PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT 2026

Complete Draft for Review – October 2026

TOWN OF PUTNAM, CONNECTICUT

Town of Putnam 2026 Plan of Conservation and Development



Introduction

The Putnam Planning and Zoning Commission is pleased to introduce the 2026 – 2036 Putnam Plan of Conservation and Development. In late 2024, the Town initiated a comprehensive effort to develop this plan. Over the next year, the Town, with assistance from its consulting planner and guidance provided by the Planning & Zoning Commission and other key Boards and Commissions, conducted an open planning process to ensure that the document presented today reflects a broad consensus on the Town's aspirations and values.

What is Plan of Conservation and Development?

A Plan of Conservation and Development (the Plan, PoCD) is a strategic and comprehensive document that provides guidance for the future growth and development of a municipality as it makes decisions about land purchases, infrastructure investments, and zoning changes. Every ten years, the Putnam community has an opportunity to participate in a town-wide planning effort, to tell local leaders what they like about Putnam, what is not so desirable, and what the town should prioritize to make it the most prosperous community it can be. The Plan is more than just words on paper guiding the decisions that get made in Town Hall. It is a mindset, a vision for the future of Putnam, and a document that describes how the community wants Putnam to look and feel for future generations. It sets forth the policies and procedures that should be followed, which will impact the way community members live, work, and play in Putnam.

The framework of this Plan differs from the most recent Plan. It takes the usual topics and categorizes them into broad themes- taking a more holistic approach to planning for the future. Rather than focusing on the traditional subjects of transportation, land use, housing, etc., the Plan focuses on big picture concerns such as quality of life, creating affordable housing, and sustainability, among others. Putnam is a regional center of sorts, providing a significant number of jobs and other services for the smaller, more rural towns surrounding it. As a center of commerce, Putnam is well positioned to continue to grow its tax base and attract a diverse population. However, there are significant challenges that will need to be overcome in the next ten years. While slightly more diverse than other Connecticut communities, the population in Putnam is aging, and relies mostly on automobiles for transport. Much of the community outside of the downtown area lives in single-family homes on large lots with little to no services. Population growth has been largely flat, and the Town's public-school population is declining, down 9.2% from 2010 (*Source: EDSIGHT*). While this decline is not as significant as it is similar in many communities throughout the state, it follows larger trends of declining birthrates alongside an aging population. Climate change poses a threat to the predictable weather patterns we have come to rely on, increasing the risk of droughts, wildfires, and larger and more frequent storms causing flooding in unexpected areas. Putnam is no stranger to suffering the consequences of flooding, having been a victim of severe flooding in 1955 which

destroyed a large swath of the area surrounding the Quinebaug River. While the federal government's construction of the upstream Thompson Dam protects Putnam against that type of historical flooding, larger more frequent storm events threaten a repeat of past struggles. Housing costs are skyrocketing, and homeownership is becoming unattainable for an increasing portion of the population. Fortunately, Putnam's housing stock is diverse compared to many other towns in the State of Connecticut. Both homeownership rates and median housing costs are below statewide averages. Putnam historically has had higher rates of rental units due to the large concentration of jobs in a small area providing for a more transient population and opportunity for working-class families to live in town. On the other hand, much of the housing stock in Putnam is aging and substandard. Over three-quarters of Putnam's housing stock was constructed prior to 1980. Older housing can be expensive to maintain and difficult to manage for elderly or cost-burdened residents.

Despite the challenges to come, we believe that the Putnam community can and will work together to overcome those hurdles. The Town prioritizes its community feel, and like many small towns, large extended families have made Putnam their home for decades, and they take pride in their community. In keeping an eye toward the future and what we want it to be, the community can work together to chart the best course to make Putnam strong, resilient, thriving, and diverse for both its long-term residents and newcomers.

CGS 8-23

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS, the "Statute") requires each municipality to adopt a Plan of Conservation and Development every ten years. The Plan is key to accessing state funding for a variety of projects, including transportation, open space, education, and others. State agencies, when administering grants and other state funding for municipalities, must consider the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan (C&D Plan, the "State Plan") and the local Plan for consistency. At a minimum, the local plan must consider:

- Future land use;
- Affordable Housing;
- Protection and preservation of drinking water supplies;
- Cluster development and soil types;
- Physical, social, economic, and governmental conditions and trends;
- Community needs;
- Energy;
- Protection and preservation of agricultural resources;
- Sea level concerns and;
- Technology needs of the municipality.

The Statute requires that any inconsistencies between this Plan and the State and Regional Plans be acknowledged. Those inconsistencies are explored in the next sections of this Plan.

Consistency with the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments Plan

Putnam is one of sixteen municipalities within the Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG) planning region. As of July 2026, NECCOG has not adopted a regional Plan of Conservation and Development, and therefore it is impossible to determine consistency.

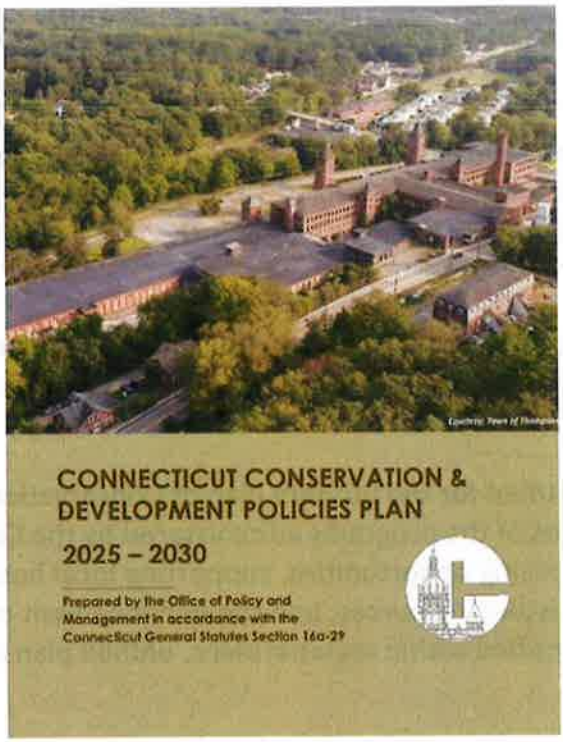
The Vision of Putnam as a cultural and economic hub within the region is supported through the various events, activities and services provided by its businesses, non-profit organizations and civic leaders.

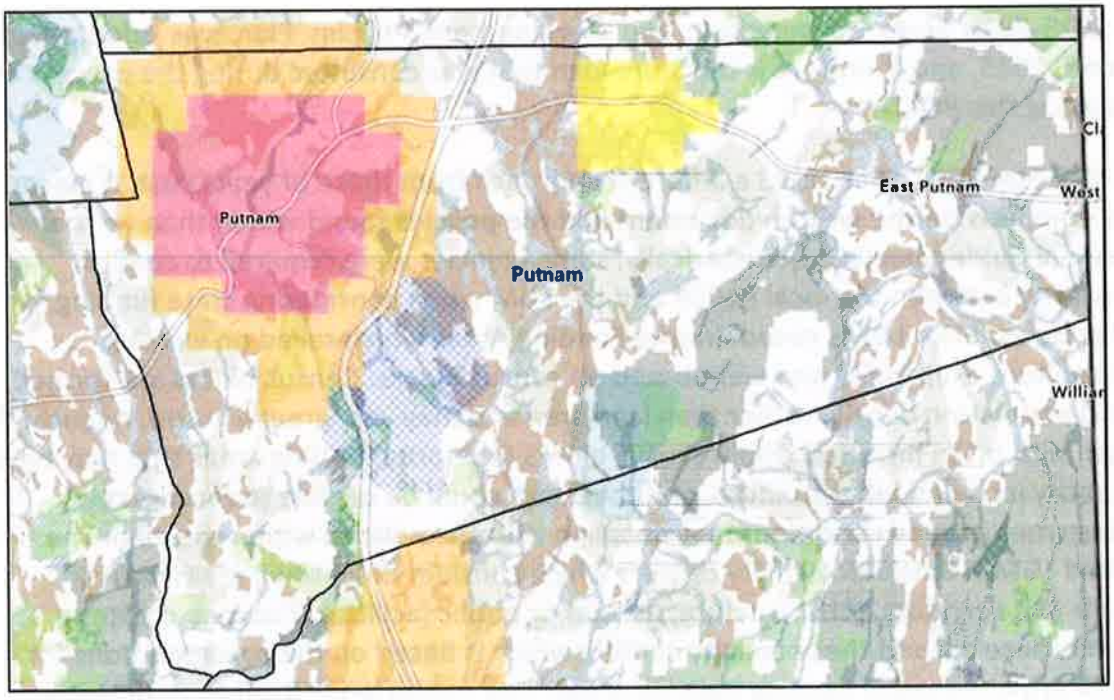
The Guiding Principles identified for the Putnam Plan of Conservation and Development are in line with the objectives of the programs administered by the Council of Governments. Increased housing opportunities, supporting local businesses, the protection of natural and historic resources, and the enhancement of transportation infrastructure are goals identified within regional plans, unified plan of work and programs of the NECCOG.

Consistency with the 2025 State Conservation and Development Policies Plan

The 2025-2030 State Conservation and Development Policies Plan was adopted on March 5, 2025, and therefore is the State Plan that was consulted during the process of developing this POCD.

The 2025 State C&D Plan takes a different approach from those of years past. It places more emphasis on the written document and the policies found within than on the Locational Guide Map (LGM). Historically, state agencies were required to confirm consistency between the local PoCDs and the LGM when considering state funding for local projects. Prior LGMs noted Priority Funding Areas which relied on existing infrastructure availability and were based on census blocks. Census blocks are formed around population density rather than land area and they vary greatly in size. As such, the former LGM often included whole census blocks in priority funding areas that may have only partly included infrastructure, and therefore could be eligible to receive state funding when ground conditions may not align with the policies within the Plan. The updated LGM is based on activity centers which consider downtown areas, transit stations and corridors, infrastructure, and other public facilities. The map creates a circumference around these activity centers which is based on the considerations for realistic growth around existing built-up areas. This model lends itself to prioritizing development in and around already dense areas. This model is also less likely to create conflict areas where natural conditions may call for conservation priorities, but the census block is noted as a priority funding area for development.





Source: State C&D Plan

In reviewing the 2025 LGM, Putnam contains a local activity center surrounded by the less dense suburban activity center (the pink and orange highlighted areas, respectively), and one rural activity center along Route 44 to the east of I-395 (the yellow highlighted area). These areas all function to serve the community with jobs and services. While large geographical areas of Putnam are zoned for large single-family development, or set aside as conservation space, the downtown area, I-395 corridor, and parts of the Route 44 corridor are surrounded with commercial and industrial zoning which allows for the growth of business-use and the tax base in this area. The area surrounding downtown is zoned for more dense housing, and includes a large portion of Putnam's housing stock. Water and sewer services are provided by the Town's Water Pollution Control Authority and generally are in the downtown area - stretching south toward the Killingly town line along Park Road. Public water and sewer are not available in the more rural areas of town toward the east. The public water and sewer service area aligns with the activity center found in the LGM. These areas allow for the densest type of development within Putnam, have easy access to I-395 for commuting and the flow of goods, and is an area of focus for future development.

In addition to activity centers, the State C&D Plan encourages growth surrounding transit nodes and along transportation corridors, which are also noted on the LGM. As discussed later in this Plan, Putnam is served by the Northeast Connecticut Transit District with two-fixed route bus lines. Those bus routes circulate throughout the town making several stops in the downtown area and provide connections to surrounding communities. These routes and corridors all overlap with the activity centers shown in the LGM. High traffic volumes exist along Route 44 and I-395, making it a suitable candidate for most retailers, many of which have already located in these areas.

Overall, this Plan is consistent with the LGM focusing future growth in and surrounding areas noted as activity centers. These areas already have appropriate infrastructure and facilities to support additional growth of both housing and commercial development. The existing sewer and water service extends outside of the activity centers into the industrial areas to the south and can support further development efforts to boost the town's economy. These areas can also support a variety of additional housing units. Toward the east end of Town, the LGM would not support additional growth as many services are not provided. This Plan and existing zoning do not support additional development of those areas beyond large-lot single-family housing.

The vision of this Plan, which is included in the following chapter and explored more broadly later in this Plan, aligns with the four guiding principles of the State Plan which are *Sustainable*, *Equitable and Just*, *Vibrant*, and *Resilient*. Putnam has determined that a key component of this Plan is to continue to support a thriving business environment to become the "Regional Downtown" as an economic hub for northeastern Connecticut. As noted above, the LGM supports additional growth in the core areas of Putnam, and the written policies are supportive of encouraging growth in areas where density and services already exists.

Another guiding principle of the Putnam Plan is to expand and improve Putnam's housing stock in order to provide opportunities to residents of all ages and incomes. This goal is consistent with the State's principle of being equitable and just. Additional housing leads to more opportunities for a more diverse community. Other guiding principles of this plan include enhancing municipal facilities to adapt the needs of the Town's residents and businesses while keeping in mind the changing environment, and focusing on enhancing the community's natural, cultural, and historic resources with an emphasis on resilience and sustainability. As previously noted, a core theme of the State C&D Plan is sustainability, particularly as it relates to the impacts of climate change.

History and Background of Putnam

Prior to the European arrival in Eastern Connecticut, the area now known as Putnam was likely inhabited by the Algonquins, the primary Native American nation in the eastern portion of what is now Connecticut.

The earliest European settlers in what is now Putnam arrived around 1691 when a road was extended from Providence, RI to Woodstock, CT. The area was originally known as Aspinock. With the Quinebaug River running through, the land was fertile and there was ample water and the initial settlers were involved in agriculture.

Eventually, as settlers harnessed the water-power, a variety of mills developed, typical of those in New England towns, such as grist mills, blacksmith shops, hammer mills, and fulling mills. Cargill Falls, the natural waterfall located just west of today's downtown, provided the downstream pressure to power these mills.

Smith Wilkinson and James Rhodes arrived in the early 19th century and developed more advanced mills, such as the textile mill. Formation of the Union Block and Main Street commercial areas followed the arrival of the Norwich and Worcester Railroad in 1839 (*Source: Northeast Connecticut Chamber of Commerce*).

The current Town was incorporated in 1855 out of portions of Killingly, Pomfret, and Thompson. It is named for General Israel Putnam, credited for cautioning his troops at Bunker Hill "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes."



1877 Bailey Map of Putnam

As the 19th century drew on, more and larger mills were constructed, and migrant workers, mostly from Canada and Europe were drawn to the Town, substantially increasing the population. The population supported the incorporation of the City of Putnam in 1895 (which has since been disincorporated and integrated back into the Town), providing for additional services.

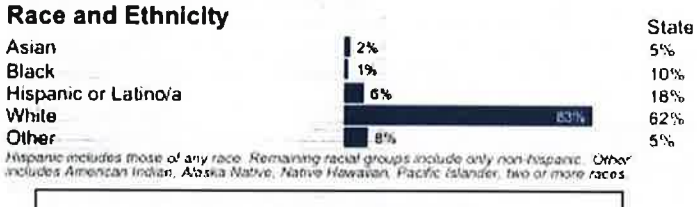
In 1955, the Town was devastated by flooding caused by two hurricanes within a week of each other. The Quinebaug River overflowed its banks destroying homes, businesses, and factories which surrounded its shoreline. The railroad bed was destroyed, and floating magnesium barrels sparked fires which destroyed even more buildings.

After the floods, the Town built Rotary Park to act as a village green. In more recent years, antique stores and restaurants have turned the downtown into a regional tourist destination.

The three fire districts within Putnam are known as Putnam Special Services District (former City of Putnam), which serves as the downtown commercial area and surrounds the Quinebaug River in the northwest part of town, East Putnam or Putnam Heights, lying in the south-central part of town, and West Putnam, which lies generally in the west/southwestern portion of Town. The current form of government consists of a Mayor, six member Board of Selectmen, and a Town Administrator. The town encompasses 20.4 square miles surrounded by Woodstock, Thompson, Pomfret, and Killingly in Connecticut, and Burrillville and Glocester in Rhode Island. Freight rail service, operated by the Providence and Worcester Railroad continues to operate through Town.

Demographics

Putnam is a small community in Windham County in the northeast corner of Connecticut with 9,292 residents and 4,166 households (*Source: 2026 Town Profile*). At approximately 20 square miles, the population density is 458 persons per square mile. The population, like most small communities in Connecticut, is predominantly Non-Hispanic White (83%).

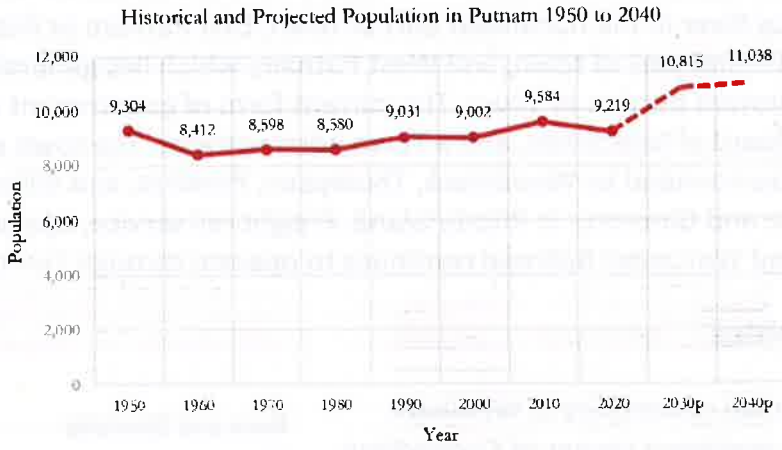


Source: 2026 Town Profile

Approximately 6% of residents identify as Hispanic or Latino/a. The population, also much like the rest of Connecticut, is rapidly aging. As of 2024, approximately 17% of residents are between ages 50 and 59 and 26% are over the age of 60. Children under 19 make up 22% of the population, and the median age in town is 44, which is slightly above the statewide median age of 41. Since 2010, the town's population has decreased by approximately 2% but is expected to grow to approximately 11,038 by 2040 (*Source: CT Data Center*).

Most residents report speaking English at home, 94%, as opposed to 77% statewide (*Source: 2026 Town Profile*). Approximately 37% of Putnam residents have earned a High School Diploma, only 8% have earned an Associate's Degree, and 20% of residents have earned a Bachelor's Degree or higher. Putnam is a working-class community with a median household income of $70,561, which is below the statewide median of $95,781.

The poverty rate in Putnam is 11% which is similar to the statewide poverty rate of 10% (*Source*: *ADVANCE CT*). The term ALICE refers to those who are Asset Limited, Income Constrained and Employed. These are people and families who are employed full-time and oftentimes own their own home, but are on a limited budget and are just one emergency or unexpected expense from financial trouble. These individuals do not meet the criteria to be defined as being in poverty but are often living not far above the poverty line. Statewide, it is estimated that 29% of residents are ALICE, while in Putnam, approximately 47% of the population is estimated to be ALICE (*Source*: *UNITED FOR ALICE*). An ALICE household is one that often has to make difficult choices, such as deciding between quality child care or paying the rent. These decisions can have long-term consequences for both the immediate family and the community as a whole.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census, 1950-2020. Projected Population by Connecticut Data Center

Transportation

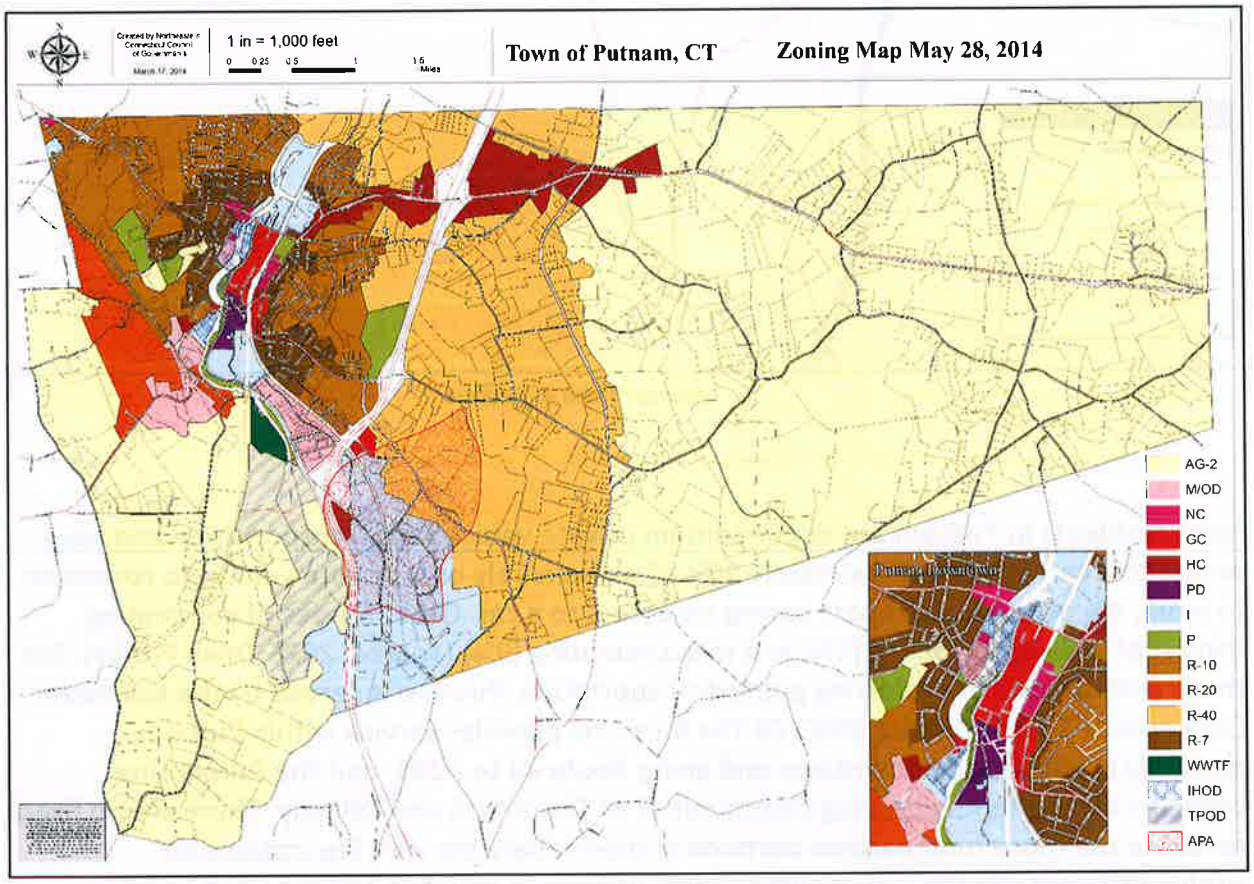


Source: Town of Putnam

Most residents in Putnam are dependent on private vehicles for transportation and have access to a car. While approximately 90% of workers rely on a private vehicle to commute to work, 9% of residents report having no access to a car. Other modes of commuting consist of walking or cycling (2%) and telecommuting (9%) (*Source: 2026 Town Profile*). For those without cars or preferring public transportation, Putnam is served by the Northeast Connecticut Transit District (NECTD).The Blue Line provides service within Putnam, primarily in and around downtown and along Route 44 to I-395, and the Purple Line provides service to neighboring communities of Thompson and Killingly. There are no fixed routes in the more rural eastern portions of town. There are very few options for connections outside the region without making several switches between bus routes. Senior residents or those with disabilities use dial-a-ride services provided by the NECTD. While Putnam was once served by two railroads, the Air Line Railroad and the Norwich and Worcester Railroad, passenger service ended in 1971. The route of the former N&W line is currently used for freight service. Much of the Air Line has been converted to a cross state multi-purpose trail, although it has not been completed through Putnam yet.

The primary roads in Putnam are the Providence Pike (SR 44), Liberty Highway (SR 21), Killingly Avenue (SR 12), Woodstock Avenue/Providence Street (SR 171), and Interstate 395. The Town owns and maintains over 65 miles of local roads. The highest traffic counts in Town are on I-395, as would be expected. Annual average traffic is approximately 17,000 cars per day on the interstate. Route 44 handles approximately 14,000 vehicles per day in the downtown area near its intersection with Route 171, but volumes are lower to the east of I-395. Route 12 carries approximately 4,400 vehicles per day in the downtown area, which reduces to about 2,200 south of its I-395 interchange. Approximately 11,000 vehicles per day use Route 171 north of the downtown area (*Source: CT DOT Annual Average Daily Traffic).* These busier roads act as feeders to and from I-395 for residents of Putnam and surrounding towns.

Land Use, Zoning and Housing



The Land Use pattern of Putnam somewhat follows a sector model growth pattern with decreasing densities moving away from the downtown area and dense corridors extending outward along certain transportation routes. The most dense and intense land uses are located downtown surrounding the Cargill Falls and the Quinebaug River. Historically, this is where mills provided jobs, and workers lived. Today, it is the commercial center and provides for a mix of uses including commercial, multi-family housing, and higher density single family housing. Several of the mills have been redeveloped into housing or mixed-use

developments. Further out of the center of town, the predominant land use is single family housing, with larger minimum lot sizes required further from the downtown area. The construction of I-395 interrupts the concentric ring to create a few nodes, one allowing for industrial development along the interstate to the south of town, and an additional commercial corridor extending east from downtown along Route 44 to its interchange with I-395.

Land uses in Putnam are diverse, with much of the downtown area consisting of dense multi-family dwellings. Historic commercial areas are also quite dense and the downtown boasts a traditional walkable core. Nearby areas that were redeveloped after the flooding of 1955 are a stark contrast of low-rise buildings with large parking lots. Older neighborhood retail areas line Providence Street and Providence Pike. Newer commercial and industrial growth is primarily in the Putnam Industrial Park, Quinebaug Regional Technical Park, and Route 44/I-395 Interchange, all of which are located adjacent to Interstate 395. These newer developments consist of big box retail and warehousing operations which are not conducive to a walkable environment. Outside of the downtown and the I-395 corridor, the town has a much more rural feel. The minimum lot size grows to one or two acres, and mainly consists of single-family homes.

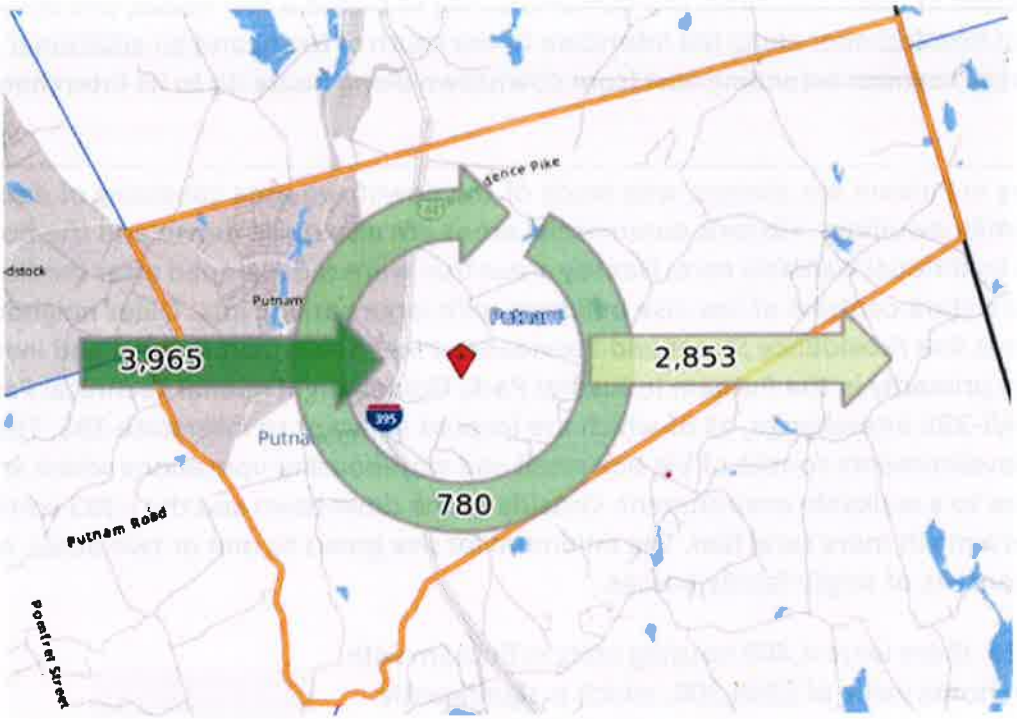
As of 2024, there were 4,403 housing units in Putnam with a median home value of $269,200, which is significantly lower than the statewide median of $366,900. The median rent in Putnam is $1,149 per month versus a statewide median of $1,488. This suggests that rental costs are heavily dependent on subsidies, many of the units may be older, or both. Approximately 59% of the units in Putnam are owner-occupied, which falls below the statewide average of 66%. Four percent of units are vacant, a healthy vacancy rate that allows for in-migration and intra-migration (*Source: Advance CT*).



Housing Affordability in Putnam, *Source: CT Department of Housing*

Affordable housing, as defined by CGS 8-30g, includes housing that is funded by the Connecticut Home Finance Authority (CHFA), deed restricted or reserved for those with low and moderate income as well as assisted housing. Putnam is exempt from the 8-30g appeals process, with 13.70% of its housing stock defined as 'affordable' in accordance with Statute. There are no deed restricted units in Town, instead the vast majority (465) of units are provided through government assistance, 104 of which are age restricted and managed by the Putnam Housing Authority, and 219 are low- income family units, also managed by the Putnam Housing Authority (*Source: www.putnamhousing.org*). Other units are funded through CHFA mortgages, rental assistance programs, or other government programs. The CHFA mortgages are tenuous and as those homeowners sell, those units could be lost meaning the percentage of homes meeting the affordable requirement could decline.

Economy



Source: US Census, OnTheMap

Consistent with its history as an employment center, Putnam continues to have a healthy mix of commercial and industrial activity providing over 6,100 jobs within its borders. More workers report travelling to Putnam than leaving Putnam for work. It is estimated that approximately 4,000 people travel to Putnam for work, while about 3,000 Putnam residents commute out of town for work. Additionally, almost 800 workers both live and work in Putnam (*Source: OnTheMap*). This indicates Putnam's role as a small, regional hub for industry and jobs.

Top industries are health care and social assistance, manufacturing, retail trade, government (including schools) and accommodation and food services. As of 2026, there were 725 active business registrations in Putnam. Key employers include Day Kimball Healthcare, Staples, ERW, Inc (precision sheet metal), Impact Plastics, and Putnam Public Schools (*Source*: *Advance CT 2026 Town Profile*).

Economy

Top Industries
Lightcast, 2024 (2 and 3 digit NAICS)

	Jobs	Share of Industry
1 Manufacturing	1,334	
Food Mfg		*36%*
2 Health Care and Social Assistance	1,328	
Hospitals		*60%*
3 Retail Trade	918	
General Merchandise Retailers		*34%*
4 Government	678	
Local Government		*78%*
5 Accommodation and Food Services	659	
Food Services and Drinking Places		*99%*
Total Jobs, All Industries	6,189	

SOTS Business Registrations
Secretary of the State, March 2026

New Business Registrations by Year

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total	73	97	87	96	97

Total Active Businesses 725

Source: Advance CT, Putnam Town Profile 2026

Based on the 2026 Town Profile, municipal revenues are just over $31M, of which $16M is obtained through property taxes while the balance comes from intergovernmental revenues. Twenty-seven percent of the grand list is commercial or industrial properties; the rest of the tax burden falls to residential property owners (*Source: ADVANCE CT 2026 Town Profile*). Expenditures are about $32M per year, of which $22M or 96% are spent on education, typical of most communities in the state. Annual debt service is 6% of the total budget.

Past Planning in Putnam

While Putnam has not conducted many planning studies on its own, there have been several collaborative planning efforts over the last decade with the Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments including the 2021 Regional Transportation Safety Plan, 2018

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, and the 2015 Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. In addition, Putnam adopted its Affordable Housing Plan in 2023. All of these planning efforts have been incorporated into this PoCD update for consideration.

Development of this Plan

In late 2024, the Town's Planning and Zoning Commission began the process of updating the Plan of Conservation and Development. The responsibility for developing the framework and substance of the Plan was assigned principally to key staff, including the Land Use Director, Director of Economic & Community Development, the Town Administrator, and the Mayor.

To assist with the effort, the Town selected Tyche Planning & Policy Group in a competitive bid process. Over the next year, the Town Planner, with input from various Town Boards and Commissions including the Special Services District, the Economic Development Commission, the Putnam Redevelopment Agency, the Aspinock Historical Society, the Putnam Business Association and the Board of Selectmen shaped the vision and values presented in this document. To understand the communities' needs, the update included a survey. The survey asked those who live and work in Putnam questions on a range of topics such as housing, open space and natural resources, general government services, and more. The survey also included open-ended questions to allow residents to submit any additional input or comments. The open-ended questions included in the survey asked about residents' hopes and worries over the next 10 years, what things make Putnam special and what things the Town could improve upon.

As the Plan development continued, the Planning & Zoning Commission reviewed each draft section of the document, from the Vision Statement and framework through all of the substantive sections based on the Guiding Principles. Following the completion of the full draft, public outreach and public hearings were held to ensure that the members of the Putnam community had access and opportunity to comment on the draft.

Vision and Guiding Principles

The Putnam Planning & Zoning Commission, in developing this update to the 2016 Plan of Conservation & Development (PoCD), is guided by an interest in enhancing the economic, social, and cultural environment of Putnam, and by the wish to advance policies and practices that will strengthen the vibrant, sustainable, welcoming, healthy, and safe community for all who live, work, shop, and play in Putnam. Over the next decade, Putnam seeks to solidify its place as one of the best and most vibrant small towns in Connecticut.

We envision a Putnam that recognizes and embraces its role as a "regional downtown" and hub of economic, housing, civic and cultural activity for Northeast Connecticut and the Tri-State area.

We envision a Putnam that celebrates its place as destination for commerce, public gatherings, health care, civic and cultural activity, and recreation.

We envision new public and private investments that focus on expanding businesses and housing opportunities and improving critical infrastructure and civic capacity to support them.

We envision forging new connection to regional services, including public safety, environmental corridors and trail systems, and inter-town transportation and services.

We envision managing growth in a way that recognizes and protects the critical natural, cultural, and historic resources that have been integral in making Putnam the vibrant community it is today.

Guiding Principle #1

Support Putnam's Business Environment to Solidify the Town as a "Regional Downtown" and Economic Hub for Northeast Connecticut.

Guiding Principle #2

Celebrate and Support the Events, Organizations, and Infrastructure that Brings the Putnam Community Together.

Guiding Principle #3

Expand and Improve Putnam's Housing Stock to Provide Satisfactory Opportunities to Residents of All Ages and Income Levels.

Guiding Principle #4

Continue to Enhance Municipal Facilities and Services to Adapt to the Changing Environment and Needs of the Town's Residents and Businesses.

Guiding Principle #5

Protect and Enhance Putnam's Natural, Cultural, Agricultural, and Historic Resources with a Focus on Resilience and Sustainability.

Guiding Principle #1

Introduction



Cargill Falls
Source: visitnewengland.com

Putnam's downtown area lies along the Quinebaug River, once a major source of power for a thriving textile industry. Like its counterparts up and down the river, Putnam was once home to several mills producing a variety of goods sold in markets across the country and internationally. While many of those industries have moved and the mills have closed, in recent decades, Putnam has redefined itself as a major economic hub for the otherwise quiet northeast corner of Connecticut. Attractive buildings and a walkable downtown have created an ideal location for small shops, dining, and attractions. Tourists flock to Putnam for its antique shops, arts scene, and outdoor activities. The Air Line Trail, Quinebaug River, and ample trails and open spaces are major attractions. Beyond the downtown area, Putnam has grown its economic base to include several thriving industrial areas and a significant number of shopping centers, particularly along the Route 44 corridor, that Putnam residents and those in nearby towns use for everyday needs. The presence of keystone institutions such as Day Kimball Hospital and the Hale YMCA reinforces Putnam's status as a regional center and hub of economic, health care, and cultural activity.

Putnam's existing infrastructure, road network, and job centers make it an ideal location for additional economic growth. Underused historic mill buildings provide opportunities for infill development without encroaching upon more rural areas nearby. Residents and visitors alike benefit from all that Putnam has to offer, and in the years to come **Supporting Putnam's Business Environment to Solidify the Town as the "Regional Downtown" and Economic Hub for Northeast Connecticut** is essential.

Existing Conditions

As of 2024, there were a total of 6,189 jobs in Putnam *(Source: Advance CT 2026 Town Profile)*, with the largest employment sectors being health care and social assistance, manufacturing, retail trade, government, and accommodation and food services. Key employers in town include Day Kimball Healthcare; Foster Corporation; Staples; ERW, Inc; and Impact Plastics. The median household income (MHI) in Putnam is $70,561, lower than the state's MHI of $95,781 *(Source: 2026 Town Profile)*. Although Putnam's median household income is below the statewide median, it is higher than the average annual salary for employment in Windham county's top five sectors which stands at $58,855 *(Source: Putnam 2025 Equity Profile)*, indicating the town's strong economic opportunities. Although not a direct comparison, those figures underscore the importance of aligning economic

development, workforce training and housing policy so that people who work in and around Putnam can also afford to live in the community. The more prevalent level of educational attainment in town is high school, with 37% of Putnam's residents holding a high school diploma only. This coincides with the smaller percentages of Putnam residents with post-secondary degrees (*Source: Advance CT 2026 Town Profile*). *Minor discrepancies between employment and income statistics are due to differences between the US Decennial Census and the American Community Survey data.

Employment data collected by the CT Department of Labor also reveals much about the municipality's economy. Currently, there are 725 businesses registered in Putnam. In 2025, there were 97 new business registrations in town, one more than the previous year (*Source: Advance CT 2026 Town Profile*). Approximately 4,600 of Putnam residents are employed while about 200 residents are unemployed; this translates to an unemployment rate of approximately 4%. The self-employment rate was 10%, equal to the statewide self-employment rate (*Source: Advance CT 2026 Town Profile*). Of the population that commutes to work, there is an average of 24 minutes spent travelling to work, just under the statewide average commute time of 26 minutes. Although a majority (approximately 90%) of Putnam's workforce drives to work, less than 10% of the people in town report working from home while 2% walk or cycle to get to work. It is important to note that 9% of Putnam residents report having no access to a car, which is equal to the state at 9%. Statewide efforts to form a well-connected transportation network can lead to lower unemployment rates, as both car ownership and access to public transportation are linked to better employment outcomes.

Looking deeper into commuter patterns, it's evident that Putnam serves as a regional economic hub, with more people travelling into town each day for work as opposed to the number that leave town for work. Approximately 4,000 people enter Putnam each day while about 3,000 leave town for work. Approximately 16% of the working population (or 780 people) both live and work in Putnam (*Source: US Census OnTheMap*).

Other financial indicators such as the town's municipal revenue and expenditures can reveal much about Putnam's fiscal health. Based on data collected by the CT Office of Policy and Management, the town's total revenue in FY 22-23 was $31,648,232. The total property tax revenue was almost half of that at $16,069,759. Municipal expenditures totaled about $32,378,479 and the overall revenue to expenditure ratio was 98%. Annual debt service is 6% of total town expenditures. Commercial/ industrial property makes up 27% of the overall grand list, which helps to keep the mill rate relatively low compared to many other towns within the state (*Source: Advance CT 2026 Town Profile*).

Looking to the Future

Looking ahead, Putnam should continue to solidify its role as the region's "Downtown" by supporting the balanced growth of commercial and residential development. One way to achieve this is by working with property owners to develop previously undeveloped or "greenfield" sites in the downtown area through infill development.

Infill Development is building within an already developed area or district i.e. building "in not out" to avoid sprawl. This could mean reducing minimum lot sizes, constructing smaller buildings, and/or redeveloping under-utilized properties. This type of development leverages existing infrastructure such as transit, sewers/water, sidewalks or other walkable services and amenities.

Much of the town's existing built environment provides a cornerstone for future economic development. Putnam's existing WPCA water and sewer infrastructure serves as a basis for potential business expansion in town, and areas with proper utility access provide the essential foundations for business establishments to locate. Two areas with nearby connections to sewer and water that have potential for additional business development are heading eastward on Route 44 toward the Connecticut-Rhode Island border and on the southern portion of Park Road near downtown. Although preservation of the town's residential, more rural neighborhoods remains a key priority, other areas, such as Putnam's downtown core, are well-established destinations in the region and have long proven to be fit for development potential. Specifically, the area immediately surrounding the I-395 and Route 44 interchanges can support added development. With many restaurants, retail establishments, and community events located here, it lays an ideal framework for expanded business activity in this section of town. There are several large parcels toward the eastern end of town along Route 44 that hold broad potential to support future industrial development growth, although this area would likely need expanded water and sewer infrastructure to sustain full development capability. These areas provide easy access to I-395, and could be developed in such a way that they are adequately buffered from surrounding residential development, while allowing more industrial and commercial grand list growth to occur. Despite that general development potential, the Planning & Zoning Commission has routinely supported the preservation of open space, agricultural land, and residential uses.



Belding Mill

Putnam also stands to benefit from continued mill redevelopment efforts. Due to the town's history as a manufacturing hub, many historic mill buildings were constructed early in the town's industrial revolution and remain intact. A focus on supporting the redevelopment of these buildings will allow for the sustainable preservation of the town's historic elements, while introducing activation and development of these sites. Currently, the Belding Mill and the Monohansett Mill properties are up for sale or targeted for redevelopment, and both provide spectacular opportunities for mixed-use properties that could benefit the entire community. Private investment through a Community Investment Fund (CIF) or

establishing a "Bring Us Your Idea" initiative to encourage greater community involvement and input can support revitalization efforts on brownfield sites in town. The Monohansett, Belding, and Foundry mills are all suitable candidates for this type of economic development project. Other potential mill redevelopment ideas for this area includes a hotel (depending on current zoning regulations), a boutique retail complex, or a mixed-use property containing both. Moreover, a food hall or market can bring a new variety of dining options to town while providing a hub for residents to mingle and socialize, strengthening their sense of community while supporting local businesses.

10 Properties Targeted for Redevelopment

1. **76-80 Main Street**

Zone: PD (Putnam Downtown)



2. **88 Main Street**

Zone: PD (Putnam Downtown)



3. **107 Providence Street (Belding Mill)**

Zone: I (Industrial)



4. **55 Providence Street (Metal Mast)**

Zone: I (Industrial)



5. **2 Furnace Street**

Zone: I (Industrial)



6. **20 Mechanics Street**

Zone: I (Industrial)



7. 114- 120 Main Street

Zone: PD (Putnam Downtown)



8. 83 Canal Street (Monohanssett Mill)

Zone: PD (Putnam Downtown)



9. **70 May Street (P&W Building)**

Zone: GC (General Commercial)



10. **126 Church Street (Old Town Hall Building)**

Zone: NC (Neighborhood Commercial)



Currently Available Commercial Properties

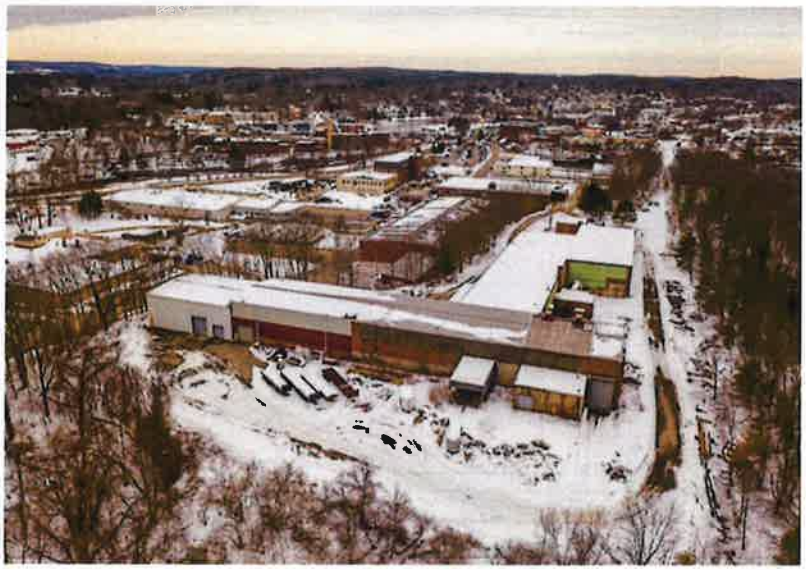
1. **109 Main Street**

Zone: PD (Putnam Downtown)



2. **30 Harris Street**

Zone: I (Industrial)



3. **35 Kennedy Drive**

Zone: M/OD (Medical Office Development)



4. **51 Ridge Road**

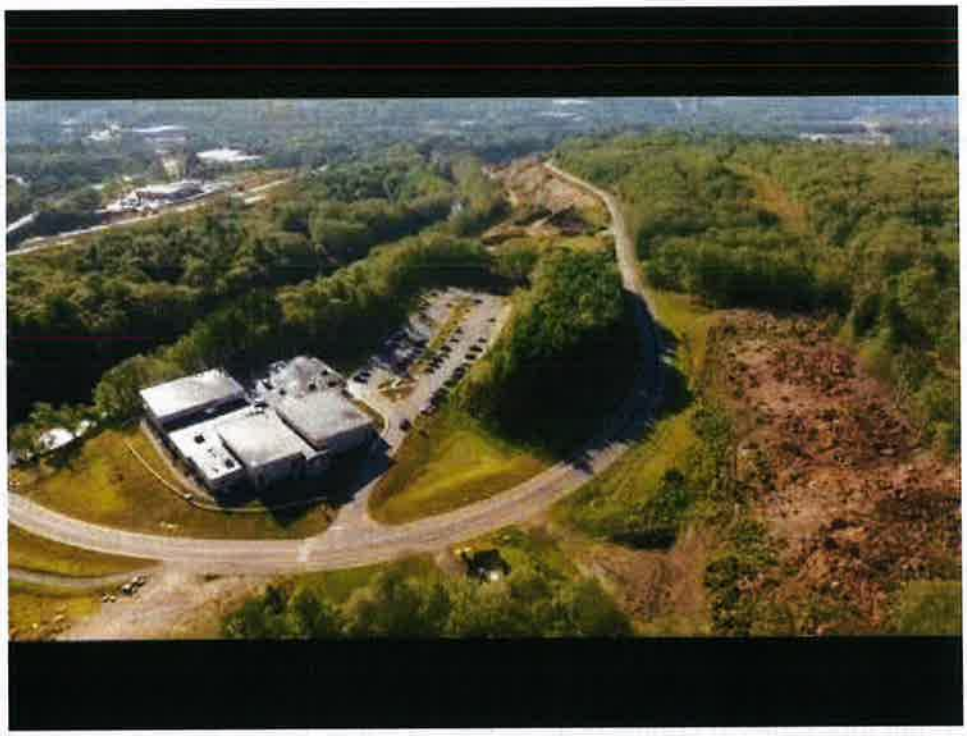
Zone: I (Industrial)



In addition to those redevelopment opportunities previously mentioned, Putnam has various other opportunities to spur increased economic development in town through updates to their zoning regulations. The recent consolidation of the town's Planning and Zoning Commissions allows for the streamlining of commercial development regulations and permitting processes, leading to decreased review times and making it easier for developers to offer proposals for these sites. Updates to zoning regulations can also stabilize and encourage the continued expansion of the Day-Kimball Hospital and the cluster of similar medical and commercial facilities nearby. Additionally, the Quinebaug Regional Tech Park District (the Park) is an approximately 230-acre area located in Putnam that is easily accessible by I-395 and was created to support light industrial, research and technology manufacturing uses. The area contains a regional 40,000 square foot YMCA facility and is also accessible by pedestrian and bicycle paths that connect to the town's existing River Trail. Working with owners of large properties in and adjacent to the Tech Park will help foster additional infill development, leveraging the property's ideal location. Currently, a majority of the Park is privately owned by Rawson Materials, a supplier of an array of sand and stone products for the concrete, block and asphalt industries in Connecticut, as well as Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New York.

Development of connecting businesses on School Street and Church Street contributes to the formation of a downtown core area and should also be explored. Lastly, the town should also continue to promote and advertise available commercial real estate on its website to increase visibility and showcase unique characteristics of the properties up for sale. Property advertising, paired with higher design, landscaping, and maintenance standards to increase the appeal of commercial properties in town, can also lead to increased development.

Successful economic development requires the coordination of multiple factors, and jobs should be located where housing can also be nearby, making it easier for residents to access employment opportunities. Aligning affordable housing developments with job creation fosters sustainable urban development and ensures that the town's investments are of maximum benefit to its residents. Additionally, workforce development initiatives for high technological or defensive original equipment manufacturers (OEM) go hand in hand with housing and job growth in this region. Ensuring that residents can access proper training that is relevant to local businesses provides important professional development while leveraging the town's existing infrastructure and history as a pioneer in the manufacturing industry as a major producer of essential electronics, communication systems, protective equipment, and similar products.



Quinebaug Regional Tech Park

Please contact: Mary Ann Chinatti, Economic and Community Development Director regarding the Quinebaug Regional Technology Park. Phone: 860- 963- 6800 ext. 200

As noted, approximately 4,000 people travel to Putnam for work each day, the majority of whom drive. Evaluating the community's parking needs and providing a variety of solutions for employees will have positive economic impacts and encourage more patrons to visit downtown Putnam. One potential solution could be to provide designated staff parking areas to free up short-term parking for customers visiting retail areas. This can be achieved by working with private businesses and property owners to allow shared parking. The installation of vehicle crossings over the railroad tracks that run between Union Square Parking area and South Main Street parking can also provide essential connections and expanded options between key parking areas. In the past, the town considered a "parking buildout" study which, if revisited, will help the town determine the amount and location of potential additional parking in town.

Overall, Putnam serves an important role as the regional hub in the area, building on its already attractive qualities is key in the next decade. From parking solutions to zoning amendments and the proper coordination of residential and business development, the town is well on its way to continuing in this role and expanding its robust business environment and can choose from this menu of well-thought-out business expansion methods.

GOALS and ACTIONS

Continue to Position Putnam as the Regional Economic Hub of Northeast Connecticut.

1. Support the stabilization and expansion of Day-Kimball and related medical offices.
2. Explore opportunities to push forward potential development and potentially expand the concept of a Regional Technology Park.
3. Promote Putnam as the "Regional Downtown".
4. Leverage I-395 interchanges for regional-scale retail activity.

Complete Sale and Development of Town Industrial Park Properties.

5. Work with existing tenants and business owners on potential expansions.
6. Investigate opportunities for new property acquisition for future business park phases.
7. Continue to promote available commercial real estate on the town's website.

Improve Regulatory Environment for Business Growth.

8. Work with the town's Economic Development Commission to promote a "Bring Us Your Idea" approach.
9. Elevate design, landscaping, and maintenance standards for commercial development.
10. Leverage existing WPCA infrastructure as a business development tool.
11. Coordinate housing availability with job generation.
12. Implement workforce development programs for high technological and defensive OEM businesses.
13. Forge partnerships with local Community Colleges for workforce training.
14. Work with property owners on redevelopment and infill development of "greenfield" sites.
15. Support mill redevelopment including the Belding Mill and Monohansett Mill.
16. Maximize the use of grant funding for economic development projects.
17. Consider seeking Community Investment Fund opportunities to support private

investment into the Monohansett and Belding Mills, along with the Foundry property.

18. Limit business expansion in rural, eastern parts of town while focusing on building up the downtown core.

Enhance Downtown Business Environment.

19. Work with employers to ensure staff have designated parking areas separate from short-term parking areas for patrons.

20. Continue working with business/ property owners to allow shared parking arrangements.

21. Consider the addition of a railroad crossing for vehicles to connect the Union Square parking area with parking on South Main Street.

22. Revisit the "parking buildout" study.

23. Encourage the private developer's idea for the addition of an indoor market or food hall at 88 Main Street (including 76 Main Street and 80 Main Street), along with a boutique hotel.

24. Explore ways to develop businesses and connections that support downtown on School Street and Church Street.

25. Continue progress on the town-owned parcel between Union Square and Front Street to encourage and support connections between downtown and School Street towards the Municipal Complex.

26. Maintain a balance between commercial and residential growth.

27. Consider increasing housing density within a walkable radius of the downtown core.

Guiding Principle #2

Introduction

Putnam's reputation as a "regional downtown" also distinguishes it as an important center of cultural activity in Connecticut's northeast region. The events and celebrations located in and highlighting Downtown Putnam showcase the town's unique identity, pride, cultural relevance, and robust economic activity. Looking ahead over the next ten years, Putnam should continue to Promote, **Celebrate and Support the Events, Organizations, and Infrastructure that Bring the Putnam Community Together.**

Community Facilities and Schools

The Town of Putnam provides a vast amount of community programming and events that contribute to the high quality of life its residents enjoy today. Various parks, walking trails, and recreation facilities provide ample opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. Additionally, plentiful dining options, bars, boutiques, theaters and art galleries, contribute to the town's healthy economy, as well as its status as a thriving industrial enterprise hub.



Putnam Municipal Complex
Source: Town of Putnam

The Town Hall, located in the Municipal Complex on School Street, was recently constructed and the building houses all town departments. Also located on the property is a multi-use field that serves as a venue for several of the many townwide events held throughout the year. The Putnam Public Library, also located within the municipal complex, provides a variety of children's, pre-teen, teen, and adult services year-round. The library provides free access to a variety of information and online

resources, and in-person experiences. Science experiments, bilingual story times, and musical programming are just a few of its offerings that keep children engaged in academia during summer months. Continuing to encourage reading, learning, and artistic and scientific exploration to children outside of the classroom is essential to the quality of life of Putnam's youth. Additionally, the Children's Free Summer Lunch Program provides free lunch at the town's library for families with children under the age of 18, meeting an important community need. The Aspinock Historical Society is also located in the Municipal Complex, rounding out the Town Hall offices and Library. The Aspinock Historical Society is an organization that serves as a research center and museum for the town, displaying items of local and regional historical significance (*Source: putnamaspinockhistsoc.com*). Additionally, they offer tours, re-enactments, and illustrated lectures on a range of local and national history, keeping in touch with the town's rich past. Finally, the Municipal Complex has several community rooms, which are dedicated to public boards and commissions and our senior lunch program, but as available, also serve non-profit organizations, community groups, and a variety of community needs.

The Putnam School District serves all pupils in town and is comprised of Putnam Elementary School, Putnam Middle School, and Putnam High School. For the 2023-2024 school year, the schools served 1,181 students ranging from Pre-Kindergarten to 12th grade (*Source: CT State Department of Education via Putnam Public Schools*). Putnam High School offers numerous advanced placement, honors, and early college enrollment courses in addition to its core programming and elective courses. A plethora of sports and extracurricular activities such as soccer, cheerleading, golf, and vocal and instrumental ensembles are also offered at the high school. Putnam Middle School boasts a marching band and has instrumental ensembles in addition to the variety of core subjects and electives along with various sports teams. Located within Putnam Elementary School is the Putnam Family Resource Center which provides a variety of family activities, before and after school programs and other support resources for children and adults in the community. Additionally, the Putnam School District serves 68 students through its special education support services (*Source: PPS FY 26 Budget Presentation*).

Putnam's public schools facilities are in relatively good condition, with major renovations completed in recent decades, and in recent years, sizable capital projects completed including roof and HVAC improvements. In recent years, the town has begun to include some funding in the capital improvements plan to dedicate to the school system, and plans to continue that support in upcoming years.

In terms of academic performance, compared to the state, less Putnam students met or exceeded expectations in math and English language arts. In the 2024-2025 school year, 30% of students in the Putnam School District met or exceeded expectations in math while 41% met or exceeded expectations in English language arts. In that same year, 46% of students statewide met or exceeded expectations in math while 50% of students statewide met or exceeded expectations in English language arts (*Source: Advance CT 2026 Town Profile*). Recently, the Board of Education approved a budget with a 4.66% increase for the

2025-2026 school year (*Source: PPS FY 26 Budget Presentation*). It is worth mentioning that for the 2025-2026 school year, the Board of Finance added funding to the Board of Education's request, which the Town Meeting supported for an actual 5.6% increase year over year. Looking ahead, Putnam Public Schools must continue to prioritize obtaining adequate educational resources for mathematical proficiency and literacy in English language arts to solidify a well-rounded educational experience for the town's school aged children.

In addition to Putnam's public schools, the school facilities along Church Street and Maple Street have operated under "Putnam Science Academy" for the last decade. Recently, the school has ceased operations. The Academy owns several significant properties in that area, including a school building, a historical building recently used as dormitory, a church building, along with several residential-type structures; the Town should continue to monitor the situation and support new ownership for development, either to restart educational services or to support other productive or high-use of the properties in this neighborhood.

The regional Hale YMCA Youth and Family Center is located on Technology Park Drive and also provides many community services to members of all ages such as swimming and water safety lessons, rental spaces, exercise classes, personal training and much more. The facility spans 40,000 square feet and connects to the town's River Trail via pedestrian and bicycle paths. In recent years, the YMCA has parking at or over full capacity, in part due to the strong use by seniors and retirees participating in the numerous sports and exercise groups offered.



The Hale YMCA
Source: ghymca.org

Much of Putnam's population is served by both public water and sewer service. Sanitary sewer treatment is provided by the Putnam Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) located on Kennedy Drive. Potable drinking water provided to the town is sourced from Roseland Lake / the Little River, the Park Street Well Field Facility and from the CT Water Company's Crystal Division located in Killingly (*Source: WPCA 2022 Annual Water Quality Report*). Efficient water and sewer services are key to public health and clean drinking water.

Putnam's WPCA provides an annual Water Quality Report that explains the town's water purification process and shares important information on the state of the town's water system. The Putnam Surface Water Treatment Plant plans an extensive renovation project and plans to have an open house in the future to display upgrades to the facility. Prior to this, in 2022, the construction of a new maintenance building for the Road Crew Division was completed at the Kennedy Drive Wastewater Treatment Facility. Additionally, the Putnam WPCA had two large solar array systems built at their Well Field and Wastewater Facilities (*Source: WPCA 2022 Annual Water Quality Report*). Overall, the Putnam WPCA should continue its successful commitment to providing quality drinking water and sanitary sewer services to residents and remaining in compliance with the Federal EPA standards. Current capacity of the wastewater treatment facility and the drinking water facilities provide the ability for continued growth. Looking ahead, the expansion of public sewer and water services, including extensions of the water distribution and the sewer collection systems should be explored to encourage additional activity and economic development in and beyond the downtown area.

Public Safety

Public safety is integral to the well-being and security of a community. Putnam has multiple agencies that serve either the entirety or designated portions of the town. Encompassing the entire town is the Emergency Management Department, with offices and an Emergency Operations Center at the Municipal Complex. Emergency Management is staffed with two stipend part-time positions. In recent years, emergency management has created a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), which is comprised of more than a dozen volunteers that provide services during town events. The Putnam-based CERT has been an example of volunteer services that several other communities are hoping to mimic.

The Putnam Special Services District is generally the downtown area, designated as District 1, and about two-thirds of the town's population lives in the District. The District coordinates public safety efforts for their service area by a board of five members that oversee the Special Service's District's Police and Fire Departments (*Source: Putnam Special Services District Authority*). The Putnam Police Department, located on Church Street, serves the District with fifteen sworn officers led by a Chief, Captain, and Records Specialist (*Source: CountyOffice.org*). Additional personnel include uniformed officers, detectives, a school resource officer, and administrative staff. The Police Department operates twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week, providing a variety of services including Emergency Notifications, Domestic Violence Services, Home Safety Checks, and more to residents.

The Putnam Fire Department Station 78, which is also on Church Street adjacent to the Police Department, has served the special services community for over twenty decades (*Source: CountyOffice.org*). Putnam Fire has between about fifteen to twenty-five volunteer staff members, led by a Fire Chief, that provide fire service to the Special Services District. Station 78 is also contracted to provide fire service to the West Putnam District.

For District 2, East Putnam, there are designated fire services provided by the East Putnam Fire Department Station 79, located on Providence Pike. East Putnam Fire has a total of twenty-five volunteer staff members that provide fire services to East Putnam, led by a Fire Chief. The East Putnam Fire District has a board including president.

For District 3, West Putnam, fire services are provided by the Putnam Fire Department (Special Services District). The West Putnam Fire District has a board including president.

Putnam EMS Ambulance Service, Inc. (Putnam EMS) is the entire town's designated ambulance service provider, and the town contracts with Putnam EMS for those services. Since 2022, Putnam EMS has twenty-four hour coverage, rather than historical on-call overnight shifts. This was possible with significant financial support from the town (and the town of Thompson which is also served by Putnam EMS).

Regarding police services, the Putnam Police Department only serves the Special Services District; East Putnam and West Putnam rely on the Connecticut State Police for their policing needs.

Looking ahead, Putnam should continue efforts to maintain and recruit emergency response staff, including providing applicable training and certification, as a shortage of first responders has been experienced statewide.

In addition, an on-and-off discussion is expanding the Putnam Police Department service area to include the East and West Putnam District areas. To many outside of town and even within town, there is often confusion that the Putnam Police Department does not serve the entire town, including heavily trafficked areas like Walmart and the Town's Industrial Park. To date, while there have not been official District votes, the East Putnam District Board has stated that they were unwilling to discuss the possibility for police coverage by the Putnam Police Department, likely due to the cost of these services and the subsequent impact to property taxes in that District. While there does not appear to be much likelihood for change in police coverage services, the Town should continue to listen to townspeople input and be ready to consider if momentum for change builds.

Parks and Open Space

The Putnam Recreation Commission, Commission on Aging and the Putnam Business Association provide an abundance of year-round activities and gatherings that serve as key opportunities for community involvement and engagement. These events create a culture of togetherness and familiarity within the community, and a focus on promoting these efforts is key over the next decade. It is worth a mention that despite Putnam's long status as a "distressed" community, all of the town's community events described below are presented free of charge to the public, a worthy point of community pride.

The Parks and Recreation Department, in partnership with the Business Association, posts an annual schedule of events with year-round offerings. In 2025, the town held its 14th annual Fire & Ice Festival, a Valentine's Day ice block competition with a variety of food vendors and photo opportunities including a 30-foot inflatable igloo, character meet and greets, stilt-walking entertainment, a heart-shaped bonfire, dancing performances and more.



Other events held in 2025 include an Independence Day firework show and concert, O'Putnam 5k road race, the Quiet Corner Pride Festival, a Fine Arts and Crafts Festival, Art Heist, a Juneteenth Celebration, and more.

For the remainder of the year, a plethora of festive events are planned including the state's largest annual Car Cruise, Trick-or-Treating, the annual Holiday Dazzle Light Parade and Gingerbread House Contest, food tasting events, the annual Great Pumpkin Festival, and many more.

Some of the town's larger events - including Fire & Ice, the Car Cruise and the Independence Day Fireworks - tend to draw large crowds approaching 20,000 attendees.



Putnam, CT Car Cruise 2024



17th Annual Holiday Light Dazzle Parade

The town's numerous athletic and recreation locations include the Murphy Park fields, the Putnam Middle School and Elementary School fields, the Owen Tarr Sports Fields, Rawson Soccer Field, Rotary Park, the Putnam Municipal Complex, the Putnam River Trail, and St. Marie Greenhalgh Football and Track fields (*Source: putnamct.us*).

Currently under contract for gravel removal activities, the Sabin Street Passive Recreation Field will become a public recreational space in upcoming years.



Owen Tarr Field (built in 2020)

Putnam's River Trail (which is a part of the larger East Coast Greenway) starts at the Arch Street footbridge and spans 1.8 miles between its northernmost point Providence Street and south to the YMCA; it has multiple points of access including a total of five parking areas on Kennedy Drive. In 2009, the trail was extended twice, and then again in 2016 it was extended southerly, toward the Hale YMCA Youth and Family Center (*Source: putnamct.us*). The town continues to work on a north-south connection of the Air Line State Park through Putnam to link the Pomfret and Thompson portions of this 50-mile long, 12-town trail system. In addition, the Town has been selected for DOT funding for a project to create a new trail extension from the Putnam River Trail south into Killingly.



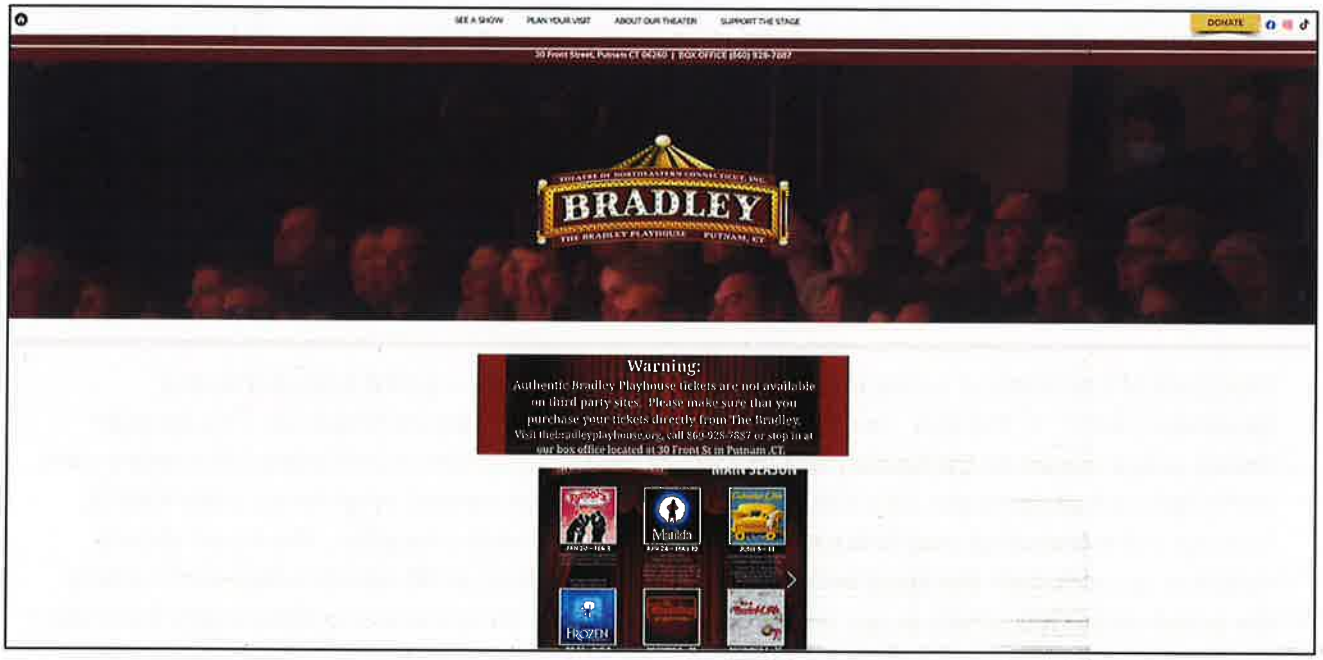
Putnam River Trail

Those who live in communities with plentiful parks and green spaces benefit from improved connections to nature and tend to have better overall health outcomes than those who do not participate in outdoor recreation activities. Over the next ten years, the town should focus on connecting its parks and pedestrian trails to the existing network of quality sidewalk and trail connections to Pomfret, Thompson, and Killingly. Connections to the Quinebaug River Corridor should be prioritized. Exploring improved connections through sidewalk extensions to Wal-Mart, the Day Kimball Hospital, the Municipal Complex, and Providence Street and the North End will be extremely beneficial to pedestrians in town.

Arts and Entertainment

Putnam is home to multiple popular entertainment venues in the region which contribute further to the town's distinctive character. The Bradley Playhouse is a community theater that has operated in town for over 100 years. WINY Radio, a popular radio station, is headquartered in Putnam.

The next ten years should include a focus on improved event planning by coordinating with transportation and transit services in town, ultimately improving the visitor experience of those who patronize Putnam. For example, the town can expand the use of shuttles for remote parking when large events are held in town. This, paired with continued parking improvements and the addition of wayfinding signage that properly delineates municipal and shared parking areas will improve parking and circulation for larger events and improve the overall visitor experience.



https://www.thebradleyplayhouse.org/



Photos from 2024 and 2025 Performances at The Bradley Playhouse

Veterans Monuments, Parks, and Services

Like many communities in northeast Connecticut, Putnam has a significant percentage of its population that serve or have served in the military. The Town offers a Veterans Service Provider, and in recent years, created a Veterans Advisory Commission. After renovation and community commitment, an underutilized town park property at the intersection of Church Street and Bridge Street was dedicated as Veteran Park. This park boasts plaques to each military service, and over 2,000 bricks were sold as a means of fundraising. The Veterans Advisory Commission also has acted to follow and recommend various state mandated and optional property tax exemption benefits that are available to qualified veterans.

The State of Connecticut is nearing completion of constructing a $30M National Guard Readiness Center in Putnam, near the Putnam/Pomfret town line on Route 44. This location choice is due in part to the known higher ratio of military members coming from the more rural northeast part of the state. This Center will house some permanent employees, with various training and events that may bring hundreds of personnel to the location. The Town should continue to work with the State and military establishment to build relationships and support the community that serves in our armed forces. There are local economic advantages from this Center, and a sense of pride that the locals serving have a state-of-the-art new training center in their community.

GOALS and ACTIONS

Improve the pedestrian environment in Downtown Putnam.

1. Improve sidewalk connections to Wal-Mart, Day Kimball Hospital, the Municipal Complex, and Providence Street/ North End.

2. Focus on trail connections such as Air Line Trail connections to Pomfret, Thompson, and Killingly; and trail connections to the Quinebaug River Corridor.

    a. Progress design for the Air Line Trail gap north of Route 171 along either Route 12 road-side or the railroad Right-of-Way to connect the Putnam River Trail to the Thompson Air Line Trailhead.

    b. Progress the Air Line Trail between the southern terminus of the Putnam River Trail and the East Coast Greenway at Upper Maple Street in Dayville/ Killingly.

    c. Continued coordination with the Town of Pomfret as they finalize design and construct Air Line Trail improvements between Pomfret and the Town of Putnam adjacent to the Quinebaug River. Plan for property acquisition possibilities at the Putnam section of the Air Line Trail, including the Hankin properties adjacent to the WPCA and Quinebaug River. Plan for continued maintenance of the Henry Breault pedestrian bridge that crosses the Quinebaug River after the Air Line Trail from Pomfret.

3. Continue to monitor and maintain vegetation along park and recreation areas, including removal of dead or diseased trees, management of invasive species, and vegetation control for public use and enjoyment.

4. As federal and state funding may allow or promote, waterways erosion management, including the Simonzi Park streambank, may become a priority.

5. Continue to use and expand outdoor dining within and towards the Downtown area.

Improve parking and circulation with a focus on larger events.

6. Incorporate transportation and transit services planning into larger events.

7. Continue to make improvements to municipal parking lots.

8. Add wayfinding signage to ensure municipal and shared parking areas are properly designated.

9. Expand the use of shuttles for remote parking for major events.

10. Consider the use of metered parking for areas within and around downtown.

Invest in a network of public spaces in Putnam.

11. Focus on connecting and expanding parks in Putnam. The newly acquired town land adjacent to Union Square parking and the railroad will be a high-quality public space joining downtown to School Street.

12. Consider the expansion of Simonzi Park and the realignment of Kennedy Drive to incorporate greenspace frontage to the Pallflex property.

13. Continue to maintain and connect the town's network of pocket parks.

Coordinate services provided by key Putnam institutions.

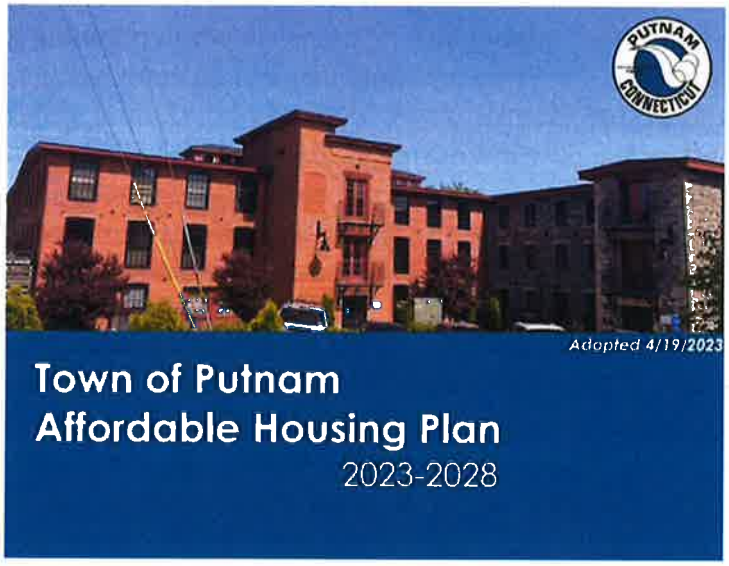
14. Continue to support the efforts of the Putnam Business Association, the Recreation Commission and local veterans' groups.

15. Explore potential expansions to public sewer and water services and encourage additional activity in and around the Downtown area.

16. Support the regional and culturally significant centers in town including the Bradley Playhouse, WINY Radio, Aspinock Historical Society, properties including the Gertrude Warner Boxcar Children Museum and Cady Copp Cottage, and the Day-Kimball Hospital.

Guiding Principle #3

Analyzing a community's housing stock can assist local leaders and community members with identifying areas for future investment, ensuring that housing needs continue to be met and remain in alignment with current land use development patterns and the town's changing demographics. Putnam's history as a prominent mill town led to the development of workforce housing near these facilities in the Downtown area. Over time, as this portion of town was repositioned as a tourist destination with shops and restaurants, existing housing developments were converted into multifamily housing. Today, many of these units are outdated and in need of restoration. East Putnam and other areas of town are low density, and more rural, but can still support additional, contextually appropriate housing. Over the next ten years, working to **Expand and Improve Putnam's Housing Stock to Provide Satisfactory Opportunities to Residents of All Ages and Income Levels** is a top priority, particularly for people who work in Putnam but live elsewhere, aging members of the population, and young families.



According to Advance CT's analysis of 2020-2024 American Community Survey data, there are a total of 4,403 housing units in Putnam (both occupied and vacant) and 4,166 households (*Source: Advance CT 2026 Town Profile*). 5% of the town's housing is vacant. This encompasses units that may be under renovation, being held for the settlement of an estate, or under foreclosure and other similar scenarios. It is important to note that a housing stock with a vacancy rate that is less than 5% is considered effectively fully occupied. Of the homes that are occupied, 52% are single-family and 47% of the housing stock is comprised of multi-family units, meaning they contain two or more units (*Source: 2023 Putnam Equity Profile*). Approximately 90% of the town's single-family homes are owner-occupied while renters occupy 81% of the multi-family homes in town (*Source: 2024 Housing Data Profile*).

The age of a town's housing stock can reveal much about the quality and availability of housing options, providing further insight into a community's affordability. In Putnam, 45% of the housing stock was built before 1950, and an additional 18% of units were built between the years of 1950 and 1970. 37% of units were constructed in 1970 and after. Compared to the northeastern region of Connecticut and the state as a whole, larger portions of Putnam's housing stock are older with 28% of the region's housing units built before 1950 and 19% built between the years of 1950 and 1970. The remaining 54% of the region's housing stock was built in 1970 and after. Statewide, 55% of the housing stock was built before 1970, while the remaining units (45%) were built in 1970 and after (*Source: 2024 Housing Data Profile*). Newer homes are often more energy-efficient and have less financial burden on homeowners while maintenance for older homes can be more expensive due to their older materials, less efficient windows and doors, and lack of sufficient insulation. Moreover, households that use electricity for energy typically spend less than homes that use fuel oil, coal and gas which are typically older homes. Older homes can also be subject to higher insurance and mortgage rates, increasing overall ownership costs.

The cost of housing and wages should also be assessed when planning for a town's long-term economic vitality. The median home value in Putnam is $269,200 and the median rent in town is $1,149 (*Source: 2026 Town Profile*). Overall, 35% of people in Putnam are burdened by the cost of housing (*Source: 2024 Housing Data Profile*). A household that is cost-burdened spends more than 30% of their income on housing, while households that are severely cost-burdened spend more than 50% of their income on housing. This includes utilities, maintenance, property insurance and other fees related to housing.

It is important to note that approximately 47% of households in Putnam are considered asset limited, income constrained and employed (ALICE) (*Source: United for ALICE 2022*). People living in ALICE households are able to meet all of their financial responsibilities but would struggle doing so in the wake of a financial emergency. Statewide, 1.4 million households, or 29% of the population, is considered ALICE.

In addition to ALICE households, low-income households benefit greatly from affordable housing as well. According to National Low Income Housing Coalition's (NLIHC) 2024 Out of Reach report, no full-time employee making either federal, state or local minimum wage can afford a decent two-bedroom rental unit at fair market rent. This data sheds light on how out of reach affordable housing is for low-income earners. According to the NLIHC, the hourly wage needed to afford a two-bedroom rental home without paying more than 30% of income on housing in Putnam is $26.17. This is lower than the state housing wage of $31.93. Over the past 20 years, the cost of housing (for both renters and homebuyers) has risen faster than incomes across most regions of the United States (*Source: Rent, House Prices, and Demographics, U.S. Department of the Treasury*).

Looking ahead, in addition to low-income and ALICE households, the town should aim to increase adequate housing options for those that come into Putnam for work but live elsewhere, as well as those who would like to age in place. While both groups stand to benefit from additional market rate and affordable units, working directly with employers in town and the Putnam Housing Authority can help identify the needs of each group and encourage housing development that is in alignment with other economic development, quality of life, and transportation community priorities, thus - ensuring the town's sustainable development. Updating the zoning regulations to allow 4-family as-of-right developments in most residential areas, and exploring "missing middle housing" in the Special Services District while keeping parking in mind can also contribute to increased housing affordability. Increasing access to affordable housing has numerous benefits, including opportunities to boost Putnam's local economy. With residents spending less of their income on housing, more funds can be allocated to the various services and businesses in town.

"Missing Middle Housing" refers to medium- density housing types that fall between single-family homes and mid-rise apartment buildings. Examples of missing middle housing include duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes. These types of housing meet an important need by increasing affordability and diversity of a housing stock.

In 2023, Putnam's Planning and Zoning Commission adopted an Affordable Housing Plan (AHP) to increase the affordability and diversity of housing options offered in town. The Town should continue to implement the recommendations listed in the plan. Additionally, the Town should continue to upgrade its existing housing stock by working with landlords and the Putnam Housing Authority to improve the maintenance of blighted multifamily properties, including trash management. The Town has seen some increase in property owners in the Special Services District taking advantage of a tax abatement program that allows the value of improvements to be tax-abated for between 3 and 10 years. Working with landlords to seek tax abatements will also be instrumental in this effort. Continuing to market mill redevelopment is also of utmost importance. Lastly, anticipating the community's future housing needs is key in the next decade. Working with employers to identify the best location and housing types for their employees will illustrate exactly what is needed to best serve the workforce and keep the town a vibrant economic hub. For example, those who work downtown and live at the Cargill Falls Mill thoroughly enjoy the area's walkability - with several tenants walking to their workplaces on Main Street. Building on this by expanding options for downtown workers can maintain this population while attracting more to the area. Additionally, encouraging "starter home" development projects will urge younger families to move to town, ensuring the provision of housing for residents at all stages of life.

GOALS and ACTIONS

Invest Resources in Upgrading Existing Housing Stock.

1. Focus on making improvements and continuing to make progress on maintenance of blighted multifamily properties.
2. Engage existing landlords and pursue both Blight Enforcement and Tax Abatements as improvement incentives.
3. Encourage the Putnam Housing Authority to investigate CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funding as it becomes available to assist with maintenance and improvements.

Broaden the Range of Housing Options Throughout Town.

4. Pursue both affordable housing options and market rate units.
5. Implement recommendations in the 2023-2028 Town of Putnam Affordable Housing Plan.
6. Explore allowing "missing middle" density in SDD area- with attention to parking.
7. Be more aggressive and progressive with mill redevelopment opportunities.

Anticipate and Plan for Future Housing Needs.

8. Work with employers to identify needed housing types and locations to accommodate employees of downtown businesses who live outside of Putnam.
9. Using the Cargill Falls Mill as a successful model of workforce housing, conduct outreach to property owners within the Industrial Heritage Overlay District to increase similar housing development.
10. Increase senior housing options to serve aging members of the community.
11. Encourage "starter home" development projects.

Guiding Principle #4

Introduction

Guiding Principle #2 celebrated Current Events, Organizations, and Infrastructure that Bring the Putnam Community Together. This Guiding Principle expounds further on the Town's crucial infrastructure needs and reinforces the importance of necessary community facilities and services that facilitate that community togetherness, especially in the face of a changing environment. Residents and visitors alike have come to know Putnam as a vibrant and evolving community with a strong sense of place. As the town continues to grow and diversify, the demand for adequate public facilities, utilities and community services become apparent. Modern and efficient civic infrastructure supports public well-being, drives economic development, improves accessibility, and enhances community resilience. Residents and businesses stand to benefit from accessible spaces for recreation, education and civic engagement while businesses require reliable infrastructure and municipal support. Over the next ten years, the town should **Continue to Enhance Municipal Facilities and Services to Adapt to the Changing Environment and Needs of the Town's Residents, Transportation and Businesses**.

Over the past ten years, significant investments have been made in the town's infrastructure, notably the Municipal Complex housing the Town Hall, Library, Historical Society and Community Rooms (Discussed in Guiding Principle #2) and major improvements/ new portions of the public high school. Leveraging these investments to support the addition of services and events to the abundance of those already offered will guarantee that the community's needs continue to be met well into the future. Other momentous improvements over the last decade include the completion of the regional Hale YMCA Youth and Family Center, the expansion and treatment improvements to the town's water system, the Putnam Saturday Farmers' Market (PSFM), the Putnam Lions Memorial Dog Park, and the expansion and replacement of sidewalks in Town. Moreover, the redevelopment of the Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar Children Museum displays the Town's continued commitment to engaging the youth while adding significant historical value and should continue to be promoted. Leveraging facilities and resources for youth populations in town, paired with efforts to increase the competitiveness of the Putnam School District with the intent to retain and attract families, is key. This ensures that the needs of residents of all ages are addressed (more information on the Putnam School District can be found in Guiding Principle #2.). These facilities are vital features of the community and contribute to the quality of everyday life in Putnam.



Comprehensive efforts to increase investments in sidewalk improvements, specifically connecting Wal-Mart and the Day-Kimball Complex with downtown, paired with continued improvements to roads, parking, and circulation management Downtown is key. Safer, more connected, walkable neighborhoods offer a variety of benefits including improved public health and reduced dependence on cars. Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, paired with aligned public investments, can also attract more patrons to Putnam's robust business environment and potentially further private investment from developers looking to capitalize on renewed, well-maintained, and attractive areas.

The Town has for the last decade had a significant capital improvements funding supported by the annual Ash Landfill lease payments, and in recent fiscal years, those payments have supported capital projects. This funding has supported road improvements, bridge repairs/replacements, sidewalk improvements, school facilities, and parks and recreation facilities. This Town ordinance regarding designated funding should continue to be supported so that Putnam's public infrastructure can continue to be maintained to meet applicable standards. In 2018, the Town voted this to expire June 2027; and we expect to request various approvals in upcoming months to extend that financial commitment for another 10 years.

Public Safety

As Putnam continues to grow and thrive, creating a secure and harmonious environment where people can live, work and play with an assured sense of safety and security is essential. In addition to the multiple agencies that serve the Town and provide needed emergency services, additional needs have been identified that are priority over the next ten years. There is an expressed need for a new Emergency Medical Services (EMS) facility in Town. The Town has a double-wide manufactured recently completed construction to house Putnam EMS personnel. Future improvements to the equipment and ambulance housing is expected. One possibility to address this need more inclusively is coordinating EMS facilities as part of a new Public Safety Complex along with a facility for the Putnam Special Services District (introduced in Guiding Principle #2). Exploring a siting study for

these facilities is worthwhile, perhaps away from Church Street. Moreover, a facility for the Town's Emergency Facility Operations Center and associated storage is a pertinent need. A joint Public Safety Complex that is municipally owned could be leased in-part to the Special Services District (SSD), generating revenue for the Town, and optimizing public safety coverage townwide. The Special Services District holds a "Community Policing" philosophy which emphasizes collaboration and partnerships between law enforcement and community members to proactively address public safety concerns. Generally, there is broad support for police presence and public safety in the Special Services District area of Putnam including support from the Putnam Businesses Association (PBA). The Town should continue to forge strong relationships with the SSD staff leadership and Town administration. In the past ten years, the SSD has added two police staff along with Town-supported school safety officers during otherwise turbulent budgetary times.

It is important to note a high priority community need is a new police facility. The current facility utilizes a former portable classroom from the 1980s; it is inadequate for current operations, displaying a prompt need. Furthermore, the Town's 2008 Needs Assessment, which is also in need of an update, indicated the facility's substantial inadequacy. This facility is also needed in order to maintain state accreditation as it pertains to public safety. For example, the SSD's current police facility does not have a juvenile cell block as required by the state. The Town should support the Putnam Special Services District's ability to bond funds that would facilitate this development. Additionally, the SSD is in need of a Capitol Improvement Plan and potentially Community Investment Funds (CIF) to assist in this, along with needed administrative support to seek grant funding and coordinate additional project implementation. Potential locations for this facility include the former Bank of America building, the former Metal Mast property or the Monohansett Mill site, leveraging the economic development value of sites located along the Quinebaug River.



Current Police Station on Church Street

The Town should continue to optimize law enforcement services in conjunction with the Special Services District (SSD). Unifying the Town's administration with the SSD's could result in much more efficient public safety efforts in Putnam. The Town should also consider the expansion of the SSD's services to include police and fire throughout the entire Town, perhaps on a "menu" system of services, ensuring high-quality services to both residents and businesses alike. Furthermore, the SSD is largely funded by residential properties, leaving many industrial and commercial properties, such as Wal-Mart and all companies in the Town's Industrial Park, outside of the SSD's jurisdiction. Both the incorporation of West Putnam and East Putnam into SSD jurisdiction poses a challenge. For further context, the East Putnam Fire District has a 1.40 mill rate for fiscal year 2026 and West Putnam District has a 1.0 mill rate. This can be compared to Special Services mill rate of 7.45. Generally, in order for the SSD to expand its services into East and West Putnam Districts, their mill rates would increase. (Note that the Town's mill rate for fiscal year 2026 is 17.90.) Approval is needed from the residents of East and West Putnam before any expansion of SSD services to that area can commence. Around 2022, Town and SSD representatives approached East Putnam Fire District to discuss, however the East Putnam Board stated that they were not interested in such conversation. Additional challenges that require attention within the next decade include the SSD's costly management of streetlights in town. The SSD does not own the streetlights and is burdened with a recurring significant utility electric bill. The Town collects taxes for all three districts, including the SSD, and charges an administrative fee, revealing an important need for administrative support for the SSD. Other inconsistencies include the Town and SSD's sharing of leasing fees from outdoor dining and other revenue sources, and the state's amalgamation of Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) funds for the Town and SSD. It is important to note that management of the SSD has greatly improved over the last ten years, specifically, consistent SSD leadership with support from elected officials has vastly improved the SSD's public outreach and involvement capabilities.

Regional Collaboration and Online Services

As is the case with almost all rural small communities, regional collaboration is key in enhancing community services. Technical advancements and the sharing of information forges essential linkages to nearby towns and assists in the streamlining of municipal administrative processes, ensuring the efficient use of Town resources. Continued regional collaboration through the Northeastern CT Council of Governments (NECCOG) is key over the next ten years. Particularly in Putnam, which faces potential flooding and increased frequency and intensity of storm events, regional collaboration can increase climate resilience, especially against environmental conditions experienced across municipal boundaries. Town Departments should continue to prioritize migrating to online permitting with an increased focus on e-government. Using digital and online technologies to exchange information, deliver services, and engage with residents, businesses and other stakeholders can improve efficiency, increase accessibility, cut costs, and even foster increased community engagement. Notably, the Town Building Department started an online permitting system in the last 10 years, and in recent

years, fully automated the application process by accepting online payments. The Town has and should continue to prioritize electronic efforts – which the public has come to generally expect and appreciate. Greater coordination of municipal services, such as increased coordination with the Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH), particularly with respect to public health and blight services, would be greatly beneficial to residents. Additionally, the consolidation of schools and other Town administration should be considered. For example, the shared transfer station in Pomfret and similar joint community facilities should be expanded.

As the earth's climate warms, all communities in the state face increased vulnerability to natural hazards that result from extreme weather events. Over the next decade, the Town should work with NECCOG to update the Town's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. The assessment of critical municipal infrastructure such as roads, bridges, culverts, and public utility lines is essential for updated flood and storm hazard assessments. Vulnerable and critical infrastructure in and near high hazard areas should be prioritized for updates and replacement, ensuring that the Town's landscape can support emergency response efforts during post-disaster recovery efforts following climate-related weather events.

Water and Wastewater Utilities

As detailed in previous sections, the Town's water pollution control authority is a public agency, with all property owned by the Town of Putnam. It is important to note that from approximately 2015 through 2018, the Town did contract private water and wastewater operational services via Suez. For various reasons, the contract was terminated and the Town has been once again publicly operating its WPCA services. The Town has a good track record for its water and sewer utilities, and future capacities and maintenance will need to be well maintained to keep the Town able and ready for expanded and new development. Regarding resiliency, the WPCA's wastewater treatment plant located on Kennedy Drive adjacent to the Quinebaug River is within the flood way. Recent improvements including new emergency generators installed in 2023 were required to be elevated above the normal ground level to protect from FEMA flood elevations. Much of the existing wastewater treatment plant remains below flood levels, and as improvements are made, those facilities will also require additional flood proofing. The WPCA drinking water system has less of a concern related to flooding, and has multiple source supplies creating excellent redundancy and flexibility. Maintaining and building upon this redundancy will continue to be a priority.

GOALS and ACTIONS

Build on Recent Investments to Continue to Provide High- Level of Services to Putnam Residents, Businesses, and Visitors.

1. Increase the competitiveness of the Town's school system to retain and attract families.
2. Leverage investment in Town Hall/ Municipal Complex to add services and keep events on track.
3. Seek to continue improvements to downtown roads, parking, and circulation management.
4. Expand investment in sidewalk improvements, specifically work towards connecting WalMart and the Day-Kimball complex with Downtown.

Upgrade Putnam's Public Safety Capabilities.

5. Jointly plan and develop a Public Safety Complex for police, fire, emergency management and emergency medical services (EMS) entities in Town.
    a. A combined facility could be municipally owned and in part lease space to the Putnam Special Service District.
6. Develop a new facility including Emergency Operation Center and associated storage.
7. Update the Town's 2008 Needs Assessment.
8. Maintain state accreditation in public safety and law enforcement.
    a. Develop a juvenile cell block.
9. Seek Community Investment Funds (CIF) to develop a Capital Improvement Plan for SSD.
    a. Seek administrative support to secure grant funding for SSD development projects.

Expand Public Safety Services Through Special Services District (SSD).

10. Explore unifying the Town and SSD administration.
11. Consider expanding SSD services (such as police and fire).
12. Ensure the provision of high-quality services to Putnam residents and businesses.
    a. Explore the addition of West Putnam and East Putnam to the SSD.

b. Complete an assessment, design, and programming of the expansion of the SSD services to include the Industrial Park and significant commercial areas including along Route 44 / I-395 interchange.

Explore Opportunities for Wider Regional and Online Services.

13. Continue regional collaboration with NECCOG.
14. Migrate to online permitting with a focus on e-government.
15. Strengthen connection to NDDH, particularly in the matters of public health and blight.
16. Consider shared services (such as schools and administration) with other communities in the region.
17. Build upon the shared emergency medical services provided with Thompson, and the emergency coverage for Fire Marshal services with surrounding communities.
18. Build upon the shared transfer station in Pomfret.

Plan for Effects of Climate Change on Town's Infrastructure.

19. Work with NEECOG to update the Town's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.
20. Assess the Town's critical infrastructure, including roads, bridges, wastewater treatment facilities, culverts and public utility lines.

Guiding Principle #5

Introduction

Putnam's plentiful natural resources contribute greatly to the state's natural environment and its many diverse ecosystems. Windham County contains over 600 farms and 50,763 acres of farmland (*Source: 2022 Census of Agriculture*). Of this, 383 acres of protected farmland are located in Putnam. The Town also contains more than 2,800 acres of open space and approximately 1,080 acres of forested lands.

In 1979, Putnam's Planning Commission adopted the following criteria to classify Open Space land in town for assessment purposes. The same criteria are adopted herein.

Classification of land as Open Space Land

All vacant land in the Town of Putnam, excluding parcels zoned and/or used for Industrial and Commercial purposes, and including bodies of water, being five acres or more in size, is declared to be critical to the environment of Putnam, and is hereby designated as eligible for open space classification pursuant to CGS 12-107e. It is the intent of the Putnam Planning and Zoning Commission to urge all residents owning such land to maintain the land as open space to enhance the quality of air and water and to protect the environment of Putnam.

Notwithstanding that a parcel now is built upon, it may nevertheless qualify for partial open space classification, provided:

a. It is a parcel of at least seven acres in size, at least five of which acres are free of building; and
b. That portion of the land built upon now or in the future shall be treated as a building lot and not as open space under this regulation; and
c. For open space classification, a building lot will be defined as two acres per dwelling unit.

In addition to these Open Space parcels, abundant wetlands, public drinking supply watersheds, forests and essential wildlife habitats maintain the town's scenic value while providing invaluable outdoor recreation opportunities to residents and visitors. Putnam also has a number of cultural and historic resources that are essential to the Town's character, and a focus on preserving these is key. Balancing efforts to **Protect and Enhance Putnam's Natural, Cultural and Historic Resources with a Focus on Resilience and Sustainability** is a top priority of the Town over the next ten years.

Farmland and Forest Preservation

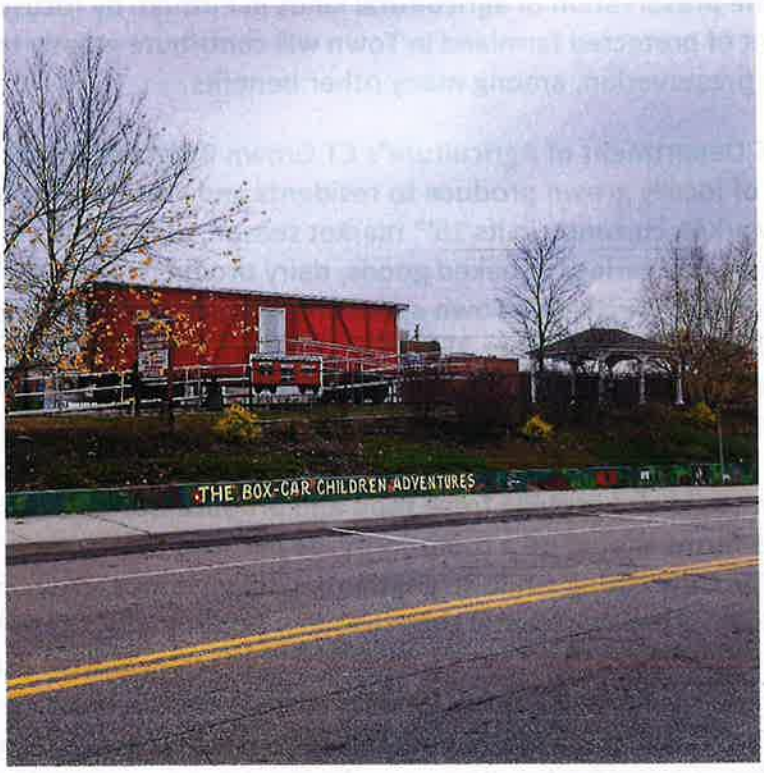
The protection and preservation of naturally formed landscapes, core forest blocks, wetlands and riparian buffers provide incomparable ecosystem benefits and serves as

some of the best defense against a warming climate. Therefore, farm and forest preservation remains a top priority of the Town over the next decade. Minimizing the installation of infrastructure through core blocks of forests, wetlands, and riparian buffers will maintain the Town's agricultural value while preserving its rural character. Furthermore, large swaths of farmland and forested areas improve air quality and store carbon, contributing naturally to climate change mitigation. Specifically, protecting farmland and forests in East and West Putnam is a high priority. '**Protected farmland**' is **agricultural land that is restricted from non-agricultural development**. The state offers multiple programs to assist landowners with protecting their agricultural land. The CT Department of Agriculture's (CTDOA) Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP), partners with landowners to acquire the development rights to agricultural properties and ensures they remain permanently protected from non-agricultural development. The Community Farms Preservation Program (CFPP) works to protect farms typically sized 30 acres or less of cropland that are active in food or fiber production, and are deemed of statewide or local importance. Participation in these programs is voluntary, and protected parcels remain privately owned while still contributing to the local tax base. Producers can also be encouraged to either avoid removal of prime farm soils in favor of large solar installations, or alternatively to pursue "agrovoltaic" approaches that allow both solar installations and grazing of animals. Ensuring the preservation of agricultural lands in Putnam by focused efforts to increase the amount of protected farmland in Town will contribute greatly to biodiversity and natural habitat preservation, among many other benefits.

Additionally, the CT Department of Agriculture's CT Grown Program ensures the essential provision of locally grown produce to residents and visitors of Putnam. The Putnam Farmer's Market, currently in its 15th market season, participates in the program and offers a wide variety of baked goods, dairy products, fresh fruits, vegetables and organic products. The Town-sponsored farmers' market is held every Saturday between June 7th and October 25th at the Putnam Riverview Marketplace Pavilion. A separate group, the Northeast Connecticut (NECT) Farmer's Market, also uses the same Pavilion for a market held on Thursdays between July and August. There is also interest in a privately-operated marketplace in downtown Putnam, possibly at 76-80 Main Street, that could also provide fresh food and produce options. Efforts to maintain the town's farms should be a top priority, as participation in programs like CT Grown encourages healthy eating while strengthening social bonds, reducing food insecurity and supporting environmental sustainability. Additionally, these farms preserve the town's rural character. Fairvue Farm's heifer facility in west Putnam holds 700 cattle and promotes sustainable living (*Source: https://fairvuefarms.com/about*). Assawaga Farm in East Putnam is a vibrant organic farm which grows a range of vegetables, herbs, flowers and fruits with an emphasis on Japanese varieties, providing fundamental biodiversity preservation of the town's ecosystem (*Source: www.assawagafarm.com*). In recent years, the farm also received state grant funding, including for an electric tractor purchase that may be the first of its type in the country.

Historic Preservation

The Aspinock Historical Society located at Suite 250 within the Town's recently renovated Town Hall complex, was founded in 1972 by a group of citizens. The organization serves as a research center and museum and displays photos and collectible memorabilia of local and regional historical significance. Additionally, the Aspinock Historical Society offers reenactments and lectures of historical significance and provides escorted tours. The center is open Tuesday – Thursday from 10 am to 2 pm and on Saturdays by appointment (*Source:* https://putnamaspinockhistsoc.com). The Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar Children Museum located off South Main Street is dedicated to the life and work of Gertrude Chandler Warner, the author of The Boxcar Children books and is a significant historic resource in the community (*Source:putnamaspinockhistsoc.com/box_car.html*). Ms. Warner was born in Putnam and spent over 30 years as a grade school teacher in Town. Efforts to protect and enhance these resources paired with other conservation projects such as the River Mills Heritage Trail will ensure the retention of significant town culture. The Mill Trail aims to protect and preserve the industrial heritage of Putnam by commemorating the town's link to the Industrial Revolution *(Source:* https://85main.com/pdf/heritage_and_local.pdf*)*.



Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar Children Museum
Source: blogspot.com

The Town has numerous historic buildings that could be considered for potential preservation such as Felshaw's Tavern circa 1742, Hidden Meadow Farm circa 1750, Simon Copp House circa 1818, Paine House circa 1820, and the Killingly Hill Meeting House and Training Grounds. It is important to note that for public access to historic properties such as Cady-Copp Cottage for example, specific requirements must be met in order to qualify for necessary Historic Property Insurance. Additionally, there has been recent interest in the Town supporting the re-creation of a passenger rail between Putnam and other parts of New England. Moreover, the Town eagerly awaits the highly anticipated 2028 MuralFest, a public art collaboration that will decorate Putnam with historic storytelling murals. Painted by The Walldogs, talented muralists and sign painters from across the world and sponsored by generous donors, the project will unite community members including local artists, students, teachers, municipal and non-profit organizations, town leaders and business owners to honor the Town's rich past through commemorative art displays at notable Town landmarks (*Source: Putnam Town Crier*).

The Mills themselves, including but not limited to the Cargill Falls Mill, Monohansett Mill, Morse Mill, Nightingale Mill, and Powhatan Mill in many ways have long symbolized and represented the history, culture, and economic heritage of Putnam. In the post-colonial age of industrialization, they took advantage of the Quinebaug River to establish Putnam as a water-mill driven manufacturing center in the textile industry. Much of the housing, employment, and other businesses in what is now the Special Services District of downtown Putnam were the product and legacy of this era. As manufacturing changed through the early and mid-20th century, these mills grew quieter and many fell into a state of neglect. A wide variety of businesses and uses cycled through these large complexes, not quite recapturing the economic force of their original uses. Putnam's continued centrality to northeast Connecticut and the late 20th century/early 21st century focus on mill and brownfield redevelopment began to open pathways toward redevelopment. More funding and guidance has become available to remediate historic pollution within or generated by these facilities, and the "good bones" of mill facilities have increased in popularity as multifamily, artist/makerspaces or multi-tenant office uses. The success of the Historic Cargill Falls Mill redevelopment efforts will hopefully encourage the Town and other property owners to retain these important structures and serve the Town for decades to come.

Key Cultural Resources

Central to the community are the various celebrations, concerts, and events held in Downtown Putnam and Rotary Park. The preservation of these key resources are of equal importance to the preservation efforts previously discussed in this chapter. As detailed in Guiding Principle #2, the Putnam Recreation Commission, Commission on Aging and the Putnam Business Association schedule a host of yearly parades, festivals and celebrations which are accessible to all and promote a sense of belonging for residents while inviting

tourism and economic growth. Firework shows, road races and holiday parades enliven the Town center and display the significance of preserving infrastructure that can adequately support community gatherings.

Additionally, the Quinebaug River Trail and Air Line Trail remain significant cultural and natural resources in Town. The Trails Committee's continued focus on efforts to form connections on the Air Line Trail and promote the Quinebaug River Trail will be key over the next ten years. Paired with historic preservation efforts similar to that of the Mill Trail, the town stands to secure important history with a balanced approach that includes sustainable conservation.

MS4 Management and Green Infrastructure

Proper water system management and access to clean water are fundamental aspects of every sustainable community. Over the next decade, a continued focus on municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) management in Putnam will ensure its water systems are fit to withstand more frequent and intense weather events associated with climate change. As a result of the warming climate and the correlated shift in weather patterns, Connecticut faces flooding, erosion and pollution of its waterways. To assist communities with building resilience to these conditions, CT DEEP established the MS4 program or the General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. The MS4 permit regulates stormwater discharges from storm sewer systems owned by municipalities. Additionally, municipalities that participate in the program are required to implement control measures to manage stormwater and prevent pollution of waterways through the establishment of a Stormwater Management Plan, and submit annual reports to CT DEEP (*Source: CT DEEP*). Continued involvement in this program and efforts to instill best MS4 management practices, including continued public education and outreach, is key to continuing proper stormwater management practices throughout Putnam. Connecticut DEEP is preparing to issue a new CT DEEP Stormwater MS4 Permit in 2026, which is expected to require continuing stormwater management improvements and completion of a Stormwater Management Plan. The Town should continue to prioritize resources for Town departments to meet the MS4 Permit requirements.

Looking ahead, pairing MS4 management strategies with the implementation of green infrastructure throughout Town will further strengthen the community's ability to withstand and recover from natural disasters. **Green infrastructure** defines **construction that is designed to filter and absorb water into the ground versus letting it run off into sewers and waterways** *(Source: NVCOG).* Implementing these designs into a community's built landscape including its roads, highways, parking lots, buildings, walkways and other construction leads to less flooding, improved water quality and contributes greatly to its natural aesthetics. The Town should seek to encourage low impact development practices and support the preservation of its natural landscape to the greatest extent feasible. Promoting green infrastructure and ensuring minimal disruption to the natural water cycle is an essential undertaking for the next ten years.

EVs and Energy Efficient Buildings

Currently, there are five publicly available EV charging stations in Putnam. Two are located on Providence Pike, one at the Town's Municipal Complex, one at the municipal parking lot on South Main St, and one at the municipal parking lot 165 Kennedy Dr. This exceeds the current demand, but also means the Town is prepared for the projected increase in demand. As the market for EVs rapidly increases due to advances in battery technology, expanded vehicle range, purchase incentives and developing EV regulation adoption (*Source: CT DEEP EV Roadmap for CT*), Putnam should continue to lead the charge in targeted efforts to maintain publicly available EV infrastructure across Town in a cost effective manner, and consider adding additional EV stations to meet community needs as necessary.

Retrofitting municipal buildings to be more energy efficient can greatly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Town, lower energy costs and further strengthen environmental resilience. Cutting energy costs in municipally owned buildings can be done through integrating renewable energy systems such as solar power or the instillation of energy efficient windows and improved insulation. Incentivizing zero-emission building design elements, specifically solar energy installations, is a practical yet impactful step to reducing operating costs for the Town and should continue to be a key initiative over the next decade. The Municipal Complex, built in 2021, encompasses many higher-than-standard efficiency designs. Other facilities, including smaller multi-use sites like the Church Street Garage and the offsite Recreation facilities, should be considered for energy efficiency along with structure improvements. Additionally, beyond just mill buildings, repurposing existing buildings remains a top priority for Putnam.

The Town successfully contracted with a solar company so that in 2020, a new solar facility constructed on the Town's closed landfill was constructed. The fixed-cost energy benefits from this project help support the Town's electricity needs at WPCA facilities, the Municipal Complex and the BOE facilities. In addition to this public benefit solar project, there are other private solar developments in town, including on Route 44 in East Putnam and one being constructed on River Road in West Putnam. The Town should continue to review projects, coordinate with the CT Siting Council as applicable, and monitor new legislation, including the recent solar payment-in-lieu of taxes legislation applicable to solar.

Sustainable CT

In addition to efforts previously mentioned, involvement and partnership with regional and statewide programs such as Sustainable CT, a voluntary certification program that recognizes thriving and resilient municipalities across the state, may help link Putnam to vital resources and information regarding sustainable development initiatives. Sustainable CT sometimes provides opportunities for grant funding to assist communities with implementing Sustainable CT actions. The Town has implemented many of the actions that would enable it to be certified as a Bronze Certification by Sustainable CT, but has chosen

not to formalize and finalize certification based on available resources and lack of potential for realized opportunities. Looking ahead, the town should continue to review the potential value of Certification, weighing opportunities and needed resources for possible participation in Sustainable CT and similar programs.

Over the next ten years many Connecticut communities, including Putnam, will continue to face the effects of the warming climate. To prepare for the impacts of increasingly unpredictable weather patterns and the associated risks of droughts and flooding, severe storms, heat waves and natural resource degradation, the Town should employ the combination of actions discussed within this chapter to protect residents and key community infrastructure, reduce its carbon footprint and enhance its natural resilience.

GOALS and ACTIONS

Focus on MS4 Management.

1. Increase green infrastructure and stormwater management; and
2. Work closely with the State of Connecticut and industry experts on understanding and delivering upon MS4 goals.
3. Consider electrifying vehicle infrastructure by investing in town fleet vehicles and corresponding with potential demand, adding EV charging stations.
4. Increase energy efficiency for municipal facilities.
5. Increase and incentivize Solar energy installations.
6. Continue to advocate and apply for state and utility programs that allow for incentives to the Town, this is especially important as Putnam is a distressed community.

Increase Farm and Forest Land Protection in East/ West Putnam.

7. Actively work with large farm and forest landowners on understanding options for tax abatement, conservation easements, and succession planning to prioritize that lands stay undeveloped; and
8. Foster partnerships with agricultural producers throughout Northeast Connecticut on land preservation, product branding, and economic development.

Consider Continued Participation in Sustainable CT Program.

9. Review Cost/Benefit of Sustainable CT program involvement.

Support Historic Preservation Efforts in Town Beyond Mills.

10. Continue strong efforts to preserve and redevelop historic mills;
11. Review Zoning Regulations concerning mill redevelopment;
12. Focus on State and Federal Grant opportunities, including Brownfield programs, Community Development Block Grants, and Community Investment Fund to support private-sector redevelopment of mills and other historic properties;
13. Work with Aspinock Historical Society on historic property documentation and assessment; and

14. Seek grants and tax abatement support for historic preservation efforts.

Designate Areas of Interest for Preservation from Development.

15. Provide support and consider re-establishing a Conservation Commission;
16. Utilize a parcel map to designate areas described under § 12-107b of CGS;
17. Provide specific criteria or requirements for eligibility of preservation; and
18. Identify high-impact areas for preservation including large tracts of acreage.

Specify Open Space Definition and Classification.

19. Ensure to avoid classifying non-buildable land such as "excess acreage" or "land beyond minimum zoning".

Review Town Regulations and Terminology for Open Space Classifications, with a Goal of Prioritizing for Focused Areas.

Conclusion

The 2026-2036 Plan of Conservation and Development (PoCD) for the Town of Putnam serves as a framework that guides the development, preservation, and land use goals over the next decade. This document reflects the collective vision shaped by the community's values - protecting Putnam's small-town charm, fostering responsible economic development and preserving the town's rich cultural resources and programming.

Putnam distinguishes itself as one of the most vibrant small towns in the state and acts as the regional downtown for the many small towns surrounding it. With its vibrant downtown, shopping destinations, and recreational opportunities, people from the surrounding region are drawn to Putnam for both their everyday needs and their entertainment activities. The themes outlined in this plan including supporting the Town's business environment, fostering a close-knit community, ensuring the provision of housing options for all age groups and income levels, continuing to enhance municipal facilities and services, and maintaining a focus on resilience and sustainability - all aim to continue this legacy and grow the Town's regional importance. Together, these principles plan for a balanced approach to addressing the needs of current residents with creating opportunities for future generations.

Central to this Plan is the principle of sustainability, both environmental and economic. The future of Putnam is dependent on the strategic and balanced preservation of its open spaces, natural resources, and infrastructure with the aligned and necessary housing development and fiscal growth. Planning and preparing for appropriate and balanced development by allowing for a variety of housing types and a diverse range of employment opportunities will position the Town for a strong future.

Implementation of this Plan will rely on the collaboration of the Town's various departments, boards and commissions as well as regional and state partners, and residents of Putnam. The Implementation Matrix, found at the end of this Plan, outlines specific actions and responsible entities to achieve the previously established goals. Regular review and progress tracking will be essential in ensuring the goals of this Plan are carried out. As Putnam evolves, this Plan should continue to inform decision-making while remaining flexible enough to respond to new challenges.

With the adoption of this Plan, Putnam has begun its journey into its next decade with the tools to grow and prosper.

Implementation Matrix

	Continue to Position Putnam as the Regional Economic Hub of Northeast Connecticut.	Responsible Party	Supporting Entities	Priority Level	Cost Est
1	Support the stabilization and expansion of Day-Kimball and related medical offices.	Board of Selectmen (BOS)	Economic & Community Development (ECD)	High	$
2	Explore opportunities to push forward potential development and potentially expand the concept of a Regional Technology Park.	Town Administrator (TA)	ECD, BOS	Moderate	$$
3	Promote Putnam as the "Regional Downtown".	ECD	Chamber of Commerce (CoC), Putnam Business Association (PBA)	Moderate	$$
4	Leverage I-395 interchanges for regional-scale retail activity.	ECD	PZC, BOS	Moderate	$$
	Complete Sale and Development of Town Industrial Park Properties.				
5	Work with existing tenants and business owners on potential expansions.	ECD	PZC, PBA, TA	Moderate	$
6	Investigate opportunities for new property acquisition for future business park phases.	Putnam Redevelopment Agency (PRA)	ECD, TA, BOS	Moderate	$
7	Continue to promote available commercial real estate on the town's website.	ECD	PRA	Ongoing	$
	Improve Regulatory Environment for Business Growth.				
8	Work with the town's Economic Development Commission to promote a "Bring Us Your Idea" approach.	ECD	Economic Development Commission (EDC)	Ongoing	$$
9	Elevate design, landscaping, and maintenance standards for commercial development.	PZC	ECD, TA, PBA	High	$
10	Leverage existing WPCA infrastructure as a business development tool.	ECD	TA, WPCA	Ongoing	$
11	Coordinate housing availability with job generation.	ECD	EDC, PZC, TA, PBA	Ongoing	$

12	Implement workforce development programs for high technological and defensive OEM businesses.	Eastern CT Workforce Development (ECWD)	EDC, PBA, ECD, CoC	High	$$
13	Forge partnerships with local Community Colleges for workforce training.	ECWD	PBA, ECD, CoC, CT State College System	Ongoing	$
14	Work with property owners on redevelopment and infill development of "greenfield" sites.	ECD	EDC, TA, PZC	High	$$
15	Support mill redevelopment including the Belding Mill and Monohansett Mill.	ECD	TA, PZC, PRA, CT-DECD	High	$$
16	Maximize the use of grant funding for economic development projects.	ECD	EDC, TA, PRA	High	$
17	Consider seeking Community Investment Fund opportunities to support private investment into the Monohansett and Belding Mills, along with the Foundry property.	ECD	TA, PRA, PBA, Property Owners	High	$
18	Limit business expansion in rural, eastern parts of town while focusing on building up the downtown core.	PZC	ECD, PBA, EDC	Ongoing	$
	Enhance Downtown Business Environment.				
19	Work with employers to ensure staff have designated parking areas separate from short-term parking areas for patrons.	PBA	EDC, Special Services District (SSD)	High	$
20	Continue working with business/ property owners to allow shared parking arrangements.	PBA	EDC, Special Services District (SSD)	Ongoing	$
21	Consider the addition of a railroad crossing for vehicles to connect the Union Square parking area with parking on South Main Street.	Public Works (PW)	TA, SSD, CT-DOT, Genessee & Wyoming Rail	Moderate	$$
22	Revisit the "parking buildout" study.	ECD	TA, PBA, EDC	Low	$$

23	Encourage the private developer's idea for the addition of an indoor market or food hall at 76 Main Street and 80 Main Street, along with a boutique hotel at 88 Main Street.	ECD	PBA, TA, BOS, EDC	High	$
24	Explore ways to develop businesses and connections that support downtown on School Street and Church Street.	ECD	PZC, TA, BOS, EDC, PBA	Low	$
25	Continue progress on the town-owned parcel between Union Square and Front Street to encourage and support connections between downtown and School Street towards the Municipal Complex.	TA	ECD, BOS, PRA, PZC	Moderate	$$
26	Maintain a balance between commercial and residential growth.	PZC	ECD, TA, BOS	Ongoing	$
27	Consider increasing housing density within a walkable radius of the downtown core.	PZC	EDC, ECD		$
	Improve the pedestrian environment in Downtown Putnam.				
1	Improve sidewalk connections to Wal-Mart, Day Kimball Hospital, the Municipal Complex, and Providence Street/ North End.	PW	ECD, TA, BOS	High	$$$
2	Focus on trail connections such as the Air Line Trail connections to Pomfret, Thompson, and Killingly; and trail connections to the Quinebaug River Corridor.	Parks & Recreation (PRC)	NECCOG, TA, ECD, PW	Moderate	$$$
	a. Progress design for the Air Line Trail gap north of Route 171 along either Route 12 road-side or the railroad Right-of-Way to connect the Putnam River Trail to the Thompson Air Line Trailhead.	NECCOG	PRC, TA, PW	Moderate	$$$
	b. Progress the Air Line Trail between the southern terminus of the Putnam River Trail and the East Coast Greenway at Upper Maple Street in Dayville/ Killingly.	NECCOG	PRC, TA, PW	Moderate	$$$
	c. Continued coordination with the Town of Pomfret as they finalize design and construct Air Line Trail improvements between Pomfret and the Town of Putnam adjacent to the Quinebaug River. Plan for property acquisition possibilities at the Putnam section of the Air Line Trail, including the Hankin properties adjacent to the WPCA and Quinebaug River. Plan for continued maintenance of the Henry Breault pedestrian bridge that crosses the Quinebaug River after the Air Line Trail from Pomfret.	NECCOG	PRC, TA, PW	Moderate	$$
3	Continue to monitor and maintain vegetation along park and recreation areas, including removal of dead or diseased trees, management of invasive species, vegetation control for public use and enjoyment.	PW	PRC, TA	Ongoing	$$

4	As federal and state funding may allow or promote, waterways erosion management, including the Simonzi Park streambank, may become a priority.	PW	PRC, TA	Low	$$
5	Continue to use and expand outdoor dining within and towards the Downtown area.	PZC	ECD, EDC, PBA	Ongoing	$
	Improve parking and circulation with a focus on larger events.				
6	Incorporate transportation and transit services planning into larger events	PRA	PBA, TA, NECCOG	Ongoing	$$$
7	Continue to make improvements to municipal parking lots.	SSD	PW, TA	Ongoing	$$$
8	Add wayfinding signage to ensure municipal and shared parking areas are properly designated.	SSD	PBA, ECD, TA, PW	High	$$
9	Expand the use of shuttles for remote parking for major events.	PRA	PBA, TA, NECCOG	Moderate	$$
10	Consider the use of metered parking for areas within and around downtown.	SSD	TA, EDC, PBA	High	$
	Invest in a network of public spaces in Putnam.				
11	Focus on connecting and expanding parks in Putnam. The newly acquired town land adjacent to Union Square parking and the railroad will be a high-quality public space joining downtown to School Street.	SSD	PW, TA, ECD, PBA	Moderate	$$$
12	Consider the expansion of Simonzi Park and the realignment of Kennedy Drive to incorporate greenspace frontage to the Pallflex property.	BOS	TA, PRC, PW, ECD, Property Owners	Low	$$$
13	Continue to maintain and connect the town's network of pocket parks.	PW	PRC, TA	Ongoing	$$
	Coordinate services provided by key Putnam institutions.				
14	Continue to support the efforts of the Putnam Business Association, the Recreation Commission and local veterans groups.	BOS	PBA, PRC, ECD, TA	Ongoing	$$
15	Explore potential expansions to public sewer and water services and encourage additional activity in and around the Downtown area.	WPCA	TA, EDC, ECD, PW, BOS	Moderate	$$
16	Support the regional and culturally significant centers in town including the Bradley Playhouse, WINY Radio, Aspinock Historical Society properties including the Gertrude Warner Boxcar Museum and Cady Cobb Cottage, and the Day-Kimball Hospital.	BOS	ECD, PBA, EDC	Ongoing	$$

	Invest Resources in Upgrading Existing Housing Stock				
1	Focus on making improvements and continuing to make progress on maintenance of blighted multifamily properties.	ECD	PRA, EDC, BOS, TA, New Housing Committee (HC)	High	$
2	Engage existing landlords and pursue both Blight Enforcement and Tax Abatements as improvement incentives.	ECD	PRA, EDC, BOS, TA, HC	High	$
3	Encourage the Putnam Housing Authority to investigate CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funding as it becomes available to assist with maintenance and improvements.	TA	Putnam Housing Authority (PHA), ECD, BOS, HC	Moderate	$
	Broaden the Range of Housing Options Throughout Town.				
4	Pursue both affordable housing options and market rate units.	HC	ECD, TA, EDC	Ongoing	$
5	Implement recommendations in the 2023-2028 Town of Putnam Affordable Housing Plan.	HC	ECD, TA, EDC, BOS, PZC	High	$$
6	Explore allowing "missing middle" density in SSD area- with attention to parking.	PZC	SSD	Moderate	$
7	Be more aggressive and progressive with mill redevelopment opportunities.	PRA	ECD, PZC, BOS	High	$
	Anticipate and Plan for Future Housing Needs.				
8	Work with employers to identify needed housing types and locations to accommodate employees of downtown businesses who live outside of Putnam.	EDC	PBA, ECD, HC, CoC	Ongoing	$
9	Using the Cargill Falls Mill as a successful model of workforce housing, conduct outreach to property owners within the Industrial Heritage Overlay District to increase similar housing development.	PRA	PZC, ECD, HC	Moderate	$
10	Increase senior housing options to serve aging members of the community.	PHA	HC, ECD	Moderate	$$$
11	Encourage "starter home" development projects.	HC	PZC, ECD	Ongoing	$
	Build on Recent Investments to Continue to Provide High-Level of Services to Putnam Residents, Businesses, and Visitors.				
1	Increase the competitiveness of the Town's school system to retain and attract families.	Board of Education (BoA)	BOS	Moderate	$$$

2	Leverage investment in Town Hall/ Municipal Complex to add services and keep events on track.	TA	BOS, PW, Public Library (PPL), PRC, PBA	Ongoing	$$
3	Seek to continue improvements to downtown roads, parking, and circulation management.	PW	TA, NECCOG, ECD	High	$$$
4	Expand investment in sidewalk improvements, specifically work towards connecting WalMart and the Day-Kimball complex with Downtown.	PW	TA, ECD, NECCOG	High	$$$
	Upgrade Putnam's Public Safety Capabilities.				
5	Jointly plan and develop a Public Safety Complex for police, fire, emergency management and emergency medical services (EMS) entities in Town.	BOS	TA, SSD, Public Safety	High	$$
	a. A combined facility could be municipally owned and in part lease space to the Putnam Special Service District.				
6	Develop a new facility including Emergency Operation Center and associated storage.	BOS	TA, Public Safety, SSD	High	$$$
7	Update the Town's 2008 Needs Assessment.	BOS	TA, Public Safety, SSD	High	$$
8	Maintain state accreditation in public safety and law enforcement.	SSD	TA, BOS	Ongoing	$$
	a. Develop a juvenile cell block.	SSD	TA, BOS	High	$$$
9	Seek Community Investment Funds (CIF) to develop a Capital Improvement Plan for SSD.	SSD	TA, ECD	High	$
	a. Seek administrative support to secure grant funding for SSD development projects.	SSD	TA, ECD, BOS	High	$
	Expand Public Safety Services Through Special Services District (SSD).				
10	Explore unifying the Town and SSD administration.	TA	SSD, BOS	High	$
11	Consider expanding SSD services (such as police and fire).	SSD	TA, BOS, ECD	High	$
12	Ensure the provision of high-quality services to Putnam residents and businesses.	SSD	TA, BOS, ECD	Ongoing	$$
	a. Explore the addition of West Putnam and East Putnam to the SSD.	SSD	TA, BOS, ECD	Moderate	$
	b. Complete an assessment, design, and programming of the expansion of the SSD services to include the Industrial Park and significant commercial areas including along Route 44 / I-395 interchange.	SSD	TA, BOS, ECD	Moderate	$$

	Explore Opportunities for Wider Regional and Online Services.				
13	Continue regional collaboration with NECCOG.	BOS	TA, ECD, PW, SSD, CoC	Ongoing	$
14	Migrate to online permitting with a focus on e-government.	TA	ECD, PZC, Land Use Office (LUO)	Moderate	$$
15	Strengthen connection to NDDH, particularly in the matters of public health and blight.	LUO	ECD, TA	Moderate	$
16	Consider shared services (such as schools and administration) with other communities in the region.	BOS	TA, BoE, NECCOG, NDDH, SSD	Ongoing	$
17	Build upon the shared emergency medical services provided with Thompson, and the emergency coverage for Fire Marshal services with surrounding communities.	TA	SSD, BOS, LUO, NECCOG	Moderate	$$
18	Build upon the shared transfer station in Pomfret.	TA	PW, BOS, NECCOG	Low	$
	Plan for Effects of Climate Change on Town's Infrastructure.				$
19	Work with NEECOG to update the town's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.	TA	ECD, NECCOG, PW, BOS	Moderate	$
20	Assess the town's critical infrastructure including roads, bridges, wastewater treatment facilities, culverts and public utility lines.	PW	TA, BOS, SSD	Moderate	$
	Focus on MS4 Management.				
1	Increase green infrastructure and stormwater management.	PW	TA, BOS, SSD, CT-DOT	Ongoing	$$$
2	Work closely with the State of Connecticut and industry experts on understanding and delivering upon MS4 goals.	PW	TA, BOS, SSD, CT-DOT, NECCOG	Moderate	$$
3	Consider Electrifying vehcile Infrastructure by Investing in Town Fleet Vehicles and Corresponding with Potential Demand, Adding EV Charging Stations.	TA	PW, BOS, SSD	Low	$
4	Increase Energy Efficiency for Municipal Facilities.	TA	PW, BOS, SSD	Moderate	$$
5	Increase and Incentivize Solar Energy Installations.	BOS	PW, TA, SSD	Low	$

6	Continue to advocate and apply for state and utility programs that allow for incentives to the Town; this is especially important as Putnam is a distressed community.	BOS	TA, ECD, State Elected Officials, PBA	Ongoing	$
	Increase Farm and Forest Land Protection in East/ West Putnam				
7	Actively work with large farm and forest landowners on understanding options for tax abatement, conservation easements, and succession planning to ensure that lands stay undeveloped.	New Agriculture & Conservation Committee (ACC)	ECD, PZC	Ongoing	$
8	Foster partnerships with agricultural producers throughout Northeast Connecticut on land preservation, product branding, and economic development.	ACC	ECD, NECCOG, EDC	Ongoing	$
	Consider Continued Participation in Sustainable CT Program.				
9	Review cost/benefit of Sustainable CT program involvement.	TA	ECD, BOS, ACC	Low	$
	Support Historic Preservation Efforts in Town Beyond Mills.				
10	Continue strong efforts to preserve and redevelop historic mill.	PRA	ECD, EDC, TA	Moderate	$$
11	Review Zoning Regulations concerning mill redevelopment.	PZC	ECD, PRA	Moderate	$
12	Focus on State and Federal grant opportunities, including Brownfield programs, Community Development Block Grants, and Community Investment Fund to support Fund to support private-sector redevelopment of mills and other historic properties.	ECD	PRA, TA	High	$
13	Work with Aspinock Historical Society on historic property documentation and assessment.	ECD	TA	Ongoing	$
14	Seek grants and tax abatement support for historic preservation efforts.	ECD	ACC	Ongoing	$
	Designate Areas of Interest for Preservation from Development.				
15	Consider re-establishing a Conservation Commission.	BOS	ACC, ECD	Moderate	$
16	Utilize a parcel map to designate areas described under § 12-107b of CGS.	ACC	ECD, TA, LUO	Moderate	$
17	Provide specific criteria or requirements for eligibility of preservation.	ACC	ECD, TA, LUO	Low	$
18	Identify high-impact areas for preservation including large tracts of acreage.	ACC	ECD, TA, LUO	Low	$

	Specify open space definition and classification				
19	Ensure to avoid classifying non-buildable land such as "excess acreage" or "land beyond minimum zoning".	LUO	Assessor, TA, PZC	Low	$
	Review Town Regulations and Terminology for Open Space Classifications, with a Goal of Prioritizing for Focused Areas.	PZC	LUO, ACC	Moderate	$