

## **CHAPTER 6.0: COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

### **6.1 HOUSING**

#### **Goals**

- Preserve the character of residential neighborhoods
- Encourage neighborhood revitalization
- Maintain affordable housing

#### **A. Introduction**

Stamford is composed of distinct residential neighborhoods that define the City's character and offer a diverse mix of housing choices. From single-family residences on large wooded lots in North Stamford, to mixed-income multifamily developments in the West Side, to apartments near transit in Glenbrook and Springdale, Stamford provides a wide array of housing types to meet the needs of its residents. Luxury housing development in the South End is attracting new young professionals who are looking for vibrant city living. Over the course of the past 10 years, Stamford's housing supply has increased as its population has expanded. Since 1998, approximately 6,400 new units have been completed or are in construction, primarily within the Downtown and South End and along the City's transit corridors.

As Stamford's housing stock has expanded, creating new housing opportunities for existing and new residents, addressing housing affordability has remained a top priority for the City. Since 2002, the City has successfully implemented an inclusionary zoning program that has created 324 new affordable housing units and generated \$3.6 million in "fee in lieu" funds to support the creation of additional affordable housing. It has also initiated a successful one-for-one replacement ordinance that mandates maintenance of the total number of public housing units in Stamford. A key partner in achieving the City's affordable housing goals has been Charter Oak Communities, Stamford's public housing authority. Since 2002, Charter Oak has revitalized several traditional public housing projects into thriving mixed-income communities through HUD's HOPE VI program and other public-private partnerships including:

- Southwood Square, 330 units, completed in 2005
- Fairgate, 90 units, completed in 2009
- Westwood, 95 units, completed in 2011
- Palmer Square, 76 units, completed in 2012

Between 2013 and 2015, Charter Oak plans to develop an additional 756 units.

Other important housing policies that the City has pursued since 2002 include implementing regulations to encourage residential conversion of office buildings and encouraging the development of a variety of housing types including new studio and one-bedroom units in the Downtown and South End. Conversion

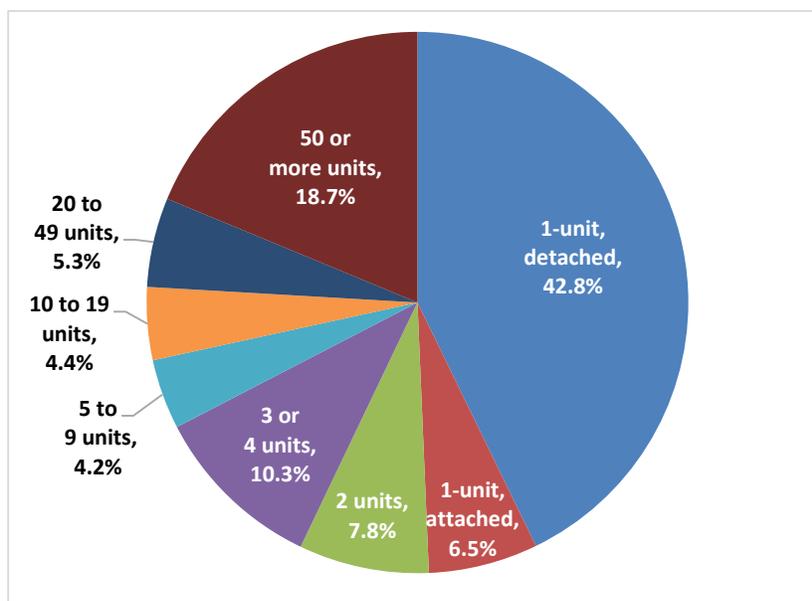
of vacant office space to residential use has been particularly successful in the Downtown, contributing to the growing vibrancy of the City’s core. Looking forward, the City continues to support varied types of residential development in both the South End and Downtown. As of 2014, the City has authorized the construction of some 3,000 residential units in connection with the Harbor Point development, with 1,046 units approved, built and/or under construction, and 1,140 units approved, built and/or under construction at Yale and Towne. There are also plans in the pipeline for 400 student housing units in connection with UCONN Stamford’s projected expansion Downtown.

## B. Housing Stock

### Housing Type

Stamford’s housing stock is almost evenly divided between single-family (49.3%) and multifamily dwelling units (50.7%) (See Chart 16).<sup>8</sup>

**Chart 16: Distribution of Housing Stock by Unit Type, 2012**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate, 2012

As shown in Table 18, over the past decade, Stamford has seen an increase in both single-family and multifamily dwelling units. The greatest growth in multifamily units has been in residences with 20-49

<sup>8</sup> The City’s housing stock profile is sourced from the American Community Survey, a product from the U.S. Census Bureau which provides annual estimates of the nation’s housing stock based on household interviews. In the State of Connecticut, 2012 estimates were produced from a sample of 1.6 percent of households. As a result, all estimates carry a margin of error.

units, which increased by 653 units between 2000 and 2012. There has been a move away from smaller multifamily developments of 3-4 units, which have declined by 1,457 units over the past decade.

**Table 18: Housing Stock by Type, 2000 to 2012**

| <b>Total Housing Units by Type</b> |                         |             |                         |             |                             |             |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
|                                    | <b>City of Stamford</b> |             | <b>Fairfield County</b> |             | <b>State of Connecticut</b> |             |
|                                    | <b>2000</b>             | <b>2012</b> | <b>2000</b>             | <b>2012</b> | <b>2000</b>                 | <b>2012</b> |
| <b>Total:</b>                      | 47,317                  | 49,413      | 339,466                 | 361,427     | 1,385,975                   | 1,488,002   |
| <b>Single-family, detached</b>     | 19,017                  | 21,145      | 200,277                 | 210,420     | 816,706                     | 877,807     |
| <b>Single-family, attached</b>     | 2,958                   | 3,229       | 20,769                  | 25,913      | 71,185                      | 82,402      |
| <b>2 units</b>                     | 3,849                   | 3,839       | 30,732                  | 34,490      | 119,585                     | 123,688     |
| <b>3 or 4 units</b>                | 4,758                   | 5,087       | 28,305                  | 28,822      | 127,032                     | 133,067     |
| <b>5 to 9 units</b>                | 3,523                   | 2,066       | 16,432                  | 15,150      | 76,836                      | 82,294      |
| <b>10 to 19 units</b>              | 2,350                   | 2,150       | 11,608                  | 11,989      | 52,697                      | 55,809      |
| <b>20 to 49 units</b>              | 2,227                   | 2,636       | 10,703                  | 12,330      | 45,403                      | 51,271      |
| <b>50 or more units</b>            | 8,608                   | 9,261       | 19,362                  | 21,018      | 64,337                      | 70,783      |
| <b>Mobile home</b>                 | 27                      | 0           | 1,206                   | 1,295       | 11,580                      | 10,796      |
| <b>Percent of Housing Units</b>    |                         |             |                         |             |                             |             |
|                                    | <b>City of Stamford</b> |             | <b>Fairfield County</b> |             | <b>State of Connecticut</b> |             |
|                                    | <b>2000</b>             | <b>2012</b> | <b>2000</b>             | <b>2012</b> | <b>2000</b>                 | <b>2012</b> |
| <b>Total:</b>                      | 100.0%                  | 100.0%      | 100.0%                  | 100.0%      | 100.0%                      | 100.0%      |
| <b>Single-family, detached</b>     | 40.2%                   | 42.8%       | 59.0%                   | 58.2%       | 58.9%                       | 59.0%       |
| <b>Single-family, attached</b>     | 6.3%                    | 6.5%        | 6.1%                    | 7.2%        | 5.1%                        | 5.5%        |
| <b>2 units</b>                     | 8.1%                    | 7.8%        | 9.1%                    | 9.5%        | 8.6%                        | 8.3%        |
| <b>3 or 4 units</b>                | 10.1%                   | 10.3%       | 8.3%                    | 8.0%        | 9.2%                        | 8.9%        |
| <b>5 to 9 units</b>                | 7.4%                    | 4.2%        | 4.8%                    | 4.2%        | 5.5%                        | 5.5%        |
| <b>10 to 19 units</b>              | 5.0%                    | 4.4%        | 3.4%                    | 3.3%        | 3.8%                        | 3.8%        |
| <b>20 to 49 units</b>              | 4.7%                    | 5.3%        | 3.2%                    | 3.4%        | 3.3%                        | 3.4%        |
| <b>50 or more units</b>            | 18.2%                   | 18.7%       | 5.7%                    | 5.8%        | 4.6%                        | 4.8%        |
| <b>Mobile home</b>                 | 0.1%                    | 0.0%        | 0.4%                    | 0.4%        | 0.8%                        | 0.7%        |

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 and 2012 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimate

Construction permit activity also provides a recent view of housing trends in terms of what developers are planning. Trends from 2000 to 2012 show a preference for multifamily housing, with nearly 70 percent of all permits granted over the 12-year period for multifamily units (see Table 19). Part of this is the growth of the South End with new rental housing that continued through and following the recent recession. Between 2003 and 2007, at the height of the nation’s “housing boom,” single-family permits grew, but then declined significantly from 2009 through the present, partly because of the 2008 financial crisis and the near paralysis of the mortgage market.

**Table 19: New Residential Construction in Stamford Based on Permits**

| Year         | Single-Family Units | Multifamily Units |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 2000         | 64                  | 507               |
| 2001         | 46                  | 348               |
| 2002         | 82                  | 137               |
| 2003         | 90                  | 6                 |
| 2004         | 126                 | 164               |
| 2005         | 206                 | 52                |
| 2006         | 185                 | 62                |
| 2007         | 262                 | 369               |
| 2008         | 39                  | 645               |
| 2009         | 7                   | 28                |
| 2010         | 16                  | 136               |
| 2011         | 30                  | 177               |
| 2012         | 28                  | 536               |
| 2013         | 44                  | 757               |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1,181</b>        | <b>3,924</b>      |

*Note: Because a portion of construction permits issued are intended to replace demolished buildings, not all building permits increase the size of the City's total housing stock.*

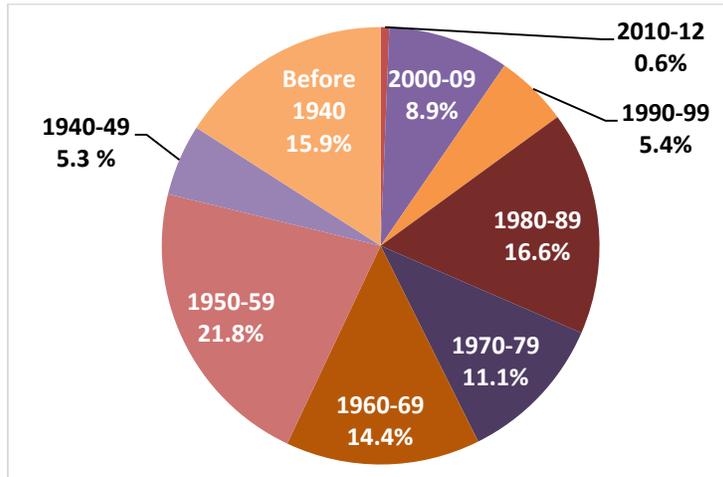
*Source: Stamford Department of Building Inspections & Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Annual Construction Report, 2000-2013*

### **Housing Age and Size**

As reported by the U.S. Census, more than half of Stamford's housing stock (55.4%) was constructed prior to World War II. This is slightly less than Fairfield County and Connecticut as a whole, with 60.7 percent and 58.7 percent of units constructed during this period, respectively (see Chart 17). As these homes age, there is an increasing need for rehabilitation of major systems, including replacement of plumbing, electrical systems, etc.

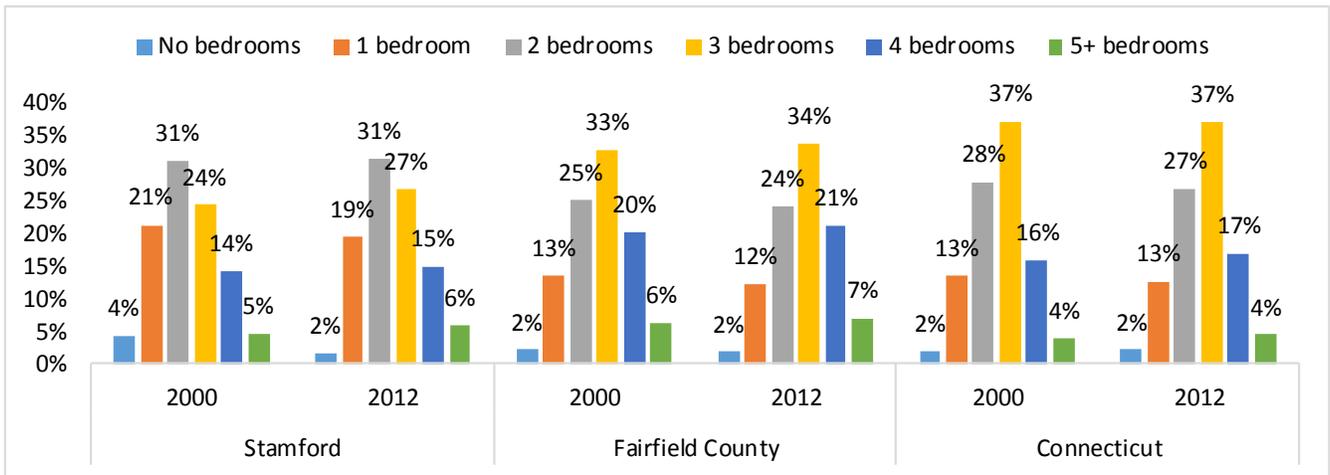
Half of Stamford's housing stock (50.7%) is composed of one- and two-bedroom units; homes with three or more bedrooms account for 47.6 percent of the City's housing stock (see Chart 18). As shown on Chart 19, renter-occupied homes in Stamford have fewer bedrooms than owner-occupied homes, indicating limited options for larger families seeking rental housing in the City.

**Chart 17: Stamford's Housing Stock by Year Structure Built, 2012**



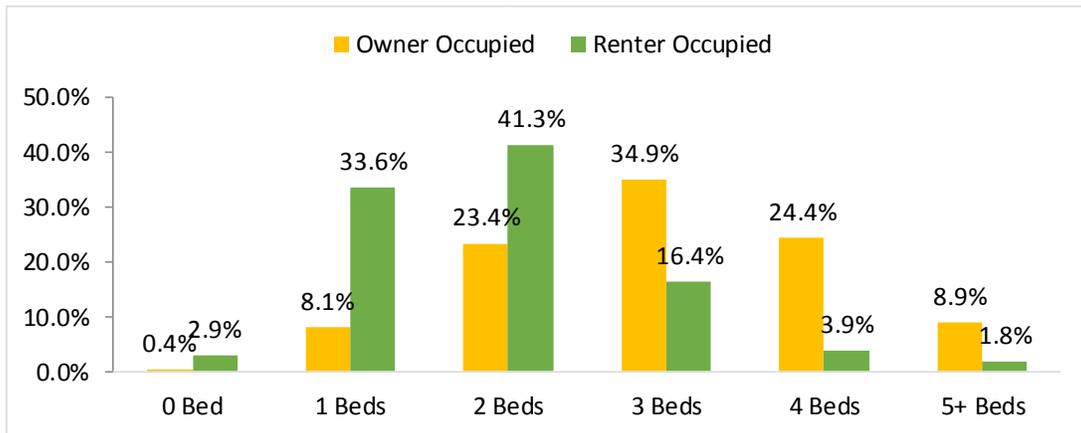
Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate, 2012

**Chart 18: Housing Stock by Number of Bedrooms, 2000 & 2012**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 and 2012 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimate

**Chart 19: Stamford Occupied Housing by Number of Bedrooms and Tenure, 2012**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate, 2012

**Vacancies**

Between 2000 and 2010, the number of housing units in Stamford increased by 6.9 percent. During this period, the percentage of vacant homeowner units increased from 0.6 percent to 2.4 percent. Vacant rental units remained mainly unchanged, increasing slightly from 3.1 to 3.8 percent. As shown in Table 20, the City has a much lower rental vacancy rate than Fairfield County and the state as a whole. Because any vacancy rate below 5 percent reflects tight market conditions, Stamford’s housing market is considered strong.

**Table 20: Vacancy Rates by Tenure, 2000 to 2012**

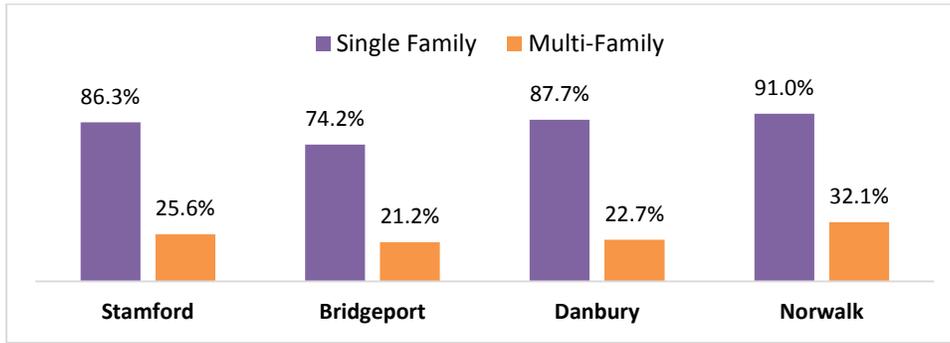
| Tenure    | City of Stamford |      | Fairfield County |      | State of Connecticut |      |
|-----------|------------------|------|------------------|------|----------------------|------|
|           | 2000             | 2012 | 2000             | 2012 | 2000                 | 2012 |
| Homeowner | 0.6%             | 2.4% | 0.9%             | 1.6% | 1.1%                 | 1.7% |
| Rental    | 3.1%             | 3.8% | 4.2%             | 7.9% | 5.9%                 | 7.6% |

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 1 and 2012 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimate

**Owner-Occupancy**

Approximately 86 percent of Stamford’s single-family homes are owner-occupied. This rate is similar to other cities in the region, as shown on Chart 20. Owner-occupancy of multifamily units is significantly lower (25.6%). Between 2000 and 2010, the number of owner-occupied units increased by 1,361 units; during this same period the number of renter-occupied units rose by 1,066 units (see Table 21, below).

**Chart 20: Owner-Occupancy Rates, 2012**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate, 2012

**Table 21: Occupied Housing Units by Tenure and Units in Structure, 2000 to 2012**

| Total Occupied Housing Units by Tenure and Year Structure Built |                  |        |                  |         |                      |           |
|---|------------------|--------|------------------|---------|----------------------|-----------|
|   | City of Stamford |        | Fairfield County |         | State of Connecticut |           |
|   | 2000             | 2012   | 2000             | 2012    | 2000                 | 2012      |
| <b>All Occupied Units</b>                                       | 45,399           | 46,599 | 324,232          | 334,255 | 1,301,670            | 1,357,812 |
| <b>Owner-Occupied</b>   |                  |        |                  |         |                      |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | 25,716           | 26,383 | 224,509          | 228,219 | 869,742              | 908,452   |
| 1, detached   | 17,169           | 18,426 | 179,238          | 181,096 | 720,951              | 751,514   |
| 1, attached   | 1,670            | 2,119  | 12,828           | 16,686  | 44,114               | 52,759    |
| 2   | 1,405            | 1,273  | 10,503           | 8,866   | 37,634               | 33,426    |
| 3 or 4  | 1,059            | 885    | 5,824            | 4,963   | 20,729               | 19,570    |
| 5 to 9  | 1,033            | 898    | 5,165            | 5,458   | 15,569               | 17,422    |
| 10 to 19  | 884              | 581    | 3,225            | 3,340   | 9,049                | 10,081    |
| 20 to 49  | 655              | 958    | 2,521            | 3,191   | 5,493                | 7,941     |
| 50 or more  | 1,814            | 1,243  | 4,148            | 3,772   | 7,297                | 8,115     |
| Mobile home   | 27               | -      | 1,011            | 847     | 8,745                | 7,589     |
| Other   | -                | -      | 46               | -       | 161                  | 35        |
| <b>Renter-Occupied</b>  |                  |        |                  |         |                      |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | 19,683           | 20,216 | 99,723           | 106,036 | 431,928              | 449,360   |
| 1, detached   | 1,484            | 2,143  | 14,469           | 17,287  | 60,176               | 67,532    |
| 1, attached   | 1,222            | 1,110  | 7,104            | 7,138   | 23,114               | 23,913    |
| 2   | 2,278            | 2,275  | 18,600           | 21,495  | 72,188               | 74,205    |
| 3 or 4  | 3,497            | 3,946  | 20,469           | 20,293  | 93,545               | 93,576    |
| 5 to 9  | 2,336            | 1,095  | 10,298           | 8,344   | 54,234               | 53,953    |
| 10 to 19  | 1,384            | 1,485  | 7,536            | 7,979   | 38,817               | 40,421    |
| 20 to 49  | 1,500            | 1,580  | 7,512            | 8,250   | 36,147               | 37,400    |
| 50 or more  | 5,982            | 6,582  | 13,532           | 15,087  | 51,721               | 56,457    |
| Mobile home   | -                | -      | 183              | 163     | 1,874                | 1,853     |
| Other   | -                | -      | 20               | -       | 112                  | 50        |

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File and 2012 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimate

### Housing Value and Sales Price

Between 2000 and 2011, the median value of owner-occupied housing (adjusted for inflation) in Stamford increased by 35 percent, from \$400,632 to \$540,700. Although a significant gain, housing prices have yet to recover to 2007 levels, when the adjusted-median value of owner-occupied housing in the City was \$692,038.

As shown in Table 22 to Table 25, the median sales price of single-family homes in Stamford peaked in 2006 at \$709,500 and then decreased with the economic recession to a low of \$535,000 in 2011. In the second quarter of 2013, the median sales price was reported at \$549,750. Comparatively, median single-family home sales prices in Fairfield County and Connecticut peaked in 2007 and reached lows in 2009 and 2012, respectively. Since 2005, the number of single-family home sales in Stamford dropped from 914 in 2005 to a low of 462 in 2008, recovering somewhat to 597 in 2012.

The condo and cooperative market has experienced similar volatility both in terms of value and in number of sales. Stamford's median condo/cooperative sales price increased from \$309,750 in 2005 to a peak of \$389,440 in 2007 and has since fallen to \$270,000 in 2013. Since a peak year in 2007, condo and cooperative sales prices have dropped throughout Stamford, the county and the state. In all areas, median sales prices have not significantly recovered from low points in 2011 and 2012. The regional sales volume among condominium units has fluctuated somewhat since a seven-year low in 2009, although annual sales in Stamford have increased modestly from 382 units to 444 units.

**Table 22: Median Sales Value of Single-Family Homes**

| Year    | Stamford  | Fairfield County | State of Connecticut |
|---------|-----------|------------------|----------------------|
| 2005    | \$700,000 | \$555,000        | \$301,000            |
| 2006    | \$709,500 | \$550,000        | \$305,000            |
| 2007    | \$692,500 | \$580,000        | \$310,000            |
| 2008    | \$643,250 | \$515,000        | \$280,000            |
| 2009    | \$575,000 | \$437,500        | \$250,000            |
| 2010    | \$588,000 | \$475,000        | \$260,000            |
| 2011    | \$535,000 | \$463,500        | \$250,000            |
| 2012    | \$546,000 | \$455,000        | \$247,500            |
| 2013 Q2 | \$549,750 | \$460,000        | \$249,000            |

*Source: Berkshire Hathaway Home Services New England Properties, 2006-2013*

**Table 23: Median Sales Value of Co-Op and Condo Units**

| Year    | Stamford  | Fairfield County | State of Connecticut |
|---------|-----------|------------------|----------------------|
| 2005    | \$309,750 | \$284,900        | \$183,000            |
| 2006    | \$352,830 | \$295,000        | \$195,000            |
| 2007    | \$389,440 | \$295,000        | \$199,000            |
| 2008    | \$345,000 | \$287,000        | \$190,000            |
| 2009    | \$299,500 | \$265,000        | \$175,000            |
| 2010    | \$302,250 | \$270,000        | \$178,000            |
| 2011    | \$268,000 | \$230,000        | \$165,500            |
| 2012    | \$285,000 | \$235,000        | \$160,000            |
| 2013 Q2 | \$270,000 | \$240,000        | \$162,900            |

Source: Berkshire Hathaway Home Services New England Properties, 2006-2013

**Table 24: Single-Family Home Sales**

| Year | Stamford | Fairfield County | State of Connecticut |
|------|----------|------------------|----------------------|
| 2005 | 914      | 9,928            | 37,270               |
| 2006 | 730      | 8,109            | 32,224               |
| 2007 | 648      | 7,605            | 29,483               |
| 2008 | 462      | 5,339            | 22,992               |
| 2009 | 484      | 5,153            | 23,213               |
| 2010 | 535      | 5,966            | 23,004               |
| 2011 | 527      | 5,610            | 21,366               |
| 2012 | 597      | 6,383            | 24,902               |

Source: Berkshire Hathaway Home Services New England Properties, 2005-2012

**Table 25: Co-Op and Condo Unit Sales**

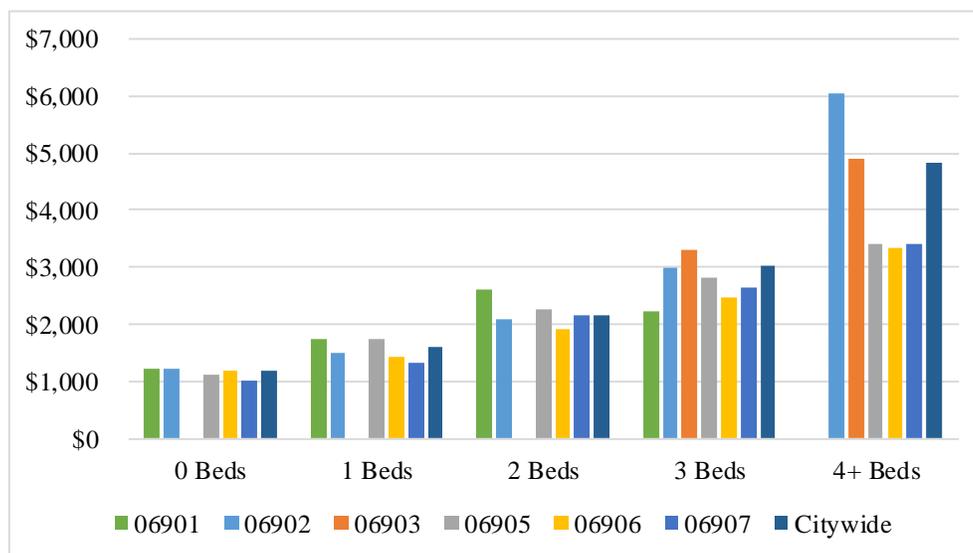
| Year | Stamford | Fairfield County | State of Connecticut |
|------|----------|------------------|----------------------|
| 2005 | 918      | 3,995            | 12,844               |
| 2006 | 932      | 3,620            | 11,911               |
| 2007 | 841      | 3,236            | 10,292               |
| 2008 | 520      | 2,067            | 6,985                |
| 2009 | 380      | 1,716            | 6,452                |
| 2010 | 404      | 1,833            | 6,138                |
| 2011 | 394      | 1,770            | 5,411                |
| 2012 | 444      | 1,893            | 5,973                |

Source: Berkshire Hathaway Home Services New England Properties, 2005-2012

## Rental Units

Location, amenities and number of bedrooms are just a few of the determining factors that contribute to the price of rent in Stamford. Of the 20,216 renter-occupied units in 2012, the majority (62%) were located in zip code 06902, followed by 06905 (9.7%), 06906 (6.8%), 06907 (4%) and 06903 (1.2%). Chart 21 illustrates average market rents in 2013 by zip code. Market rents varied greatly by neighborhood, but especially among units with 4+ bedrooms, which were most expensive in North Stamford (06903) where large single-family homes are predominant. In the downtown area (06901), three-bedroom units were lower on average than other zip codes, while two-bedroom units were least expensive in the Glenbrook-Belltown area (06906). Zip code 06907 was home to the lowest rents for studio and one-bedroom units.

**Chart 21: Average Rent by Number of Bedrooms in Stamford Zip Code Areas, 2013**



Source: Berkshire Hathaway Home Services New England Properties, 2013

Note: Includes all currently available listings as of 3/16/2014 and all completed listings within the past year. Not enough listings were available to calculate average rent for 0-2 bedroom units in zip code 06905 and 4+ bedroom units in zip code 06901.

Another useful comparative source of real estate data is the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, which estimates rent at all levels, including below-market rents (Table 26). In the ACS's 5-year estimates for 2008-2012, median gross rents, which include utility expenses, were lowest in the downtown 06901 zip code (\$1,314) and highest in the North Stamford 06903 zip code (\$2,000+). In all other neighborhoods, the median gross rent varied from \$1,400 to \$1,650. Among renter households that paid less than the citywide median gross rent, 31.2 percent lived in the 06902 zip code, 9.7 percent lived in the 6901 zip code and 4.6 percent lived in the 06905 zip code.

**Table 26: Gross Monthly Rent in Stamford Zip Code Areas, 2008-2012**

|                             | Stamford | Zip Code<br>06901 | Zip Code<br>06902 | Zip Code<br>06903 | Zip Code<br>06905 | Zip Code<br>06906 | Zip Code<br>06907 |
|-----------------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total occupied rental units | 19,796   | 3,236             | 12,321            | 180               | 1,877             | 1,368             | 814               |
| Less than \$500             | 1,354    | 589               | 652               | 0                 | 78                | 7                 | 28                |
| \$500 to \$749              | 911      | 131               | 650               | 0                 | 79                | 16                | 35                |
| \$750 to \$999              | 1,739    | 427               | 1,039             | 12                | 76                | 68                | 117               |
| \$1,000 to \$1,499          | 6,010    | 782               | 3,827             | 24                | 673               | 411               | 293               |
| \$1,500 or more             | 9,782    | 1,307             | 6,153             | 144               | 971               | 866               | 341               |
| Median (dollars)*           | \$1,492  | \$1,314           | \$1,499           | \$2,000+          | \$1,527           | \$1,657           | \$1,402           |

*Note: The Census Bureau does not estimate median gross rent beyond \$2,000.*

*Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimate*

Rental vacancy rates further explain price variations by neighborhood. In the downtown area, where median gross rents are lowest, the rental vacancy rate was 4.8 percent over the 2008-2012 period, indicating a healthy supply of vacant rental units, more than 90 percent of them with two bedrooms or less. Similarly, zip code 06907 had the second-highest share of rental units with two bedrooms or less (86.2%), and a higher vacancy rate than any other zip code (6.7%). Both there and in the 06906 zip code, vacancies exceeded 5 percent, indicating a slight oversupply of rental units. These trends suggest a possible mismatch between householder needs and the existing housing supply. As the number of renter householders with children expands throughout the City, demand for larger affordable homes will continue to grow.

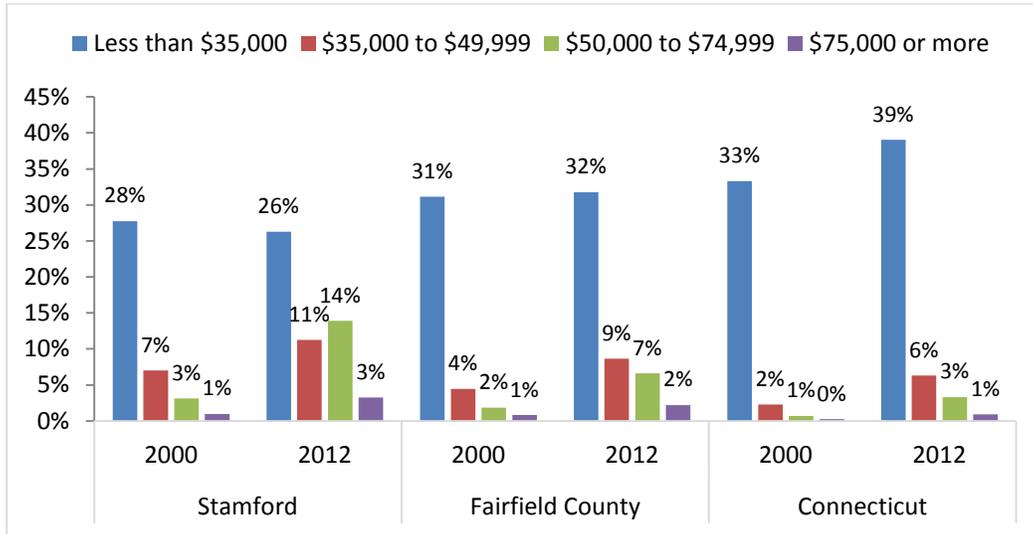
### **C. Affordability**

#### **Household Income Spent on Housing**

According to the Census Bureau’s 2009-2011 American Community Survey, almost half of Stamford’s residents (46.2%) spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs, including mortgage or rent payments and utility bills. This 30-percent threshold represents housing costs that are considered unaffordable, as defined by the federal government. Households spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing have less money to spend on other necessary purchases and less savings.

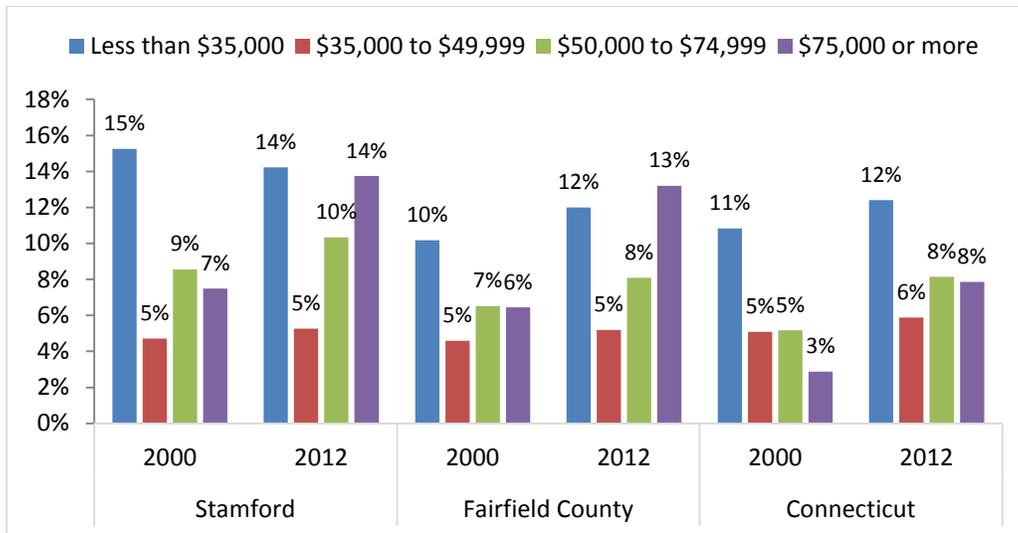
As shown in Chart 22 and Chart 23, low-income households, especially renters, are most likely to spend the largest share of their income on housing. Among Stamford’s renter households who earn less than \$50,000 annually, the number of households paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing has increased by 28.1 percent over the past decade. Comparatively, the number of homeowner households in Stamford earning less than \$50,000 and spending more than 30 percent of income on housing declined by 9.7 percent.

**Chart 22: Share of Renter Households Spending More Than 30% of Income on Housing by Annual Household Income, 2000 & 2012**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3, and 2009-2011 American Community Survey, 3-Year Estimate

**Chart 23: Share of Homeowners Spending More Than 30% of Income on Housing by Annual Household Income, 2000 & 2012**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3, and 2009-2011 American Community Survey, 3-Year Estimate

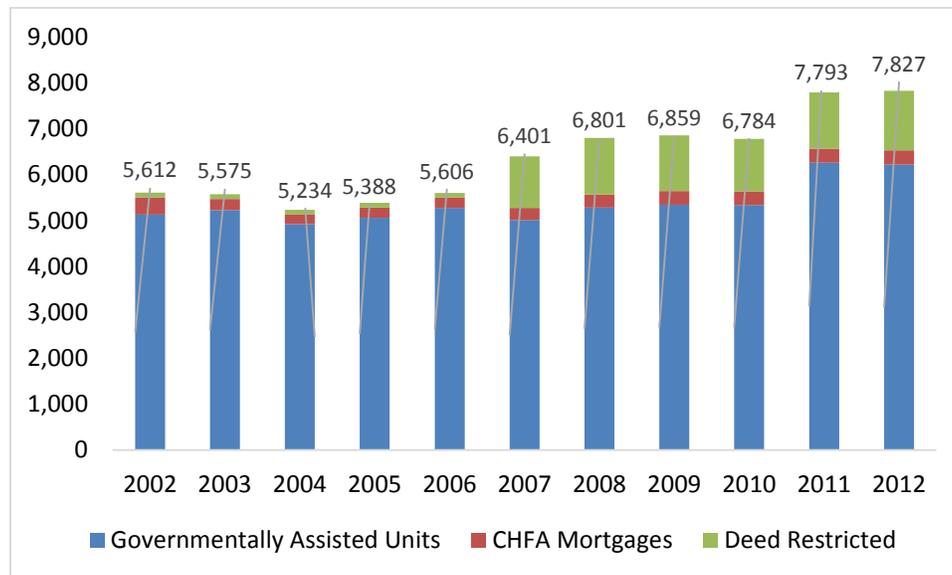
### Affordable Housing Units

The 2002 Master Plan established a goal of providing decent, affordable housing for all of the residents of Stamford, whatever their economic conditions. To address the continuing loss of affordable housing, coupled with the increasing affordability gap and growing housing demand, the City established a goal in its 2001 Affordable Housing Strategy of producing a minimum of 8,000 affordable housing units, in

addition to what was currently available at that time. The Master Plan recommended, as a key element of a coordinated housing strategy, that the City’s Zoning Regulations incorporate a mandatory inclusionary housing requirement, with appropriate incentives, consistent with established planning principles and contextual development. Since 2002, the City has added 8,456 housing units.

Chart 24 shows the trend in Stamford’s supply of affordable housing units by number of units and assistance type, according to the Connecticut Department of Housing’s Affordable Housing Appeals List from 2002 to 2012. Municipalities are considered exempt from C.G.S. §8-30g Affordable Housing Appeals statutes if at least 10 percent of their housing stock is determined to be affordable (assisted units). Over the period from 2002 to 2012, Stamford has increased its share of affordable units from 11.9 percent to 15.5 percent of total units. Over those years, 2,215 affordable units were added, including 1,093 governmentally assisted units and 1,191 deed-restricted units. The number of Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) mortgage units fell from a peak of 378 units in 2002 to 205 units in 2004, later rising to 309 units, a loss of 69 units over the entire 10-year period.

**Chart 24: Affordable Housing Units in Stamford by Assistance Type, 2002 to 2012**



Source: Connecticut Department of Housing, Affordable Housing Appeals Listing, 2002-2012

Affordable housing units in Stamford are owned and managed by Charter Oak Communities (COC, formerly the Stamford Housing Authority) as well as for-profit and not-for-profit owners. Of the total assisted and deed-restricted units, COC is responsible for 2,125 units and has 1,450 units supported by Section 8 vouchers. The majority of units managed by COC are located in the 06902 zip code (1,716 units) followed by the 06904 zip code (303 units). Over the last decade, COC has been active in developing nearly 600 units of mixed-income housing developments at Southwood Square, Fairgate, Westwood and Palmer Square. The COC has plans for two additional developments (113 total units) in the near future, both intended to replace previously demolished affordable housing at Vidal Court.

Using local capital funds and its Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the City regularly finances the purchase of land and provides financial assistance to prioritized housing projects submitted to the City by non-profit developers. Additionally, through the allocation of federally financed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program funds, affordable housing projects are subsidized by the City and bound to HUD-defined low and moderate income affordable rents based on area median income and family size. According to the Stamford Community Development Office, in fiscal year 2012-2013, the City provided \$508,700 in CDBG funding and \$589,700 in HOME funding, all of which subsidized renovations for affordable rental and homeowner properties throughout Stamford.

### Foreclosures

An issue closely related to housing affordability is foreclosures. Across the nation, the foreclosure crisis has had a substantial impact on families and neighborhoods and has been particularly acute in many low-income neighborhoods. As the country begins to recover from the housing crisis, foreclosure rates among mortgages in the Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk region remain high at 4.3 percent, well above the national rate of 2.5 percent.<sup>9</sup>

According to the Warren Group, a major New England real estate data provider, the average number of Stamford mortgage holders that received a notice of default (commonly known as a *lis pendens*) increased from 414 in 2008 to a peak of 730 in 2009, later falling to 532 in 2012. Over that four-year period, *lis pendens* notices increased by 28.5 percent in Stamford, compared with 51.2 percent in Fairfield County. Actual foreclosures, where deeds were transferred to the lender after a mortgage foreclosed, decreased from an annual peak of 127 in 2010 to just 16 in 2012. This indicates a recovery from the housing crisis in Stamford.

**Table 27: Annual Foreclosure Filings, 2008 to 2012**

| Year | Stamford    |                   | Fairfield County |                   | Connecticut |                   |
|------|-------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|
|      | Lis Pendens | Foreclosure Deeds | Lis Pendens      | Foreclosure Deeds | Lis Pendens | Foreclosure Deeds |
| 2008 | 414         | 4                 | 3,364            | 835               | 14,629      | 4,828             |
| 2009 | 730         | 72                | 6,883            | 1,263             | 24,544      | 5,090             |
| 2010 | 716         | 127               | 5,885            | 1,480             | 21,980      | 6,582             |
| 2011 | 394         | 56                | 3,679            | 544               | 12,563      | 2,723             |
| 2012 | 532         | 16                | 5,087            | 634               | 4,341       | 3,578             |

Source: Warren Group, Foreclosure Filings, 2008 to 2012

<sup>9</sup> As of July 2013, as reported by property analytics provider CoreLogic.

## **D. Housing Goals and Strategies**

When Stamford's last Master Plan was adopted in 2002, it called for new mixed-income housing development, preservation of the City's affordable housing stock, the promotion of a variety of housing types and new homeownership and rental housing. Over the past decade, Stamford has experienced significant growth in market-rate multifamily housing, particularly in the South End. At the same time, the City's public housing authority, Charter Oak Communities, has transformed many of Stamford's low-income housing projects into thriving mixed-income communities. The City continues to work to ensure that growth and development in Stamford benefits all residents with successful inclusionary zoning and one-for-one public housing replacement policies. As Stamford continues to attract new market-rate multifamily housing, it will be important for the City to maintain its existing housing policies and balance new residential development with preservation of existing neighborhoods.

The City has set forth the following housing goals. Policies and implementation strategies for achieving these goals are outlined below.

- Preserve the character of residential neighborhoods
- Encourage neighborhood revitalization
- Maintain affordable housing
- Streamline the permitting process

### **Policy Recommendations**

#### **Policy 6A: Maintain residential neighborhood character**

##### **Implementation Strategies**

**6A.1 Balance new development with preservation of existing residential communities.** As new development occurs, the City should encourage preservation of existing residential streets and the rehabilitation of structures. In order to maintain the viability of residential properties that do not have off-street parking, parking for existing residences on neighborhood streets should be preserved or replaced if on-street parking spaces are eliminated as a result of new development.

**6A.2 Create a neighborhood revitalization-focused fee-in-lieu program for meeting affordable housing requirements for new development.** Create a fee-in-lieu program for meeting affordable housing requirements, which would allow developers to contribute to a fund dedicated to revitalization of existing residential neighborhoods. This program should be used to provide funding for the rehabilitation of multiple residential properties in targeted areas in support of neighborhood revitalization, rather than for piecemeal building rehab.

**6A.3: Support neighborhood generated revitalization plans.** The City should support and encourage the implementation of neighborhood-generated plans to the extent that they are consistent with

the policies of this Master Plan, and should work in partnership with local communities to address neighborhood revitalization needs.

**6A.4: Expand the City's neighborhood beautification grant program.** The City should continue and expand its neighborhood beautification grant program, which provides small grants to property owners via neighborhood associations. These small grants play an important role in enhancing neighborhood image and character.

## **Policy 6B: Preserve existing and create new affordable housing**

### **Implementation Strategies**

**6B.1: Continue one-for-one replacement policy for public housing.** Continue the City's successful one-for-one replacement policy, which requires that any public housing unit that is to be vacated or demolished be replaced with a similar unit, offering a similar level of affordability in the same or adjoining neighborhood.

**6B.2: Maintain inventory of other publicly assisted affordable units.** There are a number of privately owned, publicly assisted housing units in Stamford built under various Federal and State housing programs. As their affordability control periods end, these apartments can be rented at market rates. In order to maintain its affordable housing stock, the City should conduct a detailed assessment of inventory at risk and should determine preservation priorities through an evaluation process that should include meetings with property owners.

**6B.3 Encourage rehabilitation and sound management of small multifamily buildings.** Small multifamily buildings generally located in or close to Downtown are a particularly important affordable housing resource.

**6B.4: Strengthen oversight and capacity within City government to promote neighborhood stabilization and enhance management of Stamford's Below Market Rate (BMR) program.** Continue to implement the City's successful inclusionary Below Market Rate program to maintain a diverse housing stock and provide continued housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households.

**6B.5: Enhance inclusionary zoning incentives.** Promote inclusionary zoning with incentives including tax increment financing in redevelopment areas, tax abatement, tax deferrals, capital subsidies and density bonuses linked to a proportionate number of affordable units.

## **Policy 6C: Encourage development of mixed-income housing**

### **Implementation Strategies**

**6C.1: Continue to revitalize public housing sites with mixed-income development that is integrated into the community.**

**6C.2: Promote development of a variety of housing types.** Create a mix of housing units that 1) includes housing suitable for families with children; 2) promotes housing prototypes that respect and complement the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood; 3) maximizes the use of cost-effective construction methods; and 4) promotes flexible housing models for the elderly in locations that are accessible to transit.

**6C.3: Encourage homeownership.** Homeownership is an important means by which households accumulate wealth and plays an important role in residents' investment in their neighborhood. The City should work with local, State and Federal partners to increase homeownership opportunities for low- to moderate-income families.

**6C.4: Encourage conversion of vacant office buildings to residential use.** Conversion of vacant office space to residential use should be encouraged as a means to address the City's high office vacancy rate and the demand for higher-density market-rate and affordable housing.

**6C.5: Encourage increased density along transit corridors and within Downtown through land-use regulations and developer incentives.** Encouraging increased density along transit corridors will expand the number of housing units in transit-served locations and ease transportation cost burdens on households.

**6C.6: Remediate brownfields for new mixed-income housing.** Some of Stamford's largest potential development sites are encumbered by environmental issues. The City should partner with private and not-for-profit entities to remediate and redevelop brownfield sites for mixed-income housing.

## **6.2 NEIGHBORHOODS**

### **A. Introduction**

Preserving and enhancing quality-of-life in Stamford's neighborhoods is an overarching theme of this Master Plan. The condition of neighborhood housing stock, commercial centers, community facilities, public services and parks and open spaces is central to the overall quality-of-life of City residents.

As highlighted in both the 1977 and 2002 Master Plans, preservation and enhancement of Stamford's low-density residential areas and revitalization of higher-density neighborhoods are key to maintaining community character and encouraging appropriately scaled growth. To that end, this Master Plan calls for a balanced approach to neighborhood preservation and revitalization that:

- Maintains existing single-family zoning and discourages expansion of additional commercial activity in low-density residential areas; and
- Concentrates future commercial, office and mixed-use development in identified growth areas, particularly in areas with strong transit access and existing infrastructure systems that can accommodate higher-density development.

This chapter provides an overview of each of Stamford's neighborhoods and policy recommendations specific to each neighborhood, based on issues raised by residents during the series of neighborhood workshops that were conducted as part of this Master Plan update.

### **B. Historic Preservation**

An important element in preserving and enhancing neighborhood character and quality-of-life is Stamford's ability to protect and preserve its historic fabric. As redevelopment occurs at an increasingly rapid pace, it is now more important than ever for Stamford to maintain the character of historic districts and structures and ensure that new development is in keeping with the City's historic character.

Stamford has a long history of active historic preservation advocacy dating back to its 1966-1967 Historic Resource Survey. As shown on Figure 20, below, the City has many properties listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places, as well as three National Register historic districts, the nationally designated Merritt Parkway and one locally designated district. Nationally designated districts include:

- Downtown Historic District(s) encompassing properties on Atlantic, Main, Bank, Bedford and Summer Streets between Broad and Main Streets, Summer Place and Bedford Street between Broad and Forest Streets
- South End Historic District generally bounded by the railroad tracks, Stamford Canal, Woodland Cemetery and Washington Boulevard.
- Revonah Manor Historic District generally bounded by Urban Street, East Avenue, Fifth Street and Bedford Street

The locally designated Long Ridge Village Historic District includes Old Long Ridge Road between the New York State line, Rock Rimmon Road and Long Ridge Road.

Nationally designated historic structures in Stamford include:

- Agudath Sholem Synagogue, 29 Grove Street
- Church of the Holy Name, Downtown Stamford
- Ecclesiastical Complexes, 305 Washington Boulevard and Pulaski Street
- Cove Island Houses, Cove Road and Weed Avenue
- Deacon John Davenport House, 129 Davenport Road
- Fort Stamford Site, Westover Road
- Graham House
- Benjamin Hait House, 92 Hoyclo Road
- Hoyt-Barnum House, 713 Bedford Street
- John Knap House, 984 Stillwater Road
- Linden Apartments, 10-12 Linden Place
- Main Street Bridge, Main Street and Rippowam River
- Marion Castle, 1 Rogers Road
- Octagon House, 120 Strawberry Hill Avenue
- Old Town Hall, Intersection of Atlantic, Bank & Main Streets
- Gustavus and Sarah Pike House, 164 Fairfield Avenue
- Rockrimmon Rockshelter
- St. Andrew's Protestant Episcopal Church
- Stamford Ecclesiastical Complexes, 1231 Washington Boulevard
- St. Benedict's Church, 1A and 1B St. Benedict's Circle
- St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church, 628 Main Street
- St. Luke's Chapel, 714 Pacific Street
- St. Mary's Church, 540 and 566 Elm Street
- Stamford Harbor Lighthouse, Stamford Harbor
- C.J. Starr Barn and Carriage House, 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue
- Suburban Club, 6 Suburban Avenue
- Turn-of-River Bridge, Old N. Stamford Road at Rippowam River
- Unitarian Universalist Church, 20 Forest Street
- U.S. Post Office, 421 Atlantic Street
- Zion Lutheran Church, 132 Glenbrook Road

State designated historic structures in Stamford include:

- Cold Spring Bridge, Cold Spring and Stillwater Roads
- Dr. John Bull House, 441 Scofieldtown Road, Stamford
- Henry Miller House (Villa Maria Retreat House), 159 Skymeadow Road
- Michael A. Boyle Stadium, 55 Strawberry Hill Avenue (rear)
- Roxbury School, 3 Roxbury Road (10/22/90)
- Rock Spring Manor, 3 Hackett's Circle West
- Stamford Golf Authority 1349 Newfield Avenue

Additional historic structures noted in Stamford's 1966-1967 Historic Resources Survey include:

- Baish, William, House, Stillwater Road
- Block House, Farms Road
- Brush, John House, East Middle Patent Road
- Fort Stamford, Westover Road
- Hoyt-Barnum House, 13 Bedford Street
- Lockwood House, (William Davenport House), Davenport Ridge Road
- Old Town Hall, Atlantic Avenue
- Saint John's Episcopal Church
- Ukraine Catholic Diocese of Stamford, 161 Glenbrook Road
- Residence, 1839 Newfield Avenue
- Residence, 507 Westover Road

While National and State Register status provides formal recognition of a property's historical and/or architectural significance and raises the stature of historic properties and districts, it does not confer direct protection for historic structures. Stamford's Zoning Code seeks to encourage preservation of historic buildings by granting special exception uses for historic buildings (see Section 7.3), which authorize use and density incentives where zoning regulations serve to discourage the preservation of significant historic buildings. However, this tool does not provide direct protection to threatened historic properties.

In seeking more proactive ways in which to preserve Stamford's historic character, the City recently created a Historic Preservation Advisory Commission. This Commission, enacted by ordinance in May 2013, is responsible for advising the City's land-use boards and commissions on historic preservation issues and is tasked with the following duties:

- Conduct a continuing survey of cultural resources within Stamford, according to the guidelines established by the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office;
- Review and forward recommendations for designation of local historic districts and properties to City and State agencies;
- Seek public input and approval of recommendations for local historic districts and historic properties;
- Advise the Planning Board, Zoning Board and Building Department regarding the protection of local cultural resources; and
- Encourage public participation in nominating properties to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Working with this Commission, the City is well positioned to consider enacting new policies that will help Stamford more effectively preserve its historic structures and districts through a combination of incentives and protections, as outlined below.

**27**  
Long Ridge Village  
Historic District

- 1 Agudath Sholem Synagogue
- 2 Church of the Holy Name
- 3 Cove Island Houses
- 4 Davenport, Deacon John House
- 5 Fort Stamford Site
- 6 Graham House (address restricted)
- 7 Hait, Benjamin, House
- 8 Hoyt-Barnum House
- 9 Knap, John, House
- 10 Linden Apartments
- 11 Marion Castle
- 12 Octagon House
- 13 Old Town Hall
- 14 Pike Gustavus and Sarah T. House
- 15 Rockrimmon Rockshelter (address restricted)
- 16 St. Andrew's Protestant Episcopal Church
- 17 Stamford Ecclesiastical Complexes
- 18 St. Benedict's Church
- 19 St. Johns Protestant Episcopal Church
- 20 St. Luke's Chapel
- 21 St. Mary's Church
- 22 Stamford Harbor Lighthouse
- 23 Starr, C. J. Barn and Carriage House
- 24 Suburban Club
- 25 U. S. Post Office
- 26 Zion Lutheran Church

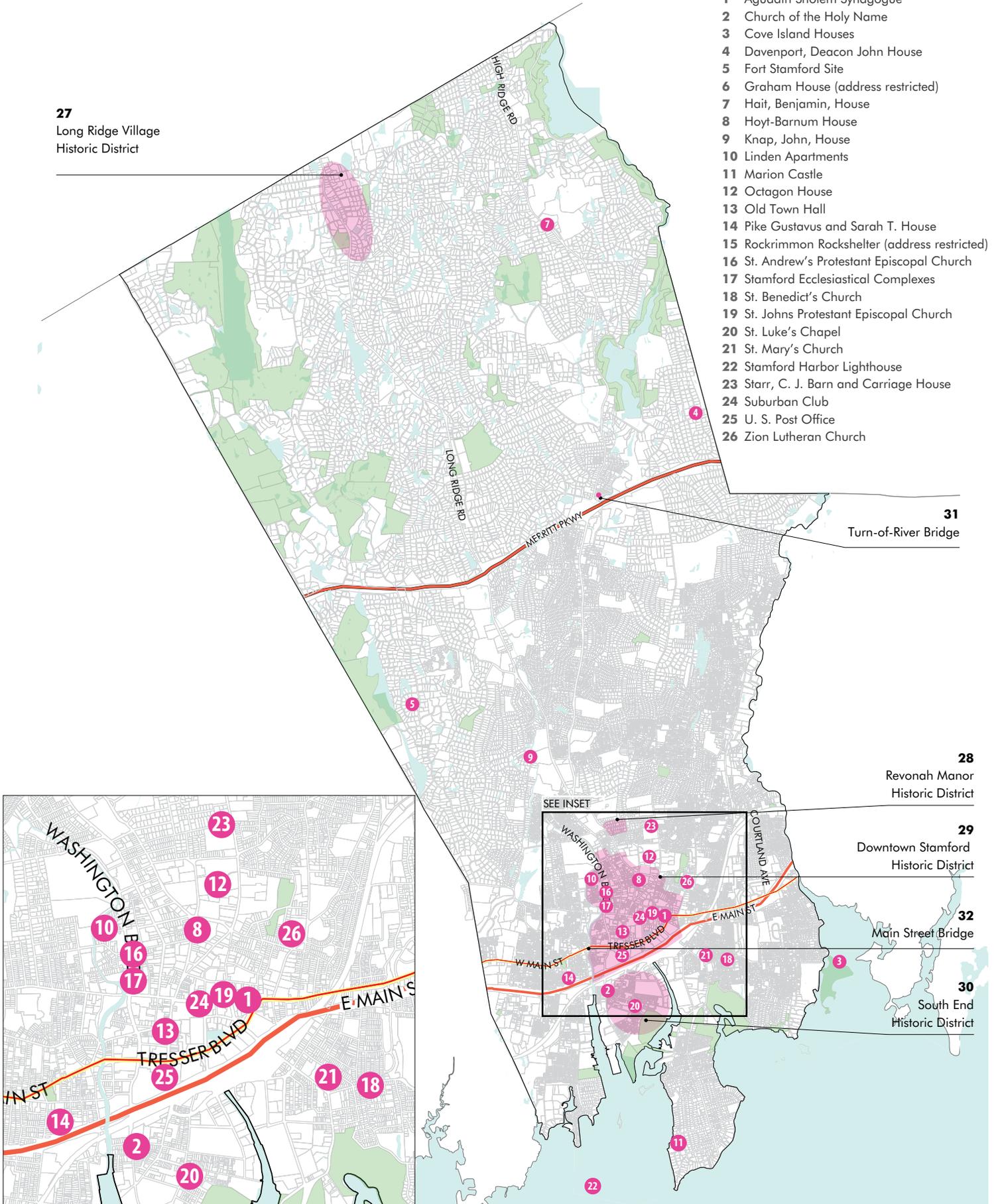
**31**  
Turn-of-River Bridge

**28**  
Revonah Manor  
Historic District

**29**  
Downtown Stamford  
Historic District

**32**  
Main Street Bridge

**30**  
South End  
Historic District



## Historic Preservation Policies and Implementation Strategies

### Policy 6D: Preserve Historic Structures and Districts

#### Implementation Strategies

**6D.1: Conduct a citywide historic preservation survey and prepare a historic preservation plan for Stamford.** Conduct a citywide survey identifying structures and districts worthy of designation and structures in danger of demolition, and outlining steps to be taken to preserve historic structures and districts.

**6D.2: Seek National Register of Historic Places listing for non-designated historically significant structures.** National Register listing gives property owners the option to apply for federal tax incentives for the cost of State-approved renovations of commercial and rental residential properties.

**6D.3: Support regulations that preserve Stamford's historic character.** The City should prioritize preservation of Stamford's historic structures and districts. As redevelopment pressures increase, the City must support preservation of Stamford's historic character by more actively regulating and incentivizing historic preservation.

**6D.3-a: Promote zoning incentives for historic preservation and adaptive reuse.** The City should continue to encourage preservation and rehabilitation of significant historic structures through special use permits and density incentives. Stamford should consider new incentive regulations that encourage retention of historic building facades and street-level character while allowing for new construction that is stepped back above historic buildings.

**6D.3-b: Authorize local designation of historic districts and landmarks.** Working with the newly created Historic Preservation Advisory Commission, the City should authorize local designation of historic districts and landmarks. This would empower Stamford to set out requirements for modifications to locally designated historic structures and properties within historic districts and prohibit demolition of historic properties. Further, local designation could also provide the City with the power to review and approve proposed modifications to historic structures and properties within historic districts.

**6D.4: Encourage the use of historic preservation tax credits.** Publicize the availability of historic preservation tax credits and provide technical assistance to property owners in securing such credits, which provide a tax credit for the rehabilitation/reuse of historic properties.

## **C. Neighborhoods**

### **NORTH STAMFORD**

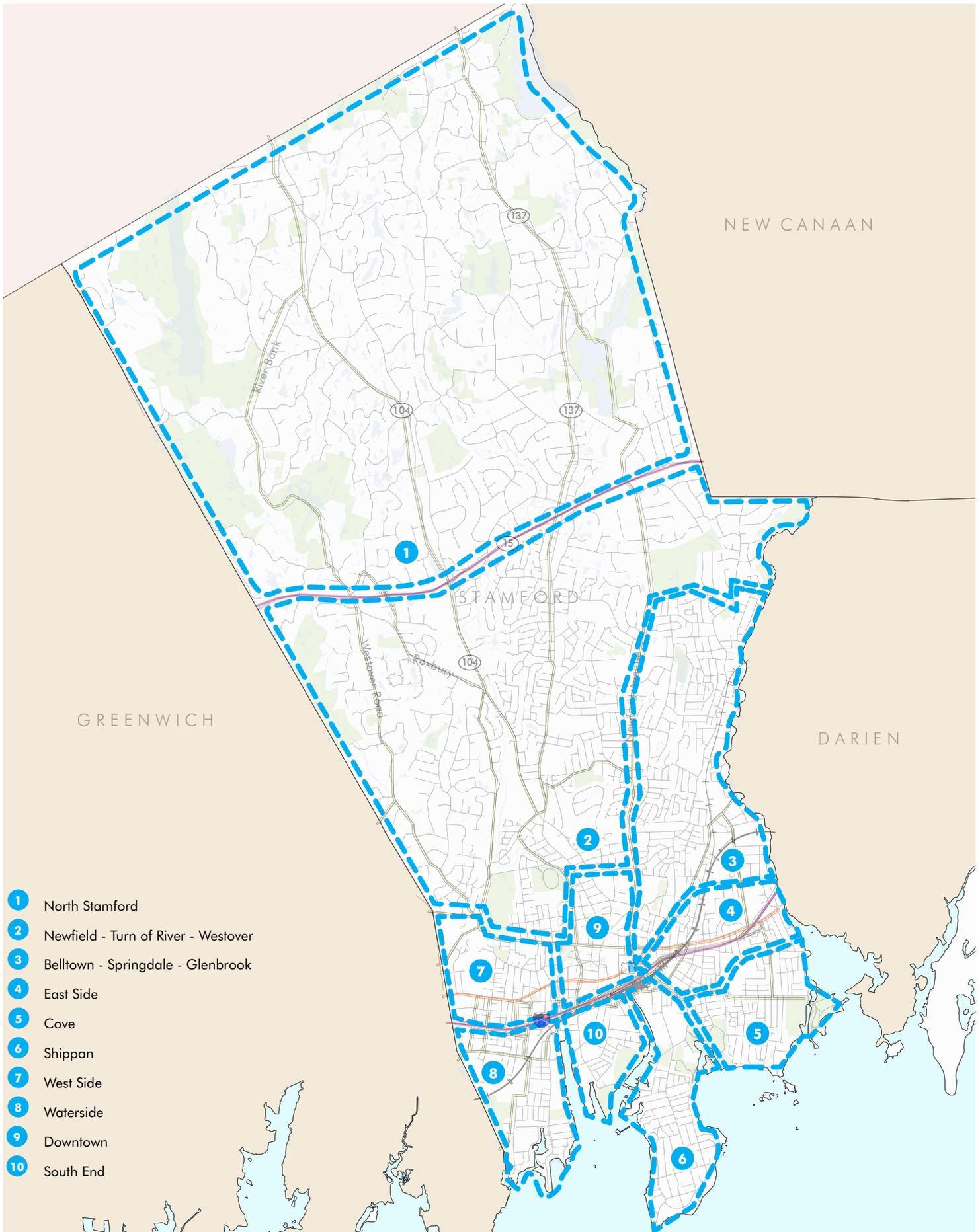
#### **Neighborhood Profile**

The North Stamford neighborhood comprises the entire land area north of the Merritt Parkway. This distinct low-density area represents Stamford's rich history of stable residential communities. Commercial uses in North Stamford are limited to small-scale neighborhood shopping centers serving the local population. Property values are among the City's highest, and the land area is mainly built out. RA-1, RA-2 and RA-3 districts are mapped across more than 90 percent of North Stamford. The purpose of these districts is to set aside and protect areas that are currently or may be developed for single-family homes on large lots (one, two and three acres, respectively) in a rural setting. A small portion of North Stamford is mapped R-10 and R-20 – also single-family districts intended to preserve and protect low-density residential areas; certain other uses are permitted in the R-10 and R-20 districts as-of-right or by special exception such as senior housing and nursing home facilities (See Chapter 2: People and Land, Section 2.2B for the full description of Stamford's zoning districts).

From 2000 to 2010, North Stamford's population remained stable, increasing from 14,525 TO 14,526. While the neighborhood's share of residents under 5 years of age decreased from 7.9 percent to 5.6 percent, the percentage of older children aged 5 to 19 increased from 18.7 percent to 21.3 percent. North Stamford's elderly population has also expanded from 14.3 percent to 16.9 percent of the population.

North Stamford has the highest average household income of all neighborhoods in the City, increasing by 4.5 percent from \$225,132 to \$235,323 from 2000 to 2011. The neighborhood also has the lowest poverty rate, with 1.4 percent of the population below the federal poverty line. North Stamford's unemployment rate ranks sixth-highest among all neighborhoods in Stamford, increasing from 3.7 percent to 9.2 percent from 2000 to 2011. With its rural character and low population density of 1.18 persons per acre, nearly all households own at least one car. However, over the period from 2000 to 2011, the rate of car ownership per household dropped slightly from 100 percent to 98.8 percent.

North Stamford's housing supply steadily increased by 3.2 percent from 5,125 to 5,289 units over the past decade; however, the supply of units built within the last 20 years dropped from 13.8 percent to 9.6 percent of the total housing stock. The share of owner-occupied units dropped slightly as renter-occupied units increased in number, from 4.4 percent to 6.5 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock. Nevertheless, the median value of owner-occupied housing units grew from \$805,291 to \$861,690 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a difference of \$56,399 or 7 percent. As any vacancy rate below 5 percent is a general indication of a healthy housing market, North Stamford's market remains strong despite an increased vacancy rate from 2.7 percent to 4.5 percent from 2000 to 2010.



- 1 North Stamford
- 2 Newfield - Turn of River - Westover
- 3 Belltown - Springdale - Glenbrook
- 4 East Side
- 5 Cove
- 6 Shippan
- 7 West Side
- 8 Waterside
- 9 Downtown
- 10 South End



## **North Stamford (NS) Neighborhood Policies and Implementation Strategies**

### **Policy NS1: Preserve and protect neighborhood character and quality-of-life**

**NS1.1:** Preserve and protect North Stamford as a low-density residential neighborhood by maintaining existing residential zoning districts.

**NS1.2:** Discourage expansion of commercial districts in North Stamford. Maintain the neighborhood's two commercial districts at their present size.

**NS1.3:** Retain current floor area ratio (FAR) caps for commercial and office development in industrial districts outside of Downtown.

**NS1.4:** Identify architectural design standards for the purpose of retaining and enhancing the quality of building design in commercial areas such as Chimney Corners.

**NS1.5:** Within the road rights-of-way serving the Long Ridge Village Historic District, the City should seek to address streetscape preservation and the burying of utility lines.

**NS1.6:** Designate significant roads in North Stamford as Scenic Corridors to assure that the character of the existing streetscape is retained and enhanced. Efforts should focus on retaining natural street trees and historic elements, such as stone walls, located within the right-of-way and minimizing the impacts of engineered roads on these important features.

**NS1.7:** Protect the quantity and quality of the drinking water supply through the promotion of Best Management Practices and expansion of the well water testing program.

### **Policy NS2: Improve mobility and circulation**

**NS2.1:** Improve existing public bus service along Long Ridge and High Ridge Roads between North Stamford and Downtown, including frequency of buses and expansion of bus shelters.

**NS2.2:** Support and implement the recommendations set forth in the Long Ridge and High Ridge Roads Study, as they apply to North Stamford.

**NS2.3:** Where appropriate and feasible, support the implementation of the traffic calming measures recommended in the 2008 Traffic Calming Master Plan.

**NS2.4:** Provide for a safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle network.

### **Policy NS3: Preserve and enhance parks, open space and the natural environment**

**NS3.1:** Develop and implement land-use and subdivision tools aimed at preserving and protecting open space holdings and environmentally sensitive land by encouraging development to incorporate long-term protection of these sensitive areas; requiring development to be designed in context with these natural resources; and preventing clear-cutting and retaining mature trees to the extent feasible.

**NS3.2:** Continue to expand and improve greenways along the Mianus and Rippowam Rivers and along the Poor House Brook, linking the Bartlett Arboretum, the Nature Center and Scofield Park.

**NS3.3:** Support and expand Stamford's tree preservation tools, including subdivision and other review procedures and the creation of a tree preservation ordinance.

## **NEWFIELD, TURN-OF-RIVER AND WESTOVER**

### **NEWFIELD**

#### **Neighborhood Profile**

Newfield is a low-density residential neighborhood generally bordered by the Merritt Parkway to the north, the Stamford City line to the east, Springdale to the south and Turn-of River to the west. RA-1 is mapped across nearly the entire neighborhood, and the land area is composed largely of detached single-family homes. Newfield is also home to High Ridge Corporate Park Center, a 40-acre corporate campus located in the neighborhood's northwest portion. The High Ridge Road commercial corridor, including the High Ridge Shopping Center, serves residents of Newfield.

From 2000 to 2010, Newfield's population remained stable, increasing by only 26 residents from 4,326 to 4,352, with population density increasing from 2.99 to 3.01 persons per acre. While the neighborhood's share of residents under 5 years of age decreased from 7 percent to 5.6 percent, the percentage of older children aged 5 to 19 edged up from 18.1 percent to 18.6 percent. Newfield's elderly population grew at a slightly faster rate, increasing from 18.5 percent to 20.5 percent of the population.

Newfield has the second-highest median household income of all neighborhoods in the City, increasing by 52.1 percent from \$103,006 to \$156,666 from 2000 to 2011. The neighborhood also has the second-lowest poverty rate (behind North Stamford), with 1.7 percent of the population below the federal poverty line. Newfield's unemployment rate is the lowest among all neighborhoods in Stamford, having increased from only 1.4 percent to 3.7 percent from 2000 to 2011. Most households own at least one car; however, over the period from 2000 to 2011, the car ownership per household dropped slightly from 96.2 percent to 94.8 percent.

Newfield's housing supply increased by 7.3 percent from 1,576 to 1,691 units over the past decade; however, this rate of building has not been as aggressive as in the 1980s. This is seen in the share of units built within the last 20 years dropping from 23.9 percent in 2000 to 11.3 percent of the total housing stock in 2011. The share of owner-occupied units dropped slightly as renter-occupied units increased in number, from 12.9 percent to 17.7 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock. Nevertheless, the median value of owner-occupied housing units grew from \$489,980 to \$652,000 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a difference of \$162,020 or 33.1 percent. As any vacancy rate below 5 percent is a general indication of a healthy housing market, Newfield's market remains strong despite an increased vacancy rate from 0.8 percent to 3.5 percent from 2000 to 2010.

## **TURN-OF-RIVER**

### **Neighborhood Profile**

Turn-of-River is a low-density residential neighborhood that comprises the central portion of Stamford, bordered by the Merritt Parkway to the north; Newfield, Springdale and Belltown to the east; Downtown to the south and Westover to the west. The neighborhood's residential areas are zoned almost entirely R-10 and are composed mainly of single-family homes. High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads run north-south through Turn-of-River, and are central Stamford's key commercial spines, characterized by shopping centers, eating establishments and other neighborhood retail and personal services. Turn-of-River is also home to several major office campuses including General Electric.

From 2000 to 2010, Turn-of-River's population increased by 4.6 percent from 11,540 to 12,068. While the neighborhood's share of residents under 5 years of age decreased from 7.8 percent to 6.9 percent, the percentage of older children aged 5 to 19 increased from 16.2 percent to 18 percent. Turn-of-River's elderly population has also expanded from 14.3 percent to 16.9 percent of the population.

Turn-of-River has the fourth-highest median household income of all neighborhoods in the City, increasing by 31 percent from \$110,006 to \$144,101 from 2000 to 2011. The neighborhood also has one of the lowest poverty rates in the City, with 2.5 percent of the population below the federal poverty line. Turn-of-River's unemployment rate ranks second-lowest among all neighborhoods in Stamford, increasing from 2.4 percent to 6.7 percent from 2000 to 2011. With its suburban character and population density of 5.89 persons per acre, most households own at least one car.

Despite positive growth in the housing supply from 4,427 to 4,595 units over the past decade, Turn-of-River's housing supply of units constructed over the past 20 years fell from 18.9 percent to 6.8 percent of the total housing stock. The share of owner-occupied units dropped slightly as renter-occupied units increased as a share of the neighborhood's housing stock from 9.8 percent to 11.9 percent (106 units). Consistent with the previous decade, Turn-of-River's median value of owner-occupied homes ranked fifth-highest in the City as the value grew from \$421,929 to \$586,584 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a difference of \$164,655 or 39 percent. Turn-of-River's housing market remains strong even as its vacancy rate increased from 2.4 percent to 3.8 percent from 2000 to 2010.

## **WESTOVER**

### **Neighborhood Profile**

Westover is a low-density residential neighborhood that encompasses the western portion of Stamford, bordered by the Merritt Parkway to the north, Turn-of-River to the east, the West Side to the south and the City line to the west. Nearly the entire land area is zoned RA-1 and R-20 and is comprised of detached single-family homes.

From 2000 to 2010, Westover's population increased 6.6 percent from 8,745 to 9,318. While one of the larger absolute increases among Stamford's neighborhoods, the population density increased from 2.96 to only 3.16, or 0.2 persons per acre, thus ranking as the third least dense neighborhood. While the neighborhood's share of residents under 5 years of age decreased from 7.5 percent to 6.6 percent, the percentage of older children aged 5 to 19 increased by 256, or 17.8 percent from 16.4 percent to 18.2 percent. Westover differs from other neighborhoods in that its elderly population has decreased in share, going from 18 percent to 16.8 percent of the population. However, the loss of elderly residents in absolute terms is only 8 persons, or 0.5 percent.

Westover has the third-highest median household income of all neighborhoods in the City, increasing by 29.3 percent from \$116,829 to \$151,099 from 2000 to 2011. The share of persons in poverty expanded from 3.4 percent in 2000 to 6.4 percent in 2011. Westover's unemployment rate has increased from 2.6 percent to only 8.8 percent from 2000 to 2011. Most households own at least one car; however, over the period from 2000 to 2011, the car ownership per household dropped slightly from 95.5 percent to 92.1 percent.

Westover's housing supply increased by 7.3 percent from 3,320 to 3,564 units over the past decade, all while its share of units built within the last 20 years remained largely unchanged, an indication that new housing construction has remained consistent with previous decades. The share of owner-occupied units dropped slightly as renter-occupied units increased in number, from 19 percent to 20.7 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock. Nevertheless, the median value of owner-occupied housing units grew from \$508,368 to \$690,201 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a difference of \$181,833 or 35.8 percent. In 2010, Westover's owner-occupied home values ranked third-highest in the City, after North Stamford and Shippan. Despite rising home values, the vacancy rate increased from 3.1 percent to 4.2 percent from 2000 to 2010.

### **Newfield, Turn-of-River and Westover (NTW) Neighborhood Policies and Implementation Strategies**

#### **Policy NTW1: Preserve, protect and enhance neighborhood character and quality-of-life**

**NTW1.1:** Maintain existing residential character of neighborhoods by maintaining existing residential zoning districts.

**NTW1.2:** Direct and enhance commercial/office development in existing commercial zones.

**NTW1.3:** Retain current floor area ratio (FAR) caps for commercial and office development in industrial districts outside of Downtown.

**NTW1.4:** Explore the feasibility of rezoning certain vacant or underutilized commercial/office properties along Long Ridge Road for multifamily residential and mixed-use development.

**NTW1.5:** Designate significant roads in Newfield, Turn-of-River and Westover as Scenic Corridors to assure that the character of the existing streetscape is retained and enhanced. Efforts should focus on retaining natural street trees and historic elements, such as stone walls, located within the right-of-way and minimizing the impacts of engineered roads on these important features.

#### **Policy NTW2: Improve mobility and circulation**

**NTW2.1:** Support the recommendations established in the Long Ridge Road and High Ridge Road Corridor Study that aim to transform these key roadways into unique neighborhood-friendly boulevards that are safe, attractive and efficient for all users.

**NTW2.2:** Support efforts to reduce traffic congestion along Newfield Avenue and Westover Road by ensuring that Long Ridge and High Ridge Roads – the City’s key north-south arterials serving through traffic – operate at optimal levels of service. Newfield Avenue and Westover Road should be maintained as collector roads serving local traffic.

**NTW2.3:** Where appropriate and feasible, support the implementation of the traffic calming measures recommended in the 2008 Traffic Calming Master Plan.

**NTW2.4:** Improve and expand pedestrian and bicycle connections within and between neighborhoods.

#### **Policy NTW3: Preserve and enhance parks, open space and the natural environment**

**NTW3.1:** Create greenways along the Mianus and Rippowam Rivers that connect with the Mill River Greenway and other potential greenways including the Merritt Parkway.

**NTW3.2:** Preserve and protect open space holdings and environmentally sensitive land.

**NTW3.3:** Enhance existing parks and explore the potential for additional public open space holdings for passive and active recreation, including picnic areas, benches, ball fields and recreational facilities.

**NTW3.4:** Develop and implement land-use and subdivision tools aimed at preserving and protecting open space holdings and environmentally sensitive land by encouraging development to incorporate long-term protection of these sensitive areas; requiring development to be designed in context with these natural resources; and preventing clear-cutting and retaining mature trees to the extent feasible.

## **BELLTOWN, SPRINGDALE AND GLENBROOK**

### **BELLTOWN**

#### **Neighborhood Profile**

Belltown is a low-density residential neighborhood on the eastern side of Stamford, generally bounded by Springdale to the north, the City line to the east, Glenbrook to the south and Newfield Avenue to the west. Belltown's residential areas are zoned R-7 and R-10 and are composed mainly of detached single-family homes. The neighborhood's commercial areas are concentrated in the eastern portion along Hope Street and the New Canaan rail line. There is also a neighborhood shopping center on Newfield Avenue that serves Belltown residents.

From 2000 to 2010, the neighborhood of Belltown experienced moderate population growth, increasing by 7 percent from 3,269 to 3,499, with population density increasing from 6.93 to 7.42 persons per acre. While the neighborhood's share of residents 65 years or older decreased from 13.9 percent to 12 percent, the percentage share of children under 5 years of age remained nearly stable (decreasing from 7.9 percent to 7.8 percent), the second-highest share of young children in all of Stamford. The share of older children aged 5 to 19 expanded even faster than young children, adding 83 persons and increasing its share of the population from 16.9 percent to 18.1 percent.

Belltown has the fifth-highest median household income of all neighborhoods in the City, increasing by 27.9 percent from \$89,633 to \$114,659 from 2000 to 2011. The neighborhood also has the third-lowest poverty rate (behind North Stamford and Newfield) with 2.5 percent of the population below the federal poverty line. Belltown's unemployment rate is the fifth-highest among all neighborhoods in Stamford, having increased from 4.1 percent to 10 percent from 2000 to 2011. Today, Belltown has the second-highest rate of household car ownership in Stamford; over the period from 2000 to 2011 the rate of household car ownership climbed from 93.4 percent to 97.8 percent.

Belltown's housing supply increased by 5.5 percent from 1,254 to 1,323 units over the past decade; however, this rate of building has not been as aggressive as in the 1980s. This is seen in the share of units built within the last 20 years dropping from 17.1 percent in 2000 to 10.1 percent of the total housing stock in 2011. In 2000 as well as in 2011, Belltown had the fourth-highest share of owner-occupied units. The share of owner-occupied units dropped slightly as renter-occupied units increased in number, from 18.6 percent to 19.6 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock. Nevertheless, the

median value of owner-occupied housing units grew from \$364,971 to \$535,000 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a difference of \$170,029 or 46.6 percent. Belltown's housing market remains strong even as its vacancy rate edged up from 1.3 percent to 3.5 percent over the last decade.

## **SPRINGDALE**

### **Neighborhood Profile**

Springdale is one of Stamford's most dense and compact neighborhoods, composed of a diverse mix of land uses. It is located in the City's eastern central portion, generally bounded by Newfield to the north, the City line to the east, Belltown to the south and Turn-of-River to the west. The neighborhood is zoned mainly R-7 and R-10 and is composed of detached single-family homes. A significant portion of Stamford's industrially zoned land is concentrated along the New Canaan Branch of the Metro-North New Haven Rail Line serving Springdale; however, much of the industrial space is now occupied by service or office uses. Hope Street is considered Springdale's "Main Street" and is characterized by a healthy mix of retail stores, restaurants, personal services and other neighborhood businesses serving residents. The neighborhood is stable and largely built-out, although future infill development opportunities exist around the Springdale train station on Hope Street.

The neighborhood of Springdale experienced strong population growth from 2000 to 2010, expanding by 12.4 percent from 4,366 to 4,906, with population density increasing from 10.34 to 11.62 persons per acre. As the neighborhood's share of residents under 5 years of age increased from 6.2 percent to 7.4 percent and the share of older children aged 5 to 19 climbed up from 14.2 percent to 15.6 percent, Springdale's elderly population lost 57 residents with its share of the total falling from 13.5 percent to 10.8 percent of the population.

Springdale has the eighth-highest median household income of all neighborhoods in the City, increasing by 24.1 percent from \$82,388 to \$102,247 from 2000 to 2011. At the same time, Springdale's share of the population below the federal poverty line climbed from 6 percent to 10.5 percent of the population and the rate of unemployed workers in the labor force jumped from 2.5 percent to 8.2 percent. Despite the large increase, Springdale's level of unemployment ranked third-lowest in all of Stamford both in 2000 and 2011. Most of the neighborhood's households own at least one car; however, from 2000 to 2011, the share of car-owning households dropped significantly from 96.5 percent to 87.2 percent.

Springdale's housing supply increased by 10.7 percent from 1,970 to 2,180 units over the past decade; however, this rate of building has not been as aggressive as in the 1980s. This is seen in the share of units built within the last 20 years dropping from 18.4 percent in 2000 to 12.5 percent of the total housing stock in 2011. The share of owner-occupied units increased slightly as renter-occupied units decreased in number, from 37.2 percent to 37 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock. Additionally, the median value of owner-occupied housing units grew from \$329,963 to \$426,400 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a difference of \$96,437 or 29.2 percent. As any vacancy rate below 5 percent is a general indication of a healthy housing market, Springdale's market remains strong even as its vacancy rate has increased from 1.9 percent to 4.7 percent from 2000 to 2010.

Springdale's vision for its future as discussed in the 2002 Master Plan and in subsequent neighborhood plans completed in 2006, is to protect neighborhood stability, while providing for redevelopment opportunity. Particular priority has been placed on creating "village centers" at the Glenbrook and Springdale train stations. The 2006 neighborhood plans set forth a vision for walkable and mixed-use transit-oriented infill development within a compact area around the two stations. The plans also envision a reinforced "main street" fabric with residential units over ground floor retail or office space. To further these goals, the City has undertaken a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Feasibility Study for both Glenbrook and Springdale that will provide the necessary analyses, recommendations and conceptual designs for the two proposed TOD districts.

## **GLENBROOK**

### **Neighborhood Profile**

Glenbrook is located in the eastern portion of Stamford, generally bounded by Belltown to the north, the City line to the east, the East Side neighborhood to the south and Newfield Avenue to the west. The core of the neighborhood is zoned Village Commercial (V-C), a district whose purpose is to foster mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development around transit facilities. Residential districts mapped across Glenbrook include one-, two- and multifamily districts (R-7½, R-6, R-5 and RM-1). There is also an industrial zone (M-G General Industrial) mapped along the New Haven Rail line. Similar to Springdale, Glenbrook is a dense, compact neighborhood composed of a diverse mix of land uses. While single-family homes make up a large portion of Glenbrook's residential land area, the neighborhood also has a significant number of multifamily homes. Glenbrook is served by the New Canaan Rail line, and its commercial district is concentrated around the train station on Glenbrook Road and Crescent Street.

From 2000 to 2010, Glenbrook's population grew modestly, increasing 2.1 percent from 15,396 to 15,718, with population density increasing from 14.57 to 14.88 persons per acre. While the neighborhood's share of residents under 5 years of age grew from 6.4 percent to 6.8 percent, the percentage of older children aged 5 to 19 dropped from 16.1 percent to 15.5 percent. Glenbrook's elderly population declined as a share of the total population from 14.5 percent to 12.8 percent, a loss of 219 residents.

Glenbrook has the seventh-highest median household income of all neighborhoods in Stamford, increasing by 36.6 percent from \$75,697 to \$103,419 from 2000 to 2011. As household incomes grew, the poverty rate nearly doubled from 6.8 percent to 12.7 percent. Glenbrook's unemployment rate also more than doubled from 4 percent to 8.8 percent from 2000 to 2011. The share of car-owning households increased slightly from 92.4 percent to 93.2 percent of the population over the last decade.

Glenbrook's housing supply increased by 3 percent from 5,352 to 5,444 units over the past decade. This rate of building has not been as aggressive as in the 1980s. This is seen in the share of units built within the last 20 years dropping from 12.6 percent in 2000 to 6.1 percent of the total housing stock in 2011. Nevertheless, Glenbrook has the third-largest share in Stamford of residential units built more than 20

years ago, an improvement over 2000, where the neighborhood had the second-largest share of units of that age. The share of owner-occupied units edged up slightly as renter-occupied units decreased in number, from 40.6 percent to 38.8 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock. Additionally, the median value of owner-occupied housing units grew from \$278,762 to \$410,420 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a difference of \$131,658 or 47.2 percent. Despite rising values, Glenbrook's residential market is considered somewhat weak with a vacancy rate of 5.1 percent in 2010.

Glenbrook's vision for its future as discussed in the 2002 Master Plan and in subsequent neighborhood plans completed in 2006, is to protect neighborhood stability, while providing for redevelopment opportunity. Particular priority has been placed on creating "village centers" at the Glenbrook and Springdale train stations. The 2006 neighborhood plans set forth a vision for walkable and mixed-use transit-oriented infill development within a compact area around the two stations. The plans also envision a reinforced "main street" fabric with residential units over ground floor retail or office space. To further these goals, the City has undertaken a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Feasibility Study for both Glenbrook and Springdale that will provide the necessary analyses, recommendations and conceptual designs for the two proposed TOD districts.

### **Belltown, Glenbrook and Springdale (BGS) Neighborhood Policies and Implementation Strategies**

#### **Policy BGS1: Create vibrant mixed-use centers that are pedestrian- and transit-friendly**

**BGS1.1:** Encourage higher-density, mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly development around the Glenbrook and Springdale train stations, along the Hope Street commercial corridor and Glenbrook Road and in the Belltown neighborhood business district.

**BGS1.2:** Promote residential and mixed-use development that relates well in scale and design to the surrounding residential areas. Consider including smaller development projects in the design review process.

**BGS1.3:** Support streetscape enhancements along key commercial and mixed-use corridors, including lighting landscaping, sidewalks and façade upgrades, where appropriate and necessary.

#### **Policy BGS2: Improve mobility and circulation**

**BGS2.1:** Identify and implement strategies to reduce vehicular traffic congestion.

**BGS2.2:** Identify and implement strategies to improve public parking, access and wayfinding.

**BGS2.3:** Explore the feasibility of implementing "complete streets" elements along key commercial corridors to ensure that these rights-of-way are designed to safely and efficiently accommodate all users regardless of transportation mode, age or physical ability.

**BGS2.4:** Enhance and expand pedestrian and bicycle network within the neighborhoods, including pedestrian crossings, bicycle paths and the implementation of traffic calming measures, in order to create a pedestrian-friendly “village.” Improve connections with Downtown and the Glenbrook and Springdale train stations.

**Policy BGS3: Preserve and protect neighborhood character and quality-of-life**

**BGS3.1:** Promote industrial regulations and standards that make industry more compatible with its residential neighbors and to reduce adverse environmental impacts. Such regulations and standards should address hours of operation; setbacks; lighting; noise levels; landscaping and screening; and outdoor storage.

**Policy BGS4: Preserve and enhance parks, open space and the natural environment**

**BGS4.1:** Continue to enhance existing parks and open spaces and their connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

**BGS4.2:** Encourage the creation of public open space in connection with new mixed-use developments.

**COVE, EAST SIDE AND SHIPPAN**

**COVE AND EAST SIDE**

**Neighborhood Profile**

The Cove and East Side neighborhoods occupy the land area in the southeastern portion of Stamford, generally bounded by Glenbrook to the north, the City line to the east and south and Shippan and Downtown to the west. Single- and multifamily zones are mapped across the neighborhoods, including R-7½, RM-1 and R-5. Housing stock is diverse and includes low-density single-family homes and medium-density multifamily buildings. East Main Street runs west-east through the heart of the neighborhoods, and is the main commercial corridor serving the local population.

From 2000 to 2010, the Cove and East Side neighborhoods have experienced moderate population growth, increasing by 7 percent from 8,107 to 8,762, with population density increasing from 6.22 to 6.66 persons per acre. While the neighborhood’s share of residents 65 years or older decreased from 13.8 percent to 11.1 percent, the percentage share of children under 5 years of age increased from 5.7 percent to 6.3 percent. The share of older children aged 5 to 19 expanded as well, adding 197 persons and increasing its share of the population from 15.1 percent to 16.4 percent.

Cove and East Side have the fourth-lowest median household income of all neighborhoods in the City, increasing by 14.5 percent from \$80,298 to \$91,966 from 2000 to 2011. The neighborhoods' poverty rate ranks fifth-highest in Stamford, with the share of the population below the federal poverty line increasing from 4.7 percent in 2000 to 13.6 percent in 2011. Cove and East Side's unemployment rate increased from 3.7 percent to 9.1 percent from 2000 to 2011. Today, the neighborhoods have the fifth-highest rate of household car ownership in Stamford, with 94.2 percent of households owning at least one car.

Cove and East Side's housing supply increased by 3.6 percent from 3,392 to 3,515 units over the past decade; however, this rate of building has not been as aggressive as in the 1980s. This is seen in the share of units built within the last 20 years dropping from 10.4 percent in 2000 to 4 percent of the total housing stock in 2011, the second-lowest rate in all of Stamford. In 2000 as well as in 2010, Cove-East Side had the sixth-highest share of renter-occupied units. The share of owner-occupied units dropped slightly as renter-occupied units increased in number, from 56.1 percent to 54 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock. Nevertheless, the median value of owner-occupied housing units grew from \$280,762 to \$459,875 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a difference of \$179,114 or 63.8 percent. Cove-East Side's housing market remains somewhat weak with a vacancy rate of 6.1 percent, an increase of 3.7 percentage points since 2000.

## **SHIPPAN**

### **Neighborhood Profile**

Shippan is a low-density neighborhood located on a peninsula in Long Island Sound. The southern portion of Shippan, which is surrounded by waterfront on three sides, constitutes just over half of the land area comprising Shippan and is zoned Single-family residential (R-20, R-10 and R-7½). North of Cummings Park, a portion of the Shippan neighborhood is zoned for One-Family, Two Family Residence (R-6), commercial and manufacturing uses. A large, continuous tract of active commercial and industrial uses abuts the New Haven Rail line along Myrtle Avenue, continuing south along the East Branch of Stamford Harbor.

From 2000 to 2010, Shippan's population increased by 2.5 percent from 9,366 to 9,604, with population density increasing from 5.85 to 6.00 persons per acre. As the neighborhood's share of residents 65 years or older fell from 12.7 percent to 12.4 percent, the percentage share of children under 5 years of age increased from 6.8 percent to 7 percent. The share of older children aged 5 to 19 also expanded, adding 52 persons and increasing its share of the population from 17.3 percent to 17.4 percent.

Shippan's housing supply increased by 2.3 percent from 3,549 to 3,629 units over the past decade; however, this rate of building has not been as aggressive as in the 1980s. This is seen in the share of units built within the last 20 years dropping from 21.3 percent in 2000 to 3.3 percent of the total housing stock in 2011, the lowest out of all neighborhoods in Stamford. Between 2000 and 2011, the median value of owner-occupied housing units increased from \$495,040 to \$724,710, a difference of

\$229,670 or 46.4 percent. Shippan has the second-highest owner-occupied home values in the City, with its southernmost area, Census Tract 224, having a median home value exceeding \$1 million.

### **East Side (ES) Neighborhood Policies and Implementation Strategies**

#### **Policy ES1: Create vibrant mixed-use centers and corridors that are pedestrian- and transit-friendly**

**ES1.1:** Support the recommendations set forth in the Stamford East Main Street Transit Node Feasibility Study aimed at creating a new transit-oriented development (TOD) through the construction of an intermodal transit facility in the vicinity of the East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue (Urban Transitway – Phase II) intersection. This future transit node could include a combination of a bus station, rail station and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

**ES1.2:** Promote new, higher-density mixed-use development along the Stamford Urban Transitway.

#### **Policy ES2: Preserve and enhance neighborhood character and quality-of-life**

**ES2.1:** Promote context-sensitive residential and mixed-use development that relates well in scale and design to the surrounding residential areas. Consider including smaller development projects in the design review process.

**ES2.2:** Enforce current zoning regulations and building codes to prevent illegal residential conversions, preserve existing lower-density neighborhood character, reduce overpopulation and reduce the demand for on-street parking. Increase penalties for code violations.

**ES2.3:** Limit expansion of pre-existing, non-conforming uses allowed by the variance procedure.

**ES2.4:** Promote efforts to formalize East Main Street as a key gateway into Stamford, including signage welcoming visitors to Stamford; wayfinding signage directing travelers to Downtown and the waterfront; and overall streetscape improvements such as landscaping, building façade enhancements; and aesthetically attractive streetlights. Recommendations established in the 2005 East Main Street Corridor Neighborhood Plan should be evaluated for implementation.

**ES2.5:** Implement design guidelines for roads that serve as the edges of industrial districts, including Magee Avenue, Myrtle Avenue, Jefferson Street and Elm Street. These standards should encourage enhanced landscaping and other screening elements between industrial and non-industrial uses.

**ES2.6:** Promote industrial regulations and standards that make industry more compatible with its residential neighbors and reduce adverse environmental impacts. Such regulations and standards should address hours of operation, setbacks, lighting, noise levels, landscaping and screening and outdoor storage.

**ES2.7:** Expand neighborhood beautification grant programs.

**ES2.8:** Support neighborhood-generated revitalization plans.

**ES2.9:** Provide an adequate and equitable range of community services to meet the needs of a diverse population.

**Policy ES3: Promote new retail opportunities and services for the neighborhood**

**ES3.1:** Research creating a Business Improvement District for financial stability to fund community programs and improvement.

**ES3.2:** Create a commercial revitalization program within City government.

**ES3.3:** Conduct educational workshops to support residents, merchants and property owners.

**ES3.4:** Provide incentives for historic restoration and façade and streetscape improvements.

**Policy ES4: Improve mobility and circulation**

**ES4.1:** Reinforce Elm Street as the primary corridor linking the Cove, East Side and Shippan neighborhoods to Downtown, including the implementation of streetscape enhancements, pedestrian circulation elements, widening the underpass and other upgrades that improve the safety, efficiency and overall appearance of this key access road.

**ES4.2:** Support the creation of a safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle circulation network connecting the neighborhood's residential areas to local parks, schools, neighborhood business districts, Downtown and the South End and the waterfront.

**ES4.3:** Support efforts aimed at reducing traffic congestion, particularly along East Main Street, Elm Street and Lockwood Avenue.

**ES4.4:** Where appropriate and feasible, support the implementation of the traffic calming measures recommended in the 2008 Traffic Calming Master Plan.

**Cove (C) Neighborhood Policies and Implementation Strategies**

**Policy C1: Preserve and enhance neighborhood character and quality-of-life**

**C1.1:** Maintain existing residential character of neighborhoods by maintaining existing residential zoning districts.

**C1.2:** Support efforts aimed at maintaining and enhancing the scenic quality of key corridors, including Cove Road, Sound View Avenue and Weed Avenue and other roadways serving the Cove neighborhood. Priority should be given to maintaining roadways that provide waterfront views and access.

**Policy C2: Improve mobility and circulation**

**C2.1:** Reinforce Elm Street as the primary corridor linking the Cove, East Side and Shippan neighborhoods to Downtown, including the implementation of streetscape enhancements, pedestrian circulation elements, widening the underpass and other upgrades that improve the safety, efficiency and overall appearance of this key access road.

**C2.2:** Support the creation of a safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle circulation network connecting the neighborhood's residential areas to local parks, schools, neighborhood business districts, Downtown and the South End and the waterfront.

**C2.3:** Support efforts aimed at reducing traffic congestion, particularly along East Main Street, Elm Street and Lockwood Avenue.

**C2.4:** Where appropriate and feasible, support the implementation of the traffic calming measures recommended in the 2008 Traffic Calming Master Plan.

**Policy C3: Preserve and enhance parks, open space and the natural environment**

**C3.1:** Protect and promote water-dependent uses, recreation and boating.

**C3.2:** Promote neighborhood access to public waterfront amenities.

**C3.3:** Promote waterfront views and access, particularly in connection with future waterfront development.

**C3.4:** Maintain and upgrade the condition of neighborhood public parks.

## **Shippan (S) Neighborhood Policies and Implementation Strategies**

### **Policy S1: Preserve and enhance neighborhood character and quality-of-life**

**S1.1:** Maintain existing residential character of neighborhoods by maintaining existing residential zoning districts.

**S1.2:** Support efforts aimed at maintaining and enhancing the scenic quality of key corridors, including Shippan Avenue and other roadways serving the Shippan neighborhood. Priority should be given to maintaining roadways that provide waterfront views and access.

### **Policy S2: Improve mobility and circulation**

**S2.1** Reinforce Elm Street as the primary corridor linking the Cove, East Side and Shippan neighborhoods to Downtown, including the implementation of streetscape enhancements, pedestrian circulation elements, widening the underpass and other upgrades that improve the safety, efficiency and overall appearance of this key access road.

**S2.2** Support the creation of a safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle circulation network connecting the neighborhood's residential areas to local parks, schools, neighborhood business districts, Downtown and the South End and the waterfront.

**S2.3:** Support efforts aimed at reducing traffic congestion, particularly along Elm Street.

**S2.4:** Where appropriate and feasible, support the implementation of the traffic calming measures recommended in the 2008 Traffic Calming Master Plan.

### **Policy S3: Preserve and enhance parks, open space and the natural environment**

**S3.1:** Protect and promote water-dependent uses, recreation and boating.

**S3.2:** Promote neighborhood access to public waterfront amenities.

**S3.3:** Promote waterfront views and access, particularly in connection with future waterfront development.

**S3.4:** Maintain and upgrade the condition of neighborhood public parks.

**S3.5:** Continue to prioritize the East Branch of Stamford Harbor for water-dependent industry.

## **WEST SIDE AND WATERSIDE**

### **WEST SIDE**

#### **Neighborhood Profile**

The West Side neighborhood is generally bounded by West Broad Street and Palmer Hill Road to the north, Mill River Park to the east, I-95 to the south and the Stamford City line to the west. It is one of the city's oldest developed areas and one of its most diverse in terms of both land use and people. A significant portion of the land area is zoned for medium-density multifamily uses, including R-MF and R-5. West Broad Street, Stillwater Avenue/Village Commercial District and West Main Street are major commercial corridors and stitch together the variety of land uses that form the neighborhood's diverse urban fabric. Key institutions in the West Side include Stamford Hospital, Cytotec Industries and the Connecticut Film Center.

From 2000 to 2010, the West Side's population declined at a decennial rate of 2.1 percent from 13,275 to 12,933. Population density trends are directly related to the growth rate. Thus, over the same period, the number of persons per acre also fell by 2.1 percent, from 22.30 to 21.83 persons per acre. As the working-adult population aged 20 to 65 grew by 4.5 percent and added 349 residents, the youth and elderly shares of the population lost 411 and 211 residents, respectively. The share of residents under 5 years of age, the largest in all of Stamford, dropped from 8.5 percent to 8 percent of the total population, a loss of 85 residents, while the share of older children aged 5 to 19 declined from 22 percent to 20 percent or 326 residents. The elderly share of the population, the second-lowest in Stamford, also fell from 11.3 percent to 9.9 percent or 220 residents.

Although lower than all other neighborhoods in Stamford, the neighborhood's median household income increased from \$52,534 to \$62,367, a difference of \$9,832 or 18.7 percent. As household incomes expanded, the share of residents below the federal poverty line increased from 14.5 percent to 19.7 percent while the unemployment rate climbed from 7.2 percent to 14.4 percent. In 2010, the West Side had the second-highest rate of poverty and unemployed residents in the City. Car ownership rates per household were the third-lowest in Stamford, with 81.8 percent of households owning one car or more in 2010, an increase of 3.2 percentage points since 2000.

The West Side's housing supply expanded by just 0.5 percent from 4,553 to 4,576 units over the past decade. This rate of building has not been as aggressive as in the 1980s. This is seen in the share of units built within the last 20 years dropping from 28.1 percent in 2000 to 22.2 percent of the total housing stock in 2011. Nevertheless, the West Side has the third-largest share in the City of residential units built less than 20 years ago, a decline from 2000, where the West Side had the second-largest share of units of that age. The share of owner-occupied units edged up slightly as renter-occupied units decreased in number, from 74.8 percent to 74.2 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock. Additionally, the median value of owner-occupied housing units expanded well beyond the 18.7 percent growth seen in median household income, climbing from \$231,072 to \$454,115 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a

difference of \$223,043 or 96.5 percent. Despite rising values, the West Side's residential market is considered weak with a vacancy rate of 9.6 percent in 2010, the highest in all of Stamford.

Several revitalization initiatives in the West Side have resulted in notable improvements to the neighborhood's physical landscape and the quality-of-life of its residents. The recently completed Fairgate mixed-income housing development, located on Fairfield and Stillwater Avenues on the site of the former Fairfield Court public housing development, is an example of successful revitalization efforts in the neighborhood. Developed by Charter Oak Communities, which functions as both a community development organization and the City's public housing authority, Fairgate consists of 90 residential units and a community center. Some 60 percent of the units are affordable to low- and moderate-income households; 40 percent of the units are market-rate.

Following on this successful project, Charter Oak has joined with Stamford Hospital to launch the new Vita Health and Wellness District in connection with the planned expansion of the hospital. As part of the hospital's plans to expand its facilities, it has been working with Charter Oak to better connect the hospital to the community, improve the health of neighborhood residents and increase access to health care services. This effort includes Fairgate Farm, an urban agricultural center growing produce for the local community, and the Fairgate Community Health Center, which provides non-urgent primary health care services for low income residents. Another major Charter Oak project on the West Side is the revitalization of Vidal Court, a physically obsolete, state-assisted public housing complex. Charter Oak is working to transform Vidal Court into a stable, economically balanced community that is physically and socially integrated into the neighborhood.

In addition, the City has undertaken two studies: the West Side Neighborhood Plan, completed in 2014, and the West Side Transportation Study, in progress, which will provide the necessary analysis, recommendations and conceptual designs to revitalize the West Side neighborhood in the next 10 years.

## **WATERSIDE**

### **Neighborhood Profile**

Waterside occupies the land area in the southwestern portion of Stamford, and is generally bounded by I-95 to the north, the West Branch of Stamford Harbor to the east, Long Island Sound to the south and the City line to the west. A range of residential, commercial and industrial/manufacturing zoning districts are mapped across Waterside, a pattern which has facilitated a diverse "checkerboard" of land uses. A large portion of the neighborhood is zoned for non-residential uses, including M-G General Industrial, M-D Designed Industrial and IP-D Designed Industrial Park, while much of the land area along the Stamford Canal is zoned C-D Coast Water Dependent and DW-D Designed Waterfront Development. The balance of Waterside is largely zoned for one-, two- and multifamily residential uses, including RA-1, R-20, R-10, R-7½, R-6, R-5 and R-MF. Only a small portion of Waterside is zoned for commercial use; these districts (C-1 and C-N) are located in the northern portion of the neighborhood. Single-family homes occupy nearly the entire southern shoreline, while industrial uses front the West Branch of

Stamford Harbor. The New Haven Rail line cuts through the center of Waterside, and much of the area along the right-of-way is given over to industrial and manufacturing uses.

From 2000 to 2010, Waterside experienced significant population growth, expanding by 19.2 percent from 4,836 to 5,763, with population density increasing from 5.45 to 6.49 persons per acre. Waterside's share of residents 65 years or older grew from 9.8 percent to 11.1 percent of the population, a change of 161 residents. The neighborhood's population share of children under 5 years of age edged up by 0.1 percentage points or 72 residents while children age 5 to 19 decreased as a share of population from 22.9 percent to 17.1, a loss of 120 residents.

As the neighborhood's median household income increased by 62.1 percent over the past decade, from \$64,684 to \$104,875, the distribution of Waterside's wealth has shifted considerably. Today, Waterside has the sixth-highest median income in Stamford, compared with 2000, where Waterside's median household income was the fourth-lowest in all of Stamford. Despite increased wealth, the neighborhood's share of the population below the federal poverty line was the third-highest in the City and expanded by 3.5 percentage points from 2000 to 2011. Waterside's high level of poverty is likely related to its high level of unemployment, at 13.8 percent, the third-highest in Stamford. Today, the neighborhood has the fourth-lowest rate of household car ownership in Stamford; just 84 percent of households own at least one car.

Waterside's housing supply increased by 28.5 percent from 1,722 to 2,212 units over the past decade. This rate of construction is considerably more aggressive than that which occurred during the 1980s. This is seen in the share of units built within the last 20 years climbing from 20.9 percent in 2000 to 55.3 percent of the total housing stock in 2011, by far, the highest rate out of all neighborhoods in Stamford. In 2000 as well as in 2011, Waterside had the fourth-highest share of renter-occupied units, increasing from 54 percent to 64.1 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock. Following the trend in household income, the median value of owner-occupied housing units grew from \$335,518 to \$496,900 over the period from 2000 to 2011, a difference of \$161,382 or 48.1 percent. The impact of residential development activity in the neighborhood may have had a direct impact on overcrowding, where the number of persons per room exceeds 1.5 persons. As new residential units were added in Waterside, the rate of overcrowding fell 4.8 percent to 2.8 percent. At the same time, the residential vacancy rate climbed from 4.9 percent to 7.2 percent, indicating an oversupply of housing, a direct result of the neighborhood's recent housing boom over the past decade.

### **West Side (WS) Neighborhood Policies and Implementation Strategies**

#### **Policy WS1: Preserve and enhance neighborhood character and quality-of-life**

**WS1.1:** Promote upgrades to the public realm, including repair and maintenance of roads and sidewalks, improved street lighting, installation of street trees and other landscape elements along key corridors, and façade improvements along commercial corridors.

**WS1.2:** Implement the recommendations of the West Side Neighborhood Plan and the West Side Transportation Study.

**WS1.3:** Support the efforts of the West Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) and other neighborhood associations working to improve the overall quality-of-life for the residents and workers of the West Side and Waterside neighborhoods.

**WS1.4:** Promote industrial regulations and standards that make industry more compatible with its residential neighbors and to reduce adverse environmental impacts. Such regulations and standards should address hours of operation, setbacks, lighting, noise levels, landscaping and screening and outdoor storage.

**WS1.5:** Promote the upgrade of retailing and other uses along the West Main Street Corridor.

**WS1.6:** Promote efforts to formalize West Main Street as a key gateway into Stamford, including signage welcoming visitors to Stamford; wayfinding signage directing travelers to Mill River Park and Downtown; and overall streetscape improvements such as landscaping, building façade enhancements; and aesthetically attractive streetlights.

**WS1.7:** Continue to evaluate the strategies and recommendations set forth in the Stillwater Avenue Corridor Study for implementation.

**WS1.8:** Support the planned expansion of Stamford Hospital and the Vita Health and Wellness District initiative.

### **Policy WS2: Improve mobility and circulation**

**WS2.1:** Where appropriate and feasible, support the implementation of the traffic calming measures recommended in the 2008 Traffic Calming Master Plan.

**WS2.2:** Support the recommendations set forth in the forthcoming West Main Street Corridor Study for mitigating traffic congestion and improving the overall safety and efficiency of West Main Street/U.S. Route 1. Recommendations from the SWRPA Route 1 Greenwich-Stamford Study may also be considered.

**WS2.3:** Support initiatives aimed at improving access and connectivity between the West Side and Mill River Park and Downtown for all modes of travel.

### **Policy WS3: Retain existing and promote new affordable housing**

**WS3.1** Promote affordable homeowner housing by supporting City policy (financial and zoning incentives) and other creative solutions such as cooperatives and condominiums.

**WS3.2** Continue the one-for-one replacement of policy for all publicly supported housing for all redevelopment initiatives targeting existing public housing holdings.

**WS3.3:** Continue to apply inclusionary housing regulations to all large-scale (10 or more homes) residential development.

**WS3.4:** Encourage the rehabilitation and management of small multifamily buildings in order to preserve existing housing stock and maintain affordability.

### **Waterside (W) Neighborhood Policies and Implementation Strategies**

#### **Policy W1: Preserve and enhance neighborhood amenities and character and overall quality-of-life**

**W1.1:** Promote upgrades to the public realm, including repair and maintenance of roads and sidewalks, improved street lighting, installation of street trees and other landscape elements along key corridors, and façade improvements along commercial corridors.

**W1.2:** Promote pedestrian- and transit-friendly development along the Selleck Street neighborhood business district in Waterside.

**W1.3:** Create a commercial revitalization program within City government.

**W1.4:** Conduct educational workshops to support residents, merchants and property owners.

**W1.5:** Provide incentives for historic restoration and façade and streetscape improvements.

**W1.6:** Explore sites for a new public school in Waterside.

#### **Policy W2: Preserve and enhance parks, open space and the natural environment**

**W2.1:** Enhance existing parks and explore the potential for additional public open space holdings for passive and active recreation, including picnic areas, benches, ball fields and recreational facilities.

**W2.2:** Promote waterfront views and access along the West Branch, with a focus on creating continuous public access along the water's edge, with frequent connections to upland streets and views of the water down cross streets.

**W2.3:** Protect and promote water-dependent uses, recreation and boating along the West Branch.

**W2.4:** Make non-waterfront dependent uses contingent upon providing public access and meeting other public objectives.

