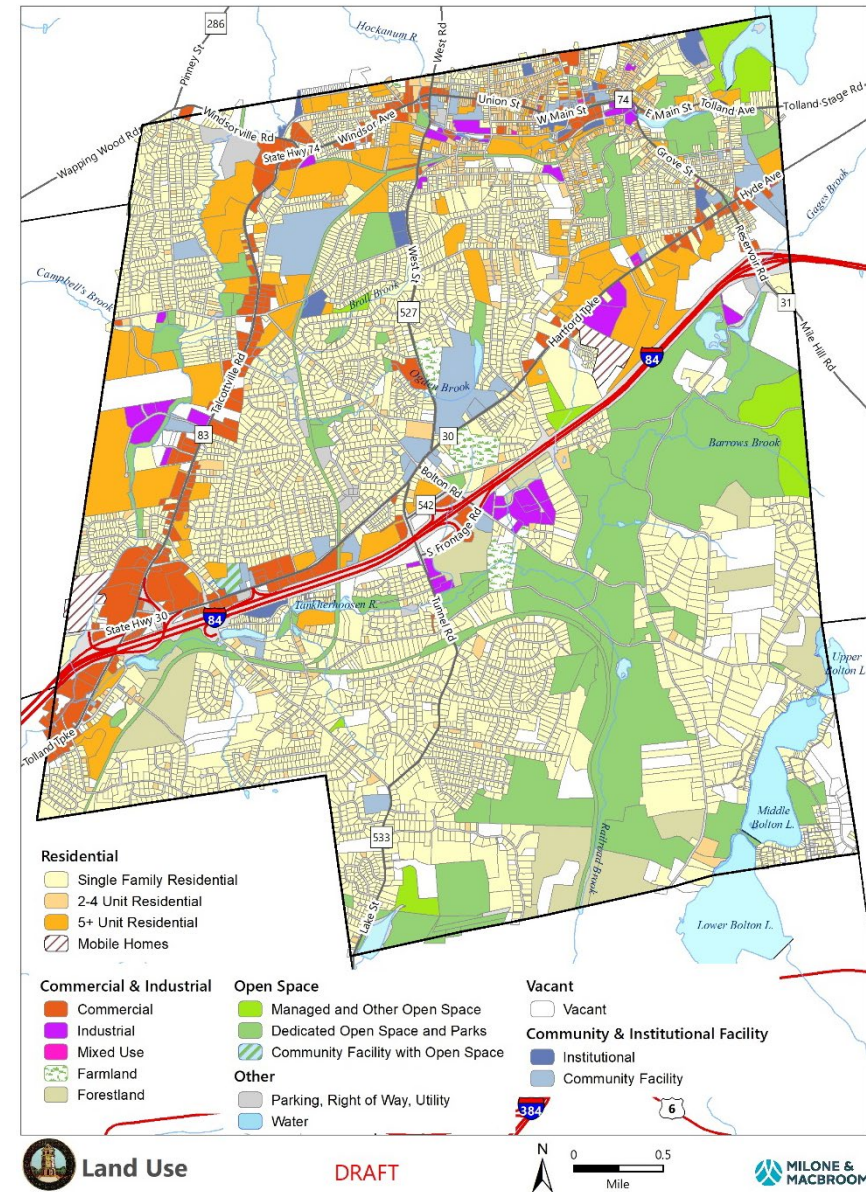
November 16, 2020



MILONE & MACBROOM

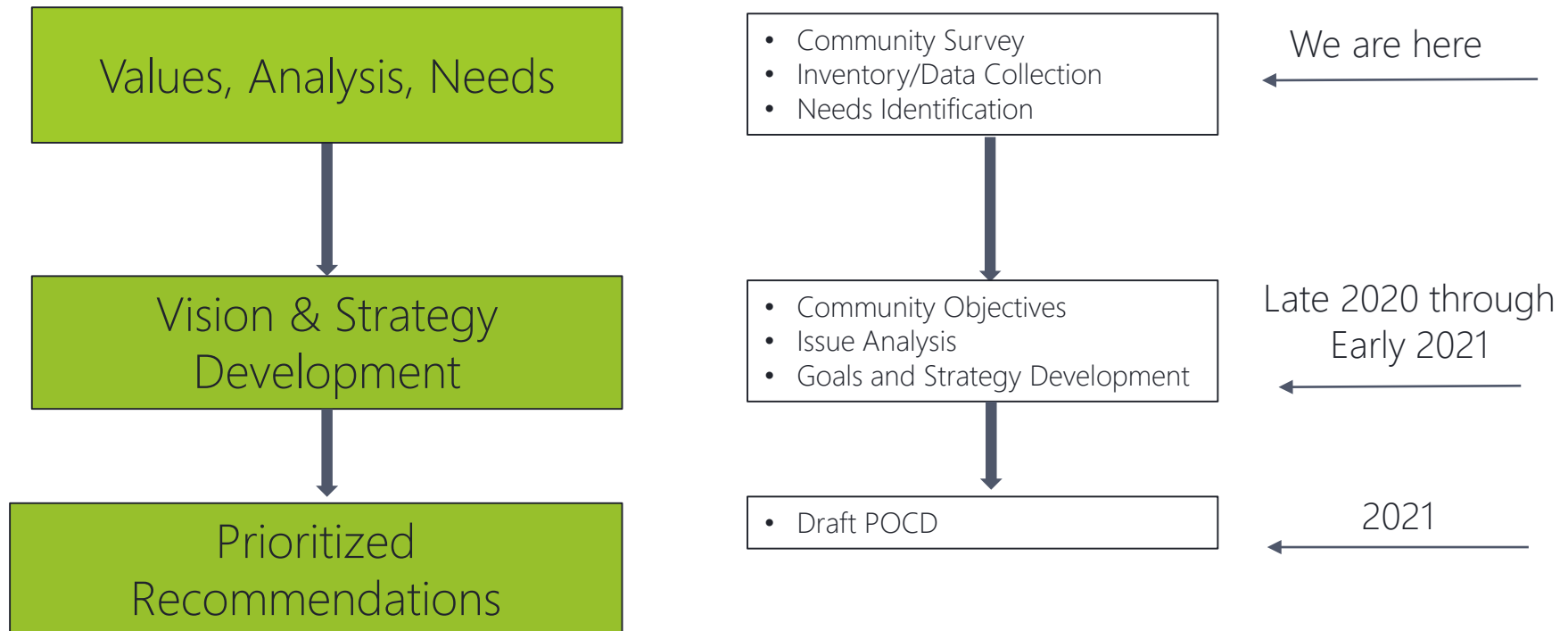
# WHAT IS A POCD?

- 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



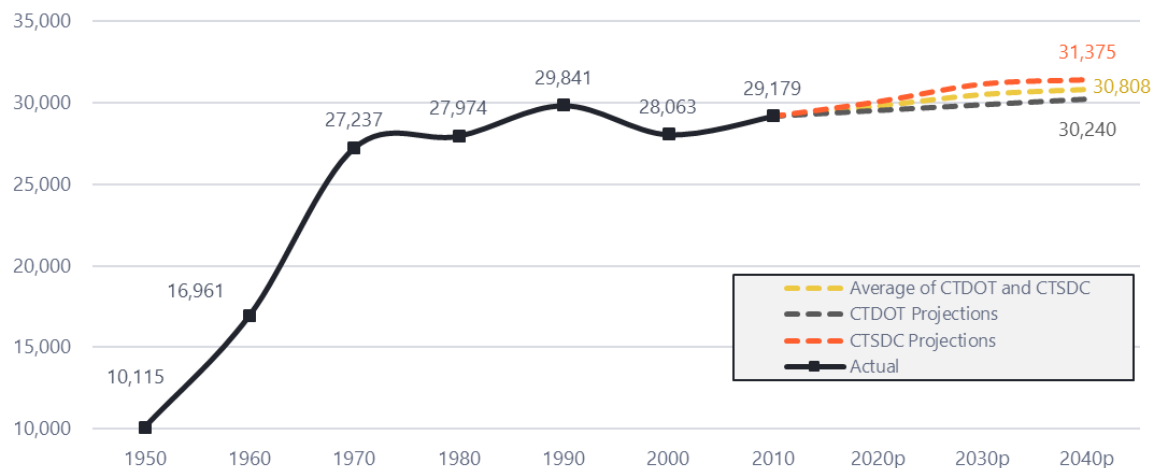
# PROGRESS TO DATE

- Community Survey (1,057 respondents)
  - Ran from September 30<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup>
- 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**

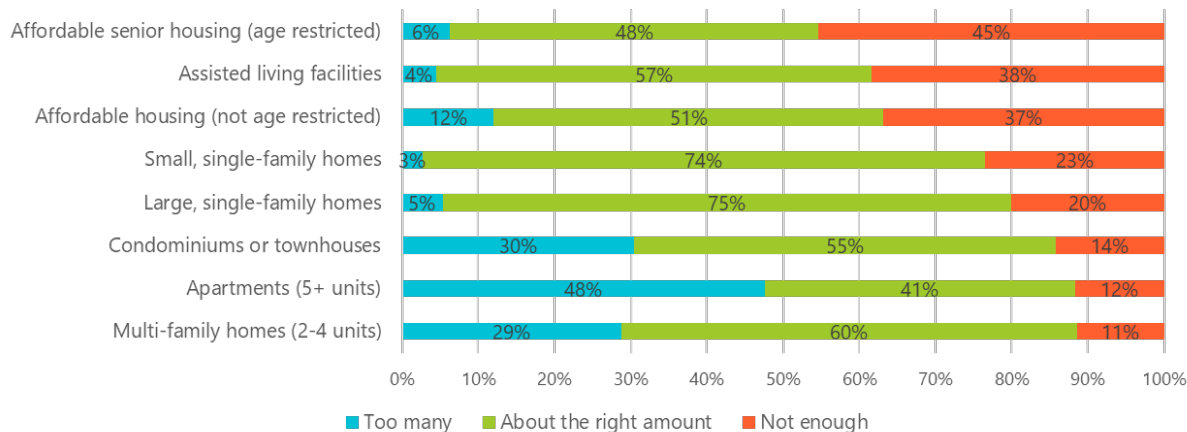


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census, 1950-2010. Projected Population by CTDOT and CTSDC.

# 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)

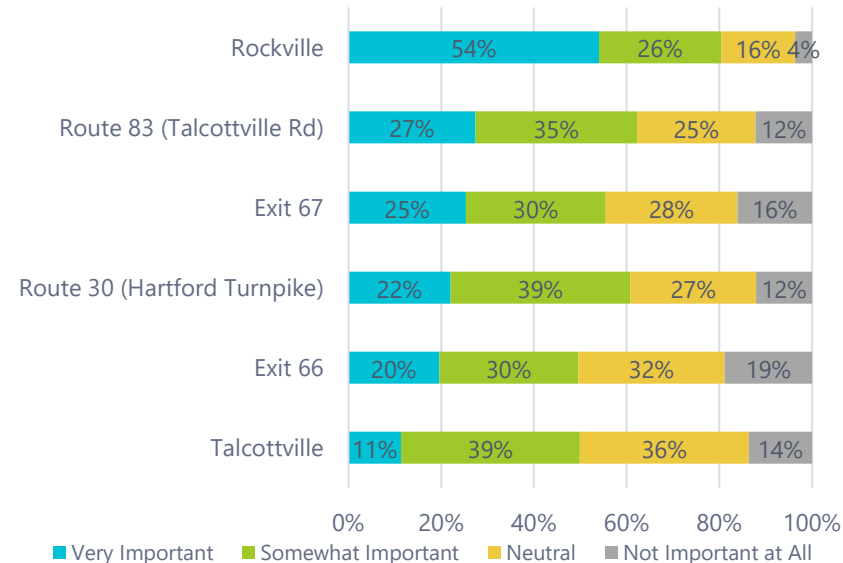
## Does Vernon have too many, about the right amount, or not enough of the following housing types:



# 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?**

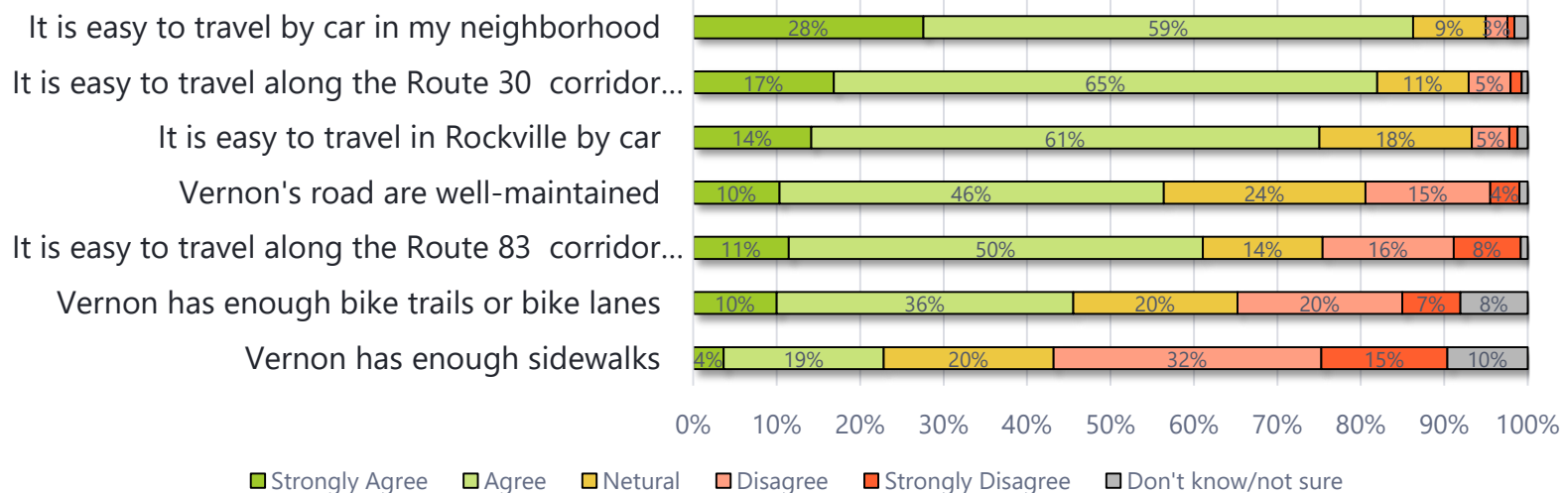




# KEY FINDINGS: TRANSPORTATION

- 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?

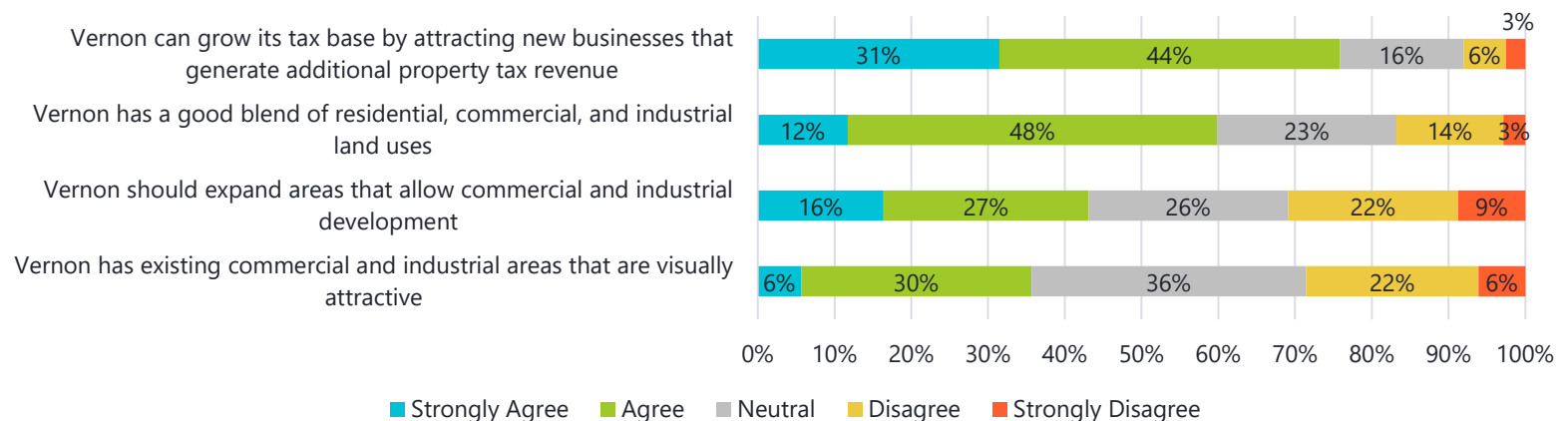




# KEY FINDINGS: LAND USE & ZONING

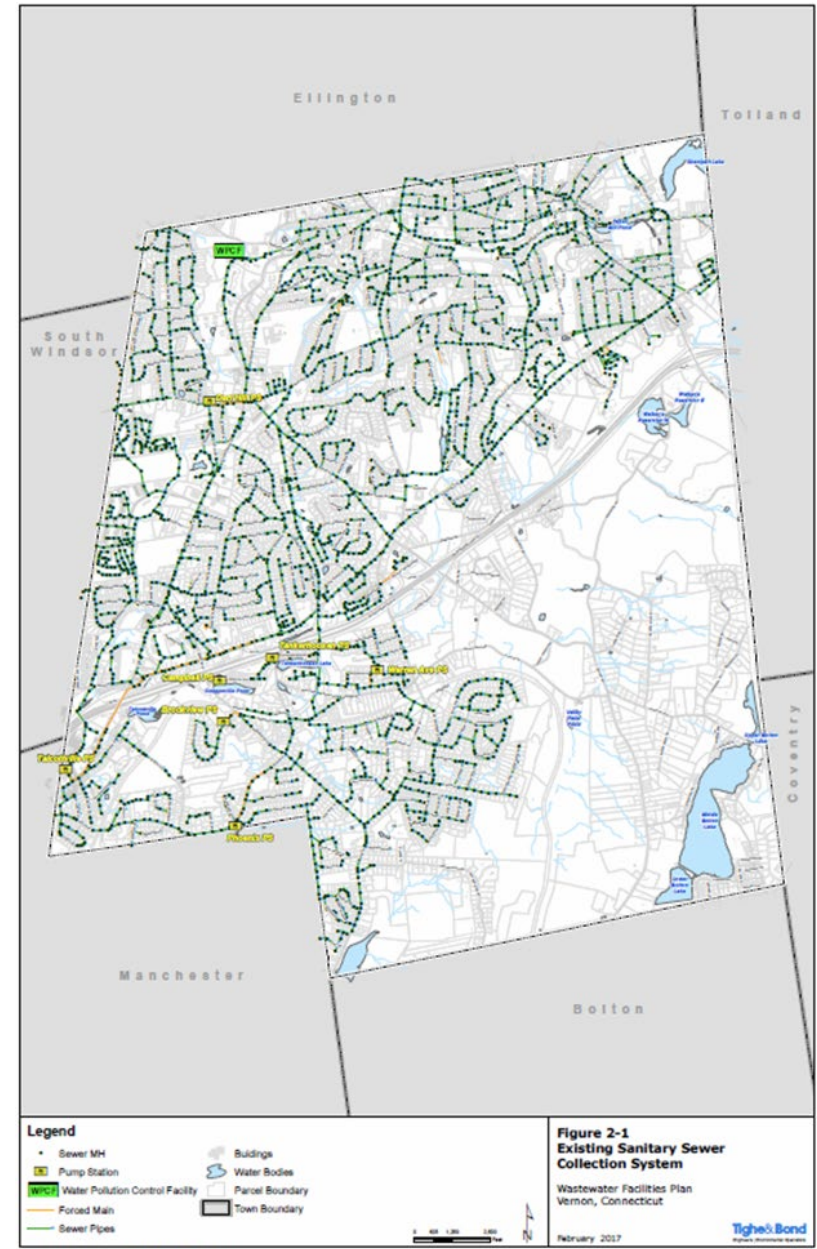
- Largely built out community - future development will mostly be through infill, reuse, or redevelopment
- Lack of vacant land to support industrial uses under current zoning
  - Many light industrial uses locate within commercial zones
  - Survey respondents are split on the expansion of commercial 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....



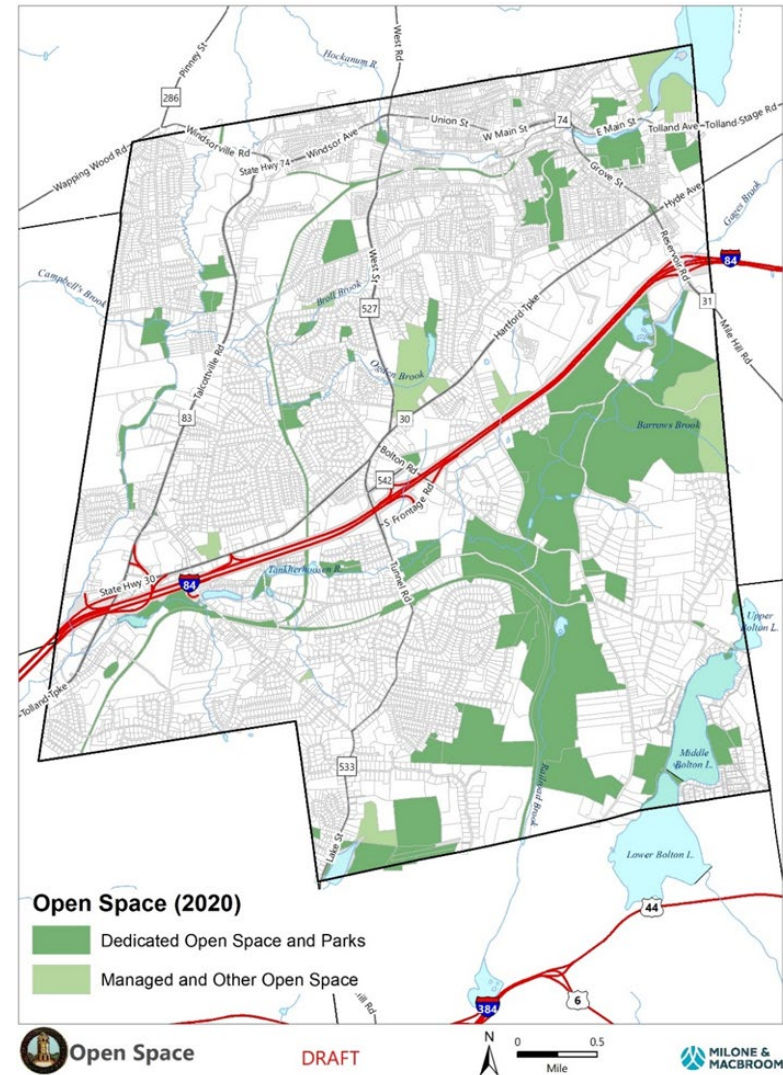
# KEY FINDINGS: INFRASTRUCTURE

- 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

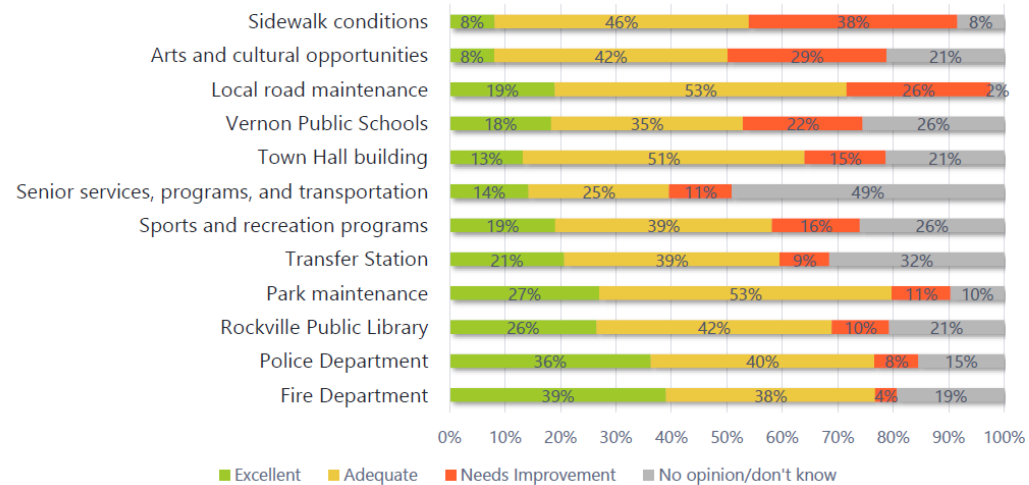
- Extensive open space network concentrated along waterbodies.
  - Opportunities to better serve and connect Rockville with the Town's open space network
- Excellent multi-use trail network is highly regarded by the community
- Continued focus on water quality protection and pollution reduction, particularly 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

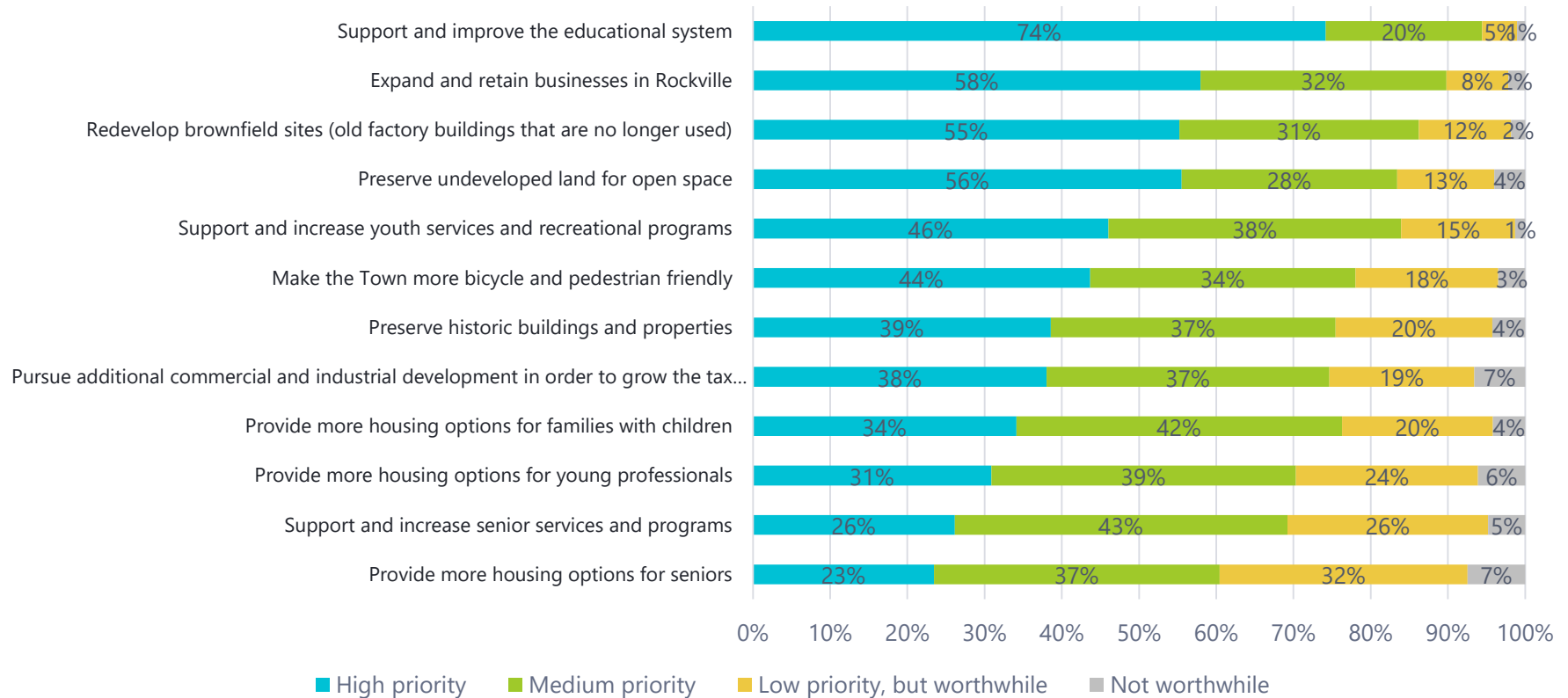
- Survey respondents are generally satisfied with town facilities and services
- Major facility and construction projects that are underway or planned include:
  - Citizens Block Project
  - Water Pollution Control Facility Upgrades
  - Replacement of Town Fueling Station (DPW)
  - Fox Hill Tower Repairs

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

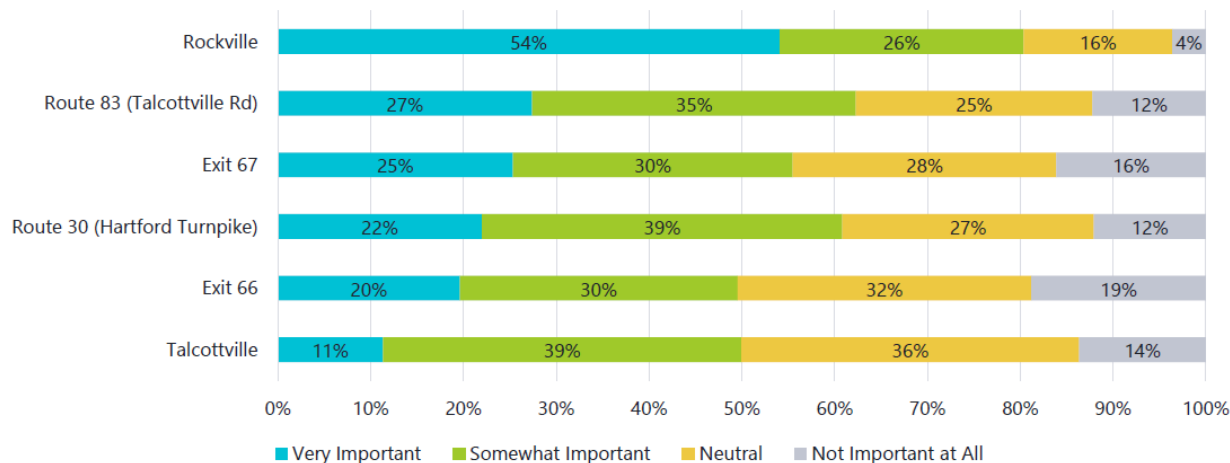
- Strong sense of community
- Reasonable cost of living
- Diversity of housing stock
- Excellent open space, recreation, parks, and trail system
- Convenience/location – proximity to shopping, services, entertainment, and jobs
- General satisfaction with Town services
- Historic character



# 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

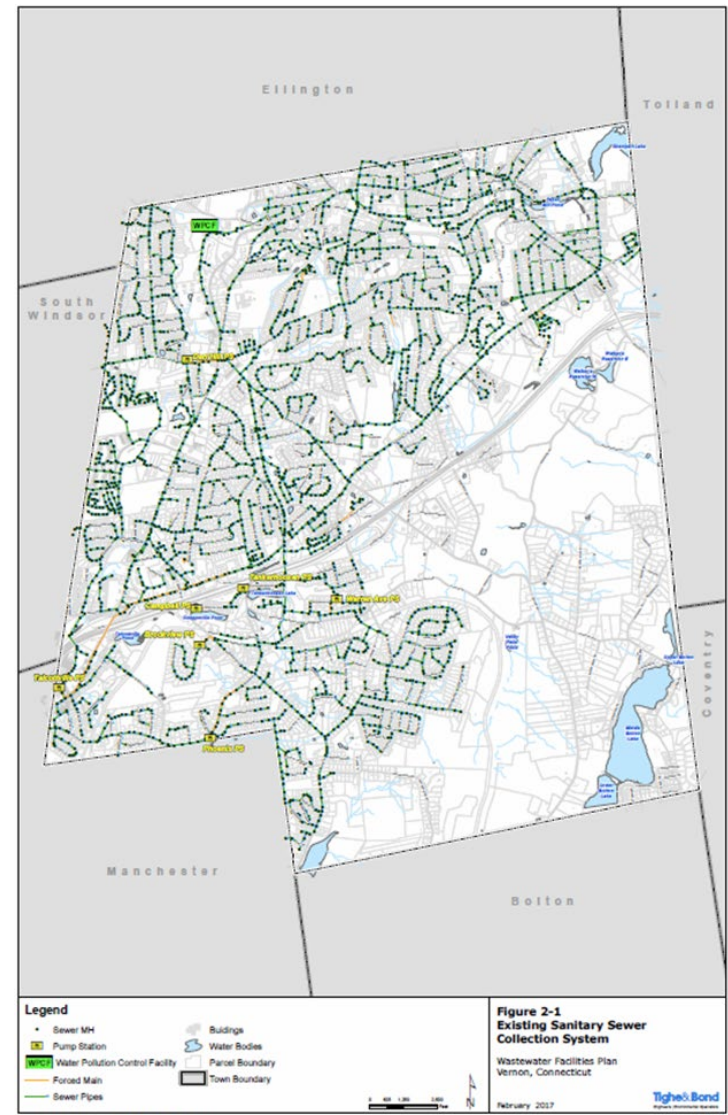
**Are there areas of Vernon that should be prioritized for economic development over the next 10 years?**





# 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



Committee and/or PZC Meeting



Community Survey/ Pop-Up Event



Community Workshop



Public Hearing for Adoption