

# STAMFORD MASTER PLAN 2015-2025





# **Stamford Master Plan**

**City of Stamford, Connecticut**

**Adopted: December 16, 2014**



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(un-edited by the Planning Board)

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## **CHAPTER 1.0: INTRODUCTION AND VISION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Stamford, a coastal community located on Long Island Sound, is Connecticut's third-largest city, with a population of 125,109. The City has grown by more than 5,000 residents since its last Master Plan was published in 2002, and it surpassed the population of Hartford for the first time in 2012. Stamford is one of the State's leading employment centers and boasts a diverse economy employing nearly 75,000 workers. While there are approximately 9,000 fewer jobs in the City today than in 2002, Stamford is rebounding from the Great Recession. Over the next 15 years, the City is expected to recover a portion of its job losses, adding 5,255 new jobs. Stamford's leading growth sectors include retail, accommodation and food services, information services and healthcare services and education. Growth in these sectors is translating into demand for retail and restaurants, high-tech office space; classroom and vocational training space; and high-quality, well-located commercial space.

While employment declined significantly over the past decade, Stamford has seen unprecedented residential development, with 9,000 new units completed or in construction, mainly Downtown and in the South End. The vast majority of new residential development has been higher-density rental housing, consistent with regional and national trends. This housing has brought new vitality to the transit-served Downtown and South End neighborhoods, further bolstering retail and restaurant uses. East and west of Downtown there has been significant progress in neighborhood revitalization, with the successful redevelopment of public housing sites into mixed-income communities in the West Side, and new investment in the East Side with the implementation of the Urban Transitway. Over the past decade, progress also has been made in expanding Stamford's open space network and making the Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods greener. The Mill River Park is a spectacular new addition to Downtown, and plans to construct a continuous greenway along the river from Scalzi Park to Kosciuszko Park are advancing through a series of park and pathway construction projects. In residential neighborhoods, preservation of community character and quality-of-life remains an important priority. And citywide, Stamford continues to demonstrate its commitment to preserving and enhancing its affordable housing stock with required one-for-one replacement of affordable housing units.

While these trends are expected to continue, Stamford's ability to capture growth and enhance the vitality of the Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods will be dependent on the City's ability to address crucial circulation and mobility needs. Making it easier to get to and around Stamford is essential to the City's economic future. Traffic congestion on I-95 and the Merritt Parkway and system failures on Metro-North's New Haven line are compromising Stamford's ability to attract economic growth and capture regional demand for entertainment and culture. At the same time, within the City, roadway and transit improvements and new pedestrian and bicycle connections are needed to effectively get people where they need to go and enhance Stamford's vitality as an appealing, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly city. Creating attractive and functional streetscapes with integrated circulation networks that serve all users will be essential to attracting new businesses and enhancing residential quality-of-life.

## **1.2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLANNING PROCESS**

In determining how to build on Stamford's strengths and develop a vision for its future, the City reached out to a variety of residents, business owners, community organizations and other stakeholders through a dynamic community engagement process. Development of the plan was led by the City's Land Use Bureau in collaboration with a Steering Committee composed of representatives from the Planning Board, Zoning Board, Board of Representatives and the City's Economic Development Department. Over the course of the master planning process, the City hosted three citywide public workshops to gain input on the vision and goals for the plan and to test ideas with the community. A series of neighborhood meetings were also held to discuss issues particular to each neighborhood. Information gathered during these sessions was critical to developing the Master Plan vision described in Section 1.3 below. In addition to these in-person meetings, the City created a website to share information with the community and obtain feedback on goals, policy recommendations and implementation strategies. Summaries of the workshops are found in the Appendix.

## **1.3 MASTER PLAN VISION**

Stamford has experienced substantial changes since the 2002 Master Plan, but the long-term vision for the City's future remains largely intact: to create a livable built, economic, social and political environment. In furtherance of this vision, the highest-intensity development and redevelopment should be focused in the Downtown, recognizing that it serves as both Stamford's economic engine and as the transportation hub for the region. Areas adjacent to the Downtown should accommodate growth at a lesser intensity, while the character of Stamford's neighborhoods will be supported and enhanced, but not significantly altered. No land-use changes are envisioned in North Stamford. The City's vision also incorporates increased mobility for all transportation users, as well as measures to enhance the City's environmental sustainability and resiliency. The vision for Stamford's future that emerged through the planning process is captured in six central themes. These themes inform the chapters of the Master Plan, which tell the story of where the City is today, where it wants to be 10 years from now, when the population is projected to reach nearly 134,000 people, and how it will get there.

### **A. A Regional Center**

Stamford's role as Connecticut's leading city is vital to its economy and the quality-of-life of its residents. Maintaining and enhancing its place as a vibrant regional destination for jobs, shopping, dining and entertainment is central to its vitality. Its position as a regional center is dependent upon two key factors: (1) its ability to advance its economy, and (2) capturing job growth and moving people to and around the City. This can be accomplished by supporting a diverse economy in Stamford and by improving regional and local mobility, efforts to be guided by the following goals:

### Support a Diverse Economy

- Retain existing corporations
- Attract new and diverse companies
- Capture job growth in expanding sectors including technology, education and healthcare
- Concentrate regional office and retail development in the Downtown
- Continue to pursue a balance of uses that promote vibrancy and economic vitality
- Enhance the Stamford Transportation Center as a welcoming gateway to the City
- Increase workforce readiness

### Improve Regional and Local Mobility

- Advocate for regional roadway and rail improvements to address traffic congestion
- Improve intra-city mobility for all modes- vehicles, mass transit, pedestrians and bicyclists

Key projects to be undertaken by the City and its partners over the course of the next 10 years in support of these goals, as discussed in this Master Plan, are as follows:

1. Market existing and create new incentives to attract small business
2. Encourage modernization of office space and allow for adaptive reuse
3. Explore the feasibility of the development of a convention center in the Downtown
4. Create a model “cradle to career” education program to educate and train the resident workforce for jobs in emerging sectors
5. Implement the City’s Economic Development Plan

## **B. Growth Management**

Directing growth toward appropriate locations is key to supporting Stamford’s position as a regional center, encouraging neighborhood revitalization and maintaining neighborhood character and quality-of-life. The vision for Stamford’s future described in this Master Plan calls for concentrating regional office development and high-density residential uses in the Downtown, as well as promoting transit-oriented development (TOD). Encouraging compact, walkable, mixed-use development with jobs and housing in close proximity to transit will enhance the vibrancy of the Downtown, providing the density and street life necessary to its strength as a thriving retail, restaurant and entertainment district. TOD at Stamford’s Springdale and Glenbrook train stations will support those neighborhoods’ visions of enhancing their roles as compact, walkable communities. At the same time, directing growth to these areas will relieve development pressure on other City neighborhoods that wish to limit commercial growth and retain lower-density development, guided by the following goals:

- Concentrate regional office and retail development as well as high-density residential uses in the Downtown
- Promote transit-oriented development

Key projects to be undertaken by the City and its partners over the course of the next 10 years in support of these goals, as discussed in this Master Plan, are as follows:

1. Amend zoning to allow for redevelopment of office parks outside Downtown for mixed-use
2. Encourage reuse of vacant Downtown office space for housing
3. Allow higher-density residential development in close proximity to transit
4. Encourage neighborhood-scale commercial and mixed-use development at transit-served locations
5. Reduce parking ratios in close proximity to transit
6. Strongly advocate for inclusion in the decision making process for the State's TOD proposal at the Stamford Transportation Center to ensure that the proposed development is appropriately scaled and pedestrian-friendly

### **C. Transportation and Mobility**

Addressing regional traffic congestion and improving intra-city circulation for all modes, including vehicles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians, is essential to promoting economic growth in Stamford. At the same time, enhancing a sense of place by encouraging active street life where people can comfortably walk and bicycle, particularly in the Downtown, is essential to supporting Stamford's evolving role as a dynamic and vibrant city that attracts young professionals and jobs in emerging sectors. Achieving the vision of a robust, multi-modal transportation system that serves all users will require significant capital investments in both regional and local transportation infrastructure, guided by the following goals:

- Address regional roadway congestion and improve commuter rail
- Improve intra-city mobility for all modes

While investments in regional roadways and rail are not within Stamford's direct control, if the City is to realize its vision for the future, it must be a vocal advocate for improvements to the regional road and rail systems that bring people to the City. Traffic congestion on I-95 and the Merritt Parkway hampers Stamford's ability to attract investment. System failures and capacity issues on Metro-North's New Haven line and the lack of coordinated and efficient transit service between the Stamford Transportation Center and the City's employment centers discourage transit use, which exacerbates traffic congestion on regional roadways. Over the course of the next 10 years, it will be essential for Stamford to partner with like-minded organizations, including the Regional Plan Association (RPA), the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCCOG, the successor agency to the South Western Regional Planning Agency as of December 31, 2014) and the Business Council of Fairfield County, to lobby for State and Federal funding for the following priority capital investments, which are vital to address these pressing issues:

- Bring Metro-North's New Haven line into state of good repair
- Reduce travel times between NYC, Stamford, New Haven and Hartford
- Build a fourth lane on I-95, where possible

At the same time, the City must make investments in its internal transportation infrastructure to make it easier, more efficient and more pleasant for people to get around within Stamford. This will require improvements to roadways and transit as well as pedestrian and bicycle circulation. Key projects to be undertaken by the City and its partners over the course of the next 10 years in support of these goals, as discussed in this Master Plan, are as follows:

1. Widen underpasses below the railroad tracks that connect Downtown and the South End to improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation
2. Improve vehicular circulation along Atlantic Street and West Main Street
3. Implement park and ride from the Merritt Parkway to Downtown
4. Improve bus service to address crosstown travel needs
5. Coordinate with the State to upgrade the Stamford Transportation Center so that it serves as an attractive gateway to the city
6. Implement coordinated shuttle service between the Stamford Transportation Center and employment centers
7. Improve trolley service between Downtown and the South End to connect with other key travel nodes Downtown
8. Ease traffic congestion and improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility along Long Ridge and High Ridge Roads
9. Redesign Tresser Boulevard as a more pedestrian-friendly roadway
10. Adopt a Complete Streets policy
11. Create bicycle routes in appropriate locations Downtown and in adjacent neighborhoods
12. Make Downtown more pedestrian-friendly by enhancing sidewalks, streetscapes, wayfinding signage and overall pedestrian connectivity

#### **D. Downtown and South End**

Downtown plays a pivotal role in defining the vision for Stamford's future. Downtown is the heart of the city and its primary activity center, supported by the Stamford Transportation Center and serving all City residents as well as workers and visitors from around the region. Supporting and enhancing Downtown as an active and vibrant local and regional destination is essential to attracting and retaining its dynamic and growing population of new residents and the entertainment, culture and jobs in emerging sectors that are bringing them to Stamford. Key to this strategy is directing growth in office and regional retail and higher-density housing to the Downtown.

At the same time, over the course of the past decade, the South End, located immediately south of Downtown and adjacent to the Stamford Transportation Center, has emerged as a dynamic and growing neighborhood with substantial new, high-density residential development and related commercial uses. With its waterfront location and proximity to regional rail and Downtown, the South End has attracted significant new investment. Over the next 10 years, the South End will continue to evolve in its new role as a neighborhood that is increasingly attracting young professionals, while also seeking to retain long-

standing residents and preserving the character of existing residential streets. As this occurs, it will be increasingly important for the Downtown and the South End to cultivate a symbiotic relationship, capitalizing on the synergies between them in order to maximize the potential of both neighborhoods, guided by the following goals:

- Maintain and augment Downtown’s standing as a regional center
- Encourage revitalization of the existing residential neighborhood and streets in the South End
- Enhance the Stamford Transportation Center as a gateway to the City of Stamford
- Improve connectivity among Downtown, the South End, the Stamford Transportation Center and adjacent neighborhoods
- Promote quality urban design and enhance streetscapes
- Promote and enhance public waterfront access

Key projects to be undertaken by the City over the course of the next 10 years in support of these goals, as discussed in this Master Plan, are as follows:

1. Concentrate regional office, retail and entertainment uses and high-density residential development in the Downtown
2. Explore the feasibility of the development of a convention center in the Downtown
3. Encourage the redevelopment of vacant Downtown office space for housing
4. Promote a regional arts and entertainment Downtown
5. Improve pedestrian connectivity within Downtown and between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, including the South End
6. Encourage quality urban design Downtown and in the South End that relates well to streets and people
7. Implement streetscape improvements Downtown and in the South End to enhance walkability within and between these neighborhoods and to enhance sense of place
8. Complete the Mill River Greenway from Scalzi Park Downtown to Kosciuszko Park in the South End
9. Establish strong guidelines for the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission to protect historic landmarks and districts
10. Revitalize existing residential streets in the South End
11. Maintain and enhance public access to the South End waterfront

## **E. Community Character**

Maintaining community character and preserving and enhancing quality-of-life in Stamford’s neighborhoods is central to the vision for the future of the City. Preserving and enhancing Stamford’s low-density residential areas and revitalizing higher-density neighborhoods is key to maintaining community character and encouraging growth in locations that have the necessary infrastructure and

capacity to support growth. To this end, this Master Plan calls for a balanced approach to neighborhood preservation, revitalization and growth in support of the following goals:

- Maintain existing single-family zoning and discourage expansion of additional commercial activity in low-density residential areas
- Concentrate commercial, office and mixed-use development Downtown and in transit-served locations
- Balance new development with preservation of existing residential communities
- Preserve existing and create new affordable housing
- Preserve historic buildings and districts
- Preserve and enhance parks, open space and the natural environment

Key projects to be undertaken by the City over the course of the next 10 years in support of these goals, as discussed in this Master Plan, are as follows:

1. Continue a neighborhood revitalization-focused fee-in-lieu program for meeting affordable housing requirements for both rehabilitation in existing neighborhoods and new development
2. Continue one-for-one replacement policy for assisted housing
3. Promote neighborhood stabilization and enhance management of Stamford's Below Market Rate (BMR) program
4. Enhance inclusionary zoning incentives
5. Encourage relocation of industrial uses to non-residential areas
6. Continue to revitalize public housing sites with mixed-income development
7. Establish strong guidelines for the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission to protect historically significant buildings and districts
8. Preserve and expand neighborhood open space by pursuing open space acquisitions, open space dedication and open space easements

## **F. A Sustainable Future**

Over the past decade and particularly in the last few years as large-scale storms have increasingly affected the City's coastline, there has been a growing awareness of the importance of planning for a more sustainable future. Addressing contributing factors to climate change and enhancing Stamford's capacity to protect itself against, prepare for and recover from weather events has become a central component of how the City envisions and plans for its future. In 2010, Stamford adopted a Sustainability Amendment to the 2002 Master Plan, which provided a coordinated set of objectives and policies to enhance its progress in sustainability. An important objective of the Amendment was to promote interdisciplinary, coordinated action among the public-, private- and non-profit sectors, as well as between the City and other municipalities in the region and State to address issues beyond Stamford's local control, such as regional transportation improvements and watershed management. This Master Plan builds on that work, calling for a more sustainable future for Stamford through enhancement of

open space, waterfront areas and environmental protection; encouragement of context-sensitive development; and enhancement of resiliency as expressed in the following goals:

- Connect open space and waterfront areas
- Protect and enhance public access to the waterfront
- Protect and promote water-dependent uses
- Protect natural areas, water quality and coastal resources
- Promote sustainable development patterns
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Key projects to be undertaken by the City over the course of the next 10 years in support of these goals, as discussed in this Master Plan, are as follows:

1. Complete the Mill River Greenway from Scalzi Park to Kosciuszko Park
2. Establish an east-west pedestrian and/or open space network connecting Mill River Park, Columbus Park and Veterans Park
3. Identify open space protection priorities and work with public and private partners to protect and acquire priority open spaces
4. Encourage sustainable building design
5. Prepare a watershed management plan
6. Adjust zoning regulations to address flood risk in coastal areas
7. Improve efficiency and resiliency of municipal infrastructure

#### **1.4 ACHIEVING THE VISION**

As well-stated in the 2002 Master Plan, “If Stamford is sometimes known as ‘the city that works,’ then the Stamford Master Plan is a set of proposals for helping it work better.” The goals, policy recommendations and implementation strategies described in this Master Plan are the updated set of tools necessary to help Stamford work better in order to achieve the vision for the future described above. Once adopted by the Planning Board, this Master Plan will be used to evaluate development applications and subdivisions. It will also be used by the Zoning Board as a basis for any proposed changes to the City’s Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map. Any zoning changes must be consistent with Master Plan policies and the Generalized Future Land Use Plan described in Chapter 8. In addition, the Plan will be used by the Mayor and the Board of Representatives as a tool for assessing the Planning Board’s capital budget recommendations.

As discussed in the chapters of this Master Plan and summarized in Chapter 9, achieving Stamford’s vision for its future will require diligent advocacy, action and funding for a variety of programs and projects.

## 1.5 HISTORY AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

*“A city of unlimited potential... Stamford is rapidly becoming one of the great cities of America.”*

— Herbert S. Swan, City Planner, 1929

### A. Historical Perspective

The founding of Stamford, Connecticut, dates back to the 1641 Puritan settlement of Rippowam; the village was renamed Stamford in 1641. The City of Stamford was established in 1893. In 1949, the City consolidated with the town of Stamford to become the present-day 52.1-square-mile city.

Stamford has been planning for its growth and development in a formal manner for more than three-quarters of a century, beginning with the City’s first Master Plan, Herbert S. Swan’s 1929 *Plan of a Metropolitan Suburb*. Of course, the City is officially much older, and steeped in a rich history.

To the original Native American inhabitants, the land area comprising present-day Stamford was known as Rippowam. In July 1640, two Indian chiefs, Ponus and Wascussue, signed the deed selling the Rippowam land to Captain Nathaniel Turner of the New Haven Colony. The land was subsequently renamed Stamford – meaning “Stony Ford” – after a town in Lincolnshire, England. During this time, Stamford was largely an agricultural community, where settlers grew grain, raised stock and hunted. Central to the Puritans’ interest in this area were the many waterways, including the Rippowam River, where oyster beds and fisheries were plentiful. The burgeoning trade industry between mainland North America and the islands of the West Indies activated Stamford’s shoreline, where waterborne vessels brought products such as grain, horses, lumber, sugar, salt, molasses and rum to New York City for export overseas. By the dawn of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Stamford’s maritime trade industry was thriving. At century’s end, Stamford was well-established as an agriculture and market town, and was home to some 4,050 inhabitants.

Stamford’s growth through the 1800s was directly related to the establishment in 1848 of a rail line through the City, linking New York City and Connecticut, as well as ongoing improvements to the Post Road, including widening and re-surfacing, and the City’s continued importance for maritime trade. As a result, new industrial and residential development took hold, and the population reached nearly 11,000 residents by 1880. Stamford was incorporated as a city in 1893.

Recognizing the significance of Stamford Harbor to maritime commerce, the federal government in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century authorized the first federal navigation improvements to be constructed in the harbor. The Stamford lighthouse was built in 1881 to mark the entrance to the harbor, and a federal navigation project including a dredged channel from Long Island Sound to the City’s wharves was authorized by Congress and completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1886. The navigation project has been modified and expanded several times since.

Stamford also gained prominence as a destination for water-based recreation. The Stamford Yacht Club was established in 1890 and the Chamber of Commerce promoted the City as a place to sail, visit and beach and enjoy outdoor recreation on Long Island Sound. Regular trolley service was extended to Shippan Point, and Stamford's beaches were popular attractions for residents and visitors.

Between 1900 and 1925, Stamford's population more than doubled, reaching approximately 40,000 by the end of that period. The opening of the Merritt Parkway (named after Stamford's own Schuyler Merritt) in 1938 and, later, the construction of Interstate 95 during the 1950s (then the Connecticut Turnpike) initiated greater vehicular connectivity between Stamford and the Northeast region, and further reinforced its role as a key satellite city to New York. In 1949, the original City of Stamford was consolidated with the Town of Stamford, establishing the City's current boundaries. The City's Charter, which became effective that year, established a 40-member Board of Representatives as Stamford's legislative body, granted the mayor with the executive and administrative powers of the City and authorized a six-member Board of Finance with powers and duties related to the City's fiscal policies. This system of government was intended to provide for a clear division of responsibility in which no single individual was responsible for the overall operation of government, and in which citizens had many opportunities to be part of the governmental process through serving on boards and commissions.

With the steady decline of its core manufacturing and industrial base during the 1950s, Stamford, like many American cities, fell victim to economic disinvestment and urban decay, leaving swaths of its core downtown vacant and underutilized. The City's Board of Representatives responded in 1951 with the creation of a five-member Urban Redevelopment Commission which, through the 1960s, initiated a comprehensive urban renewal effort that effectively transformed much of the physical layout and design of downtown Stamford. Entire city blocks were demolished and new commercial and office buildings erected, connected by new, wider roadways – including Tresser Boulevard and Broad Street. Urban renewal efforts led directly to the construction in 1972 of One Landmark Square, which was Stamford's tallest office building for some 37 years, and to the completion in 1973 of the GTE world headquarters, which acted as a catalyst for downtown office development, as corporations looked to take advantage of a less expensive labor pool, a more favorable tax structure and lower operating costs.

During the 1980s and 1990s, several major development initiatives redefined Stamford as both a key corporate and financial center and as a retail destination. Notable developments included the headquarters buildings of UBS and RBS; Stamford Town Center Mall, and numerous retail and office uses along Summer Street. Along with this increase in office and commercial space, several residential buildings contributed to the changing face of Downtown Stamford. Since the early 1970s, the downtown has seen the construction of more than 8 million square feet of office space, 1.5 million square feet of retail space, 2,500 units of housing, several dozen restaurants, a branch of the University of Connecticut and many arts and entertainment venues.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 had a significant impact on the City and its development. Most importantly, nine Stamford residents lost their lives in the attacks. And in the aftermath, the City experienced a number of business relocations as companies sought to relocate from Manhattan or to

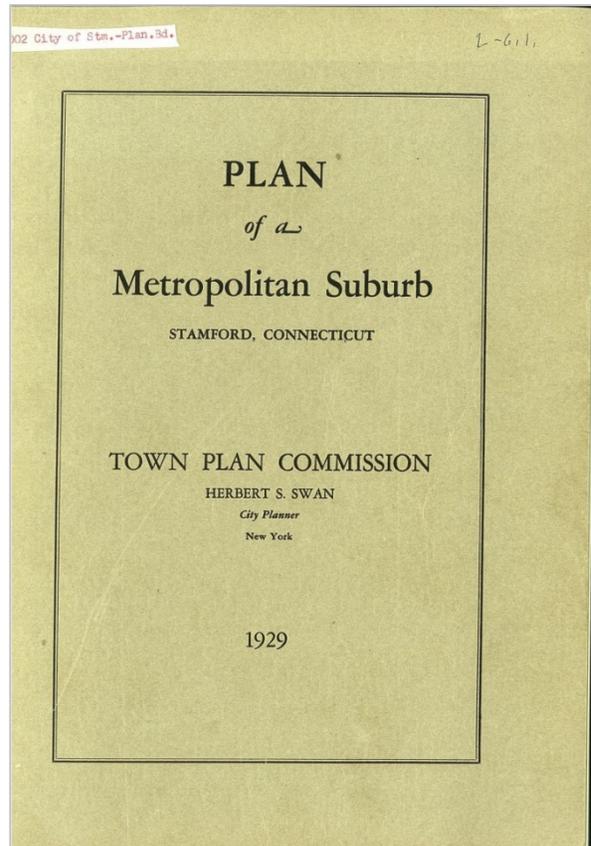
open additional offices to create greater redundancy. This trend – together with the substantial growth of the hedge fund industry throughout much of the 2000s – helped Stamford become a strong regional jobs center.

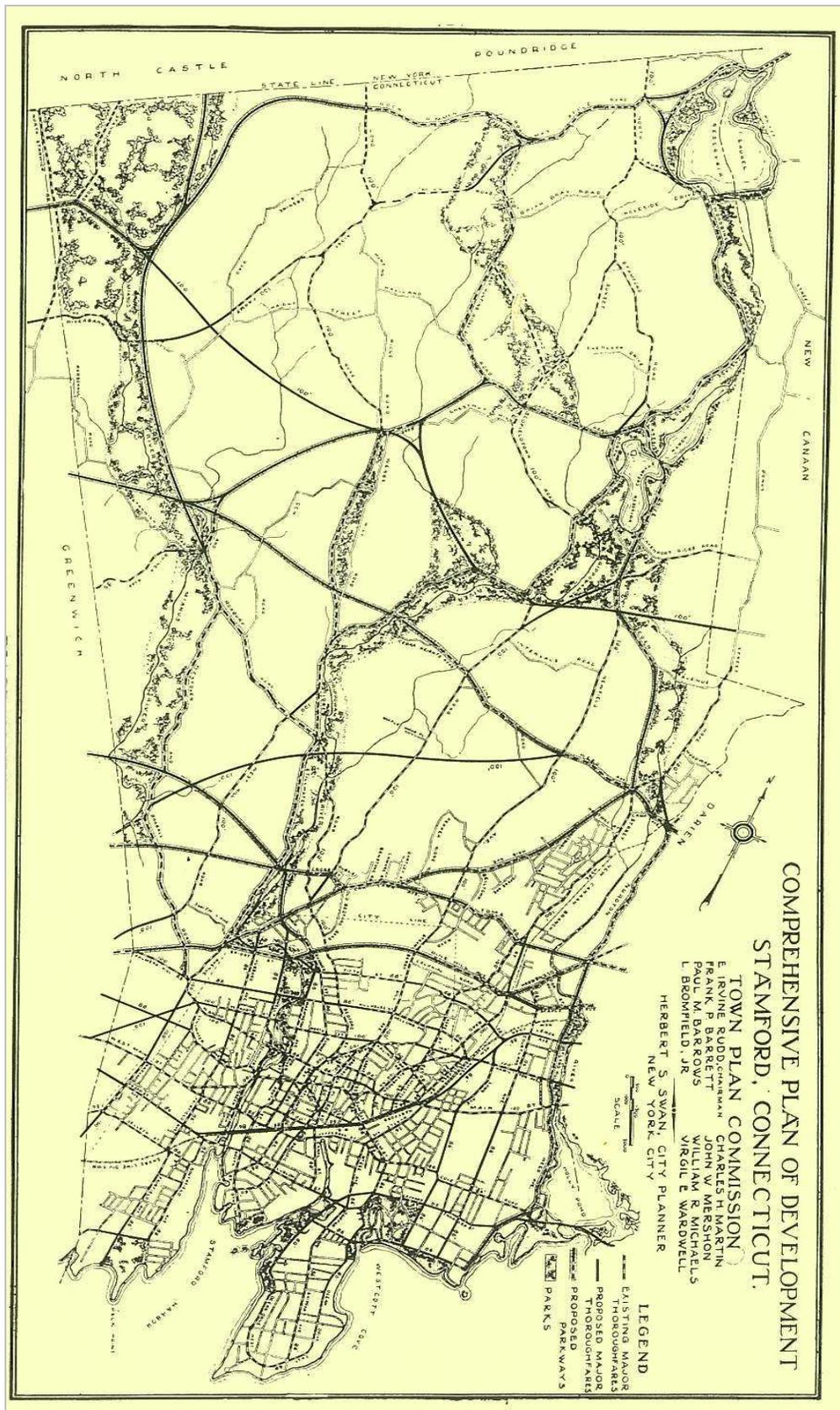
This economic growth continued through 2008 global recession and nationwide housing crisis. Despite the post-2008 economic challenges, Stamford has seen notable investments in residential development through the first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, driven in part by the shortage of rental housing in the New York Metropolitan Area. Much of the residential growth has occurred in the Downtown and South End. And, recent U.S. Census data show that Stamford’s population growth has surpassed Hartford to become Connecticut’s third-largest city. As these significant changes have come to the City’s growth areas, neighborhoods such as North Stamford have maintained their strong residential character and the quality-of-life that residents count on.

## **B. Previous Citywide Master Plans**

### ***Plan of a Metropolitan Suburb, 1929***

Stamford’s first master plan, written by Herbert S. Swan, was accepted by the Town Plan Commission on May 20, 1926, and published in September 1929. At the time, the City and Town of Stamford had a combined population of about 40,000 and had been increasing at a rate of more than 1,000 per year. Along with continued population growth projected for the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Swan’s plan foresaw the corresponding increase in the City’s residential, commercial and industrial development, cautioning that, “Without a plan, there will be no guide for the execution of public and private improvements...Only through a well-considered comprehensive plan can Stamford develop into an efficient and attractive community, uniformly and economically developed in all respects...” The Swan Plan called for the creation of a citywide transportation network and the acquisition of land for open space and recreation areas along the shorelines of Long Island Sound and the Mianus and Rippowam Rivers.





### ***Stamford Master Plan, 1977 (updated 1984 and 1990)***

The 1977 Master Plan for Stamford was a joint effort undertaken by the Planning Board and its technical staff. The document is composed of seven component elements: Population, Housing, Economic Base, Transportation, Community Facilities, Land Use and Environment. The Plan divided the City into 10 “Planning Districts,” establishing development characteristics and recommendations for each district. Community input was central to the master planning process. According to the Plan, “Neighborhood Workshop sessions were conducted in the fall of 1975 and the input of those sessions is heavily reflected in the content of this document.” Among the many policy recommendations set forth in the 1977 Plan, many remain pertinent today:

- Improve access to and through the Central Business District
- Improve public transportation to underserved markets
- Improve pedestrian circulation in high-density areas and lessen pedestrian-vehicular conflicts
- Encourage business and office development to focus on the central business district and not to decentralize
- Provide assistance and incentives to small businesses wishing to remain in the City, expand their facilities or move into Stamford
- Monitor and regulate development and preservation of lands in close proximity to the City’s harbors and Long Island Sound
- Encourage a full range of housing types
- Encourage educational programs to equip the Stamford labor force with basic skills and to retain unemployed workers
- Promote recreational and cultural activities in the central city to provide necessary breathing spaces and break commercial monotony.

The City’s basic goals with regard to coastal area land use and development were first set forth in the 1984 Master Plan Coastal Addendum, which mandated policies to protect and promote water-dependent uses, including water-dependent industry; promote coastal recreation and boating; maintain and enhance public access to coastal resources; protect the quality-of-life in shorefront residential neighborhoods; protect and restore natural coastal resources; and redevelop prominent waterfront sites in a manner that provides economic benefits while maintaining viable water-dependent uses. All of these goals remain pertinent today.

### ***2002 Master Plan***

The 2002 Master Plan, a three-year effort, was adopted by the Planning Board on October 23, 2002, and stands as the City’s current Master Plan. This Plan, which includes a General Land Use Plan Map, Citywide Policies Report and Neighborhood Plans, supersedes all previous Master Plans and Master Plan Amendments. It is supplemented by three technical studies – Economic Development, Urban Design and Traffic and Transit – and a Sustainability Amendment.

Growth management principles underpin the overall vision and goals of the 2002 Master Plan. As the Plan states, “Stamford is now the flagship of regional centers—a city that has prospered not just as a satellite of Manhattan, but as an important center in its own right; a center that plays a strategic role not only in the Fairfield County economy, but also in the larger economy of the Northeast corridor.”

Goals of the 2002 Master Plan include:

- Maintain and celebrate the diversity of Stamford's population and employment.
- Pursue a new "City Beautiful" movement, celebrating and enhancing the City's main corridors, greenways, waterfront, hills, historic buildings, gateways and especially the unique qualities of Stamford's neighborhoods.
- Protect and enhance the quality-of-life of the City's neighborhoods, addressing land use transitions, community resources, traffic, and environmental conditions.
- Create a vibrant, seven-days-a-week, pedestrian-friendly Downtown focused both on the Transportation Center and the historic area to its immediate north.

As shown in Table 1, below, many of the policies and recommendations from the 2002 Master Plan have been implemented through regulatory changes and other City actions.

**Table 1: 2002 Master Plan Implementation Actions**

<b>Master Plan Policy/Recommendation</b>	<b>Action</b>
1) <i>Support Neighborhood Revitalization Plans</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implemented Village Commercial zoning in Springdale, Glenbrook and Stillwater Avenue</li> </ul>
2) <i>Remediate brownfields for new housing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Properties remediated in South End and Waterside</li> </ul>
3) <i>Maintain inventory of affordable housing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Charter Oak redevelopment of public housing</li> <li>▪ Adoption of one-to-one replacement ordinance</li> </ul>
4) <i>Adopt an inclusionary zoning program</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Established for all zones permitting multifamily development</li> <li>▪ Total of 324 affordable units created in 10 years</li> <li>▪ \$3.6 million in “fee-in-lieu” funds to support additional affordable housing</li> </ul>
5) <i>Encourage a variety of housing types</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adopted regulations to encourage residential conversion of office buildings</li> <li>▪ Several projects completed producing primarily studio and one-bedroom units</li> </ul>
6) <i>Encourage increased housing downtown and on transit corridors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Approximately 9,000 units completed or in construction, mostly in Downtown and South End</li> </ul>
7) <i>Promote public access to the waterfront, greenways and new parks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creation of Mill River Park</li> <li>▪ Inclusion of public waterfront access at Harbor Point</li> <li>▪ Efforts to extend Mill River Park north to Scalzi Park and south to Harbor Point</li> </ul>

Source: City of Stamford Land Use Bureau

The growth management study underlying the 2002 Master Plan envisioned three scenarios: low-growth, trend growth and high-growth. During the past 10 years, commercial and industrial development in the City has fit the low-growth scenario, largely reflecting the national economic recession. Housing development, in contrast, has fit the high-growth scenario, with Stamford building through the recession, driven in part by the shortage of rental housing in the New York Metropolitan Area. Most residential growth in the City has been focused on the Downtown and South End, with some 3,000 units of approved housing still to be built in the South End. This growth has led to significant demographic changes, as Stamford's population grew nearly 5 percent from 2000 to 2010, with particular growth in the Latino and Asian populations.

Despite the progress made since the 2002 Master Plan was adopted, a number of planning issues and challenges remain, including the need for better design guidelines and standards to enhance the vibrancy and walkability of the Downtown, implementation of improvements to the Transportation Center, completing development of the South End to achieve stated goals and continuing to support mobility alternatives to the automobile.

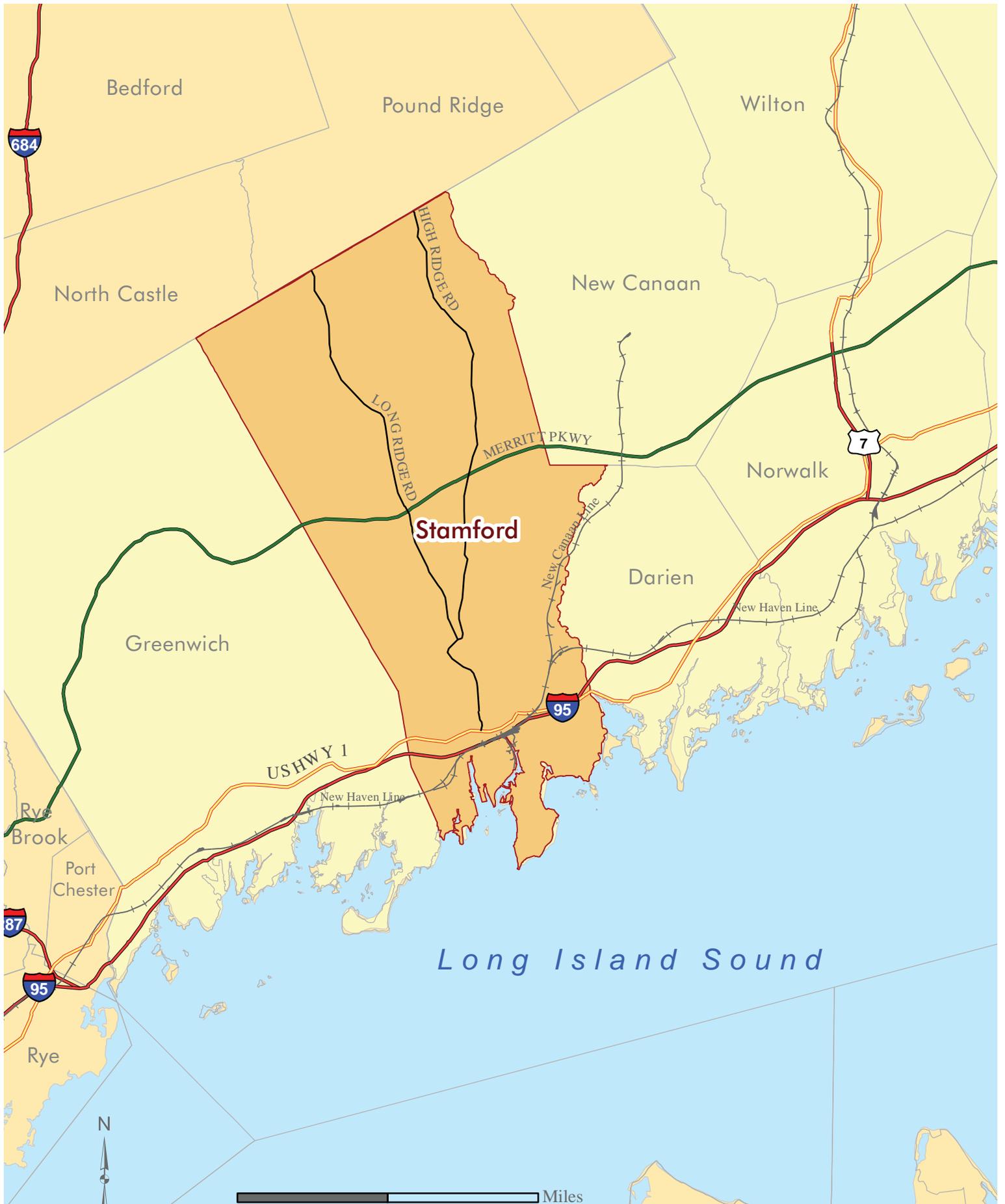
### **C. Regional Context**

The City of Stamford is a mid-sized city located in Fairfield County, Connecticut. Situated on the north shore of Long Island Sound, the approximately 40-square-mile city is part of the federally-designated Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk Metropolitan Statistical Area (see Figure 1: Regional Location Map). Located approximately 35 miles from New York City, Stamford is also part of the Tri-State Metropolitan Region. It is bordered to the west by the Town of Greenwich, to the north by the Towns of North Castle and Pound Ridge, New York, and to the east by the Towns of New Canaan and Darien (see Figure 2: Local Context). With a population of about 124,000, Stamford is the third-largest city in Connecticut.

Three principal east-west thoroughfares connect Stamford to the New York Metropolitan Area and the New England region. Interstate 95 and U.S. Route 1 traverse the southern portion of the City, providing access to Downtown Stamford, as well as the West Side, Waterside, Cove, the East Side, Glenbrook and South End neighborhoods. The Merritt Parkway crosses the northern-central portion of Stamford, providing access to the residential neighborhoods defining this area. Major north-south arterials through Stamford include Connecticut Route 104 (Long Ridge Road), Route 137 (High Ridge Road) and Route 106.

Stamford is served by three train stations on two Metro-North commuter rail lines: the New Haven Line, which provides service to New Haven and New York City, and the New Canaan Branch, a split from the New Haven Line serving the neighborhoods of Glenbrook and Springdale through to New Canaan. Additional commuter rail services with stops in Stamford include Amtrak's *Acela Express*, *Northeast Regional* and *Vermont*, and the Connecticut Department of Transportation's *Shore Line East*, which provides service between Stamford and Old Saybrook.





Stamford boasts a nearly 13-mile waterfront bordering estuary, harbor, cove and inlet areas, all of which connect with Long Island Sound. Uses along the City's shoreline are as diverse as its geography is irregular. Active industrial uses – most of which are situated along the two tidal inlets bordering the South End neighborhood – include a scrap metal recycling facility and the City's waste transfer station. For almost a century, a commercial boatyard was operated on a prominent waterfront site – historically called the HELCO (Northeast Utilities) or Yacht Haven West Site – in the South End. Beginning in 1912, this site on the west branch of Stamford Harbor was occupied for more than 50 years by the Luders Marine Construction Company, a Stamford shipbuilding industry of national renown. When the City's coastal management program was being developed in the early 1980s, the boatyard then occupying the site was identified by City planners as one of the largest boatyard/marina facilities serving pleasure craft in the northeast United States. Retention of uncompromised boatyard services and facilities on this property has been a goal of Stamford's master plans since the beginning of the City's coastal management program. Recreational resources can be enjoyed at several public waterfront parks and beaches, including Waterside, Kosciuszko, West Beach, Cummings, Boccuzzi and Cove Island Parks, while private residences and beach and yacht clubs occupy large stretches of the Cove, the East Side and Shippan shorelines. Stamford's rich boating and yachting history continues to thrive, with many docks and slips found along the inner harbors. Continuing this maritime and boating history is one of the aims of the Shorefront Mixed Use category of this Master Plan.

## **Regional Plans**

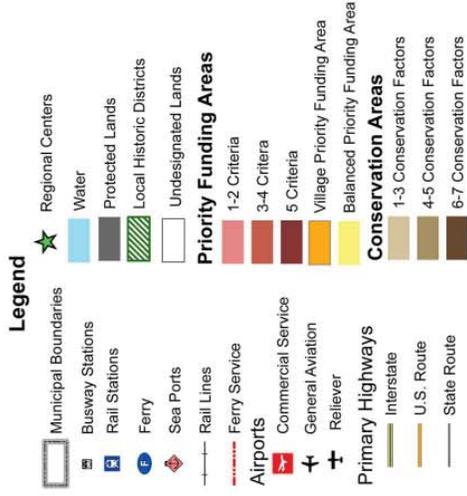
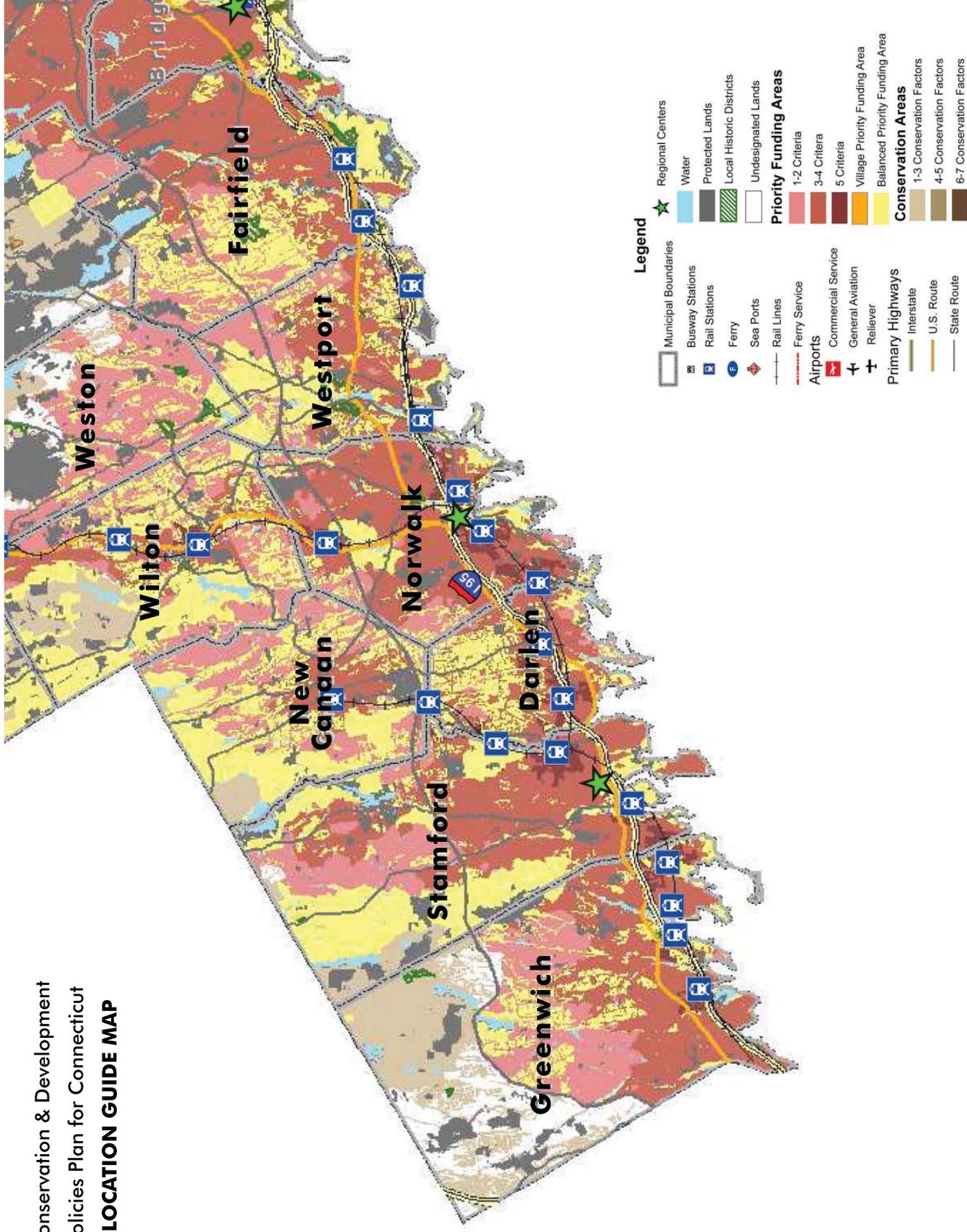
### *State Plan of Conservation and Development (2013-2018)*

The Connecticut General Assembly adopted its plan of conservation and development (State C&D Plan) in June 2013, covering the 2013-2018 period. The State C&D Plan is built around six growth management principles as well as a Statewide Locational Guide Map (LGM) showing priority funding and conservation areas (see Figure 3). The six growth management principles are:

1. Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure.
2. Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs.
3. Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options.
4. Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources and Traditional Rural Lands.
5. Protect and Enhance the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety.
6. Promote Integrated Planning Across All Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis.

While there is no statutory requirement for municipal plans, regulations or land use decisions to be consistent with the State C&D, municipalities and regional planning organizations (RPOs) must identify any inconsistencies with the six growth management principles set forth in the State C&D.

Conservation & Development  
Policies Plan for Connecticut  
**LOCATION GUIDE MAP**



STAMFORD MASTER PLAN

FIGURE 3: LOCATION GUIDE MAP

The LGM reinforces the policies contained in the text of the State C&D Plan. It establishes a set of geographic classifications and criteria for “growth-related projects” that are consistent with the text and located in a priority funding area. Among the set of nine classifications is that of “Regional Center” – defined as “land areas containing traditional core area commercial, industrial, transportation, specialized institutional services, and facilities of inter-town significance.” Stamford is one of 24 municipalities classified as a “Regional Center.”

*South Western Regional Planning Agency Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, 2006-2015\**

Stamford is one of eight municipalities comprising Connecticut’s South Western Region. Following the dissolution of county government in the 1950s, the State established 15 regional councils designed to address issues that extend beyond municipal boundaries. The formal association of these eight cities and towns was established in 1962 with the formation of the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA), one of the State’s 15 regional planning organizations (RPOs).

Connecticut State General Statutes require that the state’s RPOs produce “a plan of development for its area of operation, showing its recommendations for the general use of the area” (see Figure 4: SWRPA Land Use Policy Map). SWRPA’s Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, 2006-2015, fulfills its statutory obligation to prepare a regional plan. The Plan was adopted in February 2006 and sets forth the following goals for the Region:

- Encourage municipal land use planning that recognizes the need to direct development to those areas with the infrastructure, including transportation, to best accommodate it.
- Preserve the Region’s dwindling supply of permanent open space and, wherever possible, add to it through either outright acquisition of open space or through conservation easements.
- Improve and expand the Region’s public transportation system, including the New Haven Rail Line, bus transit services and facilities that support transit use.
- Provide for the Region’s growing energy needs while protecting human health, natural resources and property values.
- Encourage the development of a broad range of housing alternatives and, whenever possible, direct new housing to locations that are served by transit.
- Encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures.
- Foster continued cooperation among the Region’s first responders to develop coordinated plans to address emergencies that cannot be contained within a single municipality’s boundaries.
- Plan for an aging and increasingly diverse population.
- Protect the quality-of-life in all of the Region’s neighborhoods by ensuring that low-income areas or other communities of concern are not targeted for the location of undesirable land uses.
- Maintain the Region’s strong business climate by building on those assets that stimulated the Region’s business growth in the first place: viable transportation facilities, attractive communities, good schools and a well-educated and trained workforce.

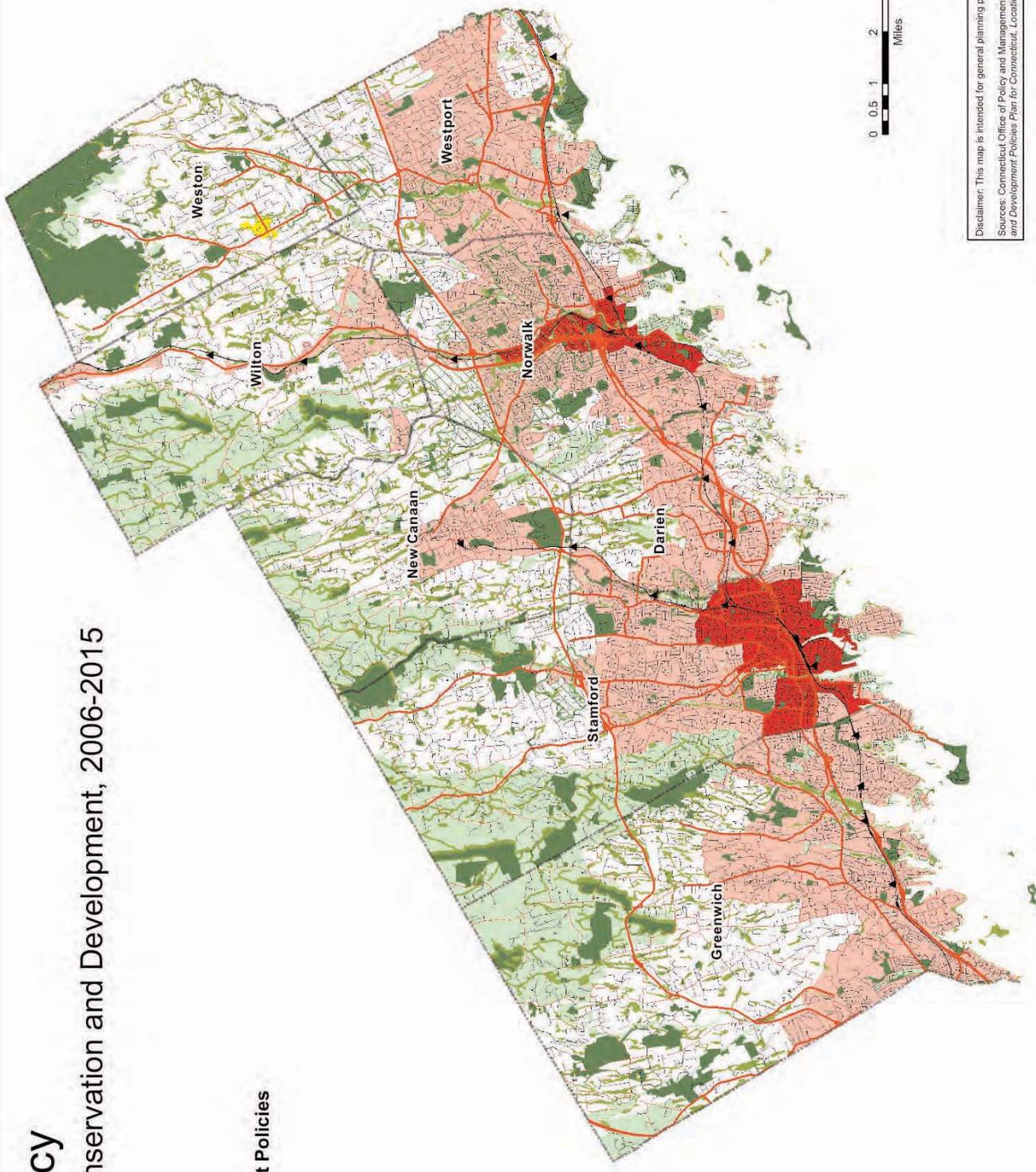
\* The Office of Policy and Management has officially re-designated the South Western and Housatonic Valley planning regions into a single planning region – the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCCOG).

# Land Use Policy

## Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, 2006-2015

### Conservation and Development Policies

-  Neighborhood Conservation
-  Regional Center
-  Rural Community Center
-  Existing Preserved Open Space
-  Preservation Area
-  Conservation Area
-  Rural Land
-  Aquifer Protection Area
-  Historic District
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Primary Highway
-  Secondary Highway
-  Local Road
-  Railroad
-  Rail Station



Prepared on January 26, 2006  
**SWRPA**  
 South Western Regional Planning Agency

Disclaimer: This map is intended for general planning purposes only.  
 Sources: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut, Locational Guide Map

FIGURE 4: SWRPA LAND USE POLICY MAP



## **CHAPTER 2.0: STAMFORD TODAY**

This chapter provides an overview of Stamford’s current demographic, socioeconomic and land-use characteristics, as well as community facilities and services. It provides both a “snapshot” of where Stamford is today in terms of its population, housing demand and household formation, education attainment, labor force, income distribution and existing land use and zoning, and an analysis of key trends across these areas. This discussion sets the stage for the remaining chapters of the Master Plan, which then set forth the overall vision, goals and specific recommendations.

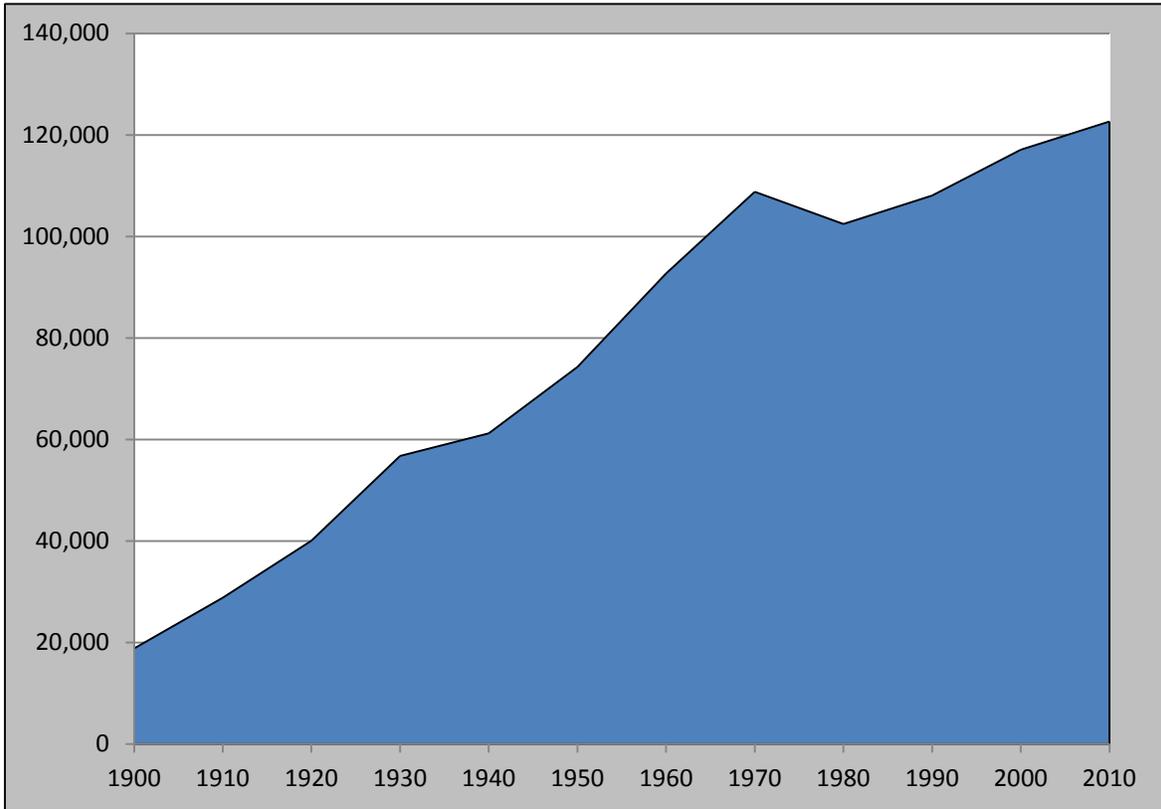
### **2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS AND SOCIOECONOMICS**

Stamford is now the third most populous city in Connecticut, following Bridgeport and New Haven. With 125,102 residents in 2012, it has more residents than Hartford, the State capital. Since the 1980s, Stamford has gained prominence in the region as a center for corporate and financial headquarters and has continued to attract new residents (see Chart 1). Between 1980 and 2010, Stamford’s population steadily increased from 102,453 to 122,643 at an average annual growth rate of 0.6 percent. As shown in Table 2, the rate of Stamford’s population gain has exceeded that of both Fairfield County and the State of Connecticut as a whole.

Over the course of the past decade, Stamford has become more racially/ethnically diverse and has attracted a younger population. Drawn to new high-rise residential development, proximity to transit and walkable neighborhoods (particularly the Downtown and South End), younger people who value the amenities of city living are being attracted to Stamford. At the same time, the City has seen a marked increase in households with children and significant gains in educational attainment among residents, due in part to an influx of educated workers, as well as an overall expansion of the resident labor force.

While the resident labor force has grown, the City has seen a widening racial/ethnic disparity in unemployment, with unemployment rates highest among Stamford’s Hispanic and Black residents. Median adjusted annual household income in Stamford has decreased over the past decade, with 33 percent of residents earning less than \$50,000 per year in constant dollars, and an additional 30 percent earning between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per year.

**Chart 1: Stamford Population Trends, 1900 to 2010**



Source: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and U.S. Census

**Table 2: Population 2000-2010, State of Connecticut, Fairfield County and Stamford**

Area	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	
			Number	Annual Average
State of Connecticut	3,405,565	3,574,097	168,532	0.49%
Fairfield County	882,567	916,829	34,262	0.39%
City of Stamford	117,083	122,643	5,560	0.47%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

**A. Population Growth Projections**

The Connecticut State Data Center at the University of Connecticut prepares population projections on a town and county basis to assist State agencies and local governments in planning for the future.<sup>1</sup> These projections are based upon historic trends, migration rates and locally derived fertility rates.<sup>2</sup> According to projections released in 2012 (Table 3), Stamford can continue to expect a rate of growth that exceeds that of the State and Fairfield County – as well as the State’s other large cities with the exception of New Haven – through 2025. By 2025, the City is expected to have added more than 11,000 new residents since 2010, for a projected total population of more than 133,800.

**Table 3: Population Projections for Large Connecticut Cities, 2010-2015**

Area	2010	2015	2020	2025	Change 2010-2025	
					Number	Annual Average
<b>State of Connecticut</b>	3,574,097	3,644,545	3,702,469	3,746,181	172,084	0.31%
<b>Fairfield County</b>	916,829	932,377	944,692	954,479	37,650	0.27%
<b>City of Stamford</b>	122,643	126,810	130,830	133,821	11,178	0.58%
City of Bridgeport	144,229	147,710	150,764	152,857	8,628	0.39%
City of New Haven	129,779	135,175	140,446	144,711	14,932	0.73%
City of Hartford	124,775	125,999	126,656	126,185	1,410	0.07%

*Source: Connecticut State Data Center, 2012*

This increase in residents will have a direct impact on Stamford’s housing market, generating demand for new housing units. Trends indicate that many of the City’s new residents will be young people attracted to urban living in the Downtown and South End. This suggests increased demand for studio and one-bedroom apartments, which is consistent with the character of new residential development that has occurred in these neighborhoods over the past five years. This type of development will have a positive fiscal impact upon the City, contributing to the tax base and attracting higher-income earners who can support Downtown retail, restaurant and entertainment uses. At the same time, such units are expected to generate few school children. A recent analysis of multifamily residential development in White Plains, Stamford and Norwalk utilizing data collected by the Mill Creek Residential Trust indicates that such development generates an average of 0.028 school children per unit, or less than three school children for every 100 units.

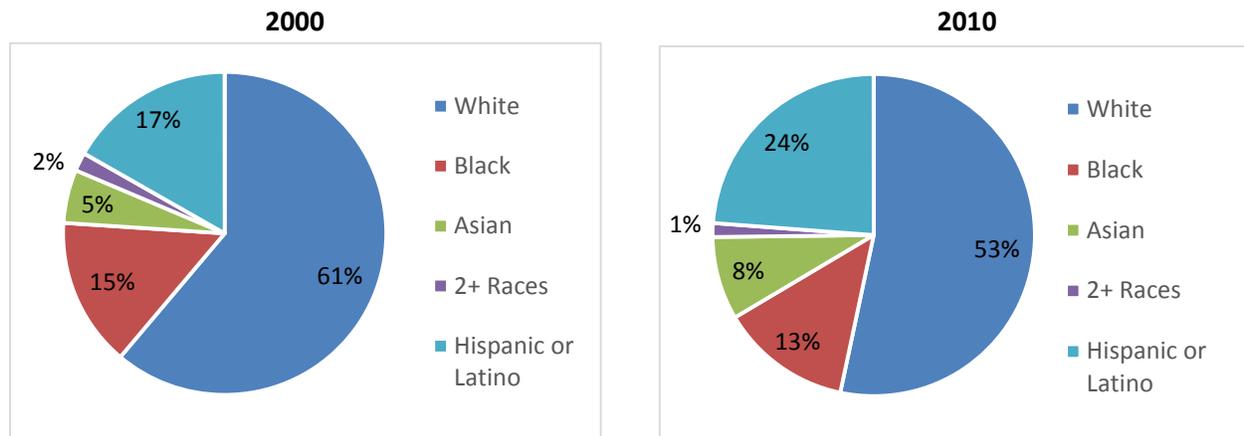
<sup>1</sup> Projections provided by the UCONN Data Center are based on historical migration trends through the 2010 U.S. Census.

<sup>2</sup> A detailed analysis of Stamford’s population growth by age and gender is included in the City’s Demographic Profile, see Appendix A.

## B. Race and Ethnicity

Stamford's population is becoming increasingly diverse. Between 2000 and 2010, as the City's total population grew by more than 5,000 residents, its White and Black populations declined while its Hispanic and Asian populations grew. As shown on Chart 2, during this period, Stamford's White population declined from 61 percent to 53 percent of the total population; its Black population declined from 15 percent to 13 percent; its Hispanic population increased from 17 percent to 24 percent and its Asian population increased from 5 percent to 8 percent.

**Chart 2: Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2010**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010 Summary File 1

## C. Age Structure

Largely because of migration trends, the age structure of Stamford has evolved in a different manner from that of Fairfield County and the State of Connecticut as a whole. At the start of the last decade, the City had relatively fewer children, more adults between the ages of 18 and 44, and fewer residents between 45 and 65 years of age than both the County and the State.

From 2000 to 2010, the population 65 years and older has been declining slightly, a trend that likely reflects patterns of outmigration and mortality. During the same period, the number of children under the age of 18 has been steadily growing. On the contrary, trend reversals have occurred among the prime labor force, with residents between age 30 and 45 contracting.

Stamford showed stronger growth among residents of the young labor force age (18 to 29), many of them enrolled at the University of Connecticut, University of Bridgeport or Sacred Heart University. Stamford also added older labor force-age residents (45 to 64), attracted by the City's employment opportunities, new housing construction and regional location. Altogether, these trends make the City decidedly more youthful than the County and the State as a whole.

**Table 4: Population by Age, 2000 and 2010**

	Total Population by Age Cohort					
	City of Stamford		Fairfield County		State of Connecticut	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Total	117,083	122,643	882,567	925,899	3,405,565	3,574,097
Under 18	25,896	26,461	226,214	225,938	841,688	817,015
18 to 29	18,473	20,164	112,761	126,948	473,052	540,804
30 to 44	31,185	29,223	221,118	183,412	831,222	690,670
45 to 64	25,354	30,702	205,311	262,375	789,420	1,019,049
65 and Older	16,175	16,093	117,163	127,226	470,183	506,559
	Percent of Population by Age Cohort					
	City of Stamford		Fairfield County		State of Connecticut	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Under 18	22.1%	21.6%	25.6%	24.4%	24.7%	22.9%
18 to 29	15.8%	16.4%	12.8%	13.7%	13.9%	15.1%
30 to 44	26.6%	23.8%	25.1%	19.8%	24.4%	19.3%
45 to 64	21.7%	25.0%	23.3%	28.3%	23.2%	28.5%
65 and Older	13.8%	13.1%	13.3%	13.7%	13.8%	14.2%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010 Summary File 1

**D. Household Formation**

Anticipated growth in Stamford’s population over the next decade will have a significant impact on household formation and the demand for housing. As the number of households residing in the City increased from 45,399 to 47,357 between 2000 and 2010, average household size rose from 2.54 to 2.56 persons. As shown in Table 5, the growth in number of households was greatest among non-family households, which expanded by 890 households, or 5.4 percent. Married-couple family households grew by 172 households, or 0.8 percent. At the same time, the number of single female householders and single male households increased by 371 households (21.8%) and 525 households (10%), respectively. The trends reflect Stamford’s increasingly youthful population, with significantly greater numbers of singles, unmarried couples and unrelated adults (roommates) choosing to relocate to the City. The growth of these demographics can be expected to have wide-ranging effects, such as greater demand for smaller housing units, changes in the mix of downtown uses and differing recreational needs.

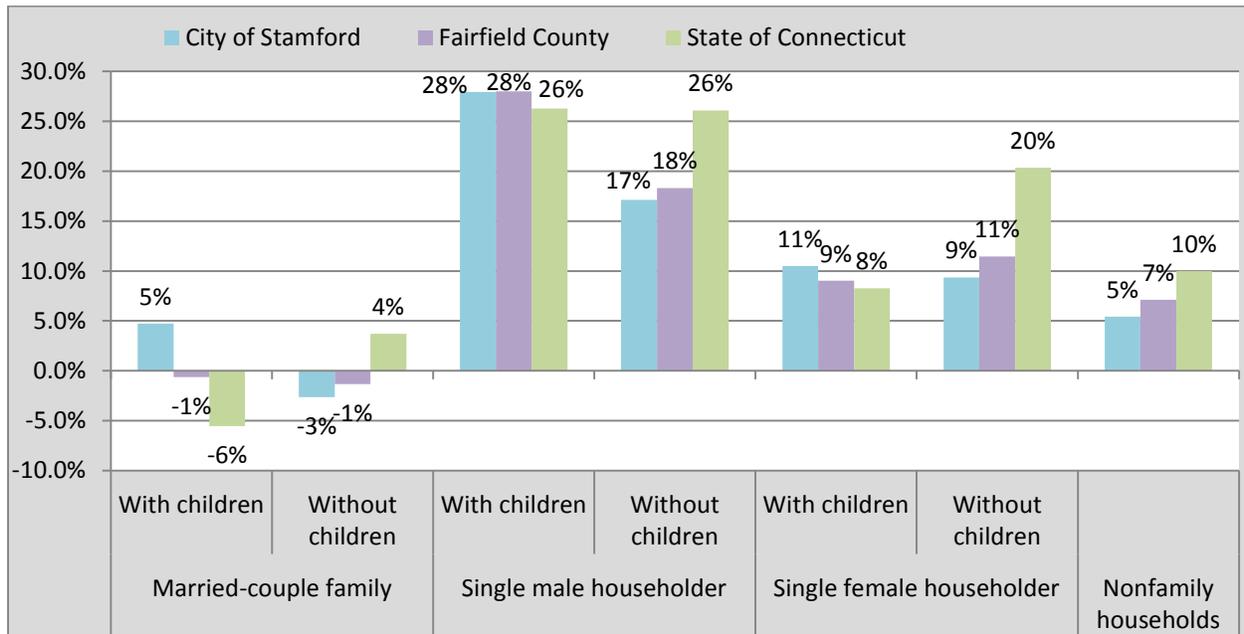
**Table 5: Stamford Household Formation, 2000 to 2010**

Total Households by Type						
	Count		Percent Share		Change, 2000-2010	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	Absolute	Percent
Total	45,399	47,357	100.0%	100.0%	1,958	4.3%
Married-couple family	22,006	22,178	48.5%	46.8%	172	0.8%
Single male householder	1,705	2,076	3.8%	4.4%	371	21.8%
Single female householder	5,240	5,765	11.5%	12.2%	525	10.0%
Nonfamily households	16,448	17,338	36.2%	36.6%	890	5.4%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010 Summary File 1

As shown in Chart 3, between 2000 and 2010, Stamford has seen an increase both in households with children and those without. The City outpaced the county and the State in growth among single-parent households with children, increasing by 13.8 percent (527 households), versus 12.5 percent growth of such households countywide and 11.7 percent growth statewide. In Stamford, married-couple families with children grew by 484 households (4.7%) over the 10-year period; this is in contrast to contractions in married-couple families with children in the county (-0.6%) and the state (-5.5%). The City's growth in households with children has clear implications for the provision of a range of services, most notably the public school system.

**Chart 3: Change in Households by Type and Presence of Children, 2000 to 2010**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010 Summary File 3

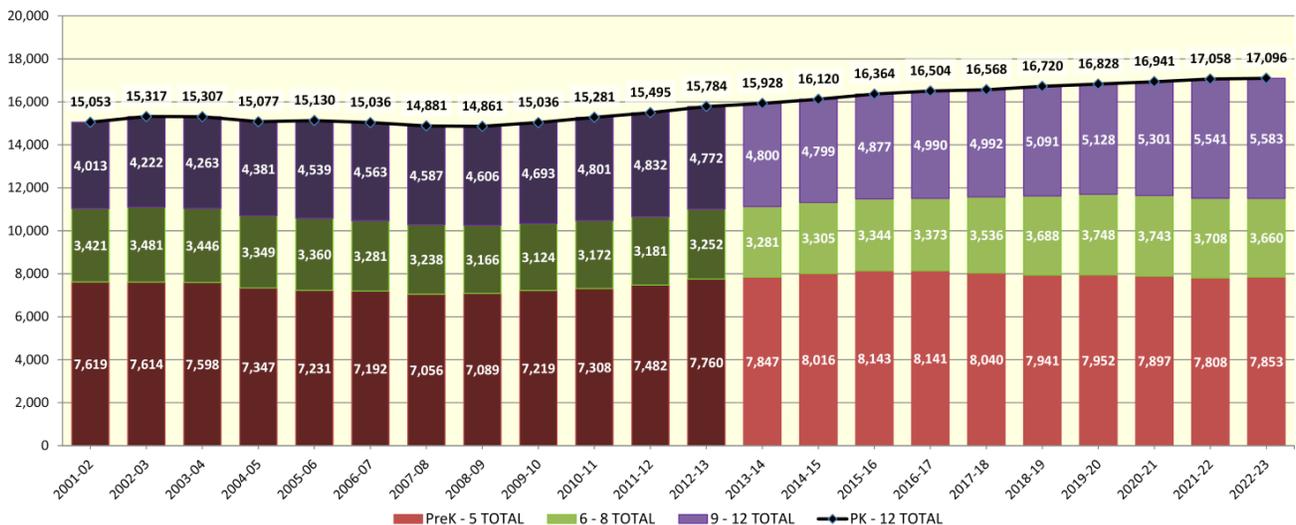
## E. Public School Enrollment and Educational Attainment

### Public School Enrollment

Since 2001, public school enrollment has been on the rise in Stamford at the elementary and high school levels, while middle school enrollment has marginally declined (Chart 4). State Department of Education records show that a reverse trend has occurred among Stamford residents enrolled at private schools. From school year 2006-07 to 2012-13, private school enrollment of City residents fell from 5,314 to 5,000 students, a drop of 5.9 percent, including declines of 350 students at the PreK-4 grade levels and 18 students at the high school level. Private middle school enrollment increased by 54 students.

According to a 2013 enrollment and capacity study completed by consultants, Milone and MacBroom, increased births and in-migration in Stamford will be responsible for enrollment growth of 8.3 percent from school year 2012-13 to 2022-23, with the largest gains expected at the high school level, followed by middle and elementary students. The report forecasts that the City’s school system will become increasingly diverse due a majority of births from minority residents. Further the study projected that neighborhoods most likely to experience school-age population growth will be those with recent and planned large-scale residential developments, such as the West Side and Glenbrook. As young families generally prefer two or more bedroom rental and townhome/condo units and single-family homes over luxury apartments, the unit price, tenure and bedroom mix of new housing development and the resettlement of existing single-family homes with young families will ultimately determine the pace of school-age growth throughout Stamford. The City and the Board of Education should develop a facilities planning analysis for infrastructure of existing and future City schools.

**Chart 4: Stamford Historic and Projected Enrollment, PreK-12, SY 2001-02 to 2022-23**



*Projections use three-year average persistency ratios and five-year moving average birth projections.*

According to the U.S. Census, over the period from 2000 to 2010, post-secondary enrollment among Stamford residents has climbed from 5,660 to 7,681 students, a gain of 2,021, or 35.7 percent (see Table 6). This has been due, in part, to the impact of the Great Recession on higher-education enrollment, as

younger people without jobs returned to education in greater numbers. Since 2010, the trend has tapered off somewhat as more jobs are becoming available, but higher-education enrollment remains high. As UCONN’s master plan has called for new residence halls to be located Downtown, the City’s college enrollment is expected to expand from today’s levels by up to 400 students in future years. Given the demands of a knowledge-based economy and Stamford’s focus on information-oriented activities, a greater concentration of students in graduate-level and professional programs is also expected. Since the late 1990s, the higher-education industry has become a key driver in urban economies, attracting new population, accounting for significant employment growth and generating major investment. As a driver, higher education – and medical education – can be counted on to serve Stamford residents and stimulate the City’s economy.

**Table 6: Post-Secondary Enrollment Status of Stamford Population, 2000, 2005 and 2010**

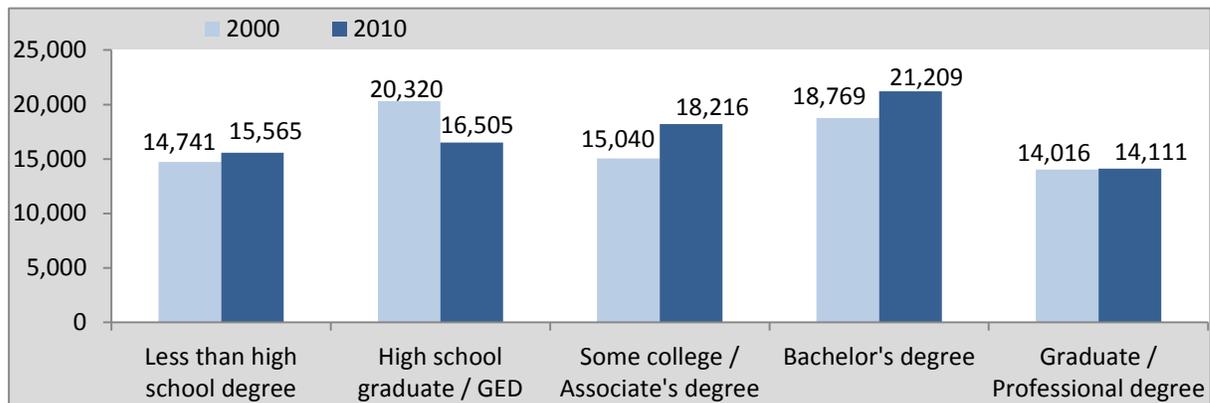
School Type	2000	2005	2010	Change	
				Absolute	%
<b>Total</b>	5,660	7,948	7,681	2,021	35.7%
<b>College, Undergraduate</b>	4,156	6,429	5,260	1,104	26.6%
<b>Graduate or Professional</b>	1,504	1,519	2,421	917	61.0%

*Source: U.S. Census, Enrollment Status, 2000 Summary File 3 and ACS 2005 and 2010 1-Year Estimate*

*Educational Attainment*

Between 2000 and 2010, there have been significant gains in educational attainment among Stamford residents. As shown in Chart 5, residents with less than a high school degree increased by 5.6 percent (824 people). The number of residents with a high school diploma or GED fell by 18.8 percent or 3,815 people; those with some college or an Associate’s degree grew by 21.1 percent (3,176 people). Although the City added just 95 residents with a Graduate or Professional degree, the number of residents with a Bachelor’s degree increased by 13 percent (2,440 people). While these statistics point to a more educated resident workforce, they also reflect the recent influx of educated newcomers, attracted by new luxury housing in Stamford.

**Chart 5: Stamford Educational Trends Attainment, 2000 to 2010**



*Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 & 2010 ACS 1-Year Estimate*

## F. Labor Force Participation

During the past decade, the resident civilian labor force in Stamford has increased from 63,681 to 71,305 participants, or by 12 percent. This expansion was faster than that in seen in overall in Fairfield County and Connecticut. By 2010, fully 72.1 percent of all Stamford adults aged 16 years and over were participating in the labor force. As shown in Table 7, the largest share (90.5%) of the population working or seeking employment was aged 45 to 54 years. Labor force participation rates fell for the youth and elderly job-seeking population (ages 16-19 and 65-74).

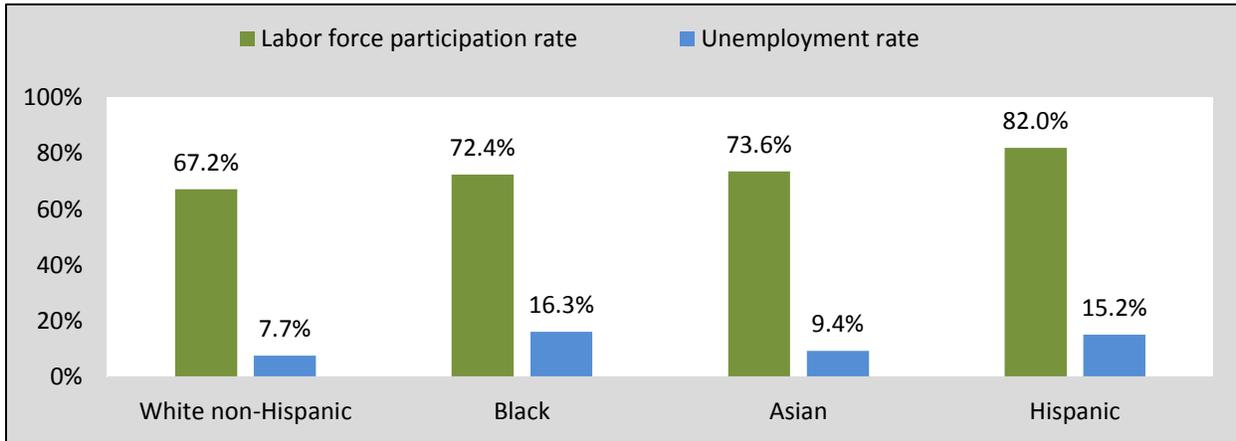
**Table 7: Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates in Stamford, 2000 to 2012**

Labor Force Participation						
	Count		Participation Rate		Change, 2000-2010	
	2000	2010	2000	2012	Absolute	Percent
Total in labor force	63,681	71,305	67.9%	72.1%	7,624	12.0%
16 to 19 years	1,933	1,595	45.3%	30.3%	-338	-17.5%
20 to 24 years	5,185	6,575	78.9%	82.4%	1,390	26.8%
25 to 44 years	34,128	35,113	82.4%	86.7%	985	2.9%
45 to 54 years	12,400	16,168	82.5%	90.5%	3,768	30.4%
55 to 64 years	6,948	8,768	68.2%	72.3%	1,820	26.2%
65 to 74 years	2,565	2,362	30.3%	32.7%	-203	-7.9%
75 years and over	522	724	6.7%	9.2%	202	38.7%
Unemployment						
	Count		Unemployment Rate		Change, 2000-2010	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	Absolute	Percent
Total unemployed	2,734	9,166	4.3%	12.9%	6,432	235.3%
16 to 19 years	457	558	23.6%	35.0%	-397	22.1%
20 to 24 years	294	1,021	5.7%	15.5%	470	247.3%
25 to 44 years	1,114	3,615	3.3%	10.3%	3,073	224.5%
45 to 54 years	394	2,908	3.2%	18.0%	575	638.1%
55 to 64 years	309	628	4.4%	7.2%	791	103.2%
65 to 74 years	63	394	2.5%	16.7%	105	525.4%
75 years and over	103	42	19.7%	5.8%	-71	-59.2%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 & 2010 ACS 1-Year Estimate

Labor force participation and unemployment rates by race/ethnicity are shown in Chart 6. Labor force participation rates are highest among Hispanic residents (82%). Labor force participation among Black and Asian residents is 72.4 and 73.6, respectively, and is slightly lower among White residents at 67.2 percent. At the same time, unemployment rates are highest among the City's Hispanic and Black populations (15.2% and 16.3% respectively) and lowest among its White and Asian populations (7.7% and 9.4%, respectively).

**Chart 6: Stamford's Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2010**

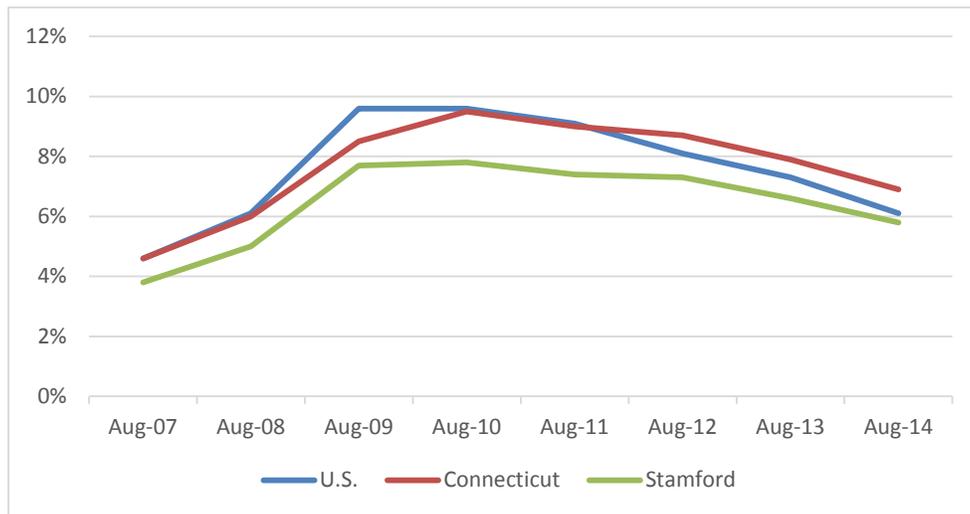


Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2010 ACS 3-Year Estimate

Currently, the City's minority populations comprise roughly half of Stamford's resident labor force; however a disproportionate share are unemployed. According to 2008-2010 Census estimates, of 8,027 jobless individuals in Stamford, 5,371, or 67%, were minorities.

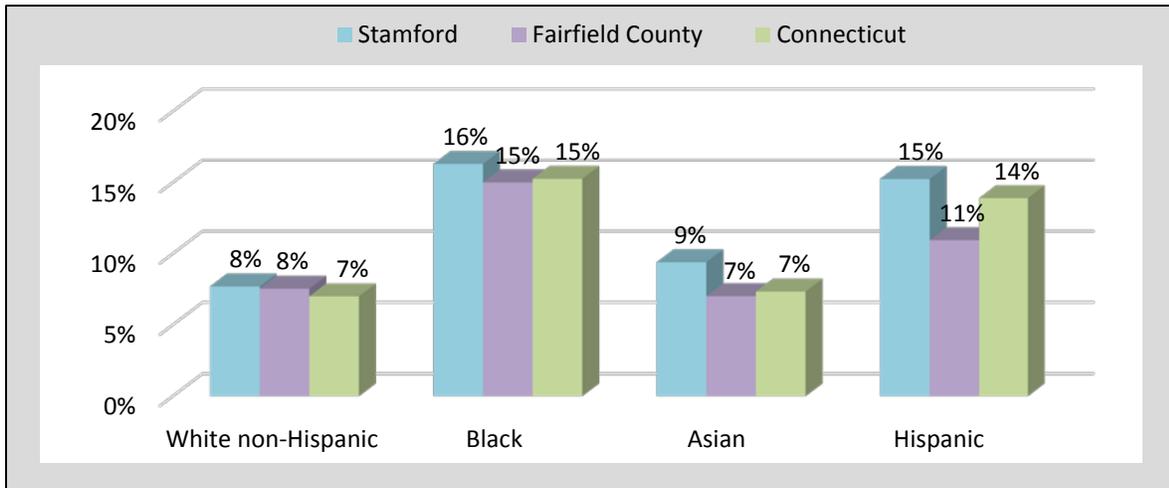
While Stamford's unemployment rate rose during the recent recession, as shown in Chart 7, it has since returned to pre-recession levels in a similar pattern as the national and state unemployment rates, but has consistently remained below those other levels. Joblessness was highest among young adult participants in the labor force and most greatly affected minority residents. As shown in Chart 8, the unemployment rate is highest among Hispanic and Black residents at 15 percent and 16 percent respectively.

**Chart 7: Stamford Unemployment Rates, 2008-2014**



Source: Connecticut Department of Labor

**Chart 8: Unemployment Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2008-2010**

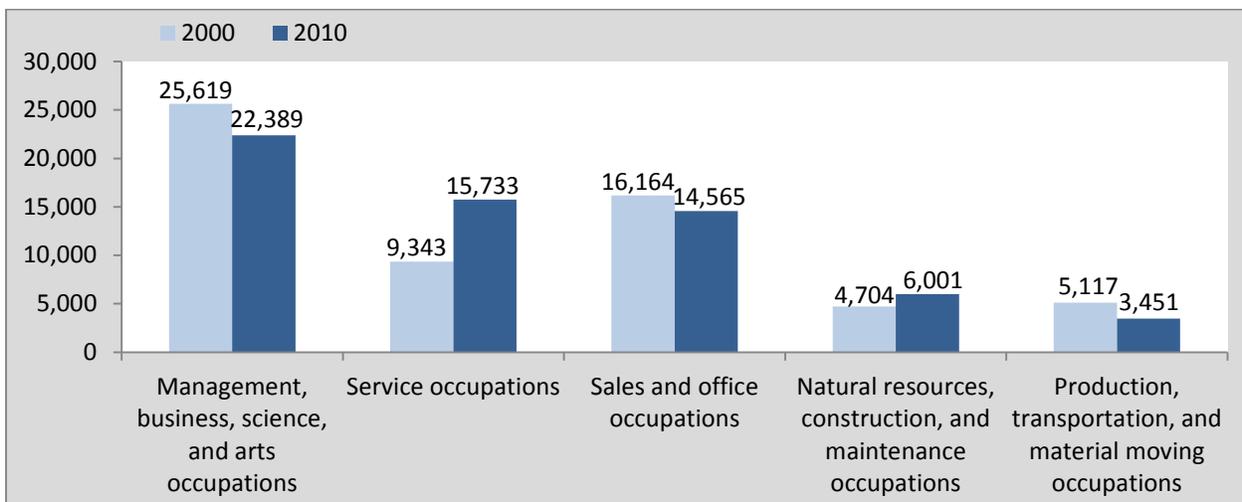


Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2010 ACS 3-Year Estimate

**G. Occupations of the Resident Labor Force**

Over the past decade, Stamford’s working labor force has been largely employed in service, sales, management, business, science and art occupations and, to a lesser extent, in natural resources, construction and maintenance occupations (see Chart 9). Employment in management, business, science, sales, office, production, transportation and material moving occupations has declined. Collectively, the resident labor force expanded by 1,192 persons between 2000 and 2010, with the largest gains in professional services, construction and maintenance occupations.

**Chart 9: Stamford's Employed Labor Force by Occupational Group, 2000 and 2010**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 & 2010 ACS 1-Year Estimate

## H. Income Distribution

As shown in Table 8, in 2010, 68.7 percent of all households in Stamford had an annual income under \$100,000. A total of 21 percent of City residents earned between \$100,000 and \$200,000 per year; 10.3 percent of households earned more than \$200,000 per year. It should be noted that the Census Bureau measurement of income does not reflect asset earnings, which could substantially elevate the earnings of upper-income earners. Over the past decade, as measured in nominal dollars, the share of households with incomes in the top two quintiles – \$150,000 and over – increased from 14.2 percent to 18.3 percent, a gain of 1,523 households (see Table 8). In the bottom two quintiles (annual incomes under \$100,000) the number of households in Stamford declined by 2,880 households, or 8.8 percent. Over the entire 1999-2010 period, the middle-income bracket of \$100,000 to \$149,999 remained the most unchanged in absolute and relative terms, representing 5,656 households, or 13 percent of Stamford households.

**Table 8: Distribution of Annual Household Income in Stamford, 1999-2010**

Distribution of Annual Household Income						
	Count		Percent Share		Change, 2000-2010	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	Absolute	Percent
Total households*	45,454	43,537	100.0%	100.0%	-1,917	-4.2%
Less than \$50,000	19,073	16,629	42.0%	38.2%	-2,444	-12.8%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	13,727	13,291	30.2%	30.5%	-436	-3.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	6,216	5,656	13.7%	13.0%	-560	-9.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2,565	3,487	5.6%	8.0%	922	35.9%
\$200,000 or more	3,873	4,474	8.5%	10.3%	601	15.5%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 & 2010 ACS 1-YR Estimate

\*The number of households for Table 8 differs from the number of households for Table 5 because the tables are generated from different Census files. Table 5 is based on Census Summary File 1, which represents a 100% count. Table 8 is based on the 2000 Summary File 3 and the 2010 American Community Survey 1-year estimate, which represent sample counts.

As shown in Table 9, median household income in Stamford (the midpoint of the household income distribution) declined over the course of the past decade from \$79,259 in 2000 to \$66,617 in 2010. This is consistent with declining relative income that has occurred nationwide.

**Table 9: Annual Household Income Trends in Stamford, 1999-2010**

Median Household Income (in 2010\$)*					
Area	2000	2005	2010	Change 2000-2010	
				Number	Percent
City of Stamford	\$79,259	\$74,403	\$66,617	-\$12,642	-16%

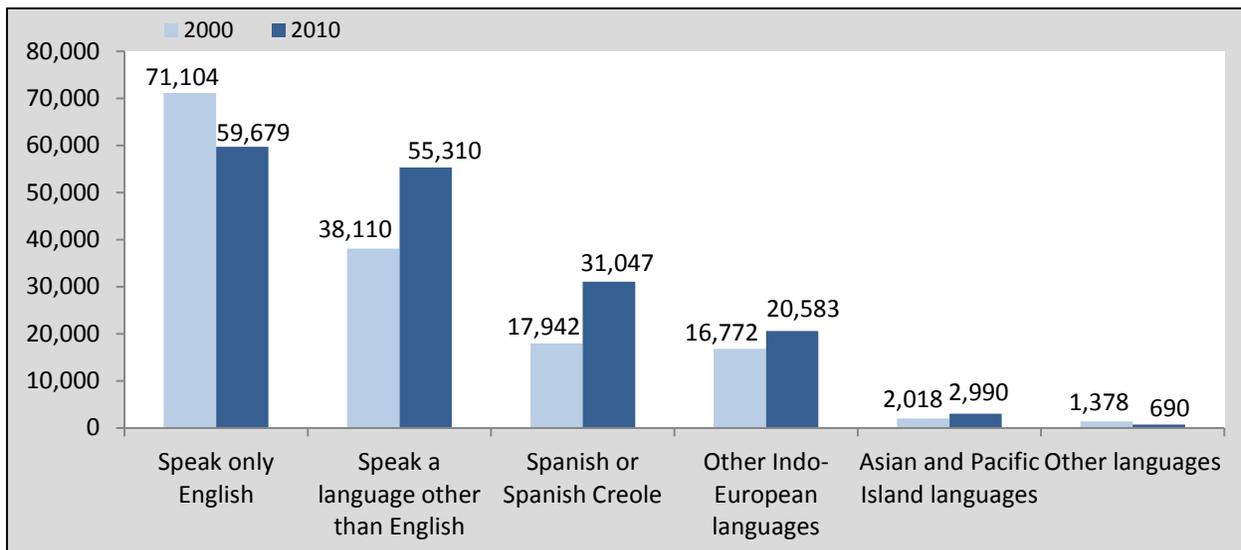
\* Note: Median Household Income in 2010 Dollars.

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 & 2005, 2010 ACS 1-YR Estimates

**I. Special Considerations: English Language Proficiency and Physical Disability**

Residents’ ability to participate in the workforce is affected by numerous factors, including ability to speak the English language and physical ability. As shown on Chart 10, 55,310 Stamford residents speak a language other than English; this is an increase of 17,200 residents since 2000. These individuals represent nearly 35 percent of the city’s current population. Among these residents, 51.6 percent, or 28,538 people, do not speak English well (i.e., have limited English proficiency (LEP)). This represents a significant barrier to employment for nearly one-sixth of the city’s population. According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey for the five-year period from 2008-2010, among those Stamford residents who do not speak English very well, the top languages spoken at home include Spanish or Spanish Creole (62.4%); French or French Creole (10.9%); Polish (5.4%); Russian (3.8%); other Asian languages (2.3%); Chinese (2%); other Slavic languages (1.9%); Italian (1.8%); and other Indo-European languages (1.5%).

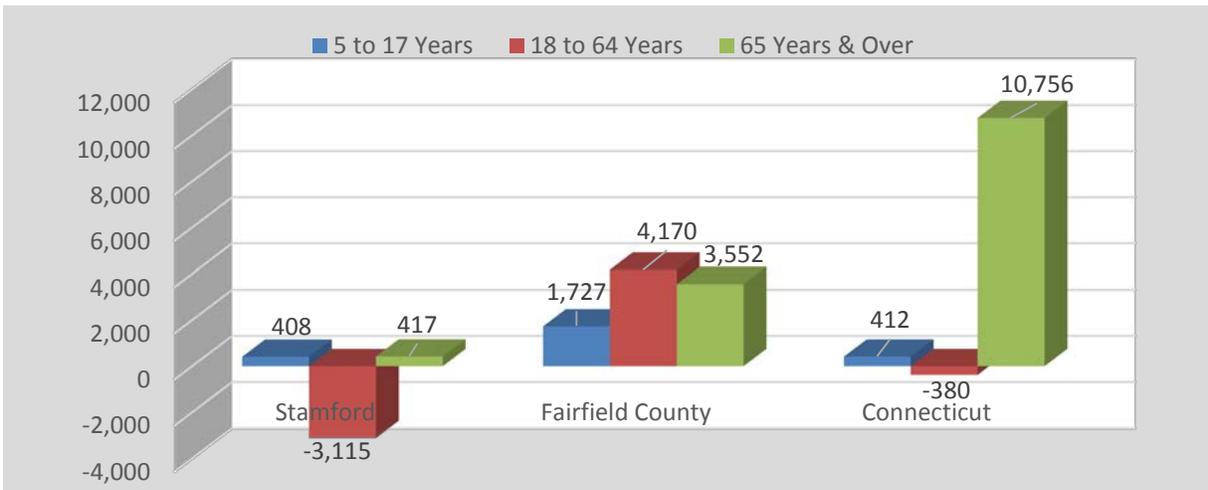
**Chart 10: Language Spoken at Home for Stamford Residents 5 Years and Older, 2000-2010**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 & 2010 ACS 1-Year Estimate

Disability affects 10,378 Stamford residents (8.5%) age 5 and older. As defined by the Census, disability includes a sensory, mental or physical disability or a self-care or independent-living difficulty. Between 2008 and 2010, the number of disabled working-age residents declined by 3,115 persons, or 40 percent, while the elderly disabled population increased by 417 persons, or 29.4 percent (see Chart 11). Although these trends show that the total number of disabled residents in Stamford has declined in recent years, disability will continue to pose barriers to daily life and workforce participation among a sizeable share of Stamford’s population, particularly the elderly. Appropriate investments in transportation services and infrastructure systems, in addition to appropriate employer assistance and investment, will continue to be needed.

**Chart 11: Disabled Residents, 2008-2010**



Source: U.S. Census, 2008 and 2010 ACS 1-Year Estimates

**J. Neighborhood Demographic Changes**

With the exception of the West Side, where large residential and institutional redevelopment projects have led to relocation of public housing residents,<sup>3</sup> all of the City’s neighborhoods experienced some population growth over the last decade. Both total and child population growth was driven by the addition of new housing units, primarily in Downtown (1,380 units), Waterside (490 units), Westover (244 units) and Springdale (210 units). In neighborhoods such as Cove, the East Side, Turn-of-River and Westover, school-child population growth was coupled with increases in the number of rental units, while in the Downtown, the expansion in both the school-child population and number of owner-occupied housing units was noteworthy.

Additionally, gains in median household income were most significant in communities that experienced the largest gains in populations 65 years and older, particularly in North Stamford (385 residents), Newfield (89) and Waterside (161 residents). All of these trends are notable for symbolizing the unique relationships among household income, tenure and age of residents.

The intensity of gentrification was most evident in neighborhoods that experienced rapidly rising home values and race-ethnicity transformations such as the West Side, where median home values increased from \$230,000 to \$450,000, while the population of Black residents fell from 5,190 to 4,090, and the Hispanic population added 1,517 residents. Similar trends also occurred in parts of Shippan, Cove and the East Side, though the displacement involved the out-migration of White non-Hispanics and in-migration of Hispanics and other minorities.

<sup>3</sup> Kim, Elizabeth. “West Side redevelopment celebrated,” 4 Oct. 2012, Stamford Advocate. Available at: <http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/article/West-Side-redevelopment-celebrated-3920599.php>.

## 2.2 LAND USE AND ZONING

A community’s land use composition defines its physical form and function. Understanding how land use is devoted to residential, commercial, industrial, open space and other uses – and the location of vacant and underutilized land – provides the foundation upon which all other Master Plan elements are based, including transportation and infrastructure, economic development, community facilities and open space. The Land Use section of the Master Plan describes Stamford’s existing land use patterns and the underlying zoning controls that regulate land use. It highlights significant land use trends that have occurred over the past decade and establishes goals and policies to manage the City’s growth and development over the next 10 years.

### A. Land Use

#### Existing Land Use

Stamford’s generalized existing land uses are shown in Table 10. This table was compiled from City of Stamford sources such as the City Assessor, as well as data from the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA) and does not represent an exact, parcel-by-parcel computation of land use. To achieve such a level of detail and accuracy would likely require neighborhood-level land-use surveys.

**Table 10: Inventory of Generalized Land Uses - City of Stamford**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Low-Density Residential: One-Family	59%
Medium-Density Residential: 2-4 Family	3%
High-Density Residential: 5+ Family	3%
Commercial	8%
Mixed-Use	3%
Institutional	3%
Light Industrial	1%
Heavy Industrial	<1%
Parking	<1%
Transportation/Utility	<1%
Parks & Open Space	9%*
Vacant	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Sources: City of Stamford, SWRPA  
\*2007 SWRPA Open Space Study*

Residential development is the predominant land use in Stamford. Low-density housing – comprised of single-family homes – is largely found in the neighborhoods of North Stamford, Newfield, Turn-of-River and Westover, as well as portions of Shippan, Cove and the East Side. Medium- and higher-density housing is generally found in Springdale, Belltown, Glenbrook and the West Side, with several multifamily developments also located farther north along High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads. The most

significant concentrations of higher-density residential development are found in the South End, where several new multifamily residential buildings have been constructed over the past decade.

Commercial and mixed uses are largely concentrated in the City's southern portion, including Downtown, the South End and West Side. There are also pockets of commercial uses in the northern portion of the City where neighborhood shopping centers and several office parks are located. Industrial uses – including light and heavy industry – are largely found in the West Side, Waterside and South End, as well as along Hope Street and the rail lines through Glenbrook and Springdale.

Over the past 10 years, Stamford has significantly increased and enhanced its open spaces, most notably with Mill River Park, a reclaimed and enhanced open space in the heart of the City, and with the new Commons Park in the South End.

### **Major Land Use Trends**

*Low-Density Residential Neighborhoods: North Stamford, Newfield, Turn-of-River, Westover, Shippan, Cove and the East Side*

Well over half of Stamford's total land area is comprised of residential neighborhoods, which generally include North Stamford, Newfield, Turn-of-River, Westover, Shippan and portions of Cove and the East Side. These distinct low-density areas represent Stamford's rich history of stable residential communities. Commercial uses in the residential neighborhoods are generally limited to small-scale neighborhood shopping centers serving the local population. Property values in these areas are among the City's highest, and the land area is mainly built out.

Both the 1977 and 2002 Master Plans recommended preservation and enhancement of Stamford's low-density residential neighborhoods, and this Master Plan reiterates this goal. Preserving the existing land use character of these areas will be accomplished with a two-pronged growth management strategy:

- Maintain existing single-family zoning and discourage expansion of additional commercial activity in low-density residential areas, and
- Concentrate 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.

### *Downtown*

Downtown Stamford is the City's central business district, home to major corporations and financial institutions, government facilities, retail establishments, restaurants, entertainment venues and two university campuses. This commercial activity is generally concentrated in the area bounded by Washington Boulevard to the west, Hoyt Street to the north, Grove Street to the east and the Transportation Center/I-95 to the south. Commercial corridors radiate out from the Downtown north

along Summer and Broad Streets to connect with the Bulls Head shopping district and east along East Main Street (U.S. Route 1) to the Cove and the East Side neighborhoods. Downtown Stamford is supported to the south by the Stamford Transportation Center, a major transit hub serving the City and larger region.

In recent years, Downtown Stamford has experienced significant development activity. New high-rise residential buildings have transformed the City's skyline. Other major projects include the planned expansion of the UCONN campus, additional residential development and the ongoing redevelopment and expansion of Mill River Park. Over the past decade, Downtown has evolved from a 9-to-5 workplace to a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood characterized by a strong residential population and activities that attract residents, employees and visitors alike.

At the same time, Downtown continues to face significant challenges. Nearly one-quarter of its commercial and office space remains vacant. Much of Downtown was constructed during the era of urban renewal, which favored superblocks, separation of land uses and automobile traffic. Areas of disconnection and challenges to pedestrian connectivity are a legacy of this development pattern. In order to build on its strengths and make Downtown more walkable, transit-oriented and pedestrian-scaled, this Master Plan calls for a growth management strategy that:

- Promotes a mixed-use, transit-oriented Downtown
- Makes Downtown Stamford more pedestrian-friendly
- Strengthens connections among the Downtown, the Stamford Transportation Center and the South End
- Promotes economic development in the Downtown by attracting and retaining office, residential and mixed-use development

### *South End*

The most notable land use changes that have occurred in Stamford since the last Master Plan was published in 2002 have been in the South End. Once characterized by robust manufacturing and maritime industries, interspersed with smaller residential streets, this waterfront neighborhood has seen dramatic transformation with new residential, commercial and office development on former industrial sites.

Despite the financial crisis of 2008 and the ensuing economic recession, there has been significant planning and development activity in the South End, with more development in the pipeline. At the same time, amid this significant transformation, numerous industrial and manufacturing businesses remain active, and a long-standing resident population remains intact. One of the key land use challenges that the South End will face over the next 10 years will be to preserve and protect older residential areas while continuing to encourage the responsible revitalization and re-purposing of the neighborhood's vacant and underutilized land.

### *Cove and the East Side*

The Cove and the East Side neighborhoods are located in the southeast corner of Stamford, generally bounded to the north by the Glenbrook neighborhood and to the west, south and east by water. East Main Street (U.S. Route 1) traverses through the East Side neighborhood and is a key gateway into Stamford. The neighborhoods are characterized by a wide range of uses. The housing stock is diverse and includes low-density single-family residences as well as higher-density multifamily homes. A large, continuous tract of active commercial and industrial uses abuts the New Haven rail line along Myrtle Avenue, continuing south along the Stamford Canal.

In recent years, several notable development projects have come to the Cove and the East Side neighborhoods, and other key planning initiatives are underway. The Stamford East Main Street Transit Node Feasibility Study is examining opportunities to generate transit-oriented development and to build an intermodal transit facility in the vicinity of the intersection of East Main Street and the planned and funded Phase 2-Stamford Urban Transitway. Phase 2 of the Urban Transitway would provide a direct connection to the Stamford Transportation Center from East Main Street. A “village center” concept should be explored for this area along East Main Street. The future transit facility may include a new bus station, a corporate shuttle drop-off area, accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians and taxi waiting area. In the long-term, a rail station may be possible as a New Canaan branch station, if initial bus ridership warrants it.

### *Glenbrook and Springdale*

Located northeast of Downtown along Metro-North’s New Canaan line, Glenbrook and Springdale are two of Stamford’s more dense and compact neighborhoods, and are comprised of a diverse mix of land uses. Springdale is largely defined by single-family homes, whereas Glenbrook contains a significant number of apartments and condominiums. A substantial portion of the City’s industrially zoned land is concentrated along the rail lines that run through these neighborhoods; 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 the local population. Glenbrook’s commercial district is concentrated around the train station on Glenbrook Road and Crescent Street. Both neighborhoods are stable and largely built out, although future mixed-use infill opportunities exist around both train stations.

The neighborhoods’ vision for their 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 established Village Commercial zoning districts in 2009 in Glenbrook and Springdale, and has also undertaken a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Feasibility Study for both neighborhoods that will provide the necessary analyses, recommendations and conceptual designs for the two proposed TOD districts.

### *West Side*

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 the most diverse in terms of both land use and people. West Broad Street, Stillwater Avenue and West Main Street (U.S. Route 1) are the neighborhood's main thoroughfares and stitch together the variety of land uses that form its overall urban fabric. Key institutions include Stamford Hospital, Cytec Industries and the Connecticut Film Center.

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. A total of 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 partnered with Stamford Hospital to launch the new Vita Health and Wellness District in connection with the planned expansion of the hospital. The hospital has been working with Charter Oak to better connect to the community, improve the health of neighborhood residents and increase access to health care services. This effort includes an urban agricultural center growing produce for the local community, as well as the Fairgate Community Health Center, which provides non-urgent primary health-care services for low-income residents. Another signature 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.

Despite these significant accomplishments, the West Side faces several challenges. Maintaining the infrastructure should be paramount. Traffic congestion, particularly along Stillwater Avenue, is high. And incompatible land uses, such as residential properties located in close proximity to industrial uses, impair quality-of-life in the neighborhood. To address these challenges, 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*

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.

The neighborhood's vision for its future, as discussed in the 2002 Master Plan, is to promote neighborhood revitalization while preserving quality-of-life, through measures such as upgrades to the streetscape and commercial facades and promotion of pedestrian- and transit-friendly development along the Selleck Street neighborhood business district. In addition, enhancements to existing parks are envisioned, as well as exploring the potential for additional public open space for both passive and active recreation. Waterfront access and views along the West Branch are encouraged, with a particular focus on creating continuous public access along the water's edge, and water-dependent uses are to be protected and promoted.

In terms of potential improvements in Waterside, the City should explore the need for a new public school in the neighborhood, and should also proceed with implementation of a roundabout at the Pulaski Street and Greenwich Avenue intersection.

## **B. Zoning**

As a Special Act community, governed by a local Charter, Stamford is unique in that its planning and zoning procedures are established according to the City's Charter, rather than by State statute as in other communities. Stamford has 38 zoning classifications: seven residential districts, nine commercial districts, two industrial districts, 19 design districts and a park district, as shown in Figure 5.

### **Residential Districts**

The RA-1, RA-2 and RA-3 zones are the City's very low-density residential districts. These districts allow for single-family residential development on large lots – one, two and three acres, respectively – in a rural setting. Certain other uses such as public schools, family day-care limited to no more than six children in owner-occupied homes, and public libraries are also permitted as-of-right or by special exception permit subject to conditions. It is intended that permitted uses in these zones be compatible with the character of the City's low-density residential areas, consistent with local street characteristics and sensitive to protection of private water and sewer facilities where public facilities are unavailable. North Stamford is almost entirely mapped RA-1, RA-2 and RA-3. These districts are also mapped in the residential neighborhoods of Westover and Newfield and part of Cove and the East Side's waterfront.

The R-20, R-10 and R-7½ zones are low- to medium-density, single-family residential districts. Like the three RA districts, the purpose of these districts is to protect low-density residential areas. However, the required minimum lot sizes are much smaller: 7,500 square feet for R-7½, 10,000 square feet for R-10 and 20,000 square feet for R-20. Most of Turn-of-River is mapped R-20 and R-10. Significant portions of Springdale, Belltown and Glenbrook are zoned for R-10 or R-7½. Portions of the Cove, the East Side,

Shippan, Waterside and West Side neighborhoods are also mapped R-20, R-10 or R-7½. The R-6 zone allows for one- and two-family detached dwellings on separate lots. A relatively small portion of Stamford’s land area is mapped R-6.

Stamford’s four multifamily residential zones – R-H, R-5, R-MF and RM-1 – allow for multifamily structures such as apartment buildings, condominium complexes and public housing facilities. These districts are primarily mapped in the West Side, Waterside Cove, the East Side, Glenbrook and Springdale neighborhoods, as well as portions of the Downtown and South End.

The Mixed-Use Development District (MX-D) is reserved for the Downtown and areas immediately surrounding the Downtown, and is intended to contribute to the vitality of this commercial core by promoting mixed residential and commercial development and provide a superior living, working and recreational environment for residents and employees. The minimum lot size for the MX-D district is two acres (87,120 square feet); building heights can reach up to 150 feet. See Section 9.AAA of the Stamford Zoning Code for the full description of requirements.

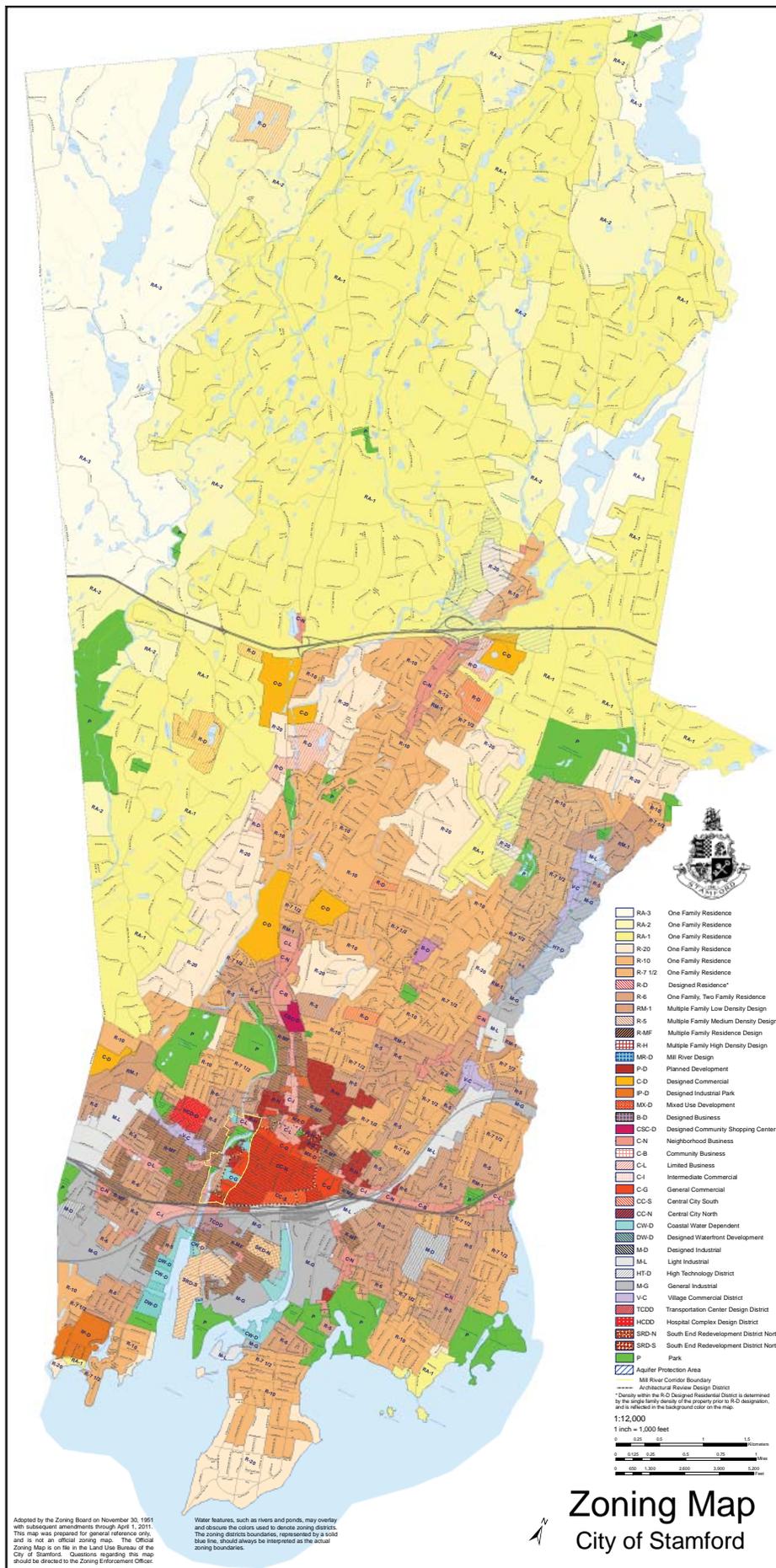
The City should develop a policy to analyze the appropriate number of children served by day-care facilities in all residential and commercial districts, other than RA-1, RA-2 and RA-3 zones, as consistent with State statutes.

Table 11 summarizes the full schedule of building area, height, bulk requirements for the City’s residential districts.

**Table 11: Summary of Requirements for Area, Height and Bulk of Residential Zones**

Zoning District	Minimum Size of Plot		Residential Density		Maximum Building Height		Maximum Building Area
	Area (sf)	Frontage (ft)	Square Foot Per Family	Maximum Families Per Plot	Stories	Feet	% of Lot
RA-3	130,680	200	130,680	1	3	35	10
RA-2	87,120	200	87,120	1	3	35	10
RA-1	43,560	125	43,560	1	3	35	15
R-20	20,000	100	20,000	1	2 ½	30	15
R-10	10,000	75	10,000	1	2 ½	30	20
R-7½	7,500	60	7,500	1	2 ½	30	25
R-6	5,000	50	-	1			25
	6,000	50	-	2			25
RM-1	5,000	50	3,750	-	2 ½	30	25
R-5	5,000	50	-	1	2 ½	30	30
	6,000	50	-	2	2 ½	30	30
	9,000	60	-	9	3	40	30
	30,000	150	2,500	-	3	40	30
RM-F	5,000	50	2,000	-	4	40	30
	20,000	100	1,500	-	4	40	35
R-H	5,000	50	2,000	-	4	40	30
	20,000	100	1,250	-	4	40	35
	43,560	150	725	-	-	110	35

Source: City of Stamford



Adopted by the Zoning Board on November 30, 1991 with subsequent amendments through April 1, 2011. This map was prepared for general reference only and is not an official zoning map. The Official Zoning Map is on file in the Land Use Bureau of the City of Stamford. Questions regarding this map should be directed to the Zoning Enforcement Office.

Water features, such as rivers and ponds, may overlap and obscure the colors used to denote zoning districts. The zoning district boundaries, represented by a solid blue line, should always be interpreted as the actual zoning boundaries.

# Zoning Map

## City of Stamford

### **Commercial Districts**

Stamford has nine commercial districts that are differentiated by density and use. The largest commercial district in terms of land area is the Central City North (CC-N) zone, which is the primary district governing the Downtown area. The CC-N and Central City South (CC-S) districts allow higher-density commercial and residential development. The City also recently established the Transportation Center Design (TCD) District, which is intended to generate transit-oriented development around the Stamford train station. The TCD provisions allow for additional building height for developments that incorporate pedestrian-friendly design, improvements at transportation nodes and other features likely to promote public transit use.

The City's other commercial districts are largely mapped along its major thoroughfares, including West and East Main Streets (U.S. Route 1) and High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads. The areas around the Glenbrook and Springdale train stations, as well as a portion of the Stillwell Avenue corridor in the West Side, were all recently rezoned "V-C: Village Commercial" – a new district intended to foster mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development.

### **Industrial Districts**

Stamford's two industrial zones provide appropriate areas for industrial uses and provide for separation between such uses and residential and other incompatible uses. The General Industrial (M-G) zone is reserved for those industries that produce nuisances such as truck traffic, smoke, dust and other hazards. These districts are predominantly mapped along Stamford's commuter rail lines running through Waterside, South End, Cove, the East Side, Glenbrook and Springdale, and along the Stamford Canal. The Light Industrial (M-L) zone allows industrial uses that have minimum off-site impact. This zone includes more stringent development and performance standards than the M-G zone. There are three M-L districts currently mapped in Stamford.

Table 12 below summarizes the full schedule of building area, height and bulk requirements for the City's commercial and industrial districts.

**Table 12: Summary of Requirements for Area, Height and Bulk of Non-Residential Zones**

Zoning District	Minimum Size of Plot		Residential Density	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)*	Maximum Building Height	
	Area (sf)	Frontage (ft)	Square Foot Per Family		Stories	Feet
<b>C-N</b>	5,000	50	2,500	0.3	2	25
<b>C-B</b>	5,000	50	2,000	0.5	4	50
<b>C-S</b>	5,000	50	2,000	-	3	40
<b>C-L</b>	4,000	40	1,250	1.0	4	45
<b>C-I</b>	4,000	40	1,250	1.2	5	55
<b>C-G</b>	4,000	40	1,000	1.8	-	100
<b>CC-N</b>	4,000	40	450	2.0	-	-
<b>CC-S</b>	4,000	40	-	2.0	-	-
<b>M-L</b>	4,000	40	-	1.0	4	50
<b>M-G</b>	4,000	40	-	1.0	4	50
<b>CW-D</b>	4,000	40	-	1.0	4	50

\*Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a regulatory device used to measure and control intensity of development on a particular lot. The total lot area is multiplied by the FAR to determine the maximum amount of floor area that can be built on the lot. For example, an FAR of 0.3 assigned to a 10,000 square foot lot would allow for a building no larger than 3,000 square feet.

### Designed Districts

Beginning in the 1950s, Stamford’s charter authorized the creation of zoning designed districts, which allowed the City to begin expanding beyond its use of more traditional zoning tools. Designed Districts were established to provide regulatory controls and development incentives in connection with specific conditions in targeted areas. Through these Designed Districts, the City has been able to achieve multiple project and community development goals while attracting developments with enhanced building and site plans, strengthened pedestrian connections, increased landscaping and open space, improved streetscapes and residential amenity spaces, and expanded affordable housing opportunities.

Provisions for each of the City’s 19 current Designed Districts are found in Article III: Section 9 of the Zoning Code. Stamford has created multiple Designed Districts to promote appropriate residential, commercial, industrial and mixed-use developments to address unique circumstances, such as:

- Multi-family residential districts, for example: the P-D Planned Development District, R-D Designed Residential District, R-H Multiple Family, High Density Design District, and R-MF Multiple Family Residence Design Districts. These districts provide careful review of site plans and architectural designs for development at a range of densities, subject to notification of surrounding property owners and a public hearing.
- Commercial districts, for example: the C-D Designed Commercial District and the CSC-D Community Shopping Center District, which was designed to promote the reconfiguration and modernization of large Shopping Centers in the City.
- Industrial Districts, for example: the M-D Designed Industrial District, the IP-D Designed Industrial Park District, and the HT-D Designed High-Technology District.

- Mixed-Use Districts, for example: the TCD-D Transportation Center Designed District, MR-D Mill River Design District, MX-D Mixed Use Designed District, DW-D Designed Waterfront District, and the SRD-N and SRD-S South End Redevelopment Districts that guide the development of the Harbor Point and Yale & Towne areas of the South End.

In addition to an array of special purpose designed districts, the City was able to use other creative techniques to promote strong development designs over the past decades. Such techniques include the ARD Architectural Review Overlay District, incentive commercial zoning to provide bonus floor and height to secure desired public amenities, and districts in which development is controlled by Special Exception, including the V-C Village Commercial district and the CW-D Coastal Water Dependent district.

## **2.3 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

### **A. Introduction**

Municipal facilities are physical aspects of local government that include land, buildings and major equipment. These facilities include such government functions as education, public works, police and fire protection, recreation and libraries. The location, capacity and quality of municipal facilities, and the services they provide, are key considerations because they can direct and shape private development, help stabilize neighborhoods and enhance community character and quality-of-life.

### **B. Government Center**

Stamford's governmental administration is based at the Government Center at 888 Washington Boulevard. Nearly all City departments and services are housed at the Government Center, with the exception of Animal Care and Control Shelter, Road Maintenance and the Water Pollution Control Authority.

### **C. Board of Representatives**

Stamford's Board of Representatives is composed of 40 elected volunteers. The City has 20 districts, and each district has two representatives. Members serve four-year terms, concurrent with the Mayor's term. The Board of Representatives is led by a President and a Clerk of the Board, both of whom are elected by the entire Board membership. The Majority and Minority Leaders, two Deputy Majority leaders and two Deputy Minority leaders also comprise the Board's leadership.

The Board of Representatives has the following powers, among others:

- Enact ordinances for the government of the City, for the preservation of good order, peace and health, for the welfare and safety of its inhabitants and the protection and security of their property (legislative process)
- Adopt the submitted capital and operating budgets of the City, the WPCA, and the Board of Education (budget process)
- Approve submitted supplemental capital and operating budget requests (fiscal process);
- Fill vacancies in elected offices (appointments process)
- Approve the appointment of City Directors, the Director of Health, the Police Chief and the Fire and Rescue Chief
- Approve leases, sales, and purchases of City owned property.

#### **D. Board of Finance**

Established and governed by the City of Stamford Charter, the Board of Finance is authorized with specific powers and duties related to the fiscal policies. The Board is composed of six members who hold office for a four-year term. Board members are elected by Stamford voters in citywide elections for staggered terms; half of the membership is elected at each biennial municipal election.

#### **E. Land Use Boards**

##### **Planning Board**

The primary responsibility of the Planning Board is to plan and coordinate the development of Stamford in accordance with the adopted Master Plan. The board prepares, adopts and amends the Master Plan; adopts and amends the Subdivision Regulations; reviews and acts on subdivision applications; prepares the Capital Budget and Capital Program; reviews and acts on referrals from the Zoning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals; and prepares and adopts neighborhood plans.

##### **Zoning Board**

This board is responsible for adopting, amending and implementing the City's zoning regulations, including the zoning map. It also has approval authority for site and architectural plans in design districts. In addition, the Zoning Board is responsible for appointing a Zoning Enforcement Officer.

##### **Zoning Board of Appeals**

The main function of the Zoning Board of Appeals is to consider variances of the zoning regulations where there is an unusual hardship with the land. In addition, it is responsible for considering special exception cases (uses of property that are permitted under the zoning regulations but subject to additional review). The Zoning Board of Appeals also rules on appeals from the decisions of the Zoning Enforcement Officer. When a variance of special exception application concerns property in the Coastal Area Management Area, the Board conducts a preliminary coastal site plan review on the matter.

### **Environmental Protection Board**

This board is authorized by ordinance to act as the Inland Wetlands Agency, the Conservation Commission, the Flood and Erosion Control Board and the Aquifer Protection Agency for the City. In addition to this regulatory role, the Board has an advisory function to the other land use boards and to other City agencies, elected officials, developers and residents. The Environmental Protection Board also provides public educational programs and collects data on key environmental resources in Stamford.

### **Historic Preservation Advisory Commission**

This commission, established in 2013, acts in an advisory role to other officials, boards, commissions and City departments on the protection of local cultural resources. The Commission also oversees the undertaking of cultural resource surveys in the City, and advises on the designation of local historic districts and properties and on the nomination of properties to the State and National Registers of Historic Places

### **Harbor Management Commission**

This commission prepared and implements Stamford's Harbor Management Plan, approved by the State of Connecticut and adopted by the Stamford Board of Representatives. This plan sets City policies for safe and beneficial use of Stamford's harbors and coastal waterways and for conservation of coastal resources and environmental quality. Among its responsibilities, the commission reviews all proposals affecting real property on, in or contiguous to the harbors and waterways and determines the consistency of those proposals with the plan.

## **F. Police and Fire**

### **Police**

The Stamford Police Department headquarters is at 805 Bedford Street. The department is composed of four Police Districts and several specialty units. Examples of the specialty units that contribute to the Department's patrol, investigative and narcotics and organized crime units include the Special Victims Unit (SVU), the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC), the Collision Analysis and Reconstruction Squad (CARS), the Canine Unit, the Motorcycle Unit, the Marine Division, the Neighborhood Impact Unit, a juvenile Police Commission and a Youth Mentoring Detail which includes summer camps and basketball leagues.

Over the years, the Stamford Police Department has enhanced its capacity by adding several specialty units and acquiring tactical and technological equipment. The department is attempting to expand its forensics capabilities as well as implement advanced tactical training to maintain and enhance safety and security. The City of Stamford should investigate the design and construction of a modern police headquarters.

### **Fire**

Fire protection in the City of Stamford is a dual level of service system based on the former boundaries comprising the Town of Stamford and City of Stamford.

The Stamford Fire & Rescue Department is a full career department with 238 employees, including staff and support personnel, currently operating from six fire stations with seven engines, three trucks and one rescue company. The department's management staff consists of the Fire Chief, two Assistant Fire Chiefs and a support staff which includes an administrative assistant and an account clerk. Personnel from every rank in the department are involved in special projects to help the department reach its goals and objectives and to better serve the public.

Beyond the routine firefighter and officer certifications, the department's personnel are certified in Haz Mat Operations and Technician levels, Emergency Medical Technician, SCUBA, Confined Space and Trench Rescue, High-Angle Rescue and many other skills, including medical first responder with automatic heart defibrillation capabilities.

In November 2012, Stamford voters voted to approve a Charter revision referendum that consolidates the volunteer and paid firefighters, effectively establishing a unified fire department led by the chief of the Stamford Fire Department. The City and the three volunteer departments are currently operating under an Interim Consent Order while the specifics of the consolidation are carried out.

### **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**

Stamford EMS is a non-profit organization providing medical services for the City, including pre-hospital emergency care and ambulance transport. It is accredited by the national Commission on the Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS), and the staff is comprised of trained career and volunteer personnel.

## **G. Public Schools**

Stamford Public Schools (SPS) comprises 20 schools, including six magnet and two International Baccalaureate schools. SPS has a total of 12 elementary schools, five middle schools and three high schools. See Table 13, below. In addition, J.M. Wright Technical High School, a technical high school operated by the State, is located within Scalzi Park. The school's operations were suspended in 2009, but the facility is scheduled to re-open in the fall of 2014 after a significant renovation.

### **Strategic District Improvement Plan (SDIP)**

The Strategic District Improvement Plan (SDIP) is the Stamford Public Schools three-year improvement plan for the 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years. The SDIP reinforces the Board of Education's five goals and categorizes its work into four areas:

- Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment
- De-Tracking/Instructional Grouping
- Professional Learning Communities and Data Teams
- School Culture

The SDIP sets measurable targets to increase student achievement on the CT Mastery Tests (CMT) in grades 3-8 and CT Academic Performance Test (CAPT) in grade 10 and to decrease achievement gaps. The SDIP also lays out action steps for each area and includes results indicators for adult actions and student outcomes to be tracked at regular intervals.

### School Enrollment

According to the 2013 Student Enrollment Report, there were 16,069 students enrolled district-wide as of October 1, 2013, an increase of 128 students from the prior-year enrollment of 15,941 students. Enrollment changes by level are shown in Table 13.

**Table 13: Stamford Public Schools - Student Enrollment Totals**

Level	2012	2013	Difference
Elementary	7,762	7826	+64
Middle	3,258	3318	+60
High	4,674	4672	-2
ARTS	104	106	+2
Outplaced	143	147	+4
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,941</b>	<b>16,069</b>	<b>+128</b>

Source: Stamford Public Schools Enrollment Report, October 1, 2013

According to a recent enrollment and capacity study conducted by Milone & MacBroom on behalf of SPS, between 2006 and 2012, some 2,600 new housing units were constructed in Stamford. From these new units, approximately 390 students reported to kindergarten in 2012. Since 2010, more than 1,000 additional students overall have been added to the public school district. In terms of capacity, the study found that, of the 12 elementary schools citywide, eight are at or above 95 percent capacity, and four elementary schools exceed maximum capacity. The City and the Board of Education should develop a facilities planning analysis for infrastructure of existing and future City schools.

**Table 14: Enrollment and Capacity - Elementary Schools in Stamford, 2013-2014**

School	Enrollment	Capacity	
		Number	Percent
Davenport	558	567	98.4%
Hart	607	609	99.7%
K.T. Murphy	526	567	92.8%
Newfield	706	651	108.4%
Northeast	663	756	87.7%
Rogers	804	798	100.8%
Roxbury	646	651	99.2%
Springdale	708	609	116.0%
Stark	621	609	102.0%
Stillmeadow	692	756	91.5%
Toquam	683	714	95.7%
Westover	689	840	82.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,903</b>	--	--

Source: Milone & MacBroom, 2013

The enrollment and capacity study sets forth short-term recommendations directed at mitigating the capacity issues within the school system. These include:

- Add two kindergartens to Westover School
- Add one kindergarten to Hart School
- Add one kindergarten to Toquam School
- Invite 75 fifth graders to Scofield by choice
- Invite 100 fifth graders to Rippowam by choice.

SPS has also identified several long-term actions for absorbing an increasing student body, including:

- Expansion of an existing school(s) or construction of a new school(s)
- Creating a K-8 magnet school or a K-5 and 6-8 magnet school on the same site
- Phasing out portable classrooms
- Creating space equity at all elementary schools.

Continued increases in enrollment levels will affect staffing levels in addition to physical space. In 2012, SPS hired 20 new teachers to address enrollment increases from the previous year. Looking ahead, the City and the Connecticut State Department of Education should continue working with SPS to ensure that sufficient resources are in place for any additional staff necessary.

#### **H. The Ferguson Library System**

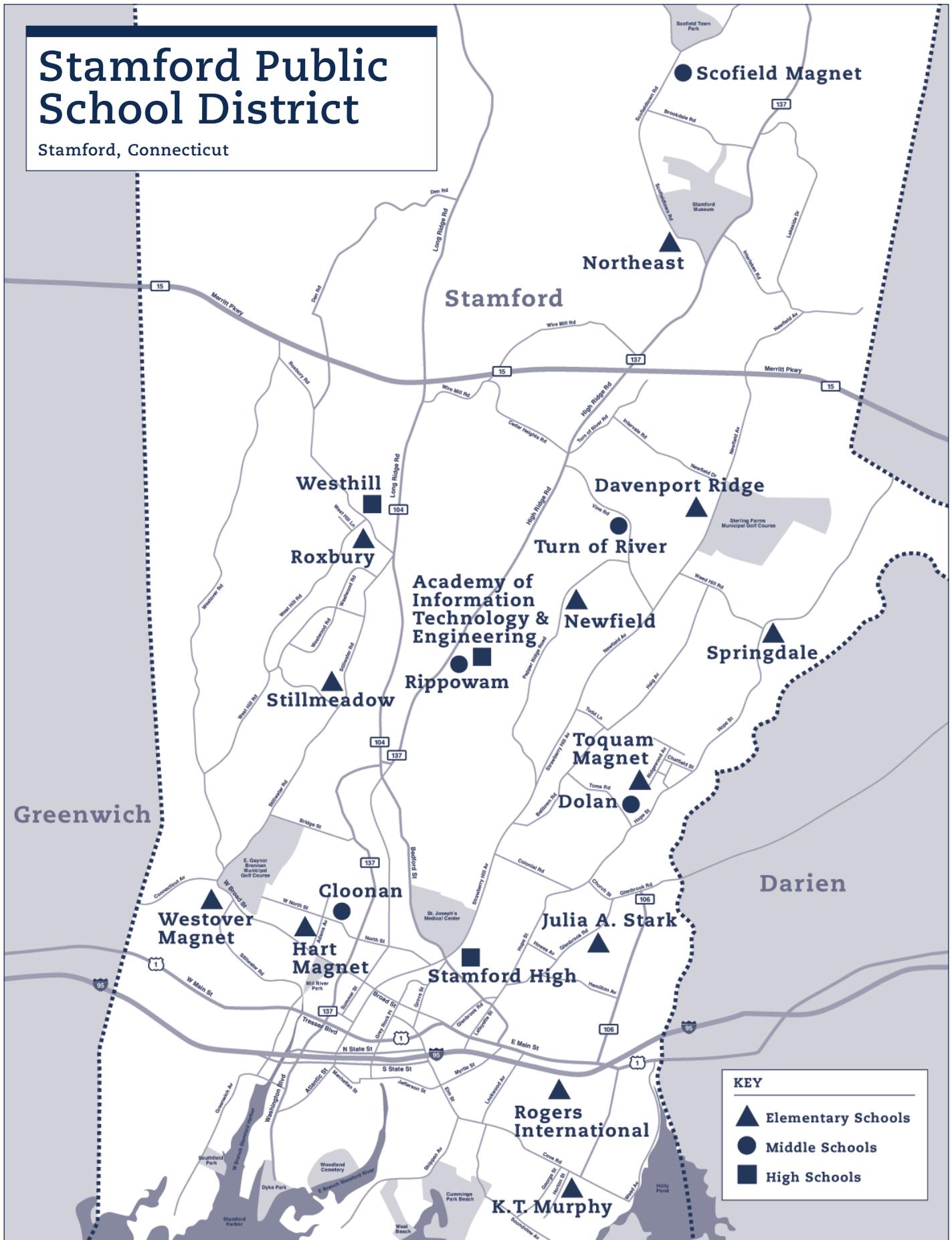
The Main Library of the Ferguson Library is located at 1 Public Library Plaza in the heart of Downtown Stamford. It is housed in a 1909 building that recently underwent a full renovation, funded mainly with capital grants from the City and additional support from the State and other sources. The collections in this facility are extensive and serve as the backbone of the whole system.

The Main Library's third-floor computer lab provides programs for English language learners and computer and Internet training classes. The third-floor auditorium is a regular venue for films, author visits and other programs, and features art exhibits curated by the Stamford Art Association. The Friends of Ferguson operates a used bookshop on the first floor of the Library. Also located on the first floor is a coffee shop.

Ferguson Library is supplemented by three branch locations: Harry Bennett, Weed Memorial and Hollander and South End. Operations of the Ferguson Library system are overseen by a Board of Trustees composed of four officers and six members.

# Stamford Public School District

Stamford, Connecticut



## **I. Senior Services**

Stamford's senior services are provided at a municipal level through the Department of Health and Social Services' Social Services Division. In addition to services such as case management, assistance in understanding Medicare and a renter's rebate program, the Division provides information about a range of senior transportation services, including the Stamford Senior Transportation (SST) and Easy Access programs, both operated by Norwalk Transit.

In addition, the Stamford Senior Center, located on the second floor of the City's Government Center, is a not-for-profit organization providing programming for Stamford residents aged 50 and older. Senior Services of Stamford is a private, not-for-profit agency providing services including financial assistance, counseling and transportation to the over-60 population of the City.

As discussed, Stamford's senior population (aged 65 years and older) has declined since 2000, in contrast to both the state and Fairfield County. In addition, although the population between the ages of 45 and 65 increased by approximately 13% between 2000 and 2012, it actually decreased by about 6.4% from 2010 to 2012. Although these trends suggest that Stamford's senior population will continue to decrease in size, the need for senior services will continue, and the City will need to keep exploring ways to provide these services in an effective and cost-efficient manner.

## **J. Local Government Finances**

Over the past six years, from FY 2006-07 to FY 2012-13, the General Fund of Stamford's municipal budget has increased by a total of 24 percent to \$480 million in revenues at present (or an average of approximately 4 percent per year), while the Capital Budget has decreased by 29 percent to \$57 million in FY 2012-13. An additional \$131 million in revenues are collected for seven special funds. Proposed fund revenues for FY 2013-14 would raise General Fund resources to \$495.8 million and Special Funds to \$139.2 million, while expenditures of the Capital Budget would decline further, to \$41.5 million.

Property taxes currently account for \$427.3 million in revenues based upon an average mill rate of \$17.79 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The revaluation of FY 2008-09 established assessed value on the full value of real property which currently stands at \$22.4 billion in Stamford of a grand list totaling \$24.3 billion. Included in the grand list, personal property and autos are taxed at rates of \$17.89 and \$26.50 per \$1,000 of full value.

Expenditures on education account for the largest single component of the Stamford municipal budget. In FY 2012-13, Stamford Public Schools expended \$236.7 million on an Operating Budget for 15,941 enrolled students and 1,945 employees. With a 3.9 percent increase proposed for FY 2013-14, the Operating Budget will increase to \$245.9 million, as enrollment grows by 1.9 percent to 16,251 enrolled students and employment expands by 2.4 percent to 1,991 teachers and administrators. Coupled with a Grants Budget of \$22.5 million, the total system budget for Stamford Public Schools will amount to \$268.4 million in FY 2013-14.

Public Safety is the second-largest budget component, amounting to more than \$100 million in expenditures since FY 2010-11. Debt Service is significant, accounting for the third-largest component since FY 2009-10, when it was last lower than Capital Outlays. Expressed as a percentage of the budget's non-capital spending, it represents nearly 9 percent of total expenditures. Total debt has, however, declined in recent years to roughly \$850 million and comprises about 30 percent of the legal debt limit.

#### **K. Conclusion**

The above discussion of community services is not intended as a comprehensive inventory of all municipal facilities and services in Stamford. Services not discussed in this section may nonetheless have significant impact on residents' quality-of-life and impression of the City as a whole, and may face needs that should be addressed in the next 10 years. For example, the City will determine a suitable location for a new animal shelter, and build a shelter that accommodates the current and anticipated future needs of Stamford. The current facility, located on Magee Avenue in Shippan, is a 1960s-era, cinderblock building that is inadequate to meet the City's needs.

The City should continue to monitor the needs of its various departments and services to determine whether changes in capacity or policy are needed to address demographic shifts and changes to the City's development pattern. Specific functions that may be affected by these changes include, but are not limited to, public safety (police and fire), schools, libraries and senior services.



## **CHAPTER 3.0: A REGIONAL CENTER: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Goals**

- Implement the City's Economic Development Plan
- Retain existing corporations
- Attract new and diverse companies
- Capture job growth in expanding sectors including technology, education and healthcare
- Concentrate regional office and retail development in the Downtown
- Continue to pursue a balance of uses that promote vibrancy and economic vitality
- Increase workforce readiness

### **A. Introduction**

In 2002, when the City's last Master Plan was published, there was common agreement that Stamford was growing and would continue to grow. The question then was, how much would the City grow? How would factors such as traffic and transit and demographic and economic conditions in the region and the country affect growth in Stamford? As we look back over the past decade, it is important to understand the extent to which Stamford has been able to achieve its previous goals for economic growth and the ways in which the City's economic outlook has changed since its previous Master Plan was published. As we look forward and plan for the next 10 years, it will be important to consider new factors as well, including new jobs in emerging sectors; growing interest in transit-oriented development, which is attracting young people and businesses to Downtown and the South End; increased interest in walkability and bikeability; and an expanding restaurant and entertainment scene in Stamford.

In planning for Stamford's economic future, it is important to reflect on its economic history, which has shown the City to have a resilient economy that continues to evolve. During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Stamford had a strong industrial base, with such notable companies as lock manufacturer Yale & Towne and postal meter manufacturer Pitney Bowes. Stamford then became known as a research city when firms such as American Cyanamid and CBS set up research centers. In the 1970s, Stamford became one of the top locations for Fortune 500 headquarters, and by the 1990s, the City was home to major investment banks and hedge funds. Today, the City is seeing growth in new emergent sectors including healthcare, education and information technology. Over time, each of Stamford's new economic identities has been layered upon its previous identities, diversifying the local economy and enhancing the City's economic resiliency.

In this context, Stamford's 2002 Master Plan contemplated three growth scenarios: trend, low and high growth. The Trend Growth scenario anticipated Stamford maintaining its current share of regional growth in existing and emerging sectors, with population and employment continuing to grow, but at a slower pace than the previous decade due to a slowing national and regional economy and transportation and housing constraints. The Low Growth scenario projected very slow population and employment growth, with little corporate relocation to Stamford and some modest growth from small

firms and business expansions. The High Growth scenario imagined Stamford establishing an identity as a financial center distinct from New York City as a result of robust growth in global financial services. What we have seen occur over the course of the past 10 years in terms of population is generally in line with the Low Growth projections of the previous Master Plan, with a 5.8 percent increase in the number of people living in Stamford. However, as a result of the Great Recession that occurred from 2007 to 2011, employment in the city declined by approximately 9,000 jobs between 2000 and 2012.

As we look toward the future, Stamford's job market will continue to evolve and diversify away from reliance on the financial-services sector and toward a more robust economy, capturing anticipated growth in expanding sectors including technology, education and healthcare. Stamford is well positioned to take advantage of expansions in these sectors given its location just north of New York City; current growth in technology firms; and the presence of major education and healthcare institutions in the city, including UCONN, University of Bridgeport and Sacred Heart University as well as Stamford Hospital. Both UCONN and Stamford Hospital are planning for significant expansions of their facilities. At the same time, trends point toward growth in Stamford's already strong retail, restaurant, hotel and entertainment sectors, as well as the continued strength of the City's housing market. As demonstrated by unprecedented development in the South End through the depths of the Great Recession, Stamford's core is the region's most attractive location for higher-density residential development, and its vital Downtown provides a strong retail, restaurant and entertainment market, drawing both local residents and visitors from around the region.

## **B. Economic Overview**

As jobs have shifted away from the financial-services sector, there has been a structural change in the composition of Stamford's job market. In 2011, the City's high-paying job sectors<sup>4</sup> accounted for approximately 45 percent of its employment, with an average annual wage of \$198,800, while its low-paying job sectors<sup>5</sup> accounted for approximately 55 percent of employment, with an average annual wage of \$50,400 (see Table 15, below). This highlights a growing economic divide in Stamford, which is reflective of a trend that is being seen in many cities throughout the country.

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<sup>4</sup> High-paying job sectors include Utilities, Manufacturing, Wholesaling, Information, Finance and Insurance, Professional and Technical Services and Management of Companies.

<sup>5</sup> Low-paying job sectors include Retailing, Transportation, Real Estate, Administrative Services, Health Care, Arts-Entertainment-Recreation, Government and Other Services.

**Table 15: Total Employment in Stamford by Average Annual Wage, 2000-2011**

	<i>Employment</i>			<i>Average Annual Wages</i>		
	<i>2000</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2011</i>
<i>High Paying Jobs*</i>	43,500	39,100	33,900	\$131,700	\$171,900	\$198,800
<i>Low Paying Jobs**</i>	43,900	41,000	40,700	\$50,600	\$45,000	\$50,400
<i>Total Employment</i>	87,400	80,100	74,600	\$89,900	\$105,100	\$115,400

Source: CT Department of Labor, QCEW and Moody's Economy.com

\*High paying jobs: More than or equal to \$100,000 in annual income

\*\*Low paying jobs: Less than \$100,000 in annual income

A significant number of workers commute to work in Stamford, while many residents commute to jobs outside the City. Only 29.2 percent of Stamford jobs are held by City residents, down from 32.1 percent in 2003. Some 18.8 percent of residents work within the rest of the SWRPA region, while 31.7 percent work in Connecticut outside the SWRPA region (up from 28.1 percent in 2003) and 17.4 percent work in New York State (up from 16.3 percent in 2003), including 4.9 percent who work in New York City.

Labor force participation has increased substantially in Stamford over the past decade, from 68 percent in 2000 to 73 percent in 2011 (see Table 16).<sup>6</sup> The highest levels of participation are among residents aged 35 to 54, with nearly 95 percent of men and 81 percent of women in this age bracket in the labor force. Stamford's current unemployment rate is 6.4 percent. Through 2008, the City's annual unemployment rate was below 5 percent, indicating a fully employed labor force. The national economic downturn resulted in increased unemployment in Stamford and throughout the state, and the slow pace of recovery has kept local rates at or above 7 percent for the past four years.

**Table 16: Labor Force Participation Rate of Stamford Residents**

	<i>Labor Force Participation Rate</i>	
	<i>2000</i>	<i>2007-2011</i>
<b>Total</b>	67.9%	73.2%
<b>Male</b>	75.7%	81.9%
<b>16-34</b>	83.2%	84.0%
<b>35-54</b>	87.3%	94.8%
<b>55-69</b>	68.5%	76.1%
<b>70 &amp; over</b>	14.5%	24.5%
<b>Female:</b>	60.8%	64.6%
<b>16-34</b>	71.0%	71.9%
<b>35-54</b>	76.7%	81.2%
<b>55-69</b>	52.1%	58.8%
<b>70 &amp; over</b>	9.7%	11.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and 2007-2011 American Community Survey

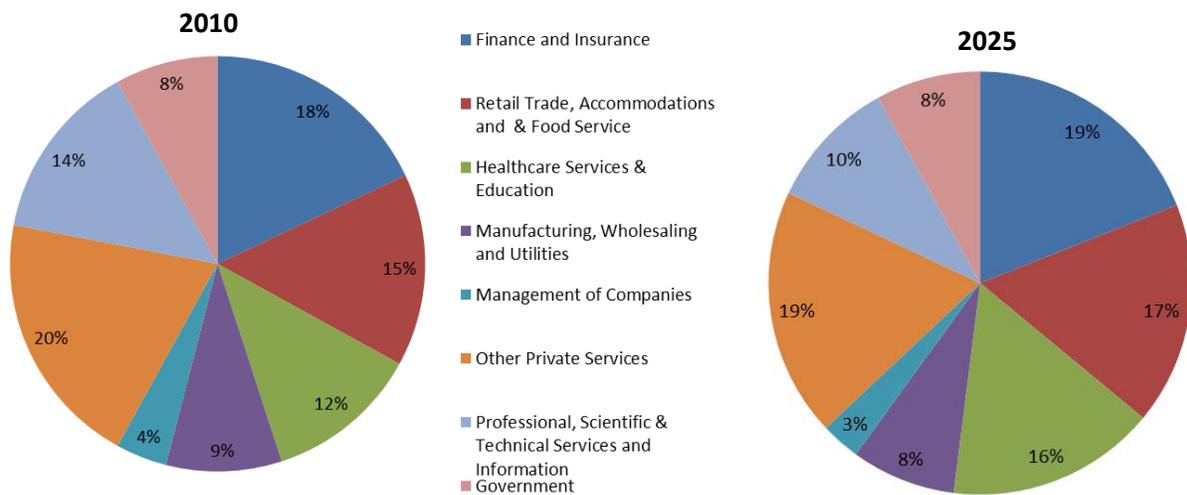
<sup>6</sup> The labor force includes all those who are working or actively seeking employment.

### C. Job Growth

What is Stamford’s job growth and economic development potential? According to Moody’s *Economy.com*, by 2025, the City’s employment base is expected to grow by 7 percent, adding approximately 5,255 jobs to the local economy. According to projections prepared by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), 2,160 of these new jobs will be in office employment and 633 will be in retail; the balance of job growth will be spread among other employment sectors. Stamford can expect to retain Finance and Insurance as its leading sector, followed by Retail Trade, Accommodations & Food Services, Information Services, and Health Care Services & Education. Growth in these sectors has significant implications for Stamford’s real estate market, translating to demand for retail/restaurant space; classroom and vocational training space; and high-quality, high-tech, well-located office space. Upgrading and adapting existing properties to meet the needs of emerging sectors, as well as construction of new commercial space in the Downtown and in transit-served locations, will be essential to capturing projected job growth and attracting employers to Stamford.

Some 5,300 business establishments and nearly 50 separate government facilities are located in Stamford. While the number of employers has increased over the decade, the average number of employees per company has declined to 14 workers. Among the 100 top employers, there are three with more than 1,000 workers, 12 with 500-1,000 workers, 31 with 250-500 workers and 54 with 100-250 workers. Business sectors most represented among Stamford’s largest employers are in the Insurance and Hotel sectors, followed by Department Stores, Accountants and Attorneys, Financing Consultants and Supermarkets.

**Chart 12: Employment by Sector**



Source: Urbanomics

### **Finance and Insurance**

Despite noteworthy losses, Finance and Insurance has remained the largest single industry in Stamford, at 18 percent of total employment today, with more than 13,000 high-wage jobs. Although the industry peaked in 2005 at 15,450 jobs and subsequently declined to 12,860 jobs by 2010, the process of recovery has begun with a net gain of several hundred jobs by 2012.

Despite the uncertainty of global financial markets, debt difficulties and equity bubbles, given the depth and diversity of this sector, Stamford is expected to retain Finance and Insurance as its leading sector over the course of the next decade. By 2025, the City will have gained a net of nearly 1,450 Finance and Insurance jobs, and this sector will account for 19 percent of its total employment.

### **Retail Trade, Accommodations & Food Services**

As the corporate and cultural center of a region with the highest per capita income in the nation as documented in the 2010 U.S. Census, Stamford is a destination for retail shopping, fine dining, executive conferences and business travel. Maintaining and growing this role in the region is essential to the City's ability to attract and retain employment and residential population as it continues to enhance its position as Connecticut's premier city.

Stamford has a strong retail sector, reflecting the strength of retail in the region. Fairfield County's retail vacancy rate is very low, at 3.8 percent, compared with average nationwide retail vacancy of 9.9 percent, as reported by the National Association of Realtors for the second quarter of 2014. Retailing, Hotels and Restaurants are the second-largest industry in Stamford and account for 11,000 jobs or 15 percent of the City's total employment. By 2025, the industry is expected to add 2,340 new jobs in Stamford and will account for 17 percent of its employment. Eight companies in this sector currently rank among the 100 largest employers in the City. Moreover, one in every seven jobs in this sector in Fairfield County is located in Stamford, making it the largest retail center in the metropolitan area.

### **Professional, Scientific & Technical Services and Information**

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services is Stamford's third-largest employment sector, with 14 percent of employment and approximately 9,900 jobs. Currently, accountants and attorneys are the largest employers in this sector; however, growth in the sector over the course of the next 10 years will be in Information Services, which includes digital technology businesses, television production and broadcasting and print media.

Taking advantage of the State's First Five program, which provides incentives to encourage job creation, NBC Sports Group is consolidating its northeastern operations in new studios and offices on the 32-acre former Clairol site in Stamford. This new facility includes production facilities and will create more than 450 new jobs. The First Five program provides incentives to businesses that, depending on the size of the company's investment, create a minimum of 200 new, full-time jobs in the state within two years, or 200 new full-time jobs in the state within five years.

With these and other businesses relocating to Stamford, the City is seeing an emerging network of high-definition broadcasting, electronic engineers, graphic artists, web and software designers, start-up founders and financial supporters of digital professionals. This, in turn, is playing a role in attracting more new firms, thereby growing this sector.

### **Healthcare Services and Education**

Stamford's hospital and university institutions are not only prominent facilities in the City's physical, cultural and social landscape, they are also major employers that will shape the growth of its economy by preparing and maintaining the health and intellectual well-being of its residents and workforce. Healthcare Services and Education account for 12 percent of employment in Stamford and are expected to increase in share to 16 percent of Stamford's employment base by 2025, adding 3,640 new jobs. Growth in these sectors often referred to as "meds and eds" reflects national trends and planned expansions at Stamford Hospital and the University of Connecticut's Stamford campus.

Stamford Hospital is currently in the midst of a \$450 million expansion that will add approximately 640,000 square feet to the hospital upon its completion in 2016. The project is expected to create 500 new jobs in Stamford. In planning for this expansion, the hospital worked closely with Charter Oak Communities and local residents to parlay this growth into a neighborhood revitalization strategy that will improve access to healthcare, access to healthy food and physical fitness. This innovative project takes a holistic approach to improving the multiple aspects of community health from physical design to enhanced access to programs and services that promote physical and social health and wellbeing. The project, which is marketed as the Vita Health and Wellness District, is a partnership between Stamford Hospital, Charter Oak Communities and the local community. Vita is a leading example of how growth in employment can be a catalyst for revitalization, creating additional economic and social benefits to the local community. In addition to the Stamford Hospital expansion, the Hospital for Special Surgery of New York City is expanding to Stamford and will locate its first satellite MRI imaging center in the Stamford Hospital Sports Medicine facility on the former Clairol site.

Higher education also plays a significant role in Stamford's economy and is expected to grow over the next 10 years. Stamford is home to satellite campuses of the University of Connecticut and the University of Bridgeport, as well as to Sacred Heart University and St. Basil Seminary. UCONN has announced its intention to expand its Stamford campus to include 400 new student residence units Downtown, possibly on the site of its current parking garage. This expansion is part of the university's plan to offer its students the opportunity to participate in internships/job training focused on digital media, engineering and financial risk management. This presents a significant opportunity for partnerships between the university and the Stamford business community to nurture talent and develop its workforce in support of the City's goal to maintain and expand its role as a regional corporate and cultural center. Further, the addition of a residential student population Downtown is expected to have positive secondary economic impacts as students patronize businesses and contribute to the vibrancy of Downtown Stamford.

### **Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade and Utilities**

Manufacturing, Wholesaling and Utilities currently accounts for 9 percent of employment, or approximately 6,200 jobs in Stamford, which is on par with national manufacturing employment. This sector is expected to decline by 1,000 jobs by 2025, which is symptomatic of the broader downsizing of manufacturing employment across the country. However, this downsizing should not be construed as an indication of the declining importance of manufacturing in Stamford's economy. Jobs in manufacturing tend to be higher-paying, as they require specialized training and are an important source of skilled local employment. According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, the future of manufacturing requires that workers be "capable of designing and operating the most advanced computerized manufacturing equipment" (*Connecticut Economic Digest*, May 2011). The declining number of jobs in manufacturing is due in large part to increased productivity, which allows manufacturers to produce the same amount or more with fewer workers. The State Department of Labor reports that production per worker continues to grow. Most manufacturing companies located in Stamford are small-scale operations with fewer than 30 employees. Three of the larger manufacturers in the City are producing equipment and supplies for physicians and surgeons, suggesting an emerging cluster in bioscience-related industrial production in Connecticut.

### **Management of Companies**

While corporate headquarters continue to maintain a presence in Stamford, they no longer account for significant employment numbers or job growth in the City and only comprise 4 percent of total employment. This sector is expected to decline by 700 jobs by 2025, from 3,000 jobs at present to 2,300 jobs. However, this sector remains important to Stamford's economy, as jobs in this sector are generally high-paying. While this sector is not growing significantly, new corporations are expected to relocate to Stamford over the next three to five years.

### **Other Private Services**

At present, Other Private Services comprise 20 percent of employment in Stamford, or approximately 15,000 jobs, and are anticipated to maintain this level through 2025, declining marginally in share to 19 percent of total employment. Consisting of a broad range of personal- and business-service industries including real estate and building maintenance; arts, entertainment and recreational facilities; delivery and marketing services; and non-profit organizations, the sector's cross-currents of industry growth and decline explain its long-term stability.

This sector includes the City's various arts and entertainment venues that serve local residents and attract tourists from Fairfield and Westchester Counties, including Stamford Center for the Arts and Chelsea Piers Connecticut. Chelsea Piers recently opened at the former Clairol site. This 400,000-square-foot facility boasts world-class sports and recreation including skating, aquatics, gymnastics, squash, softball, tennis and other activities and is expected to generate more than 200 jobs.

### **Government**

Government is a major source of employment in Stamford, currently retaining approximately 6,000 workers, nearly 5,000 of which are local government employees, with 1,100 full-time workers in General

Government and 2,100 in Stamford Public Schools. Among the City Departments, Public Safety, Health and Welfare is the largest employer, responding to more than 100,000 calls for police, fire and emergency services in 2012. State government accounts for nearly 500 workers, and federal government some 700 workers in activities as diverse as higher education and postal service.

**D. Property Markets**

**Office Market**

Leasing activity and net absorption of available office space have been depressed in the Fairfield County office market since the 2007 peak. However, asking prices for sale of office properties may be slowly recovering in the County, at \$180 per square foot in 2012. The Countywide rental price of Class A office space is also recovering, at \$51.04 per square foot, as reported in the fourth quarter of 2013, up from \$47.67 in 2012. With a current inventory of 15.2 million square feet in Stamford, of which 11.7 million square feet are in Class A structures, the City’s supply exceeds the current demand for office space. As shown in Table 17, as of the third quarter of 2014, the vacancy rate for the central business district (CBD) was 27.4%. Despite this high vacancy rate, there is a strong demand for office space in close proximity to the Stamford Transportation Center; there is a low office vacancy rate in this area, with MetroCenter almost fully occupied.

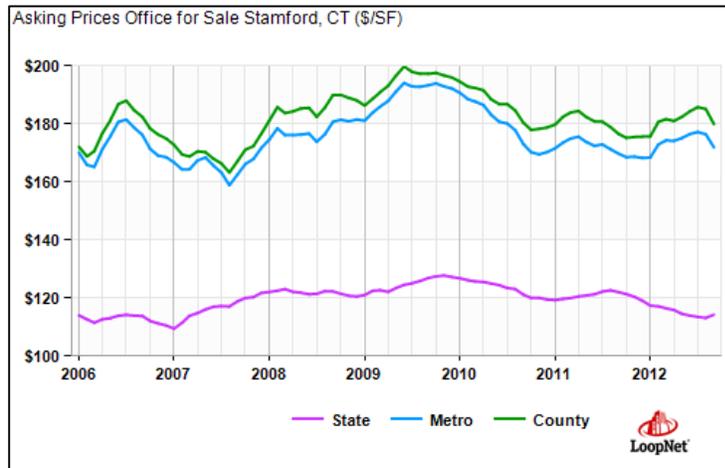
**Table 17: Stamford Central Business District Office Vacancy Rate, 2010-2014**

Year	Stamford CBD Vacancy Rate
2010	23.1%
2011	26.9%
2012	26.8%
2013	26.5%
3Q 2014	27.4%

*Source: Cushman & Wakefield Marketbeat Office Snapshot*

According to global real estate service company CBRE, nearly a million square feet were leased in Stamford in 2012, up from roughly 700,000 in 2011, though availability remains relatively unchanged, if not marginally increased. Weak signs of recovery are evident in a modest rise in asking rents to \$47.67 per square foot in the Downtown, compared with \$34.29 per square foot elsewhere in the City, as reported in 2012 by Cushman & Wakefield. Future trends indicate that office vacancy rates will remain close to present levels with stronger demand for office space Downtown, particularly in the vicinity of the Stamford Transportation Center, and weaker demand in suburban office parks. As businesses seek more efficient, technologically capable work spaces, the quality and location of office space will play a central role in the office market, indicating a need to repurpose outdated offices in less desirable locations.

**Chart 13: Asking Prices Office for Sale**



Source: LoopNet

When viewed against market conditions in Greenwich, which has approximately 4.5 million square feet of office space with 23.5 percent available, according to Newmark Grubb Knight Frank, the greater inventory of vacant space in Stamford has kept rental rates lower in the City. Total asking rates in Greenwich currently exceed \$60 per square foot with some Class A buildings in its Downtown reporting over \$90 per square foot.

Despite these vacancies, the State of Connecticut is working in partnership with a private developer on a large-scale transit-oriented development project at the Stamford train station, which includes 600,000 square feet of proposed office, hotel, retail and residential development. The City of Stamford has not had the opportunity to provide input to the State on its proposal and is concerned about potential traffic, circulation and visual impacts of this proposed development. The City encourages the State to consider the urban design context of its plans as well as traffic and pedestrian circulation impacts as it plans for TOD near the station. Plans for this area should be consistent with the Stamford Transportation Center Master Plan, discussed in Section 3.2, which was published by the City in 2010. In planning for TOD, the State should work to ensure that its plan is consistent with realistic market absorption and will not exacerbate traffic conditions at and around the train station, as consistent with this Master Plan.

### **Hotel Market**

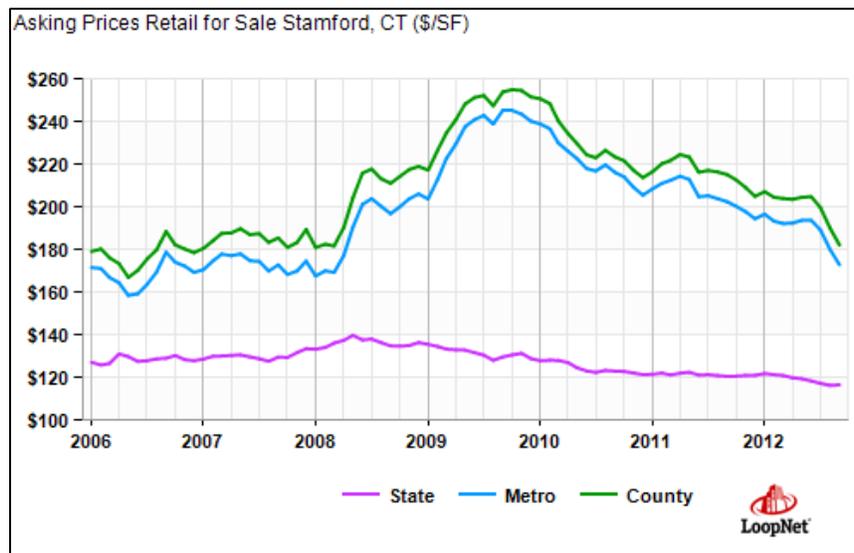
On average, occupancy rates at Stamford hotels are approximately 74 percent, which is consistent with a 70 percent occupancy target for business-oriented hotels. However, on weekdays (Monday through Thursday), the City's hotels are typically fully booked with business travelers. Weekend occupancy rates are much lower, as Stamford does not attract a substantial number of overnight entertainment visitors. Overall, the City is one of the largest hotel markets in Connecticut, and demand has been sufficient to underwrite renovation of the Holiday Inn into the Sheraton Hotel and the Stamford Plaza into the Holiday Inn Crown Plaza and a Holiday Inn Express. Over the course of the next 10 years, the Downtown hotel market is expected to expand and strengthen, which will have a positive impact on the vitality of

Downtown businesses, particularly restaurants, shopping and entertainment venues. This market could grow if the City were to explore the viability of a convention center. Located just outside of New York City on 1-95 and Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor, a convention center in Stamford could provide a more affordable convention alternative to Manhattan. This would result in an increased demand for hotel rooms and would attract business and tourist dollars to the City and region, contributing to the vitality of the Downtown.

**Retail Market**

Stamford has 3.75 million square feet of retail floor space citywide. Of this space, approximately half (1.7 million square feet) is located in the Downtown. The City has a relatively low retail vacancy rate despite a slow and uneven recovery in retail. Retail vacancies in the Downtown are currently estimated at 9 percent by the Stamford Downtown Special Services District (DSSD), and about 5 percent citywide. On retail properties for sale, according to LoopNet, the asking price is currently \$182 per square foot in Stamford, down from a peak of \$250 per square foot in 2009. The DSSD is actively working to promote growth in retail, restaurant and entertainment in the Downtown as well as residential development, which supports these uses and contributes to street-level vibrancy and economic vitality.

**Chart 14: Asking Prices Retail for Sale**



Source: LoopNet

**Industrial Market**

With 6 million square feet of industrial and warehouse space in Stamford, the vacancy rate is estimated to be 5 percent, according to the City’s 2012 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. In Fairfield County, and likely Stamford, industrial space is far more competitively priced, at \$95 per square foot, than in Connecticut as a whole, at \$55 per square foot. However, since 2009 the asking price of industrial space for sale has declined 27 percent as demand for industrial space has declined. Allowing for the adaptive reuse of vacant industrial space will continue to be an important economic development strategy in light of this decreasing demand for industrial space.

## **E. Economic Development Goals and Strategies**

### **Introduction**

Stamford has emerged as southwestern Connecticut's preeminent corporate and cultural center. With its proximity to New York City, its exceptional regional rail and roadway access and its entertainment and cultural offerings, Stamford is attracting increasing numbers of residents, workers and visitors. The City's population has grown by nearly 6 percent over the past decade, and employment has remained relatively stable. Stamford's population is expected to increase by 6.7 percent, and employment is expected to grow by 7 percent over the next 10 years. At the same time, the City faces significant challenges to economic development. Traffic congestion in the region continues to increase, limiting access to Stamford, and pedestrian and bicycle circulation within the City is lacking. While job growth is relatively strong given the national economy, employment and income disparities among Stamford residents continue to widen.

The City has set out the following economic development goals to address these issues. Policies and implementation strategies for achieving these goals are outlined below.

- Implement the City's Economic Development Plan
- Retain existing corporations
- Attract new and diverse companies
- Capture job growth in expanding sectors
- Concentrate regional commercial development in the Downtown and train station area
- Continue to pursue uses that promote vibrancy and economic vitality
- Increase workforce readiness
- Encourage small business development in all neighborhoods

### ***Policy Recommendations***

#### **Policy 3A: Increase Economic Diversity and Resiliency**

Heavily reliant on the financial-services sector, Stamford was hard-hit by the Great Recession. While financial-services will continue to play a key role in its economy, in the wake of 2008 and its aftermath, an important economic strategy that the City must actively pursue is to diversify its economic base and increase its economic resiliency. This is already occurring naturally, with greater numbers of technology and media companies moving to Stamford; increased retail, restaurant and entertainment activity; and planned expansions of major medical and educational institutions, including Stamford Hospital and UCONN. The City should continue to support this momentum by pursuing the following implementation strategies:

#### ***Implementation Strategies***

**3A.1: Create an Economic Development Plan for the City of Stamford.** Develop a 10-year economic plan for the City that maintains a strong, vibrant local economy as part of overall regional and State

economic development strategies. The plan will provide a comprehensive overview of the local and state economies; set policy direction for economic growth within the City; and identify strategies, programs and projects to improve the local economy.

**3A.2: Market existing and create new Incentives to attract business.** Market existing incentives and business loans to corporations and small businesses and create new incentives where feasible to support business development. Currently, the City partners with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to offer incentives to new and expanding businesses in Stamford through several programs, including the Enterprise Zone Program, the Brownfield Remediation Program, the C-Pace program and the Urban Jobs program.

**3A.3: Encourage modernization of office space and allow for adaptive reuse.** Encourage modernization of outdated office space to enhance efficiency and provide technological capability and allow for adaptive reuse of vacant office space for residential and mixed-use development. Capital improvements to enhance technological capability should be pursued and zoning should be amended, as appropriate, to allow for reuse. See Policy 3B.5.

**3A.4: Promote upgraded telecommunications infrastructure.** Analyze the impact of cellular phone coverage throughout the City as it affects technology.

**3A.5: Explore the feasibility of the development of a convention center in the Downtown.** A convention center could support hotels, restaurants, shopping and entertainment venues Downtown; provide an attractive reuse option for vacant large floor-plate office space; and enhance the vitality of the Downtown. Stamford is strategically located as a convention destination on I-95 and the Northeast Corridor rail line and could provide an attractive and more affordable convention alternative to New York City.

**3A.6: Increase and promote financial, technical assistance and development programs for industry.** Tax credit and financing programs should be employed to encourage manufacturers to remain in Stamford, attract new manufacturers and help companies upgrade buildings and equipment.

**3A.7: Promote live/work arrangements.** Zoning should be amended to clarify the difference between home occupations and home businesses as accessory uses in residential districts. Home occupations should be as-of-right and typically consist of a single person working from home. Such use should prohibit employees, signs, off-premise noise and smells, increases in parking and traffic and changes to the appearance of the residence. Home businesses should be permitted by Special Exception and generally include businesses operating out of a home that have employees and generate visitors.

**3A.8: Promote affordable artist live/work space.** The City should encourage strategic alliances between arts groups and affordable housing builders to create artist live/work housing and artist housing with shared work and gallery space.

### **Policy 3B: Growth Management**

Encouraging development in areas with strong transit access and the infrastructure to handle additional density is central to the economic vitality of Stamford. Regional office and retail and higher-density housing should be concentrated in the Downtown and around the Stamford Transportation Center; neighborhood-scale transit-oriented development should be encouraged in the vicinity of the Glenbrook and Springdale train stations and potentially at a new proposed transit node at the intersection of East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue. Quality transit connections and an inviting environment for bicyclists and pedestrians support higher-density activities in concentrated nodes where fewer users are dependent on personal automobiles and can travel to and within neighborhoods without increasing vehicle congestion or requiring parking facilities. The City should support the concentration of economic growth in these areas by pursuing the following strategies:

#### ***Implementation Strategies***

**3B.1: Concentrate regional office, retail and entertainment uses and high-density residential development Downtown.** Regional office, retail development and entertainment uses should be concentrated Downtown and near the STC in order to support Downtown's position as a regional center. Higher-density housing should also be encouraged in order to support an active live/work Downtown, promote transit use and enhance the vitality of Downtown as an attractive, walkable city center for living, working and entertainment.

**3B.2: Discourage expansion of office development outside of Downtown in areas that do not have direct access to transit.** Regional office development should be concentrated in the Downtown. Smaller-scale office should be encouraged in areas close to transit including Glenbrook, Springdale and potentially near a proposed transit node at East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue. Redevelopment of underutilized office space in suburban-style office parks for mixed-use development should be encouraged. Significant new office development outside of the Downtown is currently permitted under existing zoning; zoning for these areas should be amended to encourage mixed-use development.

**3B.2-a: Employ a 50 percent floor area ratio (FAR) cap for office development in industrial districts.** Limited amounts of additional office development could be considered for uses that meet performance/environmental and design standards.

**3B.2-b: Discourage retail and office development in industrial districts.** Superstores and large-scale office buildings should not be allowed in industrial districts with the following exceptions:

1) supermarkets, 2) furniture outlets, 3) construction-related stores, and 4) research and development (R&D) space.

**3B.3: Encourage redevelopment of vacant Downtown office space for housing.** Conversion of vacant office space Downtown for residential use has been a successful policy employed by the City and should be continued. A particular focus in this strategy should be on residential uses that capture Stamford's changing demographics – especially younger adults who want to live in small downtown apartments within walking distance to their jobs or transit. To be successful in attracting this demographic group, residential redevelopment will need to incorporate the types of modern amenities sought by younger adults, including landscaping and open space, technological innovations and sustainability features. In addition to helping to address Stamford's high office vacancy rate, it increases residential density Downtown, which supports retail, restaurant and other commercial uses and provides opportunities for people to live and work Downtown.

**3B.4: Encourage the reconfiguration of existing office and retail space to accommodate market trends and potential new users.** The needs of commercial users have changed dramatically in recent years, as technological shifts have allowed for more telecommuting, flexible work schedules and “virtual” meetings. As a result of these and other trends, many offices have moved toward open floor plans that emphasize collaboration and flexibility rather than individual work spaces. Existing office spaces will need to be re-engineered to be consistent with these market trends and to become the type of work spaces that businesses and employees expect. Such reconfiguration of space can, in turn, encourage businesses to function differently to better fit current market needs and alleviate impacts on traffic. Live/work arrangements, flex-time work schedules, improved infrastructure to allow for telecommuting and promotion of ride-sharing and other commuting alternatives, are all transportation-demand management tools that should be explored and encouraged.

**3B.5: Encourage the State of Connecticut to work cooperatively with the City of Stamford to plan for transit-oriented development at the Stamford Transportation Center.** As the State pursues its plans for TOD at the Stamford Transportation Center it should work cooperatively with the City to ensure that new development is consistent with Stamford's STC Master Plan and is appropriately scaled and pedestrian-friendly. The City encourages the State to consider the urban design context of its plans as well as traffic and pedestrian circulation impacts to ensure that its plan is consistent with realistic market absorption and will not exacerbate office vacancies Downtown and traffic conditions at and around the train station.

**3B.6: Improve local bus transit service quality and frequency.** A high-quality local bus transit service connects employment and residents of Stamford's neighborhoods to the jobs and community amenities available in the Downtown, as well as to regional transportation services (Metro-North, Amtrak, Greyhound and I-Bus express bus), without burdening the Downtown with the need for additional parking infrastructure. See Strategy 4C.2-a.

**3B.7: Implement traffic calming and improvements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the Downtown, along commercial arteries and in neighborhood centers.** See Strategy 4C.3

**Policy 3C: Improve Education and Job Training**

If Stamford residents are going to have access to Stamford jobs, the disparity between high-paying jobs in Stamford that employ commuters and low-paying jobs that employ City residents must be addressed. Critical factors that contribute to the mismatch between the skills of Stamford’s labor force and the skills necessary to access higher-paying jobs are education, opportunity and housing affordability. In order for existing residents to continue to live and work in Stamford, housing must be affordable, particularly for low-wage earners. The City should work to address these issues by pursuing the following implementation strategies:

***Implementation Strategies***

**3C.1: Create a model “cradle to career” program in Stamford to educate and train the resident workforce.** Over the course of the next 10 years, the City should work with Stamford Public Schools; higher-education institutions including UCONN, University of Bridgeport and Sacred Heart University; and local companies to develop a model “cradle to career” education program that trains Stamford residents for careers in the City’s leading industries. Cradle to career education is becoming a national model for improving education outcomes for students beginning at birth, continuing through secondary and postsecondary school to job placement. This approach recognizes that the education that prepares students for careers is not limited to the school system, but must include opportunities to learn outside the classroom, and requires partnerships and connections with business, civic and community partners. UCONN’s planned expansion of its Downtown campus with a focus on providing internships/job experience for students presents a prime opportunity for the types of collaborations that will enhance job readiness for Stamford’s students.

**3C.2: Foster innovative job training and entrepreneurship programs.** Stamford must work to foster innovative job training and entrepreneurship programs for its unemployed young adult and older adult populations in collaboration with private-sector business partners. Development of a program that trains local residents for jobs in emerging sectors including technology and healthcare and provides mentoring relationships between trainees and the business community is an effective strategy for developing career opportunities for its residents. This model has been successfully employed in other cities and has the potential to create significant opportunities for Stamford’s underserved communities.

**3C.3: Maintain the affordable housing stock to ensure that people who work in Stamford can afford to live in Stamford.** Maintaining affordable housing is essential to ensuring that those who work in Stamford can afford to live in Stamford. The City should continue its successful affordable housing programs, including its one-for-one replacement and below market rate (BMR) programs, as discussed in Chapter 6.

### **Policy 3D: Improve Regional Transportation Infrastructure**

Improving regional transportation infrastructure is essential to achieving the City's economic development goals. Most of these key improvements are in the State's control, but the City should actively engage the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT). Traffic congestion must be addressed with both roadway and transit improvements in order for Stamford to capture projected job growth and accommodate the transportation needs of new and existing workers. According to a 2010 study prepared by the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA) and Westchester County's Planning Department, *Measuring the Costs of Congestion*, the monetary cost of congestion on I-95 and the Merritt Parkway is estimated to exceed \$1.26 billion per year for an average weekday, and \$6.3 billion per year for an average work week. Accidents and system failures on Metro-North's New Haven line over the past year have resulted in significant impacts to commuter rail service, the economic impacts of which have yet to be quantified. These monetary costs only capture part of the losses attributable to congestion; the effects of suspended rail service on commuters to and from Stamford, the quality-of-life toll of time spent in traffic and the adverse effect that congestion has on the City's ability to attract and retain businesses and employees are equally high. Improving the transportation infrastructure that connects Stamford to the region is a paramount economic development priority. While improvements to regional transportation infrastructure are not within the control of the City, Stamford should partner with the Regional Plan Association, South Western Regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (SWRMPO), the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCCOG, successor agency to the South Western Regional Planning Agency as of December 31, 2014) and the Business Council of Fairfield County to strongly advocate for key projects at the State and Federal level by pursuing the following strategies:

**3D.1: Widen all railroad bridge underpasses to improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation.** See Policy 4C.1-a.

**3D.2: Advocate for funding to bring Metro-North's New Haven line into a state of good repair and increase capacity.**

**3D.3: Advocate for funding for infrastructure investments necessary to reduce travel times among New York City, Stamford, New Haven and Hartford.**

**3D.4: Work with the State to improve the design and function of the Stamford Transportation Center.** The City should work to establish a partnership with the State to redevelop the Stamford Transportation Center as an attractive and welcoming gateway to the city.

**3D.5: Advocate for construction of a fourth lane on I-95 where possible.** While costly and politically difficult to achieve, the City should strongly advocate for a fourth lane on I-95, in order to reduce the high level of rush-hour traffic, which constrains travel to and from Stamford. According to SWRPA, under current roadway conditions, by 2030, rush hour congestion on I-95 will be consistently severe from Greenwich to Westport, which will impede Stamford's economic growth potential. The re-

introduction of tolls on I-95 and the Merritt Parkway, particularly tolls at the border of the State, should be discouraged.

**3D.6: Monitor improvements to the Merritt Parkway.** The Merritt Parkway operates at capacity during peak hours, and its capacity cannot be easily increased because it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Parkway's bridges and landscaped areas are key elements that led to its designation. The most significant improvement currently planned is the configuration of the new median and guardrail design from Greenwich into Stamford.

During the morning peak, the congestion on the Merritt Parkway extends from Stamford east to Bridgeport for traffic coming into Stamford. In the evening, the same occurs for eastbound traffic. This congestion can be expected to have a dampening impact on development. The State has made one ramp improvement at Exit 34 on the Parkway for eastbound traffic exiting for Stamford. The City should encourage further exploration of interchange improvements at both High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads to enhance safety and capacity.



## CHAPTER 4.0: A REGIONAL CENTER: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

### Goals

- Address regional roadway congestion and improve commuter rail
- Improve intra-city mobility for all modes (vehicles, transit, pedestrians and bicyclists)
- Promote transit-oriented development

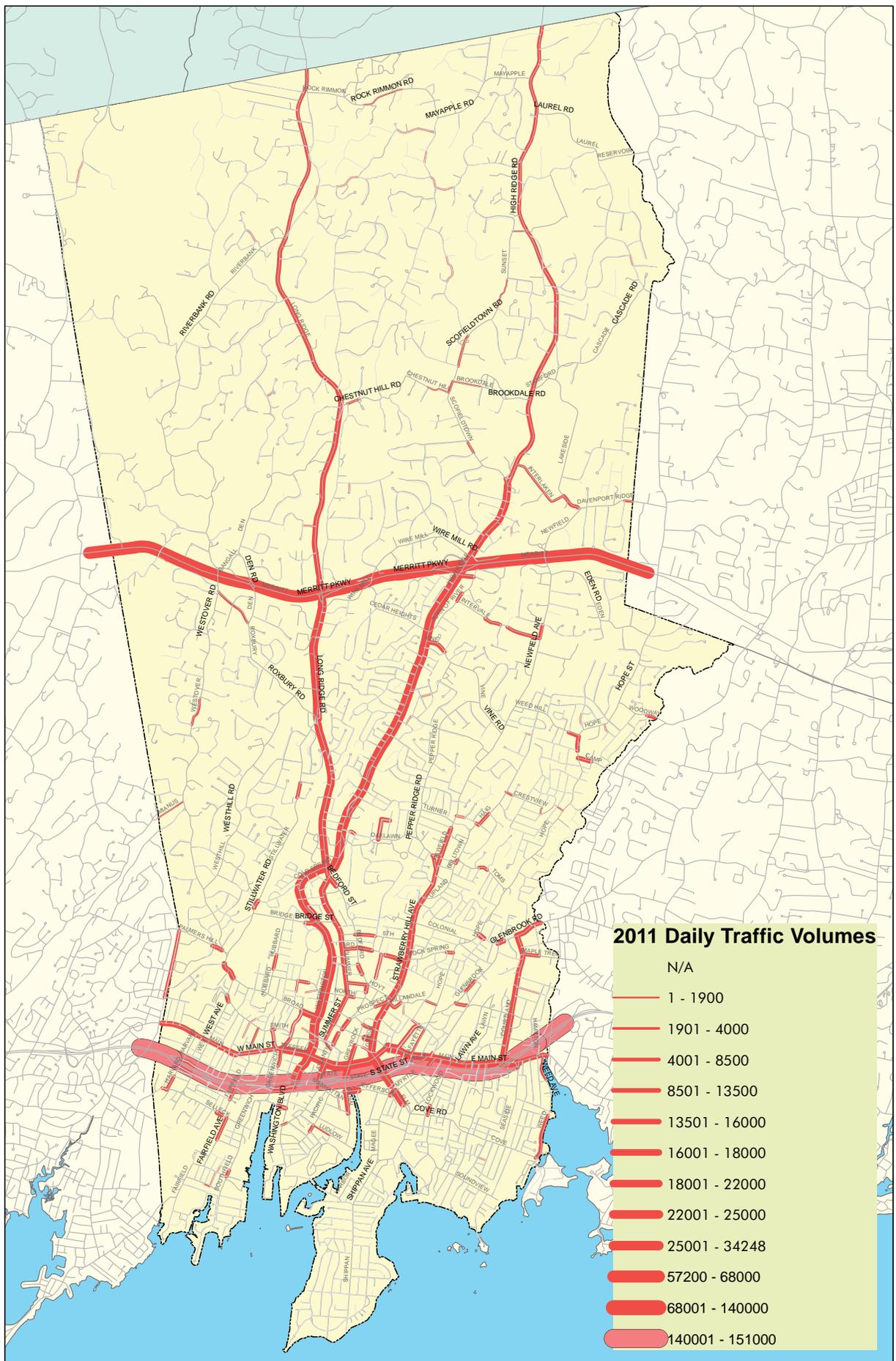
### A. Introduction

Improving Stamford's transportation infrastructure is a critical component of the City's economic development strategy. Mitigation of traffic congestion and improvements to commuter rail are essential to sustaining and enhancing economic growth in the city. Traffic congestion on I-95 and the Merritt Parkway and system failures on Metro-North's New Haven line are compromising Stamford's ability to attract economic growth and capture regional demand for entertainment and culture. As shown in Figure 7, I-95 carries approximately 140,000 to 150,000 vehicles per day through Stamford, and the Merritt Parkway carries another 57,000 to 68,000 vehicles. The South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA) projects that congestion on these roadways will continue to grow, with rush-hour traffic reaching consistently severe congestion levels from Greenwich to Westport by 2030 (see Figure 8). At the same time, continued mechanical failures and service interruptions on the New Haven line affect the reliability and performance of the City's commuter rail service. According to a report published by the Regional Plan Association (RPA), \$3.6 billion in additional investment above ConnDOT's current five-year capital plan is needed to bring the New Haven line into a state of good repair within 10 years.<sup>7</sup> Further system upgrades to reduce travel times and accommodate growth in ridership would require substantial added investment. Without these investments, Stamford's economic growth potential will be constrained by significant access restrictions.

Within the City, roadway and transit improvements and new pedestrian and bicycle connections are needed to effectively get people where they need to go and enhance Stamford's vitality as an appealing, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly city. Attractive, functional streetscapes and integrated circulation networks that serve all users are key components of the City's strategy for attracting businesses and employees and improving residential quality-of-life. High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads serve as Stamford's primary north-south access routes; east-west access is provided mainly via East and West Main Street (Route 1), which serve as key gateways to the City and will be the next phase of development in the evolution of Stamford over the next 15 years. These roadways provide critical intra-city mobility. Traffic along them presents a challenge to neighborhood quality-of-life as drivers seek alternate routes. Bus service does not provide an attractive alternative to driving along these and other routes for those with access to a car. While buses have the potential to transport more people within Stamford and thus reduce traffic congestion, as described below, the current system does not meet the needs of many residents and commuters.

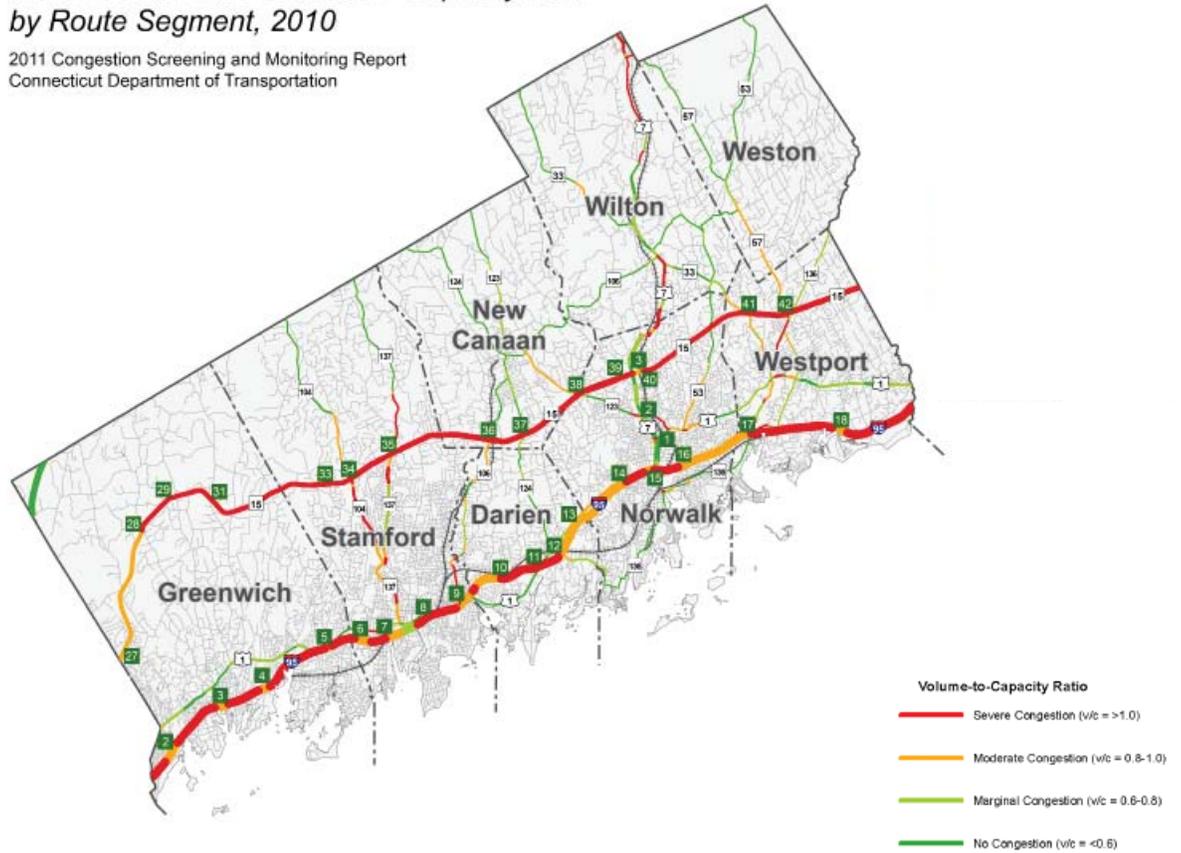
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<sup>7</sup> *Getting Back on Track, Unlocking the Full Potential of the New Haven Line*, RPA, January 2014.



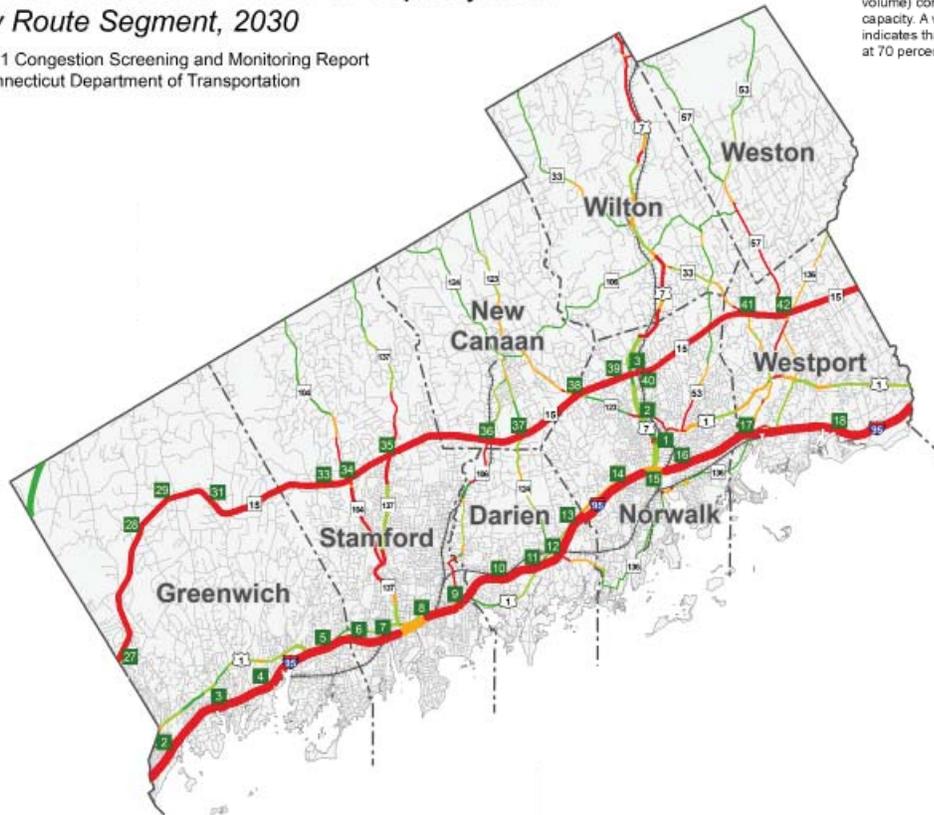
### Traffic Volume and Volume-to-Capacity Ratio by Route Segment, 2010

2011 Congestion Screening and Monitoring Report  
Connecticut Department of Transportation



### Traffic Volume and Volume-to-Capacity Ratio by Route Segment, 2030

2011 Congestion Screening and Monitoring Report  
Connecticut Department of Transportation



Volume-to-Capacity Ratio is a measure of traffic demand on a facility (expressed as volume) compared to its traffic-carrying capacity. A v/c ratio of 0.7, for example, indicates that a traffic facility is operating at 70 percent of its capacity.



## **B. Mobility Improvements**

Stamford's 2002 Master Plan recognized the critical relationship among traffic, transit and growth. A Traffic and Transit Report that accompanied the Master Plan recommended a combination of strategies to address traffic congestion and support economic development. These strategies included transportation demand management (TDM), significant transit improvements and the introduction of substantial new housing development in areas close to Downtown, specifically:

- Lowering parking ratios and increasing floor area ratios near transit
- Allowing for transfer of development rights
- Adding parking at stations east of Stamford
- Adding bus service to meet trains at the Stamford Transportation Center
- Adding train service

Since 2002, Stamford has been actively studying a range of transportation and mobility improvements including transit, pedestrian, bicycle and roadway projects. The City has created new residential development in the South End near the Stamford Transportation Center. Parking ratios for these new residences reflect reduced parking demand for housing near transit. This has been an effective strategy for mitigating the impacts of growth on traffic congestion. There are also a variety of improvements underway at the Stamford Transportation Center, including:

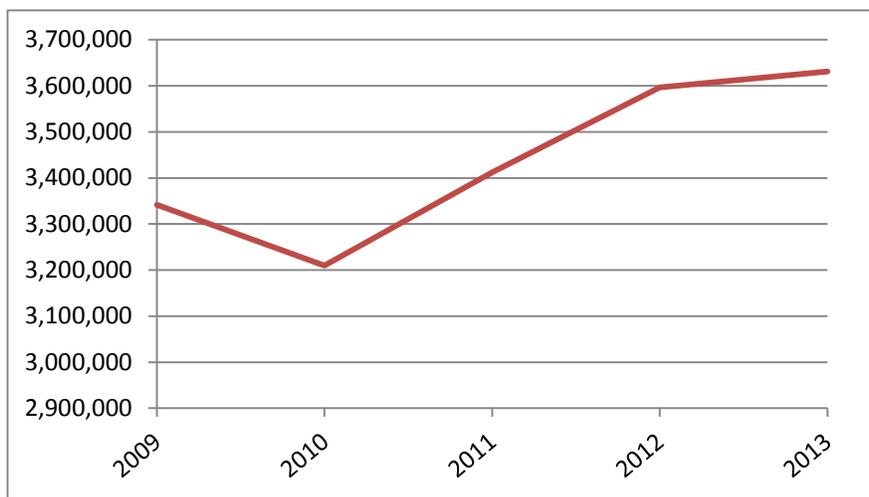
- Platform extensions
- New pedestrian bridge over Washington Boulevard
- Improvements to the Atlantic Street bridge, which will enhance connectivity between Downtown and the South End
- Improvements to the I-95 off-ramp at Atlantic Street to relieve congestion and conflicts
- Widening of State Street to three lanes
- Reorganization of shuttle parking and loading areas

In addition, the State of Connecticut, working with a private developer, has initiated plans to create significant new commercial, residential and retail development at the Stamford Transportation Center. As proposed, the State's transit-oriented development (TOD) plan will include approximately 600,000 square feet of commercial/office space, 60,000 square feet of retail, 150 residential units and a 150-room hotel. As the State moves forward with its plan, coordination with the City will be essential to ensure that the scale of the development and proposed uses are consistent with the City's overall vision for the train station area. As expressed in the Stamford Transportation Center Master Plan prepared in 2010, this area is envisioned as a lively transit hub that provides important transit connections, relates well to pedestrians and bicyclists and provides opportunities for people to live and work in close proximity to transit.

Stamford's two other train stations, which are on the New Canaan branch line, also provide important opportunities for TOD. The City is planning for two new village centers at its Glenbrook and Springdale train stations. This project, which was recommended in the 2002 Master Plan, envisions new mixed-use transit-oriented infill development in a compact area around these stations.

Buses are another important component of the City’s transit system, which must be better integrated into an overall plan for enhancing transit service (see Figure 9: Rail and Bus Routes). While bus ridership has steadily increased over the past several years, as shown in Chart 15, the bus system is designed as a traditional hub and spoke system centered on the Stamford Transportation Center, and does not meet the needs of many residents and commuters. Currently, many corporations provide private shuttle services to transport workers to and from the Stamford train station as an alternative to City bus service. Crosstown and north-south bus service is limited, requiring transfers at the transportation center, which presents a challenge for residents without cars living in neighborhoods outside Downtown such as West Side, Waterside and the East Side, and limits access from the north to amenities and public parkland in the South End. A transit project, the Urban Transitway, which has been implemented by the City, begins to address this issue. The Transitway provides a new high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lane and bicycle lane linking the Stamford Transportation Center and East Main Street. Other new transit improvements being piloted in the City include a new trolley service between Downtown and the South End. If successful, this service could be expanded to include other trolley routes providing intra-neighborhood transit.

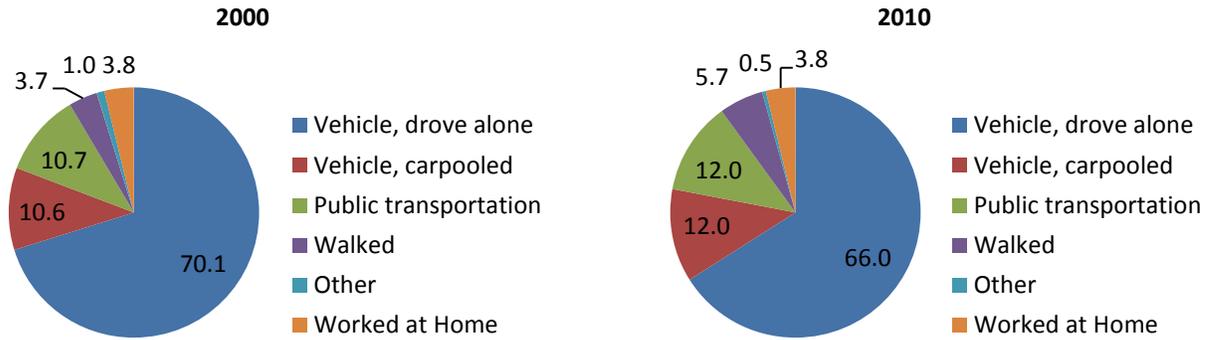
**Chart 15: Annual CT Transit Bus Ridership - Stamford Division, 2009-2013**



Source: CT Transit

Stamford’s bicycle and pedestrian networks are key components of its transportation infrastructure. As shown in Chart 16, from 2000 to 2010, the percentage of commuters who drove alone to their jobs fell from 70.1 percent to 66 percent, while all other modes – carpooling, public transportation walking and other means – increased as a percentage of total commuters. While these bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation have traditionally been under-recognized and underutilized in the City, there is significant support for greater emphasis on cyclists and pedestrians and the role they will play in Stamford’s future, especially in the Downtown, South End and train station area. These neighborhoods continue to evolve into dynamic urban spaces attracting new residents, businesses, entertainment and culture. Their ability to serve pedestrians and bicycles as well as cars will be essential to supporting the uses and activities that attract economic growth and investment.

**Chart 16: Journey to Work Data, 2000 and 2010**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 & 2010 ACS 1-Year Estimate

Currently, there are few designated bicycle routes in the City. However, as shown in Figure 10, a significant new north-south route is planned along the Rippowam River connecting Scalzi Park to Boccuzzi Park. In addition, the planned East Coast Greenway, a multi-state trail system intended to link the major cities of the East Coast, is proposed to pass through Stamford by utilizing the Merritt Parkway right-of-way. The Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) is studying the feasibility of constructing a multi-use trail along the parkway, as described below.

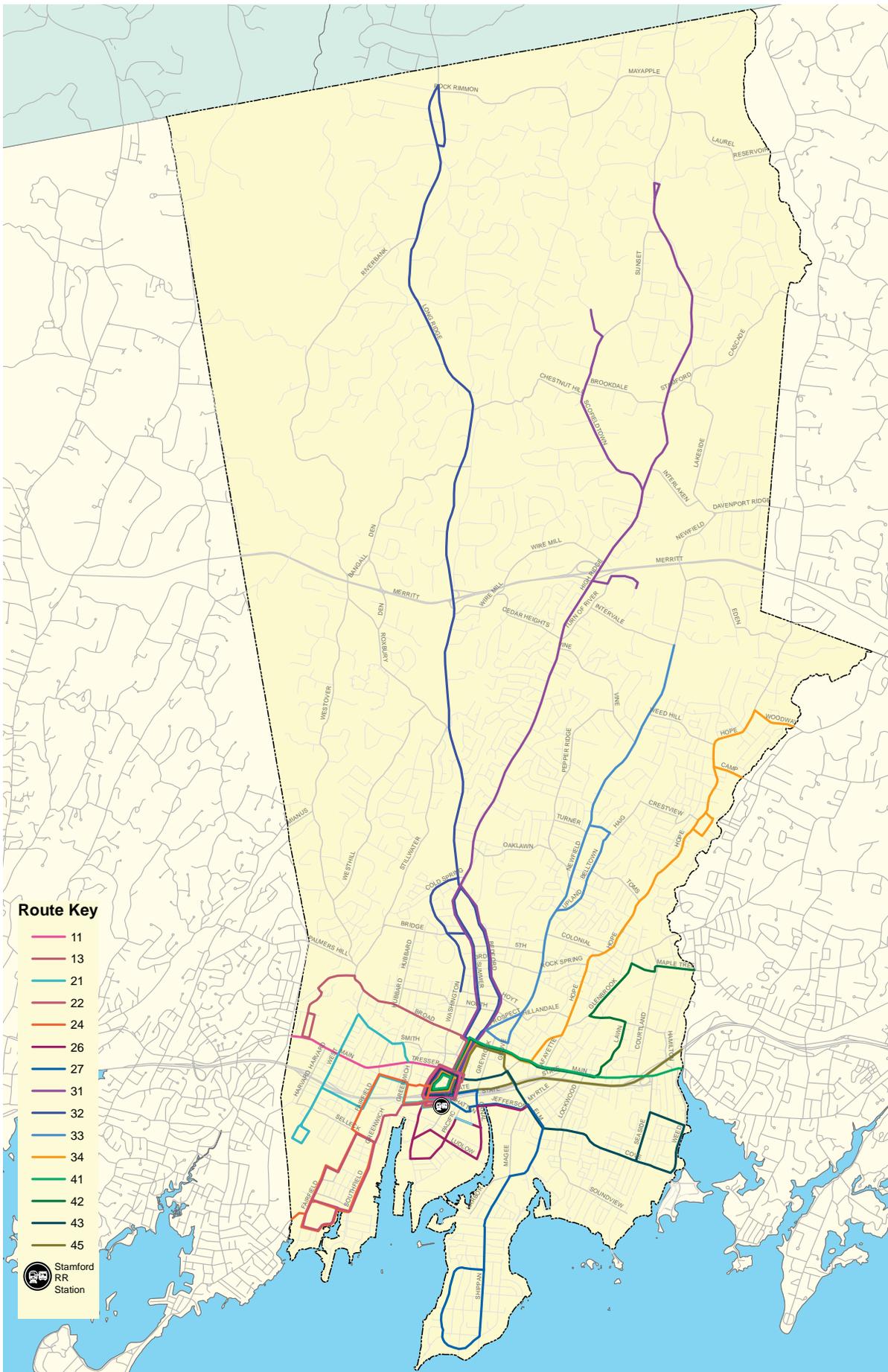
Many City sidewalks are unwelcoming, and conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles have resulted in numerous injuries, particularly in the Downtown. As shown in Figure 11, the most pedestrian/vehicular crashes have occurred at the intersection of Tresser and Washington Boulevards. Other dangerous locations include Tresser Boulevard and Atlantic Street, Broad and Atlantic Streets, and Broad and Summer Streets. Pedestrian improvements at these and other locations will be essential to increasing Downtown pedestrian traffic and supporting economic activity.

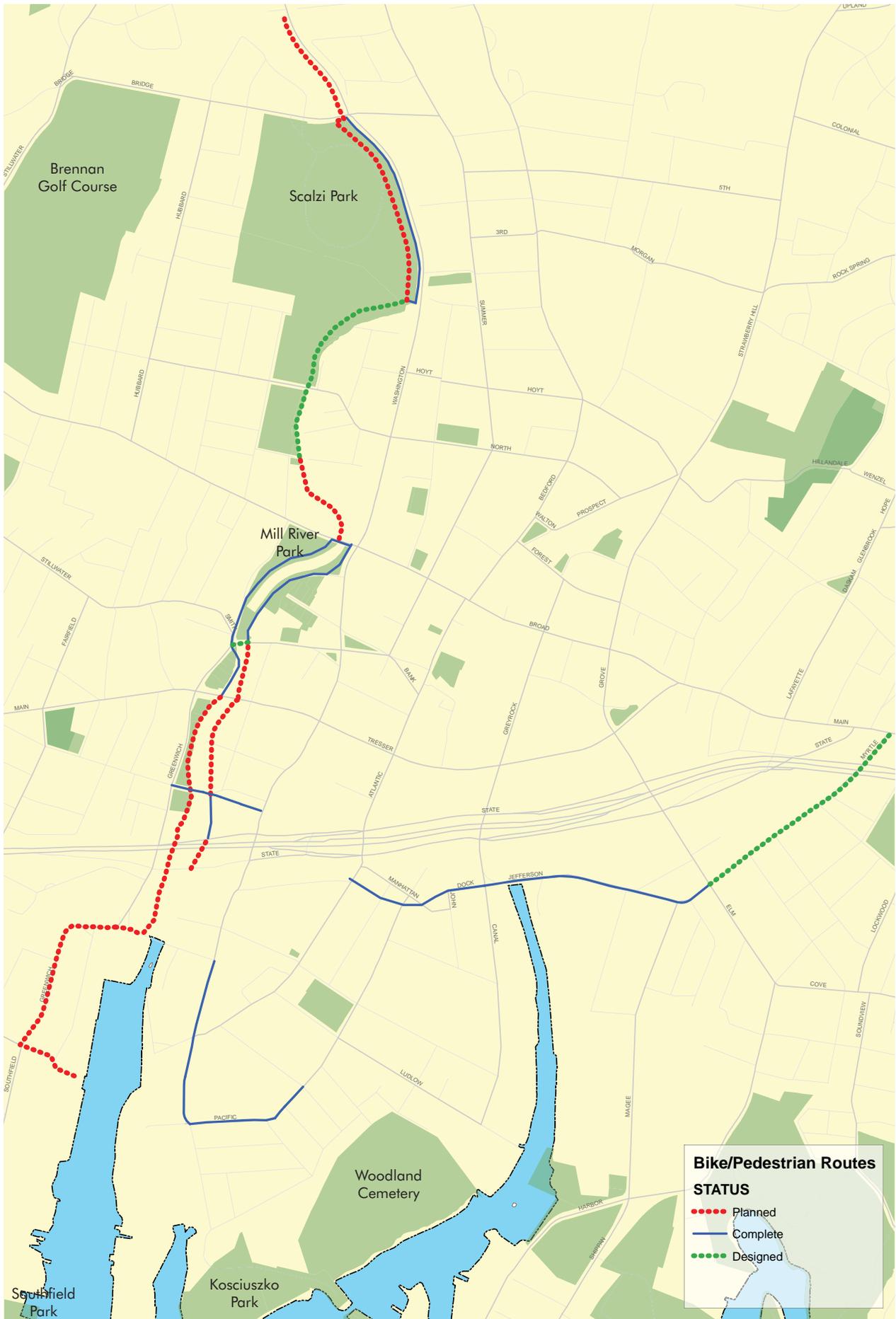
**C. Transportation Studies**

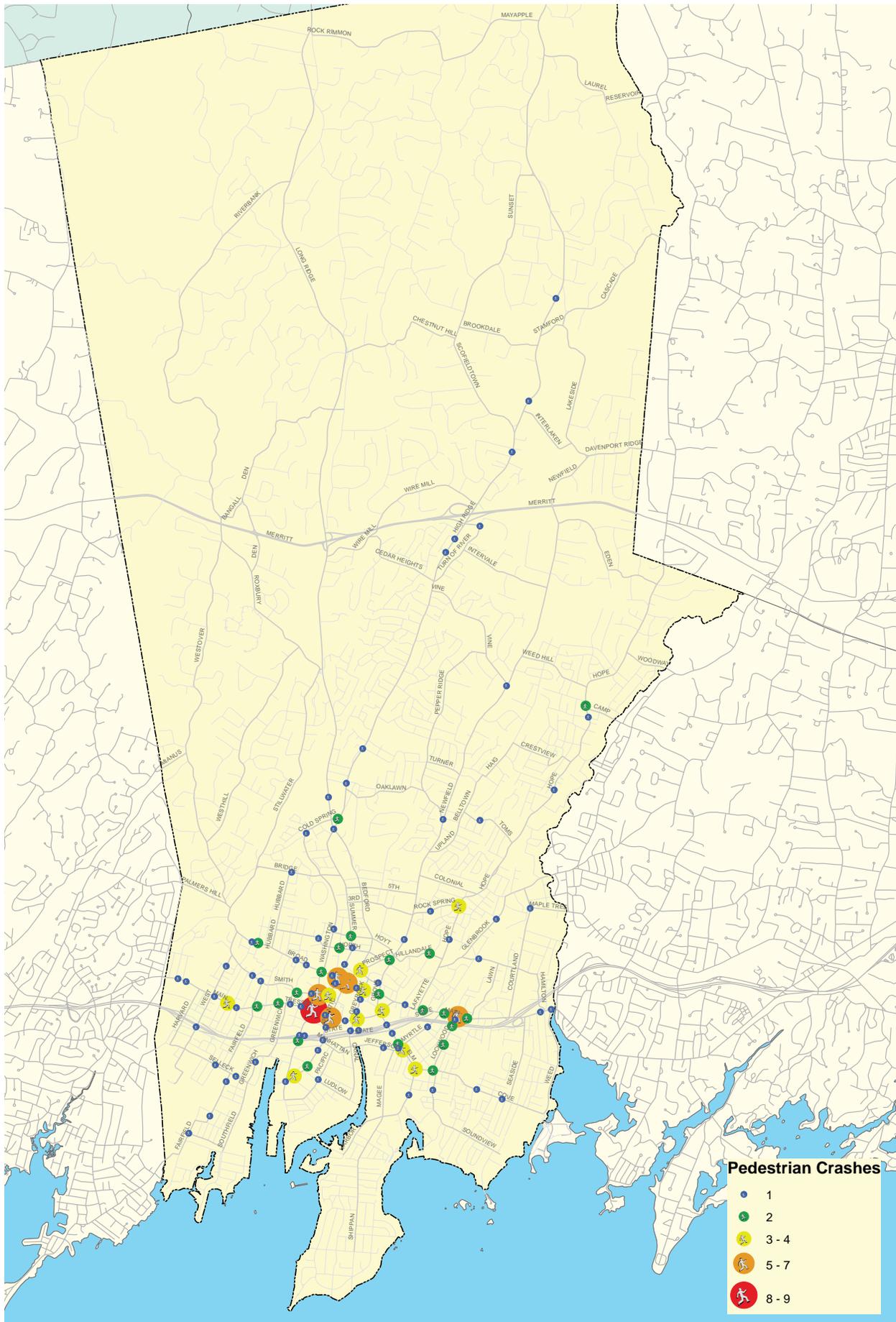
Since its last Master Plan was published in 2002, Stamford has conducted a number of studies on alternative ways to enhance mobility. These studies recommend a range of strategies for enhancing mobility including parking improvements, alternative modes of transit, traffic calming and roadway improvements, as summarized below.

**Stamford Downtown Parking, Traffic and Pedestrian Plan, 2004**

This study reviews the location and operation of parking facilities in the Downtown and addresses pedestrian safety and vehicular circulation. The plan recommends ways to make parking more convenient, improve the pedestrian experience, improve traffic circulation and expand public parking facilities.







### **Greenwich Avenue Corridor Study, 2005**

This report studies conceptual plan alternatives for improving traffic circulation and safety, pedestrian circulation and streetscapes along Greenwich Avenue between South State Street and Selleck Street, in response to community requests for improved traffic operations and safety. The alternatives recommended by the study are to:

- Provide a “one-way pair” with Greenwich Avenue serving as a one-way southbound collector roadway and Davenport Street serving as a one-way northbound collector roadway.
- Provide a modern roundabout at the intersection of Greenwich Avenue, Pulaski Street and O&G Main Drive.
- Provide geometry improvements and a new traffic signal at the intersection of Greenwich Avenue, Southfield Avenue and Selleck Street.

### **Walkable Stamford, 2008**

This report describes fundamental qualities of pedestrian-friendly downtowns and provides site-specific short- and long-term recommendations for enhancing walkability in Downtown Stamford. Locations addressed include:

- Washington Boulevard: Tresser to Richmond Hill
- Stamford Gateway
- Atlantic Street: Federal to South State Street
- Washington and Tresser Boulevards
- Broad Street and Atlantic/Bedford Street

Study recommendations discuss ways to make Stamford more pedestrian-friendly, improve wayfinding, increase public amenities and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment at the Stamford Transportation Center.

### **Downtown Streetcar Feasibility Study, 2010**

This study, which was based on a recommendation of the 2002 Master Plan, evaluated the creation of a north-south transit corridor that would run through Downtown Stamford connecting north to the Merritt Parkway. Key travel nodes along the proposed route included Bull’s Head and the Ridgeway shopping center area in the north, the UCONN Stamford, Stamford Town Center, the Stamford Transportation Center and Harbor Point in the South End. The study recommended that a priority bus corridor operated by CT Transit be initiated along the proposed route as a pilot program to test the alignment and ridership of a future fixed rail streetcar system.

### **Stamford Transportation Center Master Plan, 2010**

The Stamford Transportation Center (STC) Master Plan presents an improvement plan for addressing existing STC deficiencies to enhance the capacity of the station, improve ridership and address regional highway congestion. Issues addressed in the Master Plan include physical plant deterioration, parking constraints, platform congestion and vehicle congestion. As discussed in the plan, addressing these issues will require a systematic investment program to transform the STC into a regional transportation

hub with the necessary amenities, capacity, interconnectivity and iconic stature necessary to attract ridership and reinforce Stamford's position as a vital economic destination in the State and as a gateway to both New York and New England.

#### **Stamford Neighborhood Traffic Calming, 2011**

This report provides recommendations for minimizing speed and cut-through traffic in Stamford's residential neighborhoods. The report addresses neighborhood traffic issues on a block-by-block basis and is the result of a consensus planning process to address resident traffic and safety concerns. The analysis considered impacts of proposed traffic calming strategies on particular blocks as well as follow-on impacts such strategies would have on adjacent streets and neighborhoods. Recommended traffic calming measures include intersection treatments such as curb extensions, roundabouts, raised intersections and intersection realignments, as well as mid-block treatments, including road diets, speed tables, chicanes and median islands.

#### **U.S. Route 1 Greenwich-Stamford Study (SWRPA), 2011**

This study, funded by the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA), is intended to develop a plan to improve traffic operations and safety on Route 1 in Greenwich and Stamford that enhances pedestrian-friendliness, manages access, minimizes congestion, accommodates transit and improves the corridor's economic potential and community character. The plan identifies locations with operational deficiencies, projects future traffic conditions and suggests a range of specific strategies to improve the safety and operation of Route 1 for all users. In Stamford, recommendations include a proposed roundabout at the West Main Street/Greenwich Avenue intersection and a realignment of Richmond Hill Avenue at the Route 1 intersection.

#### **Long Ridge/High Ridge Corridor Study, 2014-2015**

Long Ridge and High Ridge Roads are Stamford's key north-south access routes, connecting Downtown and surrounding commercial areas to the City's residential neighborhoods as well as the Merritt Parkway. These corridors were recently studied as part of the Long Ridge/High Ridge Corridor study prepared by the City of Stamford in conjunction with SWRPA and ConnDOT. The study outlines various transportation improvements for the corridors including signal timing adjustments, interactive speed signs, restriping, upgraded and new pedestrian and bicycle facilities, crosswalks, medians and landscaping. The plan also provides strategies for managing land-use and growth consistent with the vision for each corridor. The study addresses multiple modes of transportation (bus, bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular) and is intended to increase overall mobility, modal choice and safety for pedestrians, residents, businesses, employees and visitors.

#### **Stamford East Main Street Transit Node Feasibility Study (SWRPA), 2013**

This study, funded by the SWRPA, examines opportunities to promote new transit-oriented development through the construction of an intermodal transit facility along the Urban Transitway at the intersection of East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue. According to the study, this future transit node could include a combination of a rail station, bus station and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The Urban Transitway will create a new direct connection between the East Side and the Stamford Transportation Center, providing safe and efficient travel for automobiles, buses and bicycles. At the same time, the Transitway is the first step in a series of key milestones necessary to create a new successful transit-oriented development in the East Side. The study recommends construction of an interim bus shuttle and East Main Street bus station at the terminus of the Urban Transitway. This would establish vehicular access, bus drop-offs and parking facilities that would be needed for a potential future rail station. Additionally, an interim bus station could build the ridership necessary to support a possible new rail station along the New Canaan branch line.

#### **Merritt Parkway Multi-Use Trail Study (ConnDOT), In-process**

This current study seeks to determine the feasibility of constructing a bicycle and pedestrian trail along the Merritt Parkway right-of-way for an approximately 37-mile stretch from Greenwich to the Sikorsky Bridge in Stratford. The 18-month study, funded by the National Scenic Byways Program, has developed a series of conceptual treatments for various components of a trail, and presented those at public meetings throughout the study area. If the trail is determined to be feasible, a complete design effort will need to be undertaken, including rights-of-way and permitting processes, and preparation of a construction cost estimate. Construction of a trail would likely proceed in phases.

### **D. Transportation and Mobility Goals and Strategies**

#### **Introduction**

Investments in roadways, regional rail and local transit as well as bicycle and pedestrian networks will be crucial to Stamford's ability to attract and manage growth over the course of the next decade. In seeking to retain corporations and expand its economic base the City must reduce and manage traffic congestion, improve regional rail and intra-City transit, increase opportunities for bicycling and enhance the pedestrian environment. The following section outlines a series of actions to improve Stamford's transportation network. Given the scope of these implementation strategies, a key recommendation of this Master Plan is for the City to establish a Transportation Department, tasked with managing all aspects of Stamford's transportation needs, including vehicular traffic flow; road improvements; bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure; parking; and enhancements to bus, shuttle and other transit. Although creation of this department is specifically addressed in Policy 4C.5, it is envisioned that its responsibilities would encompass many of the strategies listed in this chapter.

The City has set forth the following transportation and mobility goals to address these issues. Policies and implementation strategies for achieving these goals are outlined below.

- Address roadway congestion and improve commuter rail
- Improve intra-City mobility for all modes (vehicles, transit, pedestrians and bicyclists)
- Promote transit-oriented development
- Create a Transportation Department for the City of Stamford

## ***Policy Recommendations***

### **Policy 4A: Improve regional transportation infrastructure**

As discussed in Section 3, making it easier to get to Stamford via I-95, the Merritt Parkway and regional/commuter rail on Amtrak and Metro-North Railroad is central to economic growth in Stamford. Traffic congestion getting into and out of the City and could limit its ability to capture economic growth. While improvements to regional transportation infrastructure are not within its direct control, the City should strongly advocate for key projects at the State and Federal level, pursuing the strategies outlined in Section 3 under Policy 3D. For example, the Merritt Parkway operates at capacity during peak hours, and its capacity cannot be easily increased because it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. While the historic designation presents challenges, there are targeted improvements that the City could encourage as feasible, such as intersection improvements and the addition of access and turning lanes. The most significant improvement planned at present is the configuration of the new median and guardrail design from Greenwich into Stamford.

### **Policy 4B: Upgrade the Stamford Transportation Center to serve as an attractive gateway to the City.**

Stamford is second only to Grand Central Terminal as the busiest station on the New Haven line. The aesthetic and functional condition of the Stamford Transportation Center (STC), however, does not suggest this prominent position. The transportation building itself is uninviting and does not present an image of Stamford as a preeminent regional transit hub.

#### ***Implementation Strategy***

**4B.1: Work with the State to implement the Stamford Transportation Center Master Plan.** The STC Master Plan, published by the City in 2010 and described in 4.C, provides a comprehensive plan for addressing physical plant conditions, platform congestion, parking constraints and traffic congestion in the train station area. As the State moves forward with its plans for transit-oriented development at the Stamford station, it is imperative that the State work closely with the City to implement the STC Master Plan recommendations, including upgrading the station building and improving connections between the station and the Downtown/South End.

### **Policy 4C: Improve circulation and mobility within the City.**

Improving circulation and mobility within Stamford will require a coordinated multi-modal approach that addresses roadways, transit systems, bicyclists and pedestrians. Improvements should not be made in isolation, but should consider various modes in tandem to best address congestion, safety and quality-of-life. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be considered together with decisions on roadway and transit improvements. At the same time, broader transportation demand management (TDM) strategies should be employed to reduce vehicular traffic and encourage transit use. Specific recommendations by mode are as follows:

### **Policy 4C.1: Roadway Improvements**

Long Ridge and High Ridge Roads are Stamford's major north-south corridors. Other key north-south connectors include underpasses below I-95 and the train tracks at Greenwich Avenue and Atlantic, East Main, Canal and Elm Streets. East-west access is provided primarily along East and West Main Street (Route 1) and Tresser Boulevard through Downtown. The functionality and aesthetics of these roadways is central to both the City's mobility and the character of the neighborhoods they traverse.

#### ***Implementation Strategies***

**4C.1-a: Improve traffic circulation and reduce traffic bottlenecks.** The railroad bridge underpasses at Greenwich Avenue, Atlantic Street, East Main Street, Canal Street and Elm Street should be widened to improve vehicular flow and be safer and more attractive for pedestrians. Widening of the Atlantic Street underpass is planned and funded; widening of the other underpasses should be analyzed, prioritized and implemented as well. The City should also consider implementing roundabouts as an alternative to the signalized intersections.

At the same time, to realize the full benefits of widening the Atlantic Street underpass, traffic circulation improvements should be made along Atlantic Street. At the intersection of Atlantic and the parking garage access road, there is a two-lane southbound road segment that becomes one-lane due to a curb extension at 655 Atlantic Street. This extension should be narrowed to continue the two-lane southbound roadway configuration. This will allow two-way traffic southbound to Henry Street, where traffic can better travel east-west as well as north-south (see Figure 12).

Traffic circulation improvements should also be considered for Route 1 (West Main Street) in the West Side neighborhood. The first section of Route 1 between Jackie Robinson Park and West Avenue is relatively narrow, with on-street parking on both sides and multiple curb cuts, and consequently suffers from significant peak-hour congestion. The creation of protected turn lanes at critical intersections would improve traffic flow and safety along this section. Alternative side parking strategies might also be explored for this section of Route 1. During the morning peak hour, parking could be restricted on the south side of the road for traffic heading downtown, and vice versa for the evening peak hour for traffic exiting the downtown. The most westerly section of Route 1 is wider and is a candidate for pedestrian improvements similar to those recommended for Tresser Boulevard (Figure 13), i.e. narrowing some lanes, possibly eliminating some right-turn lanes, creating medians with refuge islands for pedestrians and adding pedestrian crosswalks. The City is studying this area as part of the West Side Transportation Study. The study is considering traffic flow through the West Side and is considering design alternatives for the West Main Street Bridge, which has been closed to vehicular traffic since 2002. Alternatives being evaluated include rehabilitation of the bridge for pedestrians only, as well as designs that accommodate multiple modes. Recommendations from the SWRPA Route 1 Greenwich-Stamford Study may also be considered.

The phasing of all traffic signals needs to be monitored and adjusted on an ongoing basis to reflect changing traffic patterns in order to improve traffic flow, reduce delays and make the traffic signals

more pedestrian-friendly. The phasing and cycle length of the signals are generally set to maximize capacity for vehicles during peak hours, at the cost of relatively long delays for pedestrians, bicycles and buses. Shorter cycle lengths will make circulation more convenient for these other modes.

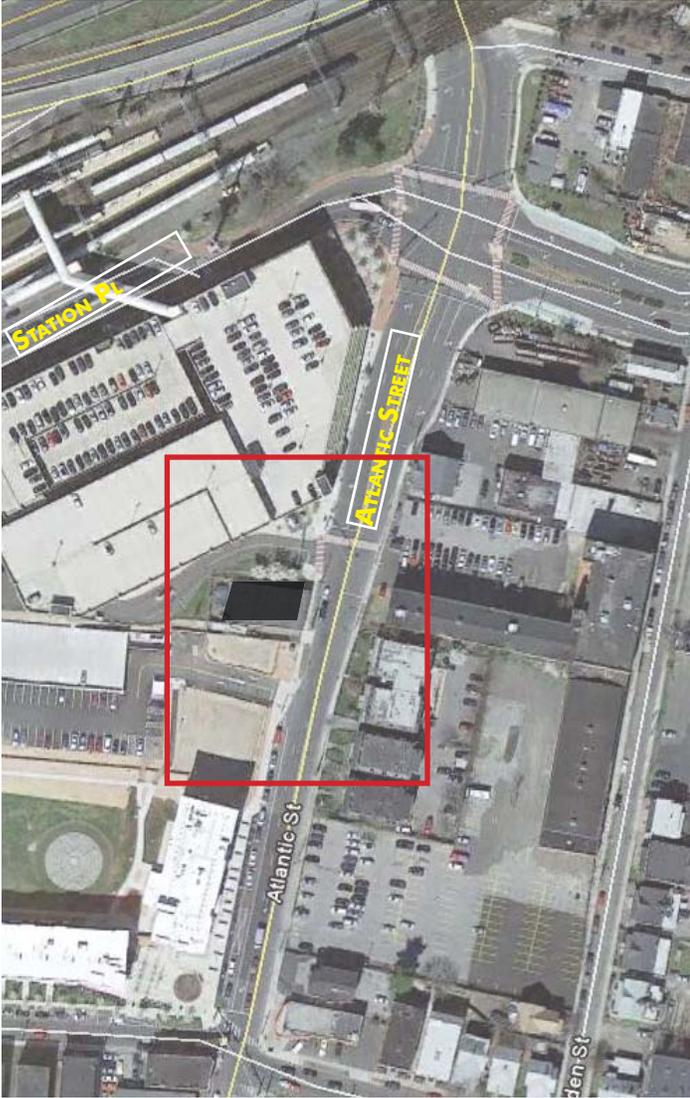
**4C.1-b: Explore Park-and-Ride from the Merritt Parkway to Downtown.** In order to ease traffic congestion coming from the Merritt Parkway to Downtown Stamford along the Ridge roads, the City should work with ConnDOT to provide express bus service. At Exit 34 (Long Ridge Road), a commuter park-and-ride lot should be explored.

**4C.1-c: Implement the recommendations of the High Ridge/Long Ridge Roads Corridor Study (when completed).** As discussed in Section 4.C, a recent study of High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads suggests improvements along these roadways to ease traffic congestion and improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Recommendations include signal timing adjustments, interactive speed signs, restriping, upgraded and new pedestrian and bicycle facilities, crosswalks, medians and landscaping. The Bull's Head section at the southern end of this study needs particular attention for better pedestrian connectivity and safety.

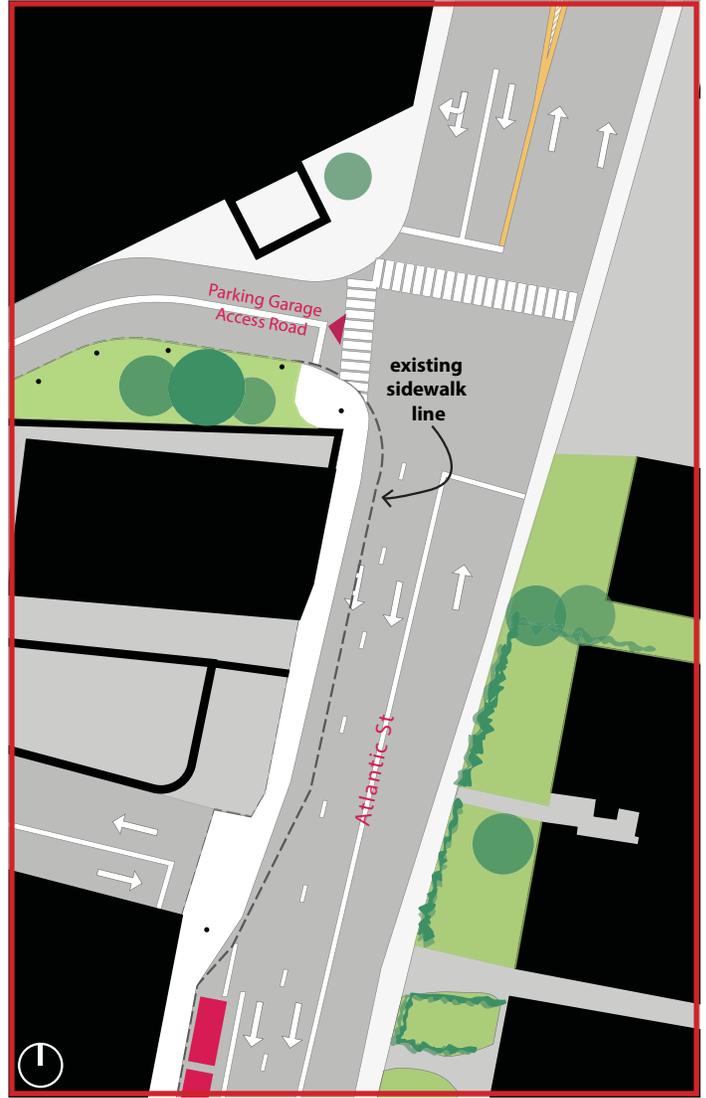
**4C.1-d: Improve East-West connections throughout the City.** Overall traffic circulation in the City (south of the Merritt Parkway) could be improved if there were better East-West connections. Several areas within the City may be prime candidates for improved East-West circulation:

- West Stamford and its connections to Downtown
- The section between Broad Street and Bull's Head
- The section between Bull's Head and the Merritt Parkway
- The section between Stillwater and the Downtown

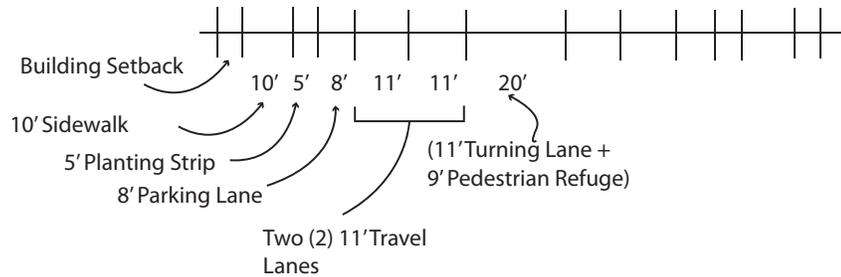
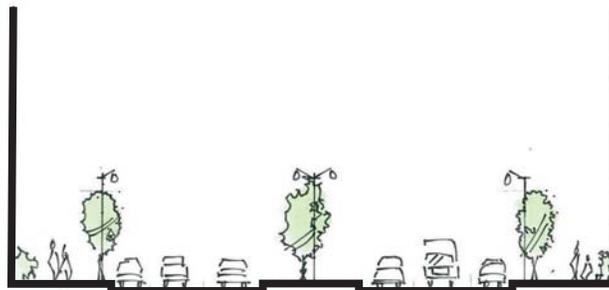
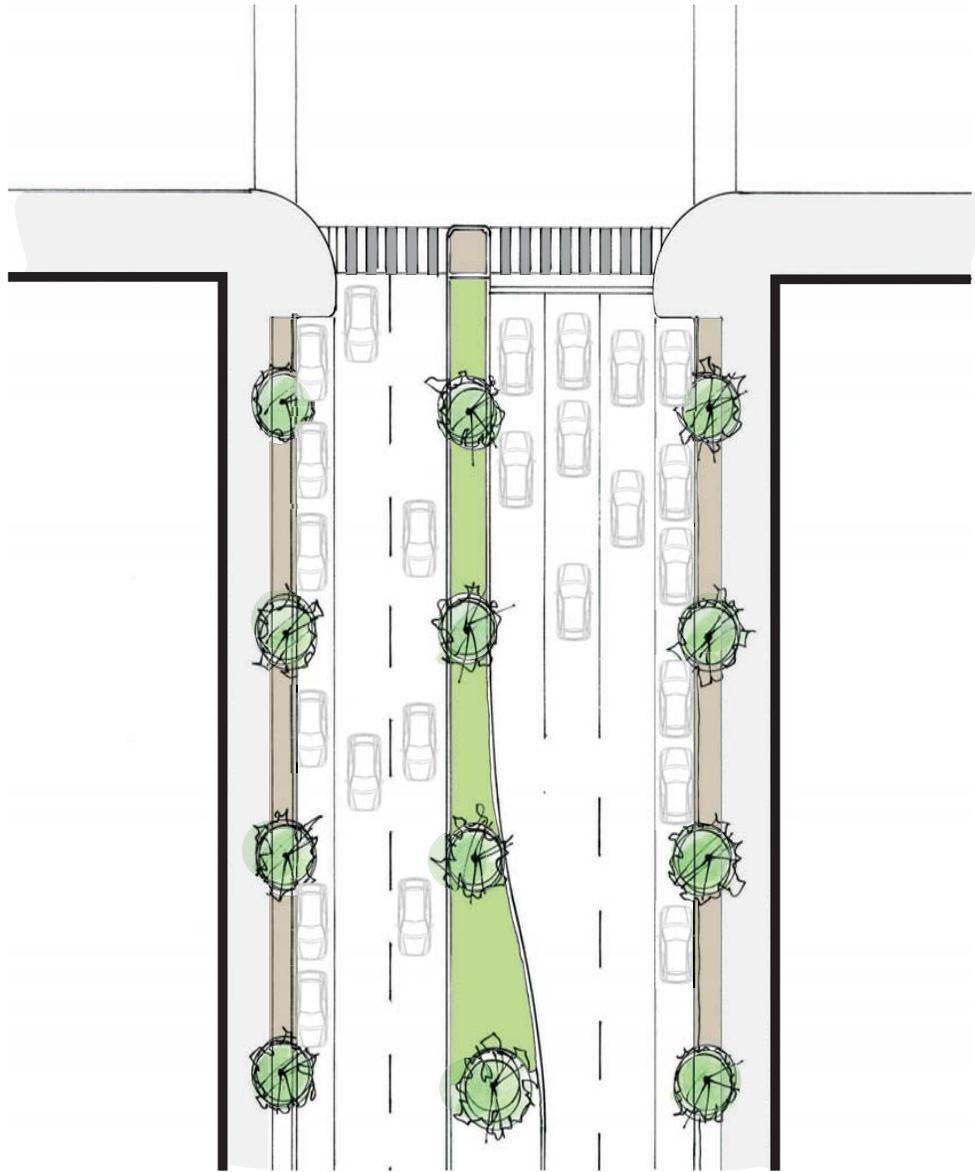
There are a number of east-west roads, such as Tom's Road and Oaklawn Avenue, which provide limited east-west access, but do not directly connect to each other. This is also true of Vine Road and Cedar Heights Road. It is extremely difficult to achieve these connections without land acquisition and possible condemnation. Before any consideration of these steps, a detailed traffic study examining east-west connections should be undertaken. Such a study should take a careful look at the cost/benefit ratio of these improvements.



AERIAL VIEW



POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT: CURB EXTENSION NARROWED TO CREATE TWO-LANE SOUTHBOUND CONFIGURATION



## **Policy 4C.2: Transit Improvements**

Improvements to bus, jitney and other transit services are essential to providing a viable alternative to automobile travel, expanding transportation choice and reducing traffic congestion.

### ***Implementation Strategies***

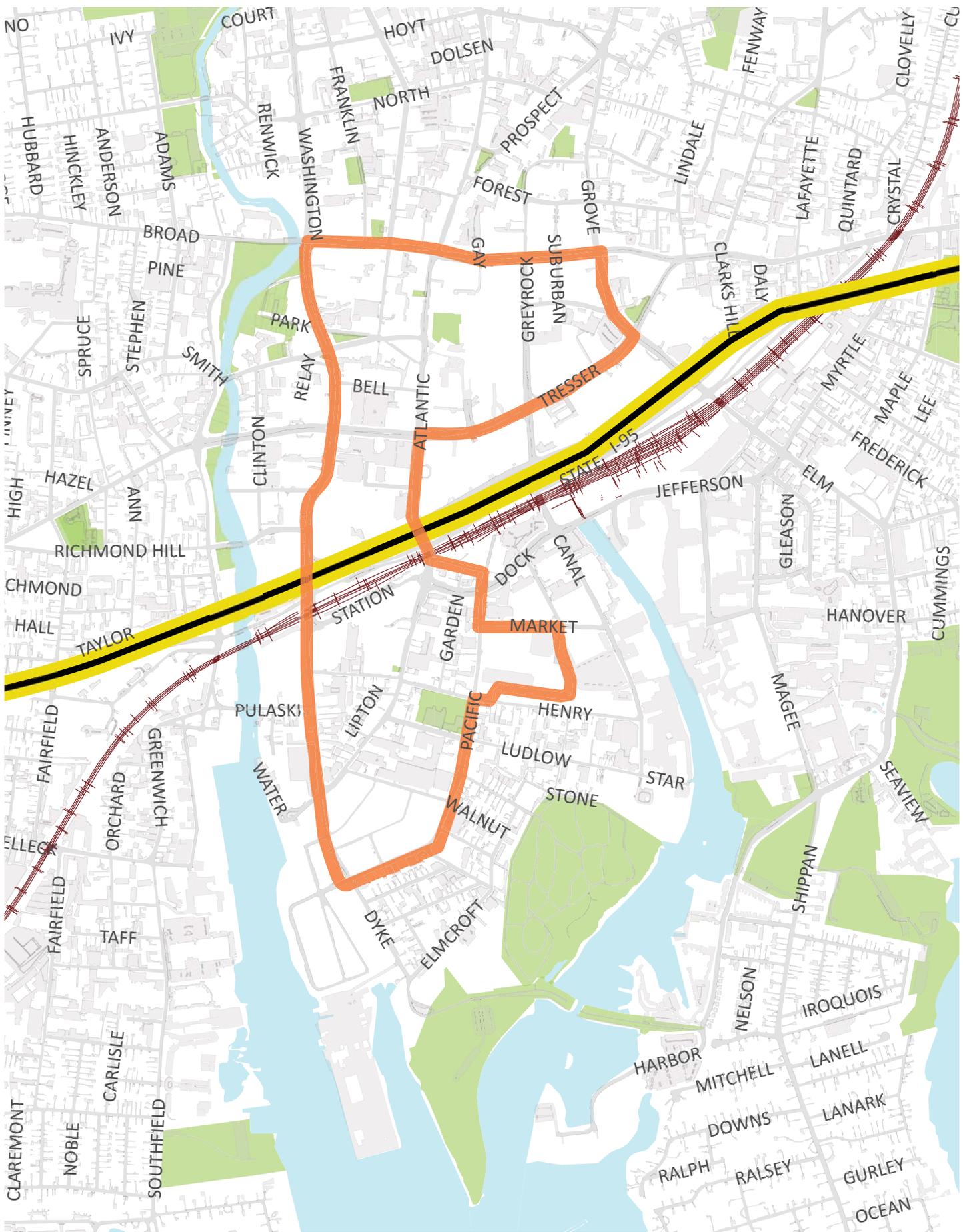
**4C.2-a: Improve bus service.** Efficient, reliable bus service is necessary to encourage public use. Currently, the City's bus service is not widely used by commuters coming into the Stamford train station and does not adequately address residents' cross-town travel needs. The existing spoke and hub system centered on the Stamford Transportation Center is not in line with the transit needs of many residents, commuters and visitors. Infrequent and redundant routes are offered via regular CT Transit routes; peak-only CT Transit commuter connection shuttles; the privately run, publicly accessible Harbor Point-Downtown shuttle; and numerous privately operated shuttles. These services should be coordinated to provide commuters with the best service possible. The City should work with CT Transit to make the following improvements to City bus service: 1) adjust bus routes to better meet the travel pattern needs of residents and commuters; 2) improve frequency and reliability; 3) coordinate bus departure times with train schedules; 4) explore opportunities to implement priority bus corridors to improve the efficiency of service.

### **4C.2-b: Continue trolley or priority bus service connecting key travel nodes in central Stamford.**

The City's 2010 *Downtown Streetcar Feasibility Study* (discussed in Section 4C) recommended a new priority bus corridor operated by CT Transit connecting key travel nodes in central Stamford, including Bull's Head and the Ridgeway shopping center area in the north, UCONN Stamford, Stamford Town Center, the Stamford Transportation Center and Harbor Point in the South End. A first step toward such service is being made with a new trolleybus, which provides service between the South End and the Downtown, as shown in Figure 14). This model could potentially be expanded to provide reliable intra-City transit in and around Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Such additional service should be complementary to existing local bus and shuttle service, and be designed to supplement, not replace, existing service.

**4C.2-c: Make transit stops more attractive and accessible.** The pedestrian environment near bus stops and rail stations should be upgraded to make walking easier, safer and more attractive. Improvements should include the provision of well-lit sidewalks, bus shelters with trash receptacles and real-time transit information at bus stops and rail platforms.

**4C.2-d: Pursue creation of a transit node at the intersection of East Main Street/Myrtle Avenue.** As discussed in Section 4.C, SWRPA prepared a study examining the feasibility of a transit node on the Urban Transitway at the intersection of East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue. A transit facility at this site, likely a bus station with parking facilities providing shuttle service to the Transportation Center, should be pursued by the City in partnership with the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCCOG, successor agency to SWRPA as of December 1, 2014) and CT Transit.



**4C.2-e: Coordinate privately operated shuttle routes for efficiency and optimal service.** Currently, a significant number of private shuttles run routes connecting the Stamford Transportation Center with destinations throughout the City. Most of these services are restricted to building tenants and run infrequently at peak hours. Space in the shuttle area is limited and will not accommodate additional services using the space during peak hours. The City should consider requiring operators seeking to gain access to the shuttle loading area to 1) coordinate with nearby operators to combine services, and 2) allow members of the general public to use shuttles. Coordination of shuttles could allow for increased frequencies and coverage and less crowding at the STC. The shuttle area should be improved to include rider information.

### **Policy 4C.3: Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Improvements**

There is significant support for making Stamford more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly, enhancing mobility choice and the overall vitality of the City, particularly in Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. While it is understood that improving these modes of transportation will not have a significant impact on overall traffic, making Stamford's streetscapes more attractive and integrating its circulation networks as complete streets serving all users is an important part of the City's strategy to attract economic growth and enhance quality-of-life in Stamford. Improving the City's pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems will encourage people to walk and bicycle in Stamford, particularly in and around Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, enhancing the vibrancy of City streets. While bicycle and pedestrian improvements are not expected to substantially improve traffic congestion, they will make walking and biking an attractive alternative for getting to and from nearby destinations and benefit the character of Downtown and nearby neighborhoods.

#### ***Implementation Strategies***

**4C.3-a: Fund and create a Citywide bicycle and pedestrian plan.** The City should seek funding for and create a Citywide bicycle and pedestrian plan that maps existing sidewalks and bicycle routes, identifies gaps in connectivity, guides the implementation of bicycle routes in appropriate locations throughout Stamford and develops a strategy to improve pedestrian connectivity within Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Various bicycle route types should be explored depending on roadway conditions and physical constraints, from simple roadway markings indicating vehicles must share the road with bicycles, to dedicated bicycle lanes, as feasible and appropriate. Enhancing walkability should be pursued in coordination with the Walkable Stamford report, and projects should focus on improved sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, curb extensions, pedestrian-scaled lighting, landscaping, street furniture and wayfinding. Pedestrian and bicycle routes should provide direct connections to key destinations.

In working to improve the pedestrian environment, the following strategies should be considered:

- Narrow vehicular travel lanes; 11-foot-wide lanes are safe in urban environments

- Introduce on-street parking where feasible
- Introduce medians that could include landscaping and refuge islands at crossings
- Eliminate exclusive right-turn lanes where they are not warranted
- Install bulb-outs at key intersection crossings where they are appropriate and will not interfere with turning movements
- Install bicycle lanes, sharrows, and “share the road” signage where possible and appropriate
- Enhance pedestrian wayfinding with attractive signage

**4C.3-b: Adopt a Complete Streets ordinance.** Complete Streets are streets designed to accommodate all users, including vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. This is a departure from the traditional view that the singular function of a roadway is to accommodate vehicular traffic at maximum safe speed. Adopting a Complete Streets policy in Stamford means that, in its transportation projects, the City will work to accommodate the needs of all users (vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles), as appropriate depending on physical constraints. The City should pursue a Complete Streets strategy that balances vehicular circulation needs with the need for pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

**4C.3-c: Implement traffic calming strategies to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.**

Traffic calming improvements should be made in various locations throughout the City, as appropriate, to calm traffic in high-speed locations and improve pedestrian safety. Such improvements include the use of street trees, neck-downs at intersections, on-street parallel parking and bicycle lanes to buffer pedestrians from the roadway, stop signs, speed humps, traffic lights and signs posting speed limits.

**4C.3-c(1): Neighborhood Traffic Calming.** The City should implement the recommendations of the *Stamford Neighborhood Traffic Calming* report published in 2011 (summarized in Section 4.C), which provides strategies for minimizing speeding and cut-through traffic in Stamford’s residential neighborhoods.

**4C.3-c(2): Downtown Traffic Calming.** Downtown traffic calming improvements should be consistent with the recommendations of the *Walkable Stamford* report published by the City in 2008 (see Section 4.C). Improvements along Tresser Boulevard should be prioritized, as it is the main east-west corridor through Downtown Stamford and is not a pedestrian-friendly roadway. Between Greenwich Avenue and Canal Street, the roadway includes three 10 to 12-foot travel lanes in each direction and a median that varies in width from 3 feet to 10 feet. Continuous 10-foot sidewalks are provided on both sides of Tresser Boulevard; however there is no buffer between the sidewalk area and the vehicle travel lanes. Crosswalks are striped across all signalized intersections, with crossing distances ranging from 85-95 feet. Crossing these wide intersections can be dangerous and stressful. Pedestrians often must use the narrow curbed medians at the intersections as refuge islands; these curbed medians do not extend past the crosswalk and cannot be used by the disabled or parents with strollers. Opportunities exist to re-design Tresser Boulevard as a more pedestrian-friendly roadway while maintaining its

function as an arterial road serving through traffic. Given the significant number of pedestrian and vehicular crashes on Tresser, the goal of any re-design effort should be to create a safer environment for all users – drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. A range of strategies should be considered, including signal phasing and timing; exclusive pedestrian crossing phases; bicycle “sharrows” (which are roadway markings indicating that vehicles must share the road with bicyclists) and signage; bulb-outs and pedestrian refuge islands; the addition of on-street parking; and the installation of median street trees and planting strips along either side of the roadway. ConnDOT should work with the City to develop alternative design scenarios as the first step toward improving the safety and efficiency of Tresser for all users.

**4C.3-d: Encourage the use of the National Association of City Transportation Officials’ (HACTO) *Urban Street Design Guide* where appropriate.** In future transportation planning efforts, the City should look for guidance, as appropriate, to this document, which emphasizes urban street design as a unique practice with its own set of goals, parameters and tools that are different from those of traditional suburban highway design.

#### **Policy 4C.4: Transportation Demand Management Strategies**

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is an important tool aimed at lowering traffic demand during peak hours and at the most critical locations. It involves actions including land-use strategies and covers all modes of transportation. TDM policies engage the City’s employers in the overall goal of allowing growth in the City while maintaining good accessibility. The Traffic and Transit Report prepared in November 2002 as part of the 2000 Master Plan outlines two sets of TDM actions: a group of actions that can be undertaken by the Stamford employers and a second group of actions, mostly land-use strategies, which are the purview of the City. The City’s TDM actions are addressed in other sections.

##### ***Implementation Strategy***

**4C.4-a: Promote TDM Strategies to Stamford Employers.** This strategy encourages Stamford employers to adopt TDM policies that motivate their employees to travel as much as possible by public transportation or carpooling; or to travel during off-peak hours. The City should prepare a brochure explaining the benefits of TDM to employers (reduced parking demands, lower employee absenteeism, greater worker pool, etc.), and the various actions employers can take to reduce their traffic load. This brochure would be distributed to all local employers.

**Policy 4C.5: Creation of a Transportation Department.** Some of Connecticut’s largest cities, such as New Haven, have a separate Parking and Traffic Management Department. The Master Plan workshops raised parking issues, particularly in the Downtown. The creation of a Transportation Department could help resolve some existing issues and create a parking management strategy. This strategy could include the relationship and cost ratios of on-street and structural parking as well as setting appropriate parking ratios for off-street parking.

#### **Policy 4D: Enhance Parking Efficiency**

Parking management is a key component of the overall strategy to improve circulation within Stamford, particularly in the Downtown. As discussed in Stamford's *Downtown Parking, Traffic and Pedestrian Plan* published in 2004 and described in Section 4.C, better management of parking and better wayfinding signage can help to reduce unnecessary vehicular traffic created when drivers search for parking. Other effective parking strategies to consider include zoning incentives for shared and public parking, off-site parking and reduced parking ratios for development near transit.

##### ***Implementation Strategies***

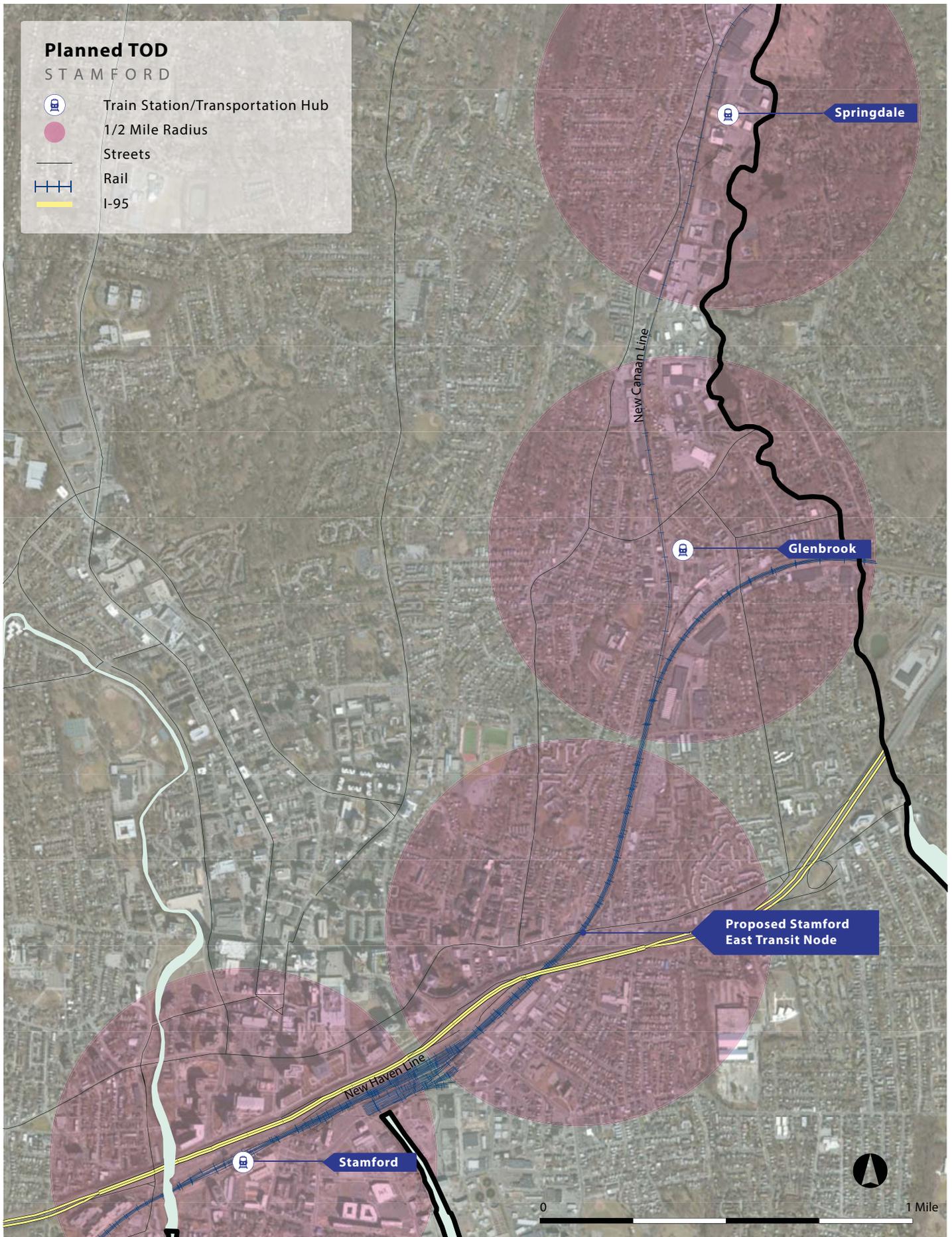
**4D.1: Prepare a parking management strategy.** The City should work with the Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) to prepare a parking management strategy that gets the most out of the number of on-street parking spaces, maximizing their turnover to encourage shopping and dining, with longer-term parking in off-street lots and garages. Pricing should be set so that there are always a few available spaces. This strategy should include a comprehensive and attractive wayfinding/signage system that provides clear direction to parking facilities. The impact of commercial trucks and their storage in downtown is worthy of follow-up study.

**4D.2: Study parking throughout the City.** A broad look at parking issues citywide should be developed.

**4D.3: Continue to evaluate opportunities to reduce parking ratios for developments in close proximity to transit.** The City should continue to allow for reduced parking ratios for developments near transit and encourage shared parking at these and other locations, as appropriate. Reserving parking spaces for individual users should be discouraged so that shared-parking becomes feasible. The City should establish a system for monitoring demand for parking at such locations as projects are completed in order to fine-tune parking ratios for future projects in similar locations.

#### **Policy 4E: Promote Transit-Oriented Development**

Promoting transit-oriented development (TOD) is key to encouraging desired growth with minimal impact on traffic congestion. By locating new, higher-density housing as well as office and retail uses near transit, the City can encourage pedestrian-friendly development, minimize traffic impacts and relieve development pressure on lower-density neighborhoods (see Figure 15).



## ***Implementation Strategies***

**4E.1: Encourage the State to coordinate with the City on plans for TOD at the Stamford Transportation Center.** The State proposes the creation of significant new commercial, residential and retail development at the Stamford Transportation Center. This proposal is being developed behind closed doors at the State level without input from the City. As the future development of this land will have a substantial impact on the character and function of Stamford's primary gateway and affect both the Downtown and South End, the City encourages the State to reconsider its closed-door position and work in partnership with the City on the TOD plan. The City urges the State to consider the recommendations of the Stamford's 2010 STC Master Plan (see Section 4.C) and to ensure that its TOD plan provides for a pedestrian-friendly transit hub that is well-connected with nearby neighborhoods and provides appropriately scaled residential and commercial development.

**4E.2: Implement the recommendations of the Glenbrook and Springdale Village District TOD Feasibility Study.** The City is working with a consultant team and neighborhood residents to develop a plan for TOD at the Glenbrook and Springdale train stations. This project was initiated in the fall of 2013 and is expected to be complete by the end of 2014. The City should work to implement the recommendations of this report, as appropriate, upon publication.

**4E.3: Consider transit-supportive land-use policies for development near East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue.** As discussed, SWRPA recently prepared a study examining the potential for an intermodal transit facility at East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue, which could include a combination of rail station, bus station and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Zoning that would allow higher-density development together with lower parking ratios in this area could encourage development and transit use as well as reduce traffic congestion in the vicinity of the Stamford train station.

**4E.4: Consider opportunities for mixed-use transit supportive redevelopment of underutilized office parks on High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads.** As contemplated in the *Downtown Streetcar Feasibility Study* prepared in 2010 and the recently completed *Long Ridge and High Ridge Corridor Study* (2013), a north-south transit corridor with relatively express and direct priority bus service along the Ridge Roads could provide a reasonable alternative to automobile travel along the corridors, easing traffic congestion. This, in turn, could create opportunities for mixed-use transit-supportive redevelopment of underutilized office parks along the corridor.

The redevelopment strategies in these two corridors need to take into consideration the fact that the Merritt Parkway operates at capacity during peak hours and that its capacity cannot easily be increased because it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Replacing office buildings with mixed-use developments may therefore be appropriate, since the addition of residential uses in this corridor would internalize some traffic that otherwise would use the Merritt Parkway, and some of the traffic generated by the mixed-use developments would be in the off-peak direction and would tend to peak prior to the morning office traffic peak and after the evening office peak.



## **CHAPTER 5.0: DOWNTOWN AND SOUTH END**

### **GOALS**

- Capitalize on the synergies between the Downtown and South End to maximize the potential of both neighborhoods
- Maintain and augment Downtown’s standing as a regional center
- Encourage revitalization of existing residential streets in the South End
- Enhance the Stamford Transportation Center as a gateway to the City of Stamford
- Improve connectivity among Downtown, the South End, the Stamford Transportation Center and adjacent neighborhoods
- Promote quality urban design and enhance streetscapes

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Downtown**

Downtown Stamford is the heart of the City. It is Stamford’s business and transit hub; a destination for arts, culture and entertainment; and home to many City residents. When Stamford’s last Master Plan was adopted in 2002, it emphasized Downtown redevelopment opportunities, the need for an enhanced pedestrian network, the need to capitalize on and connect open spaces, and urban design and landscaping as tools for supporting economic vitality and making Downtown “a people place.” The 2002 Plan stressed the importance of directing future growth to the Downtown near transit, focusing large-scale office and retail development in Stamford’s core. Since 2002, significant progress has been made toward these goals, and they continue to ring true today.

#### **B. South End**

In the South End, much has changed since 2002. In the last Master Plan, the South End was discussed in conjunction with the Waterside and West Side neighborhoods; the three neighborhoods were considered together as dense, mixed-use areas adjoining Downtown. However, the South End has emerged as unique from this group, due in large part to its relationship with the Stamford Transportation Center and its connections to the waterfront. The South End will continue to be a neighborhood in its own right, separate from the Downtown, with the character of the South End neighborhood continuing to evolve in response to demand for housing near transit and the waterfront.

In 2002, the Master Plan grappled with the issue of the boundaries of the Downtown and how it should expand over time. The Plan’s Future Land Use Map identified a core Downtown area generally bounded by Washington Boulevard to the west, Hoyt Street to the north, Grove Street to the east and properties just north of Tresser Boulevard to the south. Within the core, the primary goal was to promote mixed-use pedestrian-oriented infill development to complete the area’s urban fabric. Outside the core area,

the plan identified “collar” areas that would allow for development of a stepped-down density and intensity from the core, providing a transition to adjacent neighborhoods. The Plan also identified a Downtown “corridor” north of the railroad tracks/I-95, intended primarily for office, residential and hotel uses with an emphasis on pedestrian-friendly design.

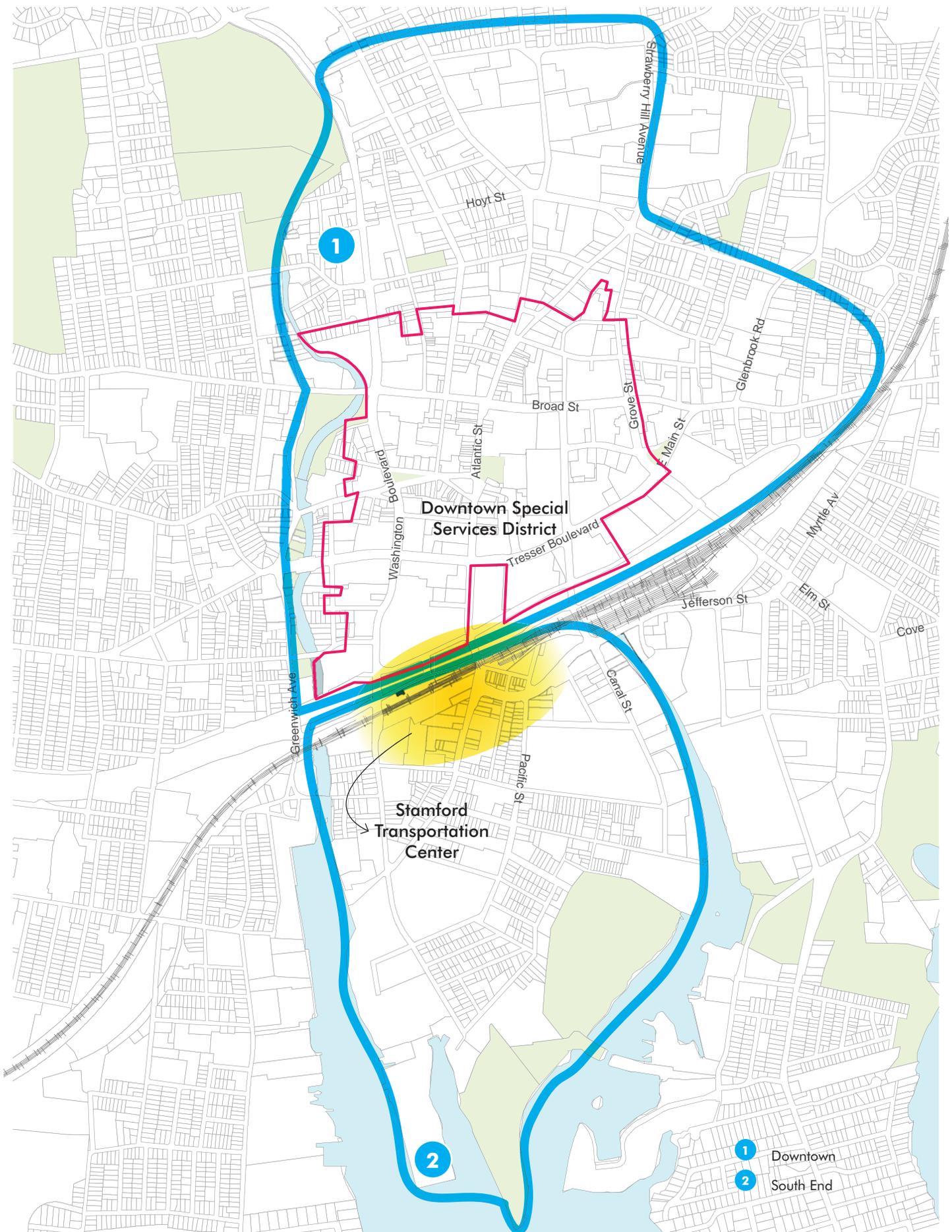
### **C. Unique Neighborhoods/Important Connections**

This basic framework remains relevant today. Concentrating large-scale office and retail development in the Downtown area continues to be an important growth management policy and economic development strategy for the City. Now, more than ever, there is a strong focus on enhancing the vitality of Downtown Stamford as an attractive, walkable and bikeable city center for living, working and entertainment. At the same time, increased attention is being paid to the area in the vicinity of the Stamford Transportation Center (STC) and the South End, which has seen unprecedented growth over the past five years. Today, the Downtown and South End, linked by the STC, remain distinct neighborhoods with their own unique characters but have become more closely linked, taking advantage of new synergies brought about by new residential development in the South End and growth Downtown. In looking forward to the next 10 years, promoting connections between these two areas will be essential to realizing the full potential of each neighborhood.



## **5.2 REAL ESTATE MARKET AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS**

Development trends in Downtown and the South End over the past decade have shown that the transportation center is an important hub linking these unique, but related neighborhoods (see Figure 16). Both Downtown and the South End have seen substantial housing growth since 2002 as well as new retail and office development. New housing units have been largely market-rate rentals, which have attracted an increasingly affluent population. Additional residential projects planned or under construction will bring thousands more units Downtown and in the South End, as well as 400 new units of student housing being considered by UCONN as part of its plan to expand its Downtown campus. These projects demonstrate a strong demand for housing, which benefits the vitality of the City’s core, increasing pedestrian activity that is essential for supporting retail, restaurant and entertainment uses.



A strong residential market Downtown and in the South End is important to the strength of Downtown retail, providing both local demand and pedestrian activity. Stamford's Downtown is a regional retail center serving neighborhood shoppers while also drawing visitors from the rest of the City and nearby areas. There is 768,000 square feet of retail space at Stamford Town Center, and an additional 986,900 square feet on retail streets throughout the Downtown. According to the Downtown Special Services District (DSSD), 95 percent of this retail space is occupied. In addition, new neighborhood-scale retail has been recently built in the South End, with 193,850 square feet of retail space at Harbor Point, Canal Street and Stamford Landing. Another 232,200 square feet of retail is planned for the neighborhood to serve its expanding residential population.

While there is a strong demand in both the residential and retail markets, the citywide office vacancy rate is high at 26 percent. Despite this trend, there is strong demand for Class A office space within walking distance of the Stamford Transportation Center; office vacancy within a quarter-mile of the STC is much lower than other parts of Downtown, with desirable office spaces such as MetroCenter fully occupied. As is clearly illustrated by the demand for office space near the STC, transit-oriented development (TOD) that allows for higher-density residential and office development and lower parking ratios is both marketable and environmentally sustainable. In response to this demand, the State is developing plans for TOD at the STC. The City of Stamford strongly encourages the State to ensure that the scale, character and design of its TOD plan is pedestrian-oriented and addresses the existing physical barriers that the STC, I-95 and the rail lines currently create between Downtown and the South End. Linking Downtown and the South End via the STC will benefit both neighborhoods by generating activity and critical mass supportive of vitality. Retail, restaurants and entertainment venues in the Downtown and planned residential development in both neighborhoods will benefit from increased pedestrian activity and vibrant urban streetscapes. Concentrating office development around the STC and in the Downtown, while emphasizing residential and neighborhood-scale retail in the South End, will allow these neighborhoods to support one another while maintaining their unique identities.

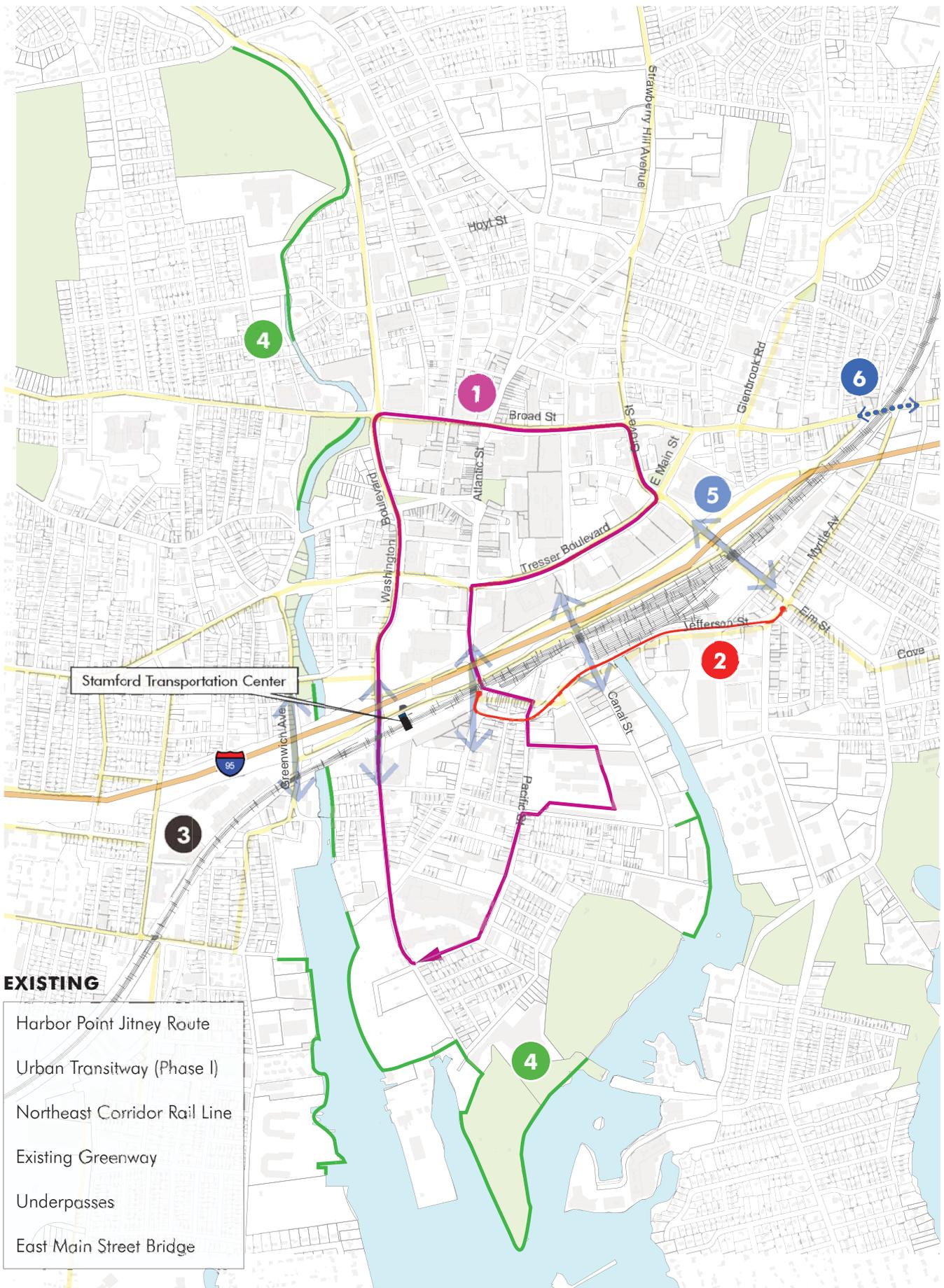
### **5.3 CONNECTIVITY**

A multimodal approach to enhancing north-south and east-west linkages is essential to improving circulation between the Downtown and South End and better connecting the Downtown to adjacent neighborhoods east and west, including the West Side, Waterside, the East Side, Cove and Shippan. In order to facilitate the movement of people and vehicles to, from and around Downtown, the South End and adjacent neighborhoods the City must improve the functionality of its roadway, pedestrian and transit networks to serve all users. At the same time, it must work to promote land development policies that encourage development near transit and create the right balance of parking for residents and visitors. Currently, both Downtown and the South End have many of the building blocks necessary to achieve this goal including a roadway and pedestrian network, transit (rail access, bus service and the new Harbor Point trolley), and ample parking (see Figure 17). However, the transportation system is unbalanced. The existing bus system routes and scheduling are problematic for attracting riders; the underpasses between the train station, Downtown and the South End below I-95 and the rail line are a source of traffic congestion and are unwelcoming to pedestrians; there are many gaps in the pedestrian

network; and bicycle routes are few. The challenge will be to improve the transportation system to provide people with a range of attractive travel options. This will require connecting missing pedestrian links, creating a bicycle circulation system, addressing traffic congestion at choke points, providing a reliable and attractive transit circulator within the Downtown and connecting to adjacent neighborhoods, and improving parking management and wayfinding/signage (see Figure 18).



**Example of Coordinated Signage Program**  
 This image shows an example of a coordinated informational signage program. This covers all municipal and public signage, including traffic, street and points of interest. Developing a coordinated signage program can improve sense of place and visual appearance.



**EXISTING**

- 1 Harbor Point Jitney Route
- 2 Urban Transitway (Phase I)
- 3 Northeast Corridor Rail Line
- 4 Existing Greenway
- 5 Underpasses
- 6 East Main Street Bridge





Downtown has a strong pedestrian-friendly grid at Washington Boulevard and Broad, Atlantic and Main Streets, with a thriving restaurant scene along Bedford and Summer Streets. Filling in the missing links of Downtown’s pedestrian network and making streetscapes greener and more attractive is key to making Stamford a more pedestrian-friendly city. Making walking easier, safer and more attractive will encourage people to park once and walk Downtown, which will help to both reduce traffic congestion and generate the foot traffic needed to support Downtown retail and restaurants. Stamford must also become more bicycle-friendly with a comprehensive bicycle circulation system Downtown, connecting to nearby neighborhoods with bicycle routes on shared roadways and/or within dedicated bicycle lanes.

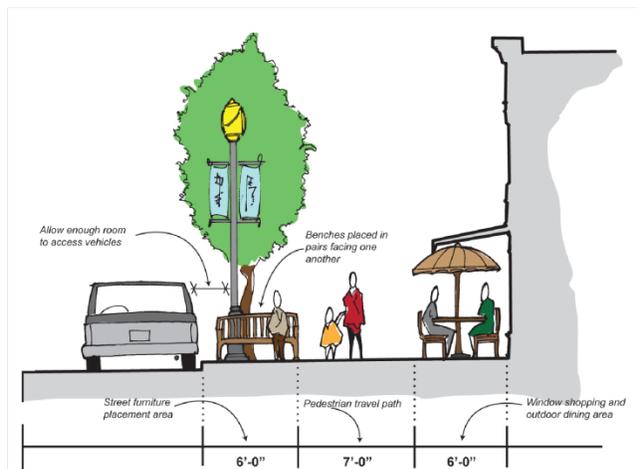
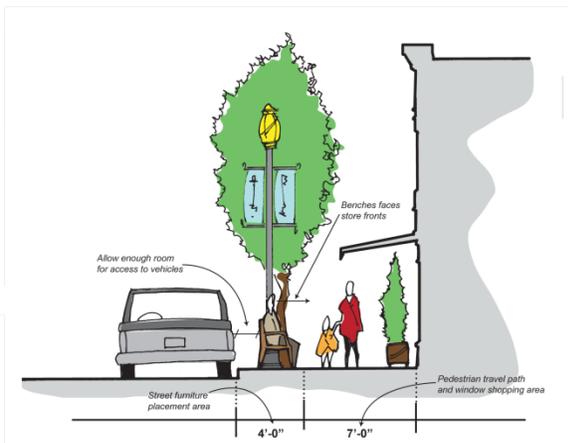


**Street Frontages in Downtown Stamford**

These images show examples of street frontages observed in downtown Stamford. The image on the left, while having ground level retail, is less successful in providing a strong and enjoyable pedestrian experience. In contrast, the center and right images show successful street frontages that provide active retail and restaurant frontages along the sidewalk, street furniture and trees, which improve pedestrian scale and enclosure. These should be replicated throughout the downtown.

**Narrow Sidewalk Condition**

**Wide Sidewalk Condition**



**Pedestrian Enclosure**

A strong sense of pedestrian enclosure along the sidewalk is an important sensory condition created through the use of physical elements such as street trees, street furniture, and building details such as cornices and awnings. Carefully placed, these elements serve to provide separation between the street’s vehicular traffic and the sidewalk’s pedestrian domain, and also reinforce a sense of human scale as provided by an overhead canopy. These graphics show how sidewalks, depending upon their width, can be successfully configured to provide a comfortable pedestrian environment.

Improving the capacity of the I-95 underpasses at Greenwich Avenue, Atlantic Street, Canal Street and Elm Street and East Main Street and making them safer and more attractive for pedestrians will substantially improve connectivity between Downtown and the South End. Further, the Harbor Point trolley connector should be improved with additional service and scheduling to provide frequent, reliable and attractive service between these two neighborhoods; additional east-west trolley routes should be considered linking Downtown to the West Side, Waterside, the East Side, Cove and Shippan neighborhoods.

Better management of parking in both the Downtown and South End is essential to balancing the parking needs of residents, commuters and merchants. Adequate parking to meet parking needs is essential; at the same time, allowing for reduced parking ratios near transit stations, including the STC and a future transit node (bus or rail) at East Main Street, is central to encouraging transit-oriented development and discouraging oversupply of parking. In the South End, where residents of existing residential streets rely on on-street parking, it will be important to preserve or replace on-street parking spaces as new development occurs.

#### **5.4 RECENT STUDIES**

Several studies addressing the Downtown and train station area have been prepared since Stamford last updated its Master Plan in 2002. These studies all discuss ways to make Downtown more walkable, pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented, as summarized below.

##### **A. Walkable Stamford, 2008**

This study, prepared for the City of Stamford by Project for Public Spaces, examines Downtown Stamford's pedestrian environment and includes "place audits," which evaluate specific locations to determine how well they serve pedestrians in Downtown Stamford. The report provides recommendations for improving the convenience, safety and attractiveness of walking between the STC and Downtown for specific locations including:

- East Main Street
- Stamford Gateway (the area between the Stamford Transportation Center and the UBS building)
- Atlantic Street
- Tresser Boulevard
- Broad Street



**Pedestrian Analyses from *Walkable Stamford Study (2008)* by Project for Public Spaces**

These images show examples of suggested streetscape improvements to encourage and improve the pedestrian environment in downtown Stamford. The image on the left suggests improvement along Washington Boulevard just north of the Stamford Transit Center, including programming the space with a wayfinding and informational kiosk. The image on the right suggests improvements to Tresser Boulevard, including medians and improved pedestrian crosswalks.

**B. Stamford Transportation Center Master Plan, 2010**

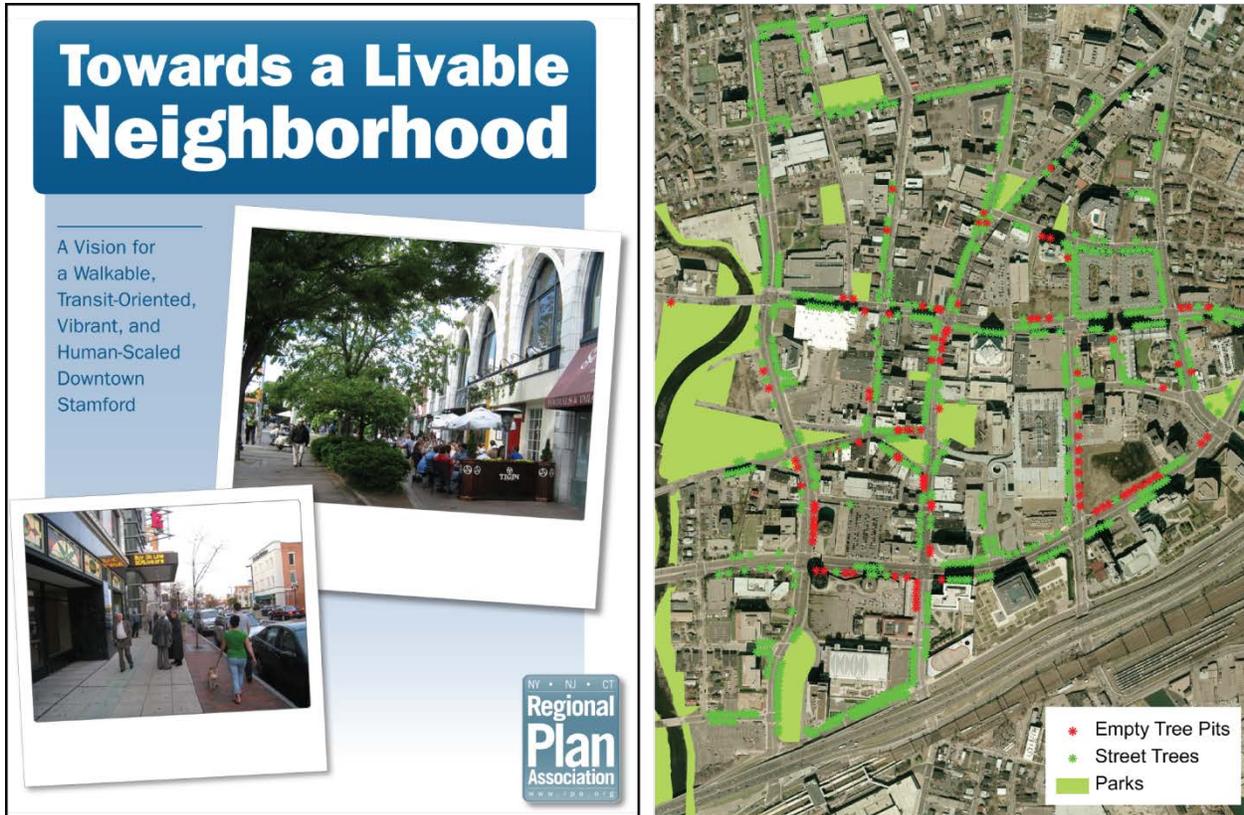
The STC Master Plan, prepared by Stantec, outlines a capital improvement plan to upgrade and enhance the efficiency of the Stamford Transportation Center, as summarized in Section 4C.

**C. Towards a Livable Neighborhood, 2010**

This study, prepared for the Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) by the Regional Plan Association, provides recommendations for transforming Downtown into a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood organized around sidewalks, transit and green public spaces. Consistent with the recommendations of this Master Plan, as discussed in Section 3, the study recommends that new residential development continue to be built Downtown and that new office and destination retail be limited outside of the Downtown. Specifically, the study calls for:

- Concentration of intense, high-rise residential and commercial uses, entertainment and destination retail Downtown
- Infrastructure investments that strengthen connections between Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods

- Improving the pedestrian experience in order to achieve a high-value and attractive Downtown
- Private investment in new and rehabilitated buildings



***Towards a Livable Neighborhood (2010)* –Prepared for the Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) by the Regional Plan Association**

This comprehensive study of the downtown environment commissioned by the Downtown Special Services District suggested a variety of strategies to improve and continue the ongoing effort to ensure a healthy downtown in Stamford. The image on the right provides an analysis of the downtown’s greenery and open space, a particularly important facet of creating an attractive and livable downtown environment.

## 5.5 DOWNTOWN AND SOUTH END GOALS AND STRATEGIES

### ***Introduction***

Over the course of the next 10 years, the City should work to achieve the following goals in order to strengthen Downtown as a regional center, continue revitalizing the South End and maximize the benefits of both neighborhoods’ proximity to the Stamford Transportation Center. The vision for the future of the Downtown and the South End is to capitalize on the synergies between these separate, but related neighborhoods and maximize their potential to complement and support each other.

The City has set forth the following goals for Downtown, the South End and the Stamford Transportation Center area. Policies and implementation strategies for achieving these goals are outlined below.

- Take advantage of the synergies between the Downtown and South End to maximize the potential of both neighborhoods
- Maintain and augment Downtown’s standing as a regional center
- Encourage revitalization of existing residential neighborhoods in the South End
- Enhance the Stamford Transportation Center as a gateway to the City of Stamford
- Improve connectivity between Downtown, the South End, the Stamford Transportation Center and adjacent neighborhoods
- Promote quality urban design and enhance streetscapes
- Promote and enhance public waterfront access

### **Policy Recommendations**

#### **Policy 5A: Support Downtown as a Regional Center**

Downtown should remain the focal point for large-scale office and residential development as well as regional retail and cultural attractions. Office development outside of Downtown should be discouraged.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

**5A.1: Concentrate regional office, retail and entertainment uses and high-density residential development in the Downtown.** See Strategy 3B.1.

**5A.2: Identify opportunities to relocate office uses that are currently situated in other neighborhoods to the Downtown.**

**5A.3: Encourage redevelopment of vacant Downtown office space for housing.** See Strategy 3B.3.

**5A.4: Explore the feasibility of the development of a convention center in Downtown Stamford near the Stamford Transportation Center.** See Strategy 3A.3.

**5A.5: Promote a regional arts and entertainment district Downtown.** The City should continue to work with the Downtown Special Services District and the Stamford Cultural Development Corporation to promote arts and entertainment Downtown. This collaborative effort should focus on 1) integrating arts into the physical landscape (murals, window displays, public art, etc.); 2) promoting more efficient use of existing arts and entertainment space; and 3) creating more affordable space for arts and entertainment.

**5A.5-a: Encourage incentives for arts and entertainment Downtown.** The City should carry out a “percent for art and amenities” program for major projects involving City, State or Federal funding.

**5A.6: Promote infill development on vacant sites within Downtown.** The City should continue to use a variety of density bonuses to enable development on hard-to-develop sites and should encourage shared parking to enhance the viability of infill development proposals.

**5A.7: Initiate a planning study by a consultant analyzing and assessing the design, connectivity and build-out of current plans for the Downtown.** This analysis should focus specifically on density and massing of potential development, site plan design standards, development of a parking management plan for Downtown, multimodal pedestrian/bicycle connectivity and potential updates to the zoning regulations. In addition, the analysis should consider vacant and underutilized parcels, parks, public facilities and conflicting land uses.

## **Policy 5B: Make Downtown a More Pedestrian-Friendly Neighborhood**

### **Implementation Strategies**

**5B.1: Improve pedestrian connectivity within Downtown and between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.** See Strategy 4C.3-d.

**5B.2: Implement streetscape and traffic calming improvements Downtown.** See Strategy 4C.3-e(2).

**5B.3: Encourage quality urban design that relates well to streets and people.** Implement the urban design recommendations of the DSSD’s *Towards a Livable Neighborhood* report, summarized in Section 5.C.

**5B.4: Emphasize ground floor retail and pedestrian activity.** The intent of this strategy is to enhance the vitality of the Downtown and South End by encouraging street activity. Key elements of this strategy include sidewalks lined with storefronts, trees and on-street parking. The majority of ground-floor space should be devoted to active uses, including stores and cultural uses, facing the sidewalk. These spaces should be transparent; inward looking retail centers should be prohibited. Multistory retail should be conditioned on sidewalk entries served with escalators or elevators. Outdoor dining should be encouraged.

**5B.5: Promote contextual commercial and residential development along Summer and Bedford Streets.** Along Summer Street between North Street and Second Street, buildings should be flush with sidewalks, with entries facing the street and landscaping to maintain the street wall where parking is provided. Along Summer Street and Bedford Street between Second and Sixth Streets,

historic homes should be preserved and any new development should be consistent with the existing streetscape character.

## **Policy 5C: Encourage Public Access to the South End Waterfront**

### **Implementation Strategies**

**5C.1: Protect, enhance and promote water-dependent uses.** Water-dependent uses include ferries; water taxis; boating; marinas; recreational and commercial fishing; port facilities; water-based recreational uses; industrial uses dependent on waterborne transportation; boat construction and repair; dry dock; uses which provide general public access to the waterfront; and other uses and facilities which require direct access to, or location in, marine or tidal waters and which therefore cannot be located inland. Additional marine-oriented recreational uses should be encouraged to develop along the harbor. All City-owned parkland should be periodically evaluated for its water-based recreational potential. Any uses or development that congests, restricts or otherwise limits the use of the harbor by commercial or recreational vessels should not be allowed. Structures and filling on the waterfront must also be designed in a manner that will not conflict with development of water-dependent uses and public safety.

**5C.2: Protect water-dependent industry.** Existing water-dependent industrial uses are to be protected. For almost a century, a commercial boatyard was operated on a prominent waterfront site – historically called the HELCO (Northeast Utilities) or Yacht Haven West Site – in the South End. Beginning in 1912, this site on the west branch of Stamford Harbor was occupied for more than 50 years by the Luders Marine Construction Company, a Stamford shipbuilding industry of national renown. When the City’s coastal management program was being developed in the early 1980s, the boatyard then occupying the site was identified by City planners as one of the largest boatyard/marina facilities serving pleasure craft in the northeast United States. Retention of uncompromised boatyard services and facilities on this property has been a goal of Stamford’s master plans since the beginning of the City’s coastal management program and should continue to be a top priority. Actions at a State level to provide economic incentives for maintenance of water-dependent industries should be pursued.

**5C.3: This Master Plan encourages the development of a full-service boatyard and marina for Stamford’s future.**

**5C.4: Make non-water-dependent uses contingent upon providing public access and meeting other public objectives.** Non water-dependent uses of waterfront property should only be permitted where they 1) provide meaningful general public access to the waterfront; 2) do not displace an existing water-dependent use or the opportunity to establish a new water-dependent use; 3) complement adjacent development; 4) function within the capacity of available infrastructure; and 5) achieve a high design quality.

**5C.5: Promote recreation and boating.** Recreational boating facilities should be encouraged to develop along the waterfront. Existing recreational boating and support facilities should be preserved and, when necessary, protected by public actions. Additional marine-oriented recreational uses should be encouraged to develop along the harbor coastline at appropriate sites. All City-owned parkland should be periodically evaluated for its water-based recreational potential.

**5C.6: Maintain and enhance harbor access.** To encourage water-dependent uses, any uses or development which congests, restricts or otherwise limits the use of the harbor by commercial and recreational vehicles should not be allowed. Structures and filling on the waterfront must be designed in a manner that will not conflict with development of water-dependent uses and public safety. The use of fill and structures should be designed so as to minimize negative impacts on coastal resources. Finally, the maintenance and protection of federally developed and maintained navigation channels, along with the development of a plan for the efficient and timely dredging of these channels, are priorities.

**5C.7: Manage and enhance the natural environment along the South End shoreline.** Actions to be undertaken include 1) stabilizing the beach system and creating a comprehensive beach management program; 2) preserving and restoring the major intertidal habitats in the East and West Branches for their biological and aesthetic values; 3) maintaining tidal wetlands in their natural state and emphasizing the value of State-mapped wetlands; 4) protecting and minimizing danger to life and property from coastal flooding; 5) restoring shellfish concentrations; and 6) maintaining and improving coastal and embayment water quality.

**5C.8: Development in unprotected areas on the shoreline and other flood-prone properties poses a particular challenge to emergency services, and should be carefully reviewed and must meet CAM and FEMA regulations.**

## **Policy 5D: Improve Connections between Downtown, the South End and Adjacent Neighborhoods**

### **5D.1: Roadways and Transit**

#### **Implementation Strategies**

**5D.1-a: Improve traffic circulation and reduce traffic bottlenecks.** See Strategy 4C.1-a.

**5D.1-b: Continue a trolley or priority bus service connecting Downtown, the Stamford Transportation Center and the South End.** See Strategy 4C.2-b.

**5D.1-c: Improve the function of the Stamford Transportation Center as a gateway to and connector between Downtown and the South End.** See Strategy 4B.1.

**5D.1-d: Implement new express bus service along the Urban Transitway from East Main Street to the Stamford Transportation Center.** Work with CT Transit to provide express bus service from a new transit node at East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue to the Stamford Transportation Center.

**5D.1-e: Promote bus connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods and make bus travel more desirable.** Improve frequency and reliability of bus service between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods to both the north-south and east-west.

## **5D.2: Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections**

### **Implementation Strategies**

**5D.2-a: Improve pedestrian connectivity between Downtown and the South End.** See Strategy 4C.3-d.

**5D.2-b: Establish a clearly delineated bicycle route(s) between Downtown and the South End.** A clearly delineated bicycle route or routes should be established to connect Downtown and the South End. Such route(s) could be designated as shared roadways or could be demarcated with dedicated bicycle lanes, as appropriate.

## **5D.3: Open Space Connections**

### **Implementation Strategies**

**5D.3-a: Continue to pursue the Mill River Plan and promote a continuous greenway from Scalzi Park to Kosciuszko Park.** The Mill River Master Plan calls for a continuous greenway along the western boundary of Downtown from Broad Street to Pulaski Street in the South End connecting Scalzi and Kosciuszko Parks. Portions of this greenway have been implemented and the City should continue to work with the Mill River Collaborative to complete the greenway.

**5D.3-b: Upgrade Kosciuszko Park to make it more of a neighborhood and citywide asset.**

**5D.3-c: Maximize the potential of public plazas and open spaces Downtown and in the South End.** Enhance the quality, visibility and use of public plazas and open spaces with both passive and active activity. Provide seating and shade to allow for quiet enjoyment and promote public events such as farmers' markets and outdoor concerts at these locations.

**5D.3-d: Link open spaces and public plazas Downtown along Main Street to create an east-west greenway.** Create a green streetscape with landscaping along Main Street that connects Columbus Park and Veterans Park to Mill River Park.

## **Policy 5E: Balance New Development and Neighborhood Preservation in the South End**

### **Implementation Strategies**

**5E.1: Promote neighborhood revitalization.** The City should work with the South End Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) to revitalize existing residential streets in the neighborhood to ensure that South End redevelopment benefits existing as well as new residents. The City should establish a fee-in-lieu program for meeting affordable housing requirements for new development that would provide funding for the revitalization of existing residential streets in the South End.

**5E.2: Promote affordable homeowner housing.** The City should work to promote affordable homeownership as part of a strategy to stabilize existing residential streets and prevent displacement of existing residents as redevelopment occurs.

**5E.3: Encourage relocation of industrial uses from residential areas.** With the exception of water-dependent industrial uses, existing industrial uses adjacent to residential streets in the South End should ultimately be encouraged to relocate to away from residential areas, to existing industrial areas elsewhere in the City. In the interim, measures should be taken to reduce conflicts between residential and industrial uses, particularly uses that generate nuisances that disrupt neighborhood quality-of-life.

**5E.4: Preserve neighborhood 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, as many older residences do not have driveways or garages.

**5E.5: Calm neighborhood traffic.** Heavier vehicular traffic in the South End should be directed mainly toward Canal Street and Washington Boulevard. Pacific and Atlantic Streets should continue to function as lower-volume neighborhood streets. Allowing on-street parking on Canal Street during off-peak hours should be considered as a strategy to reduce vehicular speeds and provide additional neighborhood parking.

**5E.6: Promote mixed-use development along the Urban Transitway.** A mix of residential and commercial uses should be promoted along the transitway, stepping down in height and density away from the Downtown. Ground-floor retail should be promoted to create a pedestrian-friendly environment along the transitway.

**5E.7: Analyze and assess the design, connectivity and build-out of current plans for the South End.** This analysis should include assessment of the Harbor Point General Development Plan, planned transit-oriented development at the Stamford Transportation Center, the Gateway development proposal and existing and potential future zoning. In addition, the analysis should consider vacant and underutilized parcels, parks, public facilities and conflicting land uses.

**Policy 5F: Support retention of the arts community in the South End.**

**Implementation Strategies**

**5F.1: Promote artist live/work space.** The City should support retention of arts space in the South End. Conversion of industrial space to artist live/work space should be encouraged. The City should work with the Stamford Cultural Development Corporation and the Loft Artists Association to promote this effort.

**5F.2: Encourage connections between the South End arts community and Downtown arts and entertainment.** The City should work with the Stamford Cultural Development Corporation and the Loft Artists Association to connect South End artists with Downtown exhibition and performance space.

**5F.3: Retain niche antiques market in the South End.** The South End has a significant number of antique dealers, particularly along Canal Street, which attract visitors to Stamford and contribute to the unique character of the South End.

## **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 Downtown and 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. Charter Oak’s approach is to integrate these new developments with their surrounding neighborhoods, physically and functionally. This is intended to energize those neighborhoods and stimulate additional private investment.

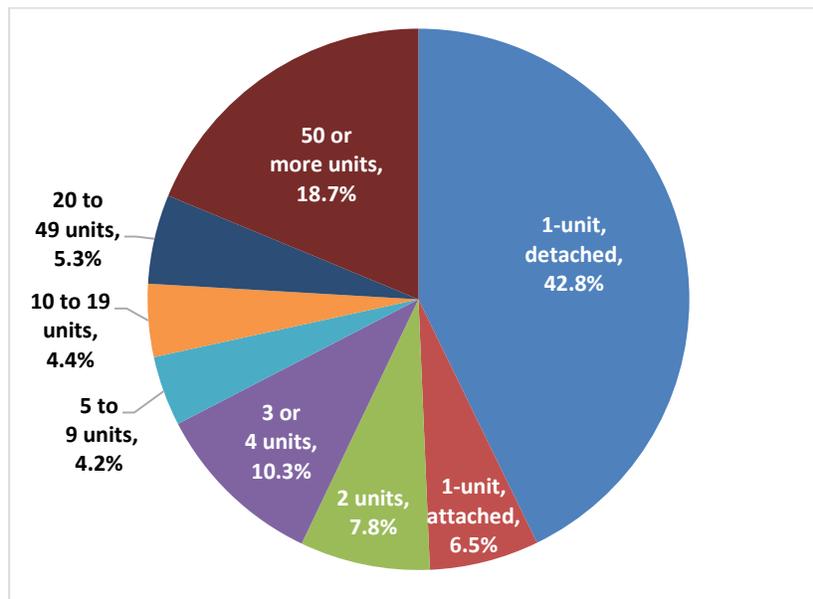
Other important housing policies that the City has pursued since 2002 include implementing regulations to encourage residential conversion of office buildings and encouraging the development of a variety of housing types including new studio and one-bedroom units in the Downtown and South End. Conversion 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 17).<sup>8</sup>

**Chart 17: Distribution of Housing Stock by Unit Type, 2012**



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

<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.

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 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.*

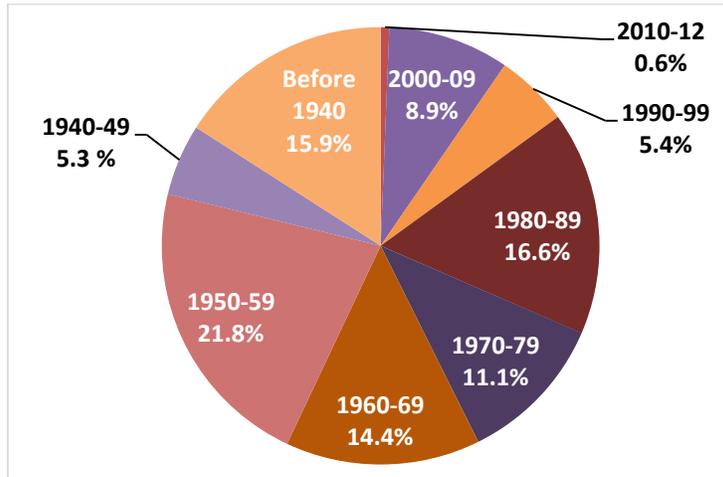
*Source: Stamford Department of Building Inspections & Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Annual Construction Report, 2000-2013*

### **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 18). As these homes age, there is an increasing need for rehabilitation of major systems, including replacement of plumbing, electrical systems, etc.

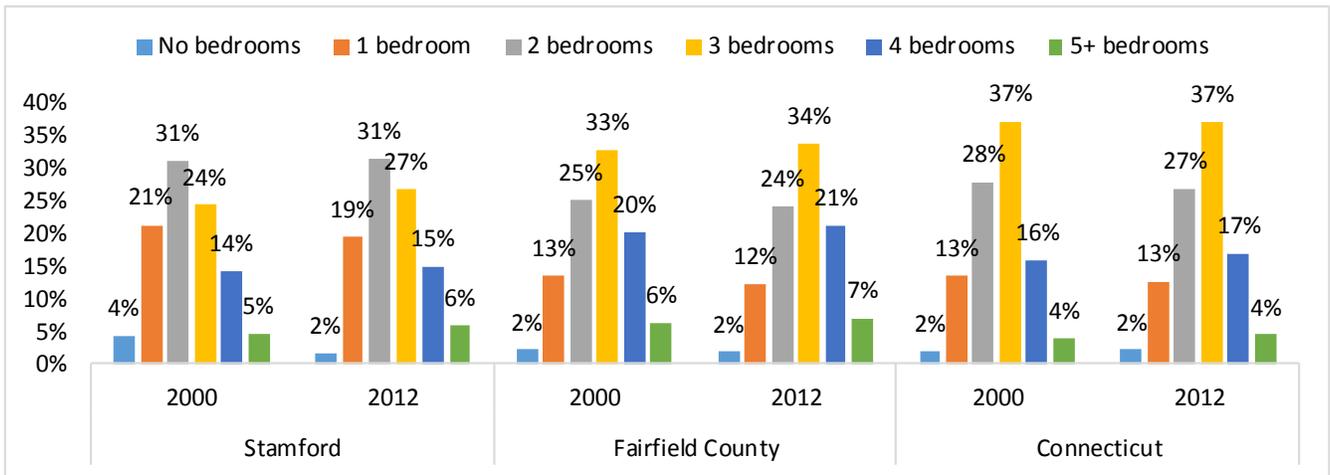
Half of Stamford's housing stock (50.7%) is composed of one- and two-bedroom units; homes with three or more bedrooms account for 47.6 percent of the City's housing stock (see Chart 19). As shown on Chart 20, renter-occupied homes in Stamford have fewer bedrooms than owner-occupied homes, indicating limited options for larger families seeking rental housing in the City.

**Chart 18: Stamford's Housing Stock by Year Structure Built, 2012**



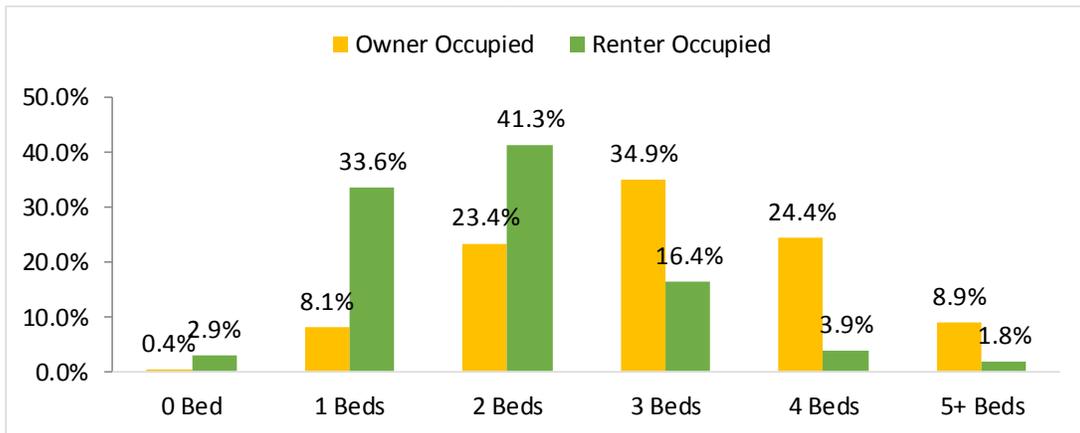
Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate, 2012

**Chart 19: 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 20: 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**

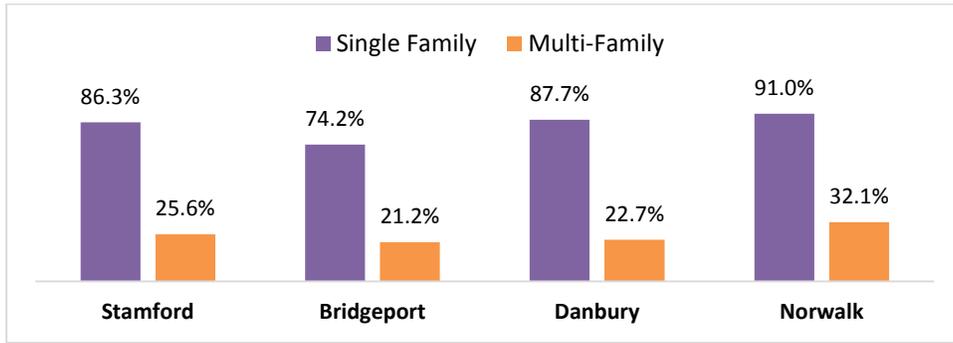
Tenure	City of Stamford		Fairfield County		State of Connecticut	
	2000	2012	2000	2012	2000	2012
Homeowner	0.6%	2.4%	0.9%	1.6%	1.1%	1.7%
Rental	3.1%	3.8%	4.2%	7.9%	5.9%	7.6%

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 21. 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 21: 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**

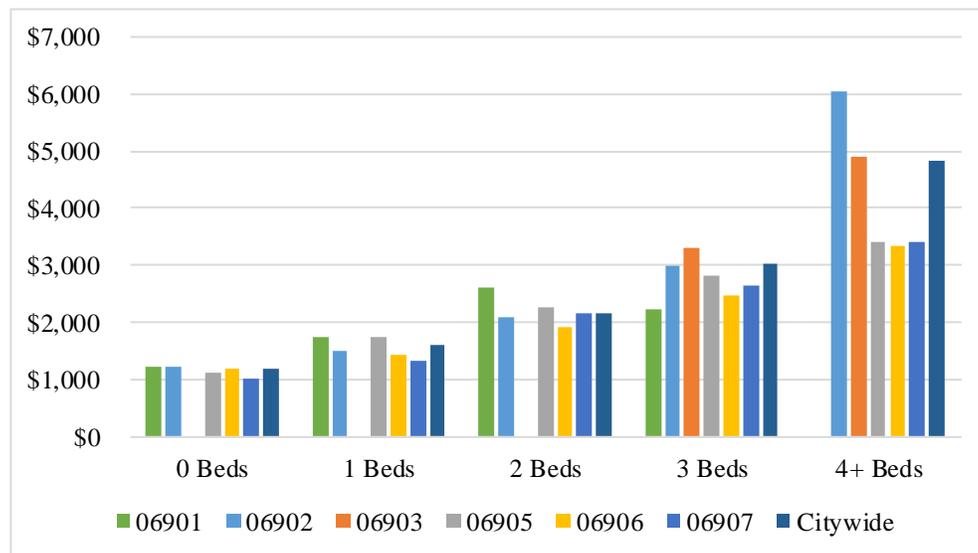
Year	Stamford	Fairfield County	State of Connecticut
2005	918	3,995	12,844
2006	932	3,620	11,911
2007	841	3,236	10,292
2008	520	2,067	6,985
2009	380	1,716	6,452
2010	404	1,833	6,138
2011	394	1,770	5,411
2012	444	1,893	5,973

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 22 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 22: 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 06901	Zip Code 06902	Zip Code 06903	Zip Code 06905	Zip Code 06906	Zip Code 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.

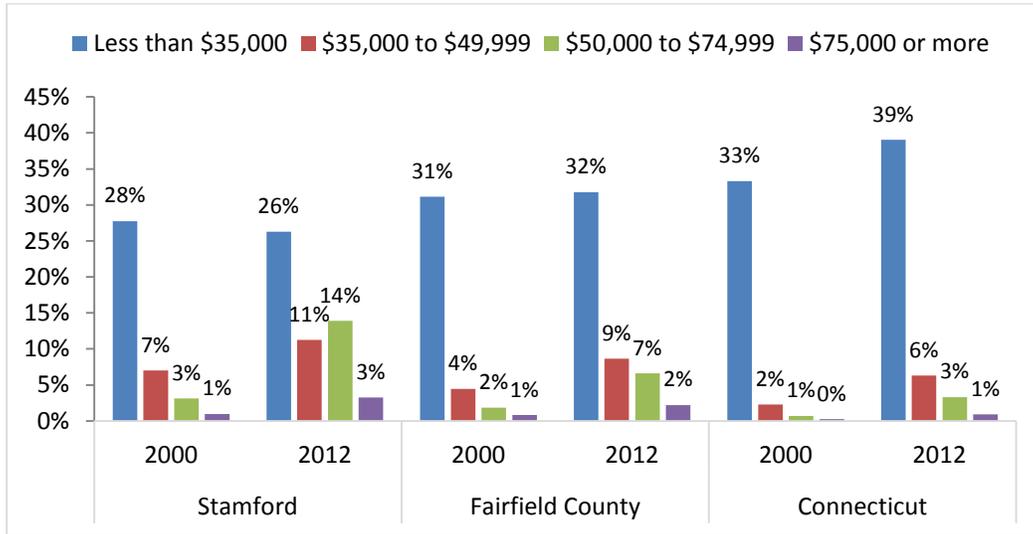
### **C. Affordability**

#### **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.

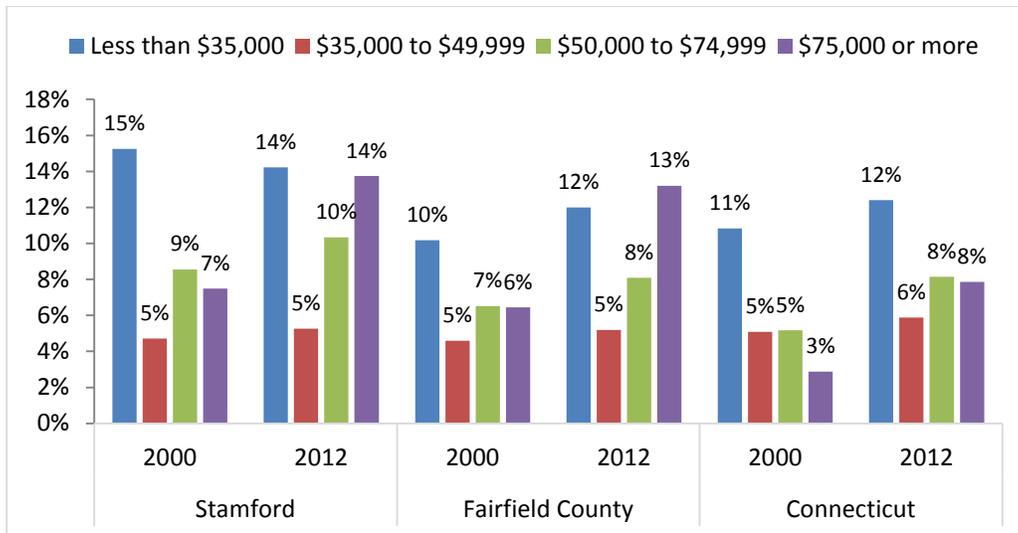
As shown in Chart 23 and Chart 24, low-income households, especially renters, are most likely to spend the largest share of their income on housing. Among Stamford’s renter households who earn less than \$50,000 annually, the number of households paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing 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 23: 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 24: 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

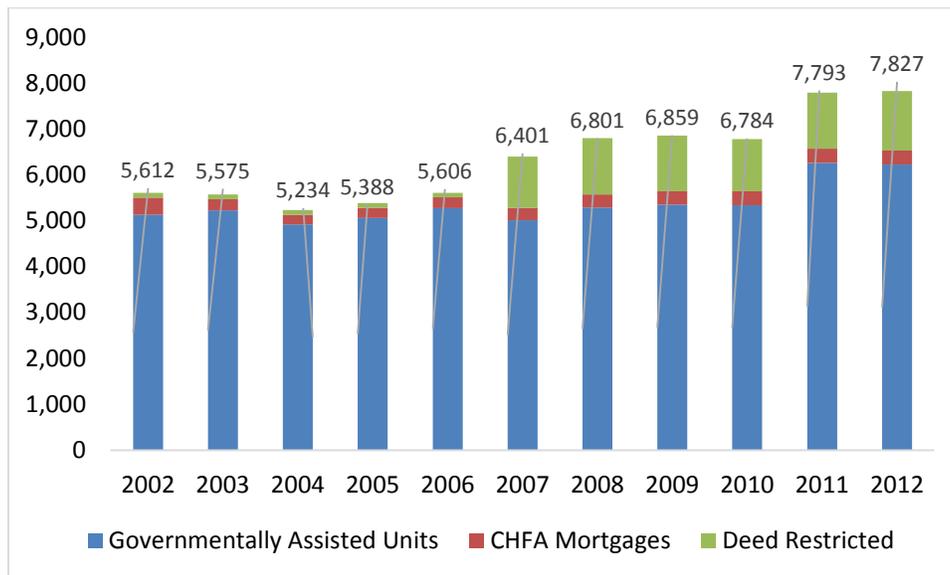
### Affordable Housing Units

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 25 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.

**Chart 25: 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.

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

## **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 assisted 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
- Promote better housing choices for older adults and people with disabilities.

### **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.** 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 assisted 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 and preferably in the same or adjoining neighborhood to the extent practicable.

**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.

**6B.6: Senior and accessible housing.** Extended family-occupied homes and apartments should be considered in neighborhoods to help promote policies to provide older adults and persons with a disability the ability to live in their homes and communities whenever possible.

**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: Make homeownership more affordable.** 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: Continue encouraging 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;
- Assesses a permanent location and quality design for Stamford’s Animal Shelter;
- Analyzes the impacts of a medical marijuana facility should one be approved by the State of Connecticut for Stamford; 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. 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. 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.

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

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

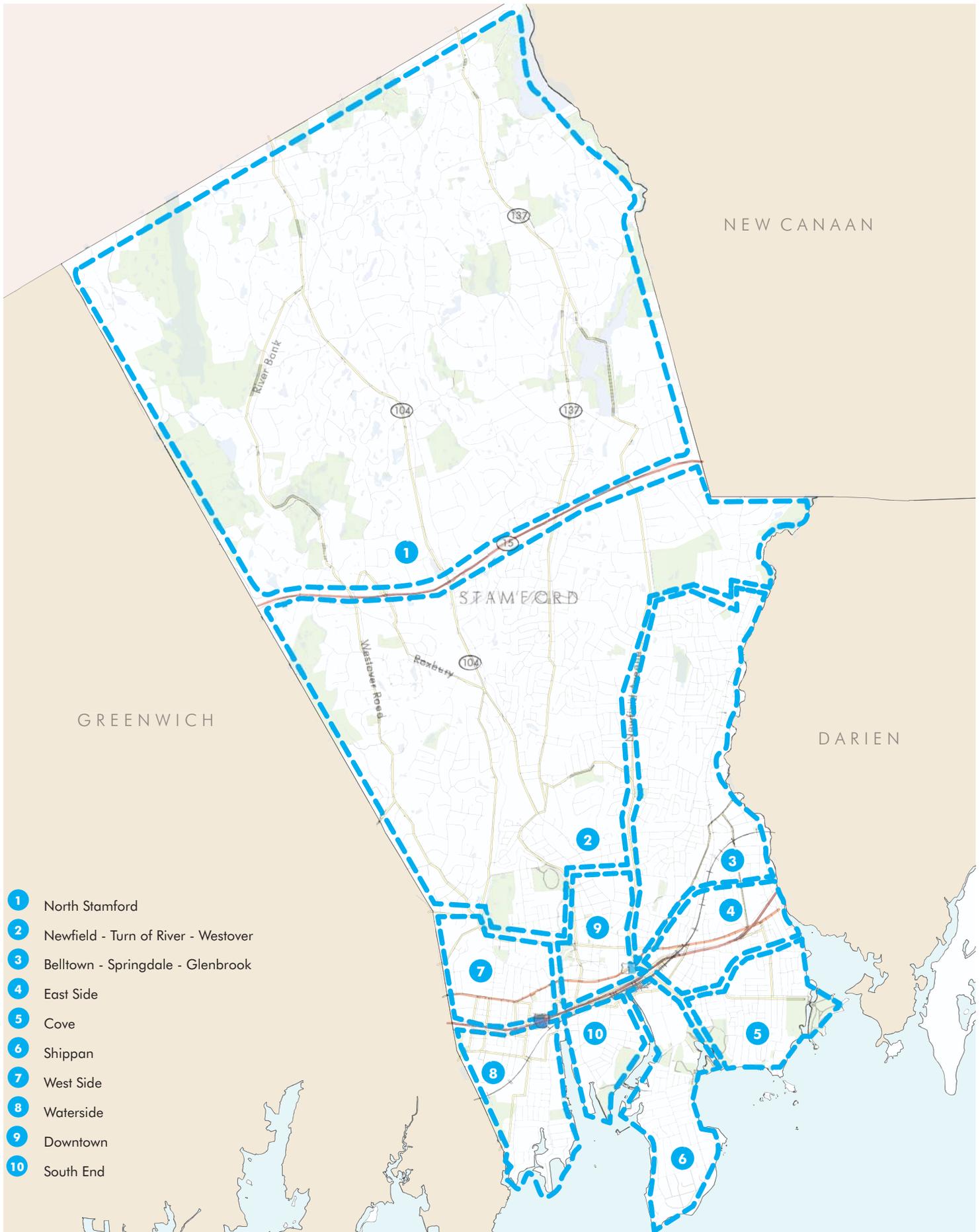
**NS1.1:** Preserve and protect North Stamford as a low-density residential neighborhood by maintaining existing residential zoning districts.

**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.



- 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



**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 2011 Traffic Calming Master Plan.

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

**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. 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. 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. 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 2011 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 matures 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. 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. 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. 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, THE EAST SIDE AND SHIPPAN**

**COVE AND THE EAST SIDE**

Although the Cove and the East Side are treated as separate neighborhoods, this Plan has aggregated data for the two neighborhoods in this section.

**Neighborhood Profile**

The Cove and the 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 the 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 the 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. 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 the 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 and the 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 and the 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, 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:** 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.

**ES2.4:** 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.

**ES2.5:** 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.

**ES2.6:** Expand neighborhood beautification grant programs.

**ES2.7:** Support neighborhood-generated revitalization plans.

**ES2.8:** 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 and possibly a Village District, for financial stability to fund community programs and improvement.

**ES3.2:** Consider creating a commercial revitalization program.

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

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

**Policy ES4: Improve mobility and circulation**

**ES4.1:** Reinforce Elm Street as the primary corridor linking the Cove, the 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 2011 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, the 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 2011 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, the 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 2011 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, Cytec 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. 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. The hospital is recognized as the center of Vita Health and Wellness District and the City's premier health district. 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. In 2012-2013, Stamford Hospital, Charter Oak, the West Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (WSNRZ), the City and area businesses and stakeholders collaborated to create the Vita Strategic Plan. The plan provides a blueprint to guide future development of the Stillwater Corridor and further its integration with the hospital and surrounding neighborhoods, including the Downtown. Supplemental plans were then created for strengthening local businesses and guiding development within the newly formed Village Commercial District overlay zone. Other efforts to integrate Stamford Hospital into the community include Fairgate Farm, an urban agricultural center growing produce for the local community, utilizing an array of volunteer farmers; providing nutrition education programs to youth and the community; and providing fresh, organic vegetables to area soup kitchens, shelters and a residential care home. The Fairgate Community Health Center 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 has continued to transform the original model of public housing on the West Side with the demolition of Vidal Court and its replacement with a number of smaller, less dense, attractively designed mixed-income communities that are 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. The Stillwater Corridor Implementation Plan (2010) and the resulting Village Commercial District zoning designation are also valuable efforts that have provided a design framework for ongoing planning and redevelopment activity.

## **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. 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 infrastructure upgrades, 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 and analyze the options for the West Main Street Bridge.

**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, which shall be considered the City's primary health services district.

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

**WS2.1:** Where appropriate and feasible, support the implementation of the traffic calming measures recommended in the 2011 Traffic Calming Master Plan.

**WS2.2:** Support the recommendations set forth in the 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.

**WS3.2** Continue the one-for-one replacement of policy for all assisted 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:** Consider creating a commercial revitalization program.

**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 the need for a new public school in Waterside.

**W1.7:** Proceed with implementation of a roundabout at the Pulaski Street and Greenwich Avenue intersection.

**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.

**6.3 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 today is an amalgamation of many diverse villages and neighborhoods, each of which has its own unique character that contributes to the rich cultural heritage of the City. Thus, the City’s array of significant historic resources includes the homes of historic sea captains, boathouses and fisherman’s shacks in the Cove neighborhood; historic factory complexes such as the Yale & Towne Lock & Key in the South End; former farm complexes such as the Sterling Dairy Farms in Newfield; the Victorian-era waterfront “cottages” of Shippan; the Colonial-era blacksmith shop, tavern and mills of Old Long Ridge Village; the sculptor Gutzon Borglum’s house and studio in Turn-of-River; and the civic buildings of the Downtown business district such as Town Hall and Ferguson Library.

The historic fabric of the City has experienced many challenges through the years: large, destructive fires in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century; the effects of urban renewal policies in the 1960s and 1970s; and the demolition of historic buildings and replacement with modern high-rise apartment and office buildings. Because redevelopment in all areas of Stamford is occurring at an increasingly rapid rate, the protection of the City’s valuable architectural resources is critical. The City must embark upon a concerted effort to

preserve the historic architectural and landscape heritage that remains. This can be achieved by the implementation of policies that preserve the character and viability of historic resources to ensure that new development respects the established traditions of scale, massing, setbacks and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and plazas.

Many properties in the City are listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. These include historic districts, buildings, bridges, landscapes and historic sites. However, the City is in need of a comprehensive cultural resource survey to identify all of the significant historic architectural resources that are worthy of preservation and protection. Several surveys were previously undertaken in the past; however, they were not comprehensive in scope and need to be updated and expanded. The earliest survey of Stamford was conducted in 1966 and includes only pre-1865 dwellings. The most recent cultural resource survey was conducted of the Hubbard Heights area in 2013. While Stamford has a considerable number of historic resources and five historic districts that are either listed on, or have been found eligible by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for the National Register, many resources throughout the City have not been identified or evaluated for their historic and/or architectural significance. Therefore, the current list of historic properties (see the Appendix) is incomplete and needs to be updated to identify all of the significant historic architectural resources that are worthy of preservation and protection. View corridors and streetscapes need to be included in the cultural resource evaluation as well as cultural landscapes and scenic roads.

As shown on Figure 20, 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. A complete list of National and State Register properties, as well as those listed in the 1966-1967 Cultural Resource Survey, is found in the Appendix.

For the past decade, the City has been undergoing redevelopment of the downtown business district and the former industrialized waterfront area in the South End Historic District area. In the process, there has been a loss of historic structures as well as aspects of the street-friendly, small-scale, pedestrian-oriented character that made these areas unique places in which to work and live.

Citizens realized that preservation policies and goals would only succeed if they were integrated directly with the Planning, Zoning and Land Use boards responsible for approving development projects. In 2012, Stamford residents voted, by an overwhelming margin, for a City Charter revisions to create the Stamford Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC). The Commission consists of seven members, appointed by the mayor, with expertise in the fields of architecture, history and land use.

The powers and duties of the HPAC, as outlined in the ordinance, are as follows:

1. Conduct a comprehensive cultural resource survey in the City of Stamford;
2. Review and forward recommendations for the designation of historic districts and properties to City and State agencies;
3. Seek public input and approval of recommendations for local historic districts and historic properties;

4. Advise officials, boards, commissions and departments of the City of Stamford regarding the protection of local cultural resources, including the Planning Board, Zoning Board and the Building Department;
5. Act as a liaison on behalf of the City of Stamford with individuals and organizations concerned with historic preservation; and
6. Work toward the continuing education of Stamford residents regarding historic preservation issues and concerns.

The Commission, which meets monthly, acts as an advisory board to City agencies such as the Planning and Zoning Boards, and also promotes historic preservation advocacy, assists in historic designations, provides guidance for individuals or organizations that seek to have their property qualify for State or Federal tax credit programs and advises neighborhood groups who want to pursue historic district status. HPAC reviews all historic preservation applications and projects in compliance with the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Historic Preservation.

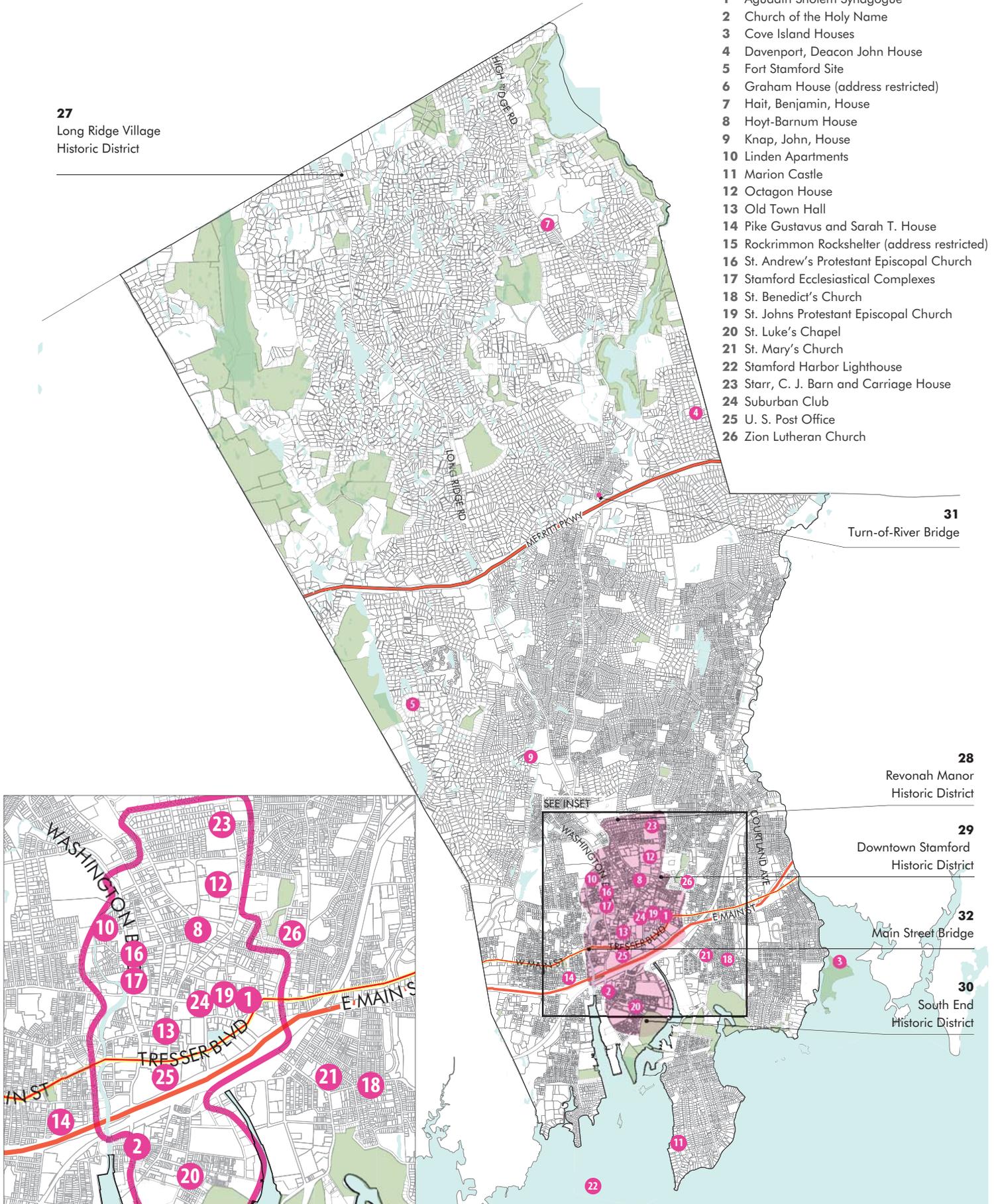
The City is also designated as a Certified Local Government (CLG) under SHPO's regulations. The CLG status, enabled by the creation of the HPAC, affords the City a close partnership with SHPO to seek funding and technical assistance, and to participate in the State's Section 106 review of undertakings that may affect historic resources.

One of HPAC's priorities is to develop a comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan for Stamford. The City will seek funding and work with HPAC toward the implementation of such a plan, which should include but not be limited to:

- Updates to the existing cultural resource surveys of the City and a phased comprehensive Citywide cultural resource survey, including guidelines for determining significance.
- Identification of additional zoning incentives and other tools that would promote historic preservation of structures, roads and landscapes, street amenities and neighborhood character. This section of the Historic Preservation Plan should examine zoning tools used by other municipalities that have successfully merged historic preservation goals with development objectives.
- Recommended improvements to clarify and strengthen the City's demolition delay ordinance. This ordinance is an important tool to protect historically and architecturally significant resources by promoting the exploration of alternatives to demolition.
- A web-based database where information regarding historic resources can be accessed.

**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



Several zoning incentives that promote the historic preservation of properties exist. Section 7.3 of the City's Zoning Regulations, for example, provides a development density bonus for projects that will result in the appropriate restoration and preservation of buildings of historic significance in the community. In exchange for the density bonus, owners of such properties file a Historic Preservation Easement in the Land Records to assure preservation of the building's historic façade. There are also density bonus incentives to encourage preservation of historic properties within the City's Downtown area (Section 7-S-12).

Until a Citywide Historic Resource Survey has been completed, the HPAC is reviewing all demolition permits, reconstruction or new construction for all buildings that are more than 50 years old. 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.

## **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.

## **CHAPTER 7.0: A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

### **7.1 OPEN SPACES AND WATERFRONT**

#### **Goals**

- Complete the Mill River Greenway from Scalzi Park to Kosciuszko Park
- Establish an east-west pedestrian and open space network connecting Mill River Park, Columbus Park and Veterans Park
- Connect open space and waterfront areas
- Protect and enhance public access to the waterfront
- Protect coastal resources
- Protect water-dependent use of the waterfront

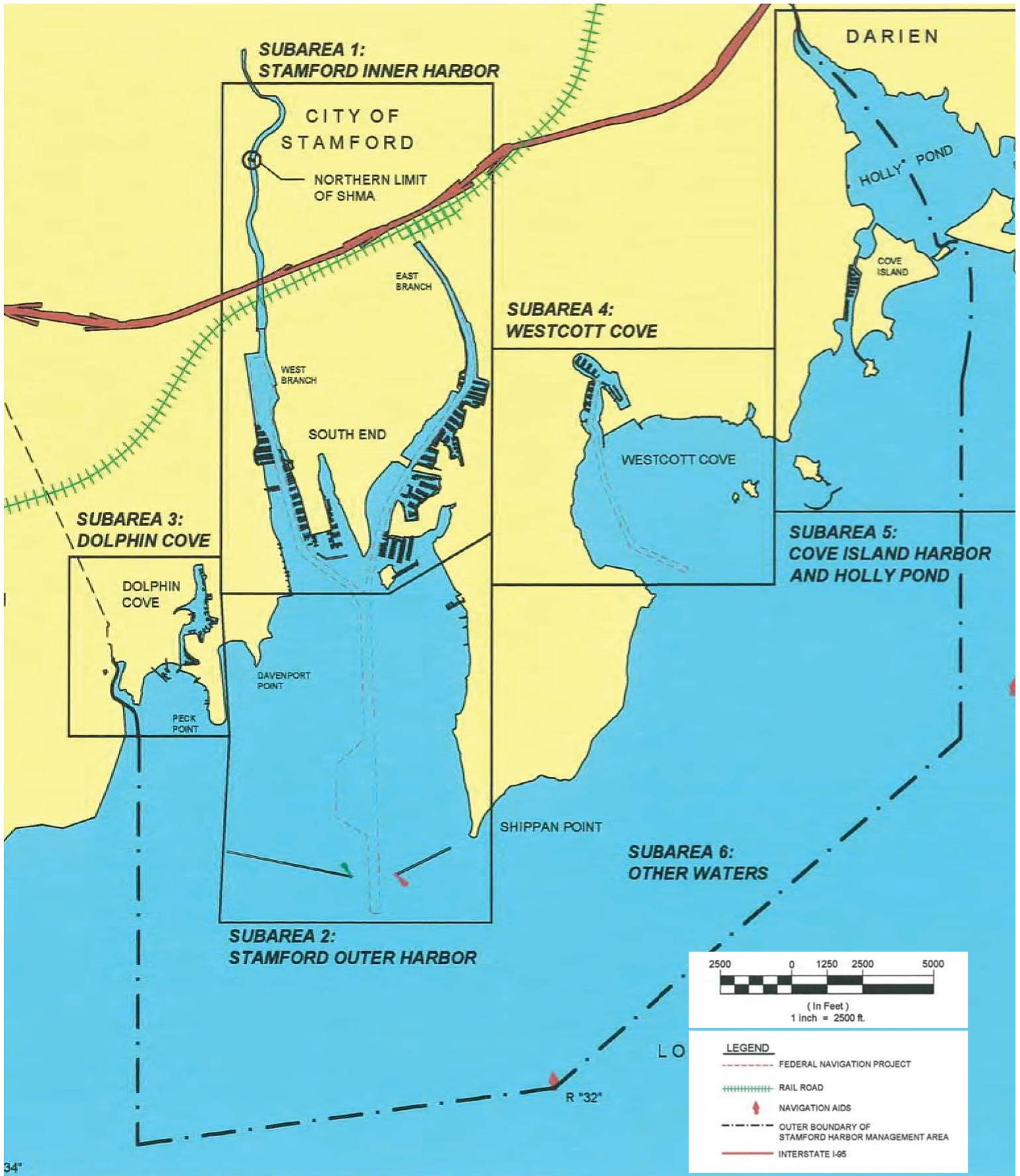
#### **A. Introduction**

Open space in the City of Stamford is composed of its extensive shoreline and river system, several large natural areas, parks, agricultural lands, school open space, playgrounds, urban plazas and pocket parks.

Stamford is part of the coastal area of the State of Connecticut as defined in the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. The City has its own coastal management program, the Stamford Municipal Coastal Program (MCP), established with adoption of the Master Plan Coastal Addendum in 1984. Stamford has established a Harbor Management Commission, tasked with planning for the use of the Stamford Harbor Management Area, the City's other coastal and navigable waters. The Stamford Harbor Management Commission, established in 2004, developed the Stamford Harbor Management Plan, which was adopted by the Stamford Board of Representatives in 2009 and approved by the State of Connecticut.

The shoreline covers approximately 14 miles and supports a diversity of land uses. Coastal waters include Stamford Harbor, Westcott Cove, Dolphin Cove and Cove Island Harbor. Coastal facilities include Cummings Park and Marina with its public beach, West Beach and adjacent boat launching ramp, Cove Island Park and Marina with beaches and a wildlife sanctuary, Czescik Park and Marina and Kosciuszko and Boccuzzi Parks on the Harbor. The Stamford Harbor Management Area is shown on Figure 21. Stamford's waterfront land uses include those genuinely dependent on their waterfront locations and those enhanced by their proximity to the shore. Water-dependent uses include industrial facilities (port facilities) and facilities supporting recreational boating and other water-based recreational activities.

The City's current port activities are among the most active in Long Island Sound. In terms of the amount of materials shipped to and from its waterfront terminals, Stamford historically has been the fourth-largest commercial harbor in Connecticut, behind the three deep-water ports of Bridgeport, New Haven and New London. To maintain waterborne commerce, the port facilities depend on Stamford Harbor's Congressionally designated federal navigation channels.



Stamford is also a significant center of recreational boating on western Long Island Sound, with a number of facilities serving the boating public located on the waterfront and in the City's several harbors. Traditionally, these facilities have included docks, boat slips, moorings and launching ramps as well as boat sales, repair, service and storage facilities. Boating facilities include those owned and operated by the City of Stamford for public use, including the marinas at Czescik, Cummings and Cove Island parks. Privately owned facilities also serve the boating public, including private clubs and marina facilities developed as ancillary components of waterfront residential and commercial developments. Historically, Stamford has been home to one of the largest boatyard/marina facilities serving pleasure craft in the northeast United States. When this facility, located on a 14-acre site in the South End, was temporarily removed in 2011 for environmental site remediation, Stamford was left without a full-service boatyard. Upon completion of this remediation, the City should seek to achieve the objectives of the Shorefront Mixed Use category on the site.

Several inland parks are located along Stamford's extensive river system; the most significant is Mill River Park. Plans to construct a continuous greenway along the Rippowam River from Scalzi Park to Kosciuszko Park are advancing through a series of park and pathway construction projects along the river. Scalzi Park's extensive recreational fields are already connected to the Mill River Greenway. Mianus River City Park, which includes 220 acres of natural areas, and the Mianus River State Park are located along the Stamford-Greenwich border. There are several isolated open spaces along the Noroton River bordering New Canaan. A series of brooks including Springdale Brook, Ayers Brook, Toilsome Brook, Holts Ice Pond Brook, Haviland Brook and Poorhouse Brook are significant natural features and open spaces. The rivers and brooks connect to the North Stamford Reservoir, the Mianus Reservoir and the Laurel Reservoir. The Dorothy Heroy Park, which includes playing fields and recreational facilities, is located near the Laurel Reservoir. The City also has two public golf courses, the Gaynor Brennan course and Sterling Farms. In addition, Stamford has a series of smaller parks located throughout the City, including Jackie Robinson Park and Lione Park, as well as a series of urban parks and public plazas Downtown.

## **B. Previous Open Space Studies**

The City's 2002 Master Plan described the importance of open spaces throughout the community and proposed linking various green spaces with a greenway along the river systems and on land adjacent to the Merritt Parkway. In 2007, SWRPA prepared an open space analysis of the South Western Connecticut region identifying potential new open space within Stamford. The SWRPA analysis provided an acquisition plan for new open spaces and identified areas in need of conservation management plans. The open space areas recommended for protection generally follow the north-south orientation of rivers and brooks and their associated ecological systems. *Towards a Livable Community*, prepared by Regional Plan Association and published by the Downtown Special Services District in 2010, reviewed a series of improvements to existing open spaces in the Downtown. It recommended pedestrian routes with improved streetscape designs connect Downtown open spaces, and also suggested small pocket

parks be created in underutilized portions of Downtown’s existing public right of ways. Collectively, these documents supported a network of open spaces could be expanded throughout the City.

### **C. Expanding the Open Space Network**

This Master Plan proposes green corridors, individual community parks and a diverse shoreline. New green pedestrian corridors and open spaces are envisioned to create a city-wide green network.

#### **Policy Recommendations**

##### **Policy 7A: Expand and Link the City’s Open Spaces**

The Mill River Greenway should be further expanded as a continuous linear park with a walking and bicycle path that connects its entire length from Stamford Harbor to Bull’s Head. Pedestrian trails along the river should continue further north of Bull’s Head. Potential trails parallel to the Merritt Parkway could connect the Mill River/Rippowam trail system to the Mianus River trail system, and to Holts Ice Pond Brook. The plan proposes that regional alliances be established to create regional open space networks. These might include further extensions of the Mill River Greenway and Mianus River into New York State or improvements along the Noroton River into New Canaan. Bicycle routes should be developed, as feasible, to connect Stamford’s public beaches to nearby neighborhoods and to the Downtown.

##### **Policy 7B: Create New Streetscape Connections to Downtown**

Recommendations also include new east/west streetscape connections in the Downtown vicinity. The first encompasses Main Street from West Main Street to Stamford Town Center. It would connect the Mill River Greenway to Columbus Park and to Veterans Park, and would consist of improved public parks as well as enhanced streetscape design between the parks. A second streetscape connector extends from Jackie Robinson Field to Elm Street along Tresser Boulevard. It would include transformation of Tresser Boulevard into a complete street with improved pedestrian and landscape features. Collectively, the greenways will provide access to park space for a greater number of individuals.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

**7B.1: Provide high-quality streetscape designs along principal streets.** Street improvements will require trees and plantings as well as improvements to urban hardscapes and crosswalks in order to provide pedestrian comfort.

**7B.2: Adopt “Complete Streets” design standards in order to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian improvements in street and sidewalk projects.** Reclaim space in streets with an excessive number of overly wide lanes for bicycle access.

**7B.3: Improve pedestrian convenience at underpasses.** Principal causes of discontinuity in the City are the elevated structures of I-95 and the Amtrak Railway. Both of these structures limit connectivity between the northern and southern portions of the City. A limited number of street underpasses have poor facilities for pedestrians.

**7B.4: Increase access to parks within a quarter-mile walking distance of each neighborhood.** Increased access to school properties for recreational use and a limited number of new recreational parks maybe required to support neighborhood needs.

### **Policy 7C: Enhance Open Space Management**

Open spaces require various types of management. Natural areas require stewardship to support their ecology, and regulations to protect them. Management plans may stem erosion problems, protect areas from overuse, maintain cleanliness, remove invasive species and increase safety. Some existing open spaces need further programing of activities. The extensive waterfront of Stamford requires management to balance the use of active waterfront activities, its natural areas and areas for flood protection. The maintenance of a public marina, docks, waterside walks, wetlands and beaches provides an important connection of Stamford to Long Island Sound. All of these management issues must be accounted for in the City's operating funds.

**Policy 7D: Aggressively Pursue Open Space Acquisitions, Open Space Dedication and Open Space Easements.** The City has successfully employed a mix of acquisition, dedications and easements, often in cooperation with local and national land trusts and as a positive outcome of land use review. The City's *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* identifies a number of acquisition priorities, mainly in North Stamford. Additional priorities include out-parcels which prevent the unification of Cummings Park East and West; larger grounds for the Rogers Magnet and K.T. Murphy public schools; and parks adjoining community centers in the South End, Waterside and West Side.

### **Policy 7E: Support an Active and Diverse Waterfront**

#### **Implementation Strategies**

**7E.1:** Establish and maintain diversity of viable water-dependent uses that a) individually and collectively enhance the quality-of-life in the City and provide significant economic benefits; and b) are consistent with the capacity of coastal resources to support those uses without the occurrence of significant adverse impacts on environmental quality or public health, safety or security. Maintain and enhance Stamford's status as a center of recreational boating activity on Long Island Sound and a regional destination for visiting boaters.

**7E.2:** Encourage and support continued operation and, where feasible, enhancement of public and private recreational boating uses and facilities, including facilities for the maintenance, repair, storage, hauling and berthing of vessels. Avoid development that would result in significant reduction of available recreational boating services, including, but not limited to, vessel maintenance, repair, storage, hauling and berthing facilities of local and/or regional significance.

**7E.3:** Maintain and enhance, for public use and enjoyment, waterfront parks, beach areas and other facilities that provide opportunities for public access to the City's coastal waterways and Long Island Sound, including but not limited to, City-owned properties and privately owned areas that provide public access to and along the coastal waterways.

**Policy 7F: Maximize public access to the waterfront.** Existing public access and visual access to the waterfront is to be preserved and enhanced wherever possible. New access should be mandatory as redevelopment occurs, except in cases where public safety would be at risk. The extent and layout of such access will be dependent upon 1) the use of each waterfront site (e.g. public access would pose safety or significant security issues on waterfront land used for water-dependent industry, and 2) its location in relation to other public access resources or opportunities.

The most meaningful public access will most likely be achieved where site plan features and permitted uses draw people to areas where waterfront access is provided and where there is continuous public access along the water's edge. Frequent connections to inland streets should be provided with pedestrian and view corridors aligned with cross streets to the maximum extent practicable. Continuous public access along the waterfront should take into consideration ways to celebrate and circumnavigate the working waterfront. A series of public destinations such as overlooks and fishing piers along the waterfront edge will help draw people along the linear path. Large blank walls or extensive parking adjacent to the waterfront should be discouraged. New development facing the waterfront should contribute to an active presence along the water's edge.

### **Implementation Strategy**

**7F.1: In designated areas, promote continuous waterfront access through easements and public acquisition.** Priority areas for acquisition include both sides of the West Branch, the east side of the East Branch and along the Mill River south of Scalzi Park. Much of this waterfront is either park, vacant, underutilized for industry or subject to flooding. Connections between the Downtown and the West Branch of the Harbor should also be considered.

## 7.2 CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

### Goals

- **Promote sustainable development patterns**
- **Encourage sustainable building design**

### A. Introduction

The City has extensive watersheds and natural ecological systems to protect. It also must continue to direct growth of the City toward neighborhoods that are less auto-dependent, more walkable and can build upon the City's access to transit. Stamford's future development should continue to examine methods to use resources efficiently including energy, water and materials. Methods to improve waste reduction must continue to evolve. As a coastal city, Stamford must respond to sea level rise and the potential increases in the frequency of flooding. Solutions to drainage and flooding issues may be addressed in part with green infrastructure. The City has already undertaken a series of studies and measures to address sustainability, most notably including the Sustainability Amendment of 2010.

### The Use of Metrics

As a departure from the other chapters of this Master Plan, sustainability metrics have been provided for the chapter to assist the City in measuring progress toward sustainability goals and the efficacy of policies. Three types of metrics addressed in this chapter:

1. *Benchmarks*, which are a reflection of existing conditions or a starting point;
2. *Targets*, which measure goals and objectives; and
3. *Progress*, which measures movement toward fulfilling a goal and objective.

As outlined in the following sections, suggested metrics are provided, as appropriate. It should be noted that not all goals and policies can be readily quantified, and the measurable data in some cases are not readily available or easily obtained. Also, for metrics to be useful, updates will need to occur on a regular basis; these cannot wait 10 or more years for a new master plan. Therefore, it is important that the City commit itself to a schedule of updating the metrics listed herein. This will enable Stamford to prepare a report card on how it is doing, over time, with respect to its sustainability goals and policies.

### B. Neighborhood Pattern and Design/Built Environment

The planning of neighborhoods has a large impact on quality-of-life and on the use of natural resources. Since vehicles are a significant source of Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, sustainable planning seeks to reduce auto-dependency. Vehicle-related accidents also comprise a significant portion of Centers for

Disease Control (CDC) injury and mortality rates. Compact community plans are sustainable because they reduce auto-dependency, allow walkable neighborhoods and offer practical access to energy-efficient transit.

### **Policy 7G: Create Compact and Complete Communities**

The plan encourages growth of compact communities. These may be focused in areas that have access to transit such as Downtown, Glenbrook and Springdale. The City has already fostered transit-oriented development planning studies in these areas. Compact growth areas should be planned with a mix of uses including residential, office, retail and institutions, so that all the needs of daily life are within short walking distances from each other. The plan proposes walkable streets within each neighborhood and “complete streets” with bicycle access.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

**7G.1: Encourage active ground floors for developments along pedestrian routes.** Require through-block pedestrian connections for large sites, where appropriate.

*Metric:*

LEED for Neighborhood Development provides several measurement standards for compact communities.

**7G.2: Encourage appropriate multifamily density standards.** Build any residential components of the area at a density of 7 dwelling units per acre or greater of buildable land available for residential uses, and build any nonresidential components of the project at a density of 0.50 FAR or greater of buildable land available for nonresidential uses.

**7G.3: Where feasible, in multifamily zones, locate and/or design development such that 50 percent of the residential units are within a quarter-mile radius of walkable, diverse uses supportive of the compact and complete community.**

### **Policy 7H: Encourage Infill Development**

Infill development is a key strategy to the growth of compact walkable communities. The City may continue its efforts to redevelop brownfield sites, underutilized vacant property, surface parking lots within the city center and underutilized sites near transit.

#### **Implementation Strategy**

**7H1:** Develop an inventory of infill parcels that have been previously developed and brownfield or greyfield sites of greatest priority and potential for development or redevelopment, to encourage redevelopment.

*Metric:*

Encourage 75% of new housing units or developments utilize existing water and sewer mains and do not require extending or widening public roadways.

**Policy 7I: Provide Greater Transportation Choices**

Current transportation patterns consume a large percentage of energy resources and contribute to GHG emissions. Providing alternative modes of transportation can support cleaner air and reduce fuel consumption. Street designs should integrate pedestrians and bicycle use. Transit options which expand upon Stamford's existing network of bus and rail can provide a sustainable transportation system.

**Implementation Strategies**

**7I.1: Transportation Demand Management (TDM).** Create and implement a comprehensive TDM program to reduce weekday peak-period motor vehicle trips by at least 20% compared with a baseline case, and fund the program for a minimum of three years following build-out of the project. Require that developments under site plan review submit Parking and Transportation Demand Management plans (PTDM) in order to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips associated with the project. PTDM measures should include some or all of the following: easy access to transit, shuttle services, ride-sharing, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, flexible working hours, flexible parking strategies and preferential parking for low-emission vehicle.

**7I.2: Encourage alternative modes of transportation to City employees, where appropriate.** Provide incentives for City employees to use alternative transportation modes, especially for those working at the Government Center.

**7I.3: Shared parking.** Review parking requirements to allow for shared parking strategies and reduced parking requirements in transit-oriented development areas.

**7I.4: Vehicle charging stations.** Encourage the installation of vehicle recharging stations on all public garages and City owned lots, and encourage private applicants to install charging stations for electric vehicles.

**7I.5: Car sharing.** Support and encourage the growth of car sharing among City residents and businesses through actions that expand the supply of car sharing vehicles at convenient locations and actions that increase the demand for car sharing services.

*Metrics:*

- Demonstrate an annual decrease in vehicle miles traveled measured from a baseline year.
- Mode Split metric per International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives Star Community Rating System
  - Achieve the following thresholds for journey-to-work trips:

- Drive alone maximum: 60%
- Bicycle + Walk + Transit minimum: 25%
- Bicycle + Walk minimum: 5%

### **C. Sustainable Buildings**

Buildings consume a large percentage of the energy supply, as well as water and building materials. Several technologies have been developed that allow the design of buildings to use resources more efficiently and also to provide healthy living environments. There are several documents that help guide the design of sustainable buildings. One of the more prominent guiding systems is the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) group of rating systems that address new construction, building renovations and neighborhood planning. Improvements in construction standards can be made for both private buildings and public buildings. The strategies and tools available to encourage sustainable private building are different than for public buildings. The City has several ongoing programs to guide private development:

#### **Corporate Sustainability Challenge**

The City has a Corporate Sustainability Challenge partnership with the Building Owners and Managers Association. This encourages sustainable buildings in the City and encourages retrofit commissioning of buildings. The challenge has included several participants and LEED-certified buildings.

#### **Sustainable Stamford**

Sustainable Stamford is the mayor's task force on sustainability, established in 2007. Its mission is to promote energy efficiency, environmental education, waste reduction and recycling, greenhouse gas emissions reductions, green buildings and all efforts affecting sustainability in Stamford.

#### **Sustainable Design Scorecard**

The City requires that a Sustainable Design Checklist, developed in partnership with the RPA and ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability), be completed as part of the site plan review process.

#### **Solarize Stamford**

Solarize is a unique program offered by the Clean Energy Financing and Investment Authority (CEFIA) in partnership with SmartPower that increases residential solar.

#### **2030 District Program**

This program, sponsored by the Business Council of Fairfield County, provides a unique private/public partnership where property owners and managers, together with government and businesses, provide a business model for urban sustainability through collaboration, leveraged financing and shared resources.

## Policy 7J: Implement the Sustainability Checklist for New Private Construction and Renovations

### Implementation Strategies

**7J.1 Benchmarking.** Require benchmarking of significant privately owned structures and operations. Benchmarking is the measurement of a facilities energy use, water use, waste and emissions. A method commonly used to calculate and record these uses and emissions is EPA’s Energy Star Benchmarking tool. The benchmarking requirement can be enabled through a City ordinance. Examples of Cities that have enacted benchmarking ordinances include New York City, Boston, Seattle and Washington D.C.

#### *Examples of Benchmarking Ordinances*

New York City: Enacted a benchmarking program known as Local Law 84 in 2009. LL84 requires annual benchmarking data to be submitted by owners of buildings with more than 50,000 square feet for public disclosure using the Energy Star Benchmarking tool.

Seattle: The Energy Benchmarking and Reporting Program (Ordinance 123226 and 123993) requires owners of non-residential and multifamily buildings (20,000 sf or larger) in Seattle to track energy performance annually and report to the City.

Washington D.C.: By 2014, all District buildings (commercial and multifamily) over 50,000 square feet will fall under a benchmarking requirement.

Boston: In 2013, enacted the Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO). This Ordinance requires Boston's large- and medium-sized buildings to report their annual energy and water use to the City of Boston, after which the City makes the information publicly available. Additionally, every five years, buildings need to complete an energy assessment or energy action; exemptions are provided for buildings that are already efficient or are making significant progress on energy efficiency.

**7J.2: Incentives.** Encourage buildings to meet measurable standards of sustainable design on a voluntary basis. Incentives to encourage the use of the LEED Rating system or the Energy Star system include the use of expedited building approvals, building density bonuses, and exempting the sustainability improvements from the assessed value of a property.

**7J.3: Require sub-metering.** Require that all new and substantially renovated multi-unit buildings be “sub-metered” to enable monitoring of energy and water consumption on a unit-by-unit basis.

**7J.4: Encourage upgrading mechanical systems.** Encourage high-energy usage facilities of at least 50,000 square feet to upgrade mature building systems to optimal energy efficiency, a process known as “retrocommissioning.” Retrocommissioning will generally increase energy efficiency in such buildings by 15 percent.

**7J.5: Adaptive reuse of existing structures.** Reuse existing buildings to conserve materials and also to divert large amounts of waste from landfills. The City has allowed several office buildings to be reconfigured and adapted for residential use. The City may review its historic preservation program to foster easier reuse of historic structures. Strategies may include expedited building permit review or zoning incentives for adaptive reuse of existing structures.

**7J.6: Support sustainable design in the industrial sector.** The industrial sector in the U.S. accounts for a substantial percentage of total water and energy consumption. The City may partner with the local industrial sector to improve reporting of consumption levels including water, energy consumption and emissions levels through the use of a benchmarking ordinance. Training may be provided to educate businesses on successful sustainable manufacturing practices.

### **Policy 7K: Sustainable Municipal Buildings**

The City may increase its standards of sustainable design for its own municipal facilities and schools. The City's Local Action Plan for Green House Gas Emission Reductions, prepared in 2005, discusses specific targets for water and energy efficiency of municipal facilities. The action plan lists methods to reduce GHG emissions within various facilities and sets targets of 20 percent reduction over 1998 GHG emission levels. The plan discusses the purchase of green power and the installation of green energy at some municipal facilities.

The City enacted an ordinance that requires new construction and renovations of municipal buildings to meet the LEED Silver Standard. The Academy of Information Technology and Engineering (AITE) was built to that standard under this guideline. Additional programs have included retrofit of select government rooms and street lights to energy efficient LED fixtures. Energy efficiency improvements have been made to existing mechanical systems at several facilities. Several solar photovoltaic installations have been completed on various facilities. The City also conducts benchmarking of energy and water consumption of its buildings.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

**7K.1: Enforce sustainable remodeling standards.** Remodeling of municipal buildings is often more frequent than the construction of new buildings. Standards as described in LEED for Interior Design and Construction and LEED for Building Operations and Maintenance should be used to guide renovations.

**7K.2: Energy Star.** Select and implement energy efficiency projects with the overall goal of bringing all municipal facilities up to Energy Star levels by 2018.

**7K.3: Adaptive reuse of existing municipal buildings.** Reuse of existing buildings is an efficient way to conserve materials and also to divert large amounts of waste from landfills. Examine repurposing of underutilized structures.

**7K.4: Renewable energy credits.** Continue to source its power from renewable sources through the purchase of Renewable Energy Credits (REC's) and/or with small-scale green power generation projects. Ensure Stamford's continued commitment to purchase at least 20 percent of municipal energy from renewable sources, as it did by participating in SmartPower's 20 percent by 2010 Campaign.

**7K.5 Efficiency Opportunities.** Continue programs of retrofit building commissioning and energy efficiency improvements. Inventory all energy efficiency opportunities in municipal buildings. Pursue alternative energy options for City facilities to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

### **7.3 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, RESILIENCY AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **Goals**

- **Protect natural areas**
- **Protect water quality**
- **Protect coastal resources**
- **Improve efficiency and resiliency of municipal infrastructure**
- **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions**
- **Measure progress toward sustainability goals**

#### **A. The Environment**

The City's rivers, brooks and shoreline form the framework of ecological systems in the area. There are also wetlands and forests associated with the area's ecological system. In order to maintain the health of Stamford's ecological systems, land that provides essential habitat and contributes to sustaining natural water systems must be protected. The area's watersheds are dependent on maintaining these lands. Protecting these areas will help secure the water supply, the flora and fauna, provide wildlife corridors, promote natural diversity and also help mitigate flood damage in certain areas. In 1997, the State of Connecticut set a goal of preserving 21 percent of the state's land as open space by 2023. According to a study prepared by SWRPA in 2007, approximately 13.5 percent of Stamford's land area is dedicated open space.

## **Policy 7L: Further identify critical natural areas**

Lands areas that are critical to the ecological system of Stamford should be further identified through ongoing review and analysis. The review of lands by SWRPA in 2007 identifies some of the land that should be protected. See Map 3 of the SWRPA report for the Open Space Acquisition Policy.

### **Implementation Strategies**

**7L.1: Prepare and maintain a long-range list of properties.** Develop a prioritized list of lands that should be placed under open space or conservation protection. In addition to the lands identified by SWRPA, the City may also enlist the aid of various organizations including non-profits to identify lands. Examples of organizations include the Stamford Land Conservation Trust, the Fairfield County Deer Management Alliance program, the Friends of Mianus River Park, Trout Unlimited Mianus Chapter and the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCCOG, the successor agency to SWRPA as of December 31, 2014). The organizations may provide the ability to evaluate the natural systems for their health and importance to the ecological system. The areas that are identified for protection should be grouped into categories that comprise a list of parcels to be acquired for protection and a list of natural elements on both public and private property that may require additional regulatory protection, such as protective buffers and activity restrictions. The areas may include natural assets that span across into neighboring jurisdictions.

**7L.2: Land protection methods.** Assemble tools available to communities to protect and acquire open space. They include acquisition, conservation easements, land use regulation and tax incentives.

**7L.2-a: Acquisition.** Outright fee-simple acquisition is the surest method to protect an open space property. Fee-simple ownership gives the purchaser rights to the land and full legal title.

**7L.2-b: Conservation Easements and Purchase of Development Rights.** With a conservation easement, the purchaser acquires a less-than-fee interest in the land but not necessarily the land itself. The easement or right purchased is recorded on the deed and runs with the land in perpetuity

**7L.2-c: Land Use Regulation.** Stamford permits open space subdivisions in its zoning regulations. Under this approach, the subdivider dedicates a portion of the property as open space in perpetuity. The intent of these regulations is to preserve any unique natural characteristics on a site while also allowing for development. The Planning Board may require such a dedication or a developer may be able to obtain a density bonus or reduced setback requirements for a dedication.

**7L.2-d: Tax Incentives.** The federal and state governments offer a variety of tax incentives to encourage landowners to preserve their property as open space. In Connecticut, Public Act 490, created by the legislature in 1963, allows property classified as forest, farm or open space to be

assessed based on its current use rather than its fair market value for 10 years, thus lowering the tax burden, provided the land stays classified as forest, farm or open space.

**7L.2-e: Funding.** Funding for these methods of land control may be obtained from various sources. The Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program, created by the Legislature in 1986, is the primary program for acquiring land to expand the state’s system of parks, forest, wildlife, and other natural open spaces. Financial assistance from these programs is combined with matching funds provided by either a municipality, local nonprofit land conservation organization, or both. Further programs are described in the SWRPA report.

### **Policy 7M: Protect Watersheds**

Protect land areas that may be of critical interest for Stamford’s watersheds. The City has three primary watershed areas to be monitored. Activity on land in these areas affects the water table level, and water quality for all of Stamford. The watersheds include:

- Mill River Watershed
- Mianus River Watershed
- Noroton River Watershed

#### **Implementation Strategies**

**7M.1: Prepare a watershed management plan.** The plan will maintain the quantity and quality of public water supplies and the quality of the receiving waters in balance with the ecological integrity of the watershed. It will be designed to meet the existing and future needs of the community, on an equitable, efficient and self-sustaining basis. Protective measures may include restrictions on the use of pesticides, fertilizers and hazardous materials in watershed areas. Watersheds spanning across jurisdictions should be protected in partnership. Incentives may be created to restore damaged portions of the watersheds.

**7M.2: Monitor water quality.** Continue to monitor Water Quality in Area Rivers and in groundwater.

### **Policy 7N: Protect Coastal Lands**

Conserve and enhance natural coastal resources in the Stamford Coastal Management Area (SCMA), including beaches, rocky shorefronts, estuarine embayments, shellfish concentration areas, tidal wetlands, intertidal flats, coastal hazard areas and other resources.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

**7N.1: Protect natural flood barriers.** Protect coastal land forms that act as natural barriers to flooding. These include wetlands, waterfront natural grasslands. As an example, protection should

be provided for the high, unmodified bluffs on the eastern side of the Shippan Peninsula from any development that accelerates natural erosion processes.

**7N.2: Recognize the ecological inter-relationships among resource areas.** Recognize that tidal waters and intertidal resources in the SCMA are part of the Long Island Sound estuarine and watershed system. Consider that actions within one part of that system can have significant impacts on other parts of the system, or on the system as a whole.

**7N.3: Consider cumulative impacts.** Consider the cumulative impacts on coastal resources and environmental quality that may result from the incremental impacts of a single action added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions when making decisions affecting land use and development in the SCMA.

**7N.4: Capacity of Coastal Resources.** Avoid new or expanded uses, development or other activities that would exceed the capacity of coastal resources to support those activities in a safe, environmentally sound and economically sound manner.

**7N.5: Restoration.** Encourage and support restoration of coastal resources and ecological functions historically lost or degraded in the SCMA, including, but not limited to, beaches, tidal wetlands, sand dunes and shellfish resources.

**7N.6: Maintain shoreline structures associated with environmental protection.** Encourage and support the repair or replacement of deteriorated shore protection structures, including seawalls, bulkheads and other structures, where such deterioration is causing significant adverse impacts on the environmental quality, including water quality, of coastal resources.

**7N.7: Environmental remediation.** Identify and evaluate any significant environmental contamination affecting beneficial use and development of coastal area properties.

## **Policy 70: Manage Natural Areas**

Natural areas require ongoing monitoring and management. Issues of erosion, health of habitat, pollution, use, invasive species and accessibility require continued field observation and overall planning. Monitoring plans should be maintained for each natural area.

### **Implementation Strategies**

**70.1: Retain the freshwater wetlands in Cummings and Cove Island Parks in their undisturbed state; protect the Rippowam and Noroton Rivers flowing into Stamford Harbor; and protect Holly Pond from point and non-point source pollution.** To meet these objectives, the City should regularly monitor water quality; identify violations; and enforce existing regulations, including National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits. Upland control measures include minimum setbacks, erosion and sediment controls and vegetative buffering. These should be adopted and enforced for all new development adjacent to watercourses.

**70.2: Maintain tidal wetlands in their natural state, and emphasize the value of tidal wetlands in the Cove-East Side and West Branch areas.** Activities within State-mapped tidal wetlands, such as excavating, filling and erecting structures in tidal wetlands, are regulated by the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). Activities and uses of land adjacent to tidal wetlands can also impact tidal wetlands and are typically subject to local review only. Regardless of which uses are permitted to be located adjacent to tidal wetlands, the zoning regulations should be amended to include a tidal wetlands setback. The City should prohibit uses adjacent to wetlands which degrade or imperil natural wetland values and processes. The City should also require mitigation where the destruction of tidal wetland is unavoidable.

**70.3: Maintain Jacks and Grass Islands as conservation and natural habitat areas with uses restricted to water-dependent activities, and maintain Vincent Island as both a passive, marine-oriented recreational area and as a wildlife habitat area.** In order to preserve Vincent Island for public open space use in its natural setting, the City could explore less than fee-simple acquisition (e.g. acquisition of development rights or donation to a land trust).

**70.4: Establish partnerships to monitor natural areas.** These may be done in partnership with area nonprofit organizations. Typical management concerns may address erosion on steep slopes and heavy foot or bicycle traffic areas. Management practices may also encourage use of native species for plantings and removal of invasive species, and may include restriction of uses in floodplain areas.

**70.5: Institute Integrated Pest Management (IPM) on City properties to reduce pesticide risk and exposure, particularly to children.** IPM is a safer and usually less costly option for effective pest management, using common sense strategies to reduce sources of food, water and shelter for pests in buildings and grounds. An IPM program takes advantage of all pest management strategies, including the judicious and careful use of pesticides.

## **B. Climate Adaptation and Mitigation**

Stamford is a coastal city and is susceptible to impacts of climate change and sea level rise. Statewide, the coastal management boundary is a continuous line delineated by a 1,000-foot curvilinear setback from the mean high water (MHW) line, a 1,000-foot setback from the inland boundary of state-regulated tidal wetlands, or the inland boundary of the “100-year” floodplain, whichever is farthest inland. The SCMA’s irregular shoreline covers about 14 miles and supports a diversity of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and open space uses.

Stamford has experienced flooding in the past and will likely experience future flooding. Some of this flooding may be associated with sea level rise and climate change. Sea levels in the area rose approximately 1 foot in the past 100 years and are anticipated to rise further. The City’s Hurricane Barrier, one of the few built along the East Coast, constructed 1969 by the Army Corps of Engineers, was built of earthen walls and with a sea gate at the East branch of Stamford Harbor. It protected more than 600 acres in the southern portions of the City in 2012 during Superstorm Sandy.

FEMA has revised the flood levels for 100- and 500-year flood events to higher elevations in order to reflect increased flood risk. These adjustments, in turn impact flood insurance rates and land values. The higher flood elevations may impact areas outside the flood barrier including Shippan, Westcott Cove, Dolphin Cove and areas along the banks of the rivers.

## **Policy 7P: Prepare Flood Mitigation Strategy**

### **Implementation Strategies**

**7P.1: Identify vulnerabilities.** In order to prepare for future events, the City may prepare a list of vulnerable areas, and identify at-risk facilities including critical infrastructure, based on FEMA maps.

**7P.2: Develop catalogue of strategies.** The City may develop a catalogue of various flood mitigation strategies similar to New York City's *A Stronger, More Resilient New York* report of 2013. These strategies may include additional flood barriers, expansion of flood plain areas, vegetated barriers, further restrictions on development in flood plains, erosion control and augmentation of natural barriers. Green infrastructure may assist in drainage of flood waters. A Mitigation Plan will match strategies to vulnerable areas.

**7P.3: Adapting building regulations.** Adapting to potential increases in flooding along rivers and shoreline will require adjustments to how development can occur. Adjustments may be required for buildings that are already located in low-lying areas, and to the design standards of new buildings near the water. Zoning of affected areas may require revisions that allow for minor adjustments in building heights, raising existing buildings to higher elevations, and entrance locations in required yards in order to accommodate higher flood elevations.

**7P.4: Future planning.** When planning future projects, the City may review the location of a project and determine if it lies within the list of vulnerable areas. The most current climate science should be considered to assess future intensity and frequency of storms. The information should be included when designing and developing the projects and infrastructure. The City's land use boards should carefully review any development proposal outside of the hurricane barrier. The effect of climate change on sea level rise and more damaging storm surges raises serious concerns about the need to protect critical infrastructure and to mitigate impacts on public safety, property and emergency services along the coast and adjacent rivers. Development in unprotected areas on the shoreline and other flood-prone properties poses a particular challenge to emergency services and should be carefully reviewed and must meet CAM and FEMA regulations.

**7P.5: Preparedness and response.** Prepare, test and update plans and programs for emergency operations and response, including procedures for issuing forecasts and warnings to the public and otherwise providing public information. Provide facilities, equipment and training needed for effective emergency response; maintain coordination among all agencies with emergency responsibilities and further develop the emergency evacuation plan.

**7P.6: Natural protective features.** Recognize the natural protective features of coastal resources, including beaches, dunes, and wetlands, and utilize those features, to the extent practical and feasible, to provide effective shore protection; encourage restoration of degraded coastal resources in accordance with detailed plans. Protect the high, unmodified bluffs on the eastern side of the Shippan Peninsula from any development that accelerates natural erosion processes.

**7P.7 Education.** Provide educational programs to increase public awareness and education concerning coastal hazards.

**7P.8 Continue the City’s maintenance of the Hurricane Barrier in cooperation with the Army Corps of Engineers.**

### **Policy 7Q: Mitigate Contributing Factors to Climate Change**

There are also methods the City can adopt that mitigate some of the contributing factors to climate change. These include reduction of the heat island effect and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). The heat Island effect comes from the absorbance of solar heat and energy emissions in urban areas. The reduction of GHG emissions is discussed in the energy section of this chapter.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

**7Q.1: Provide incentives for the use of green and “cool” roofs.** A cool roof is a roofing system that delivers high *solar reflectance* (the ability to reflect the visible, infrared and ultraviolet wavelengths of the sun, reducing heat transfer to the building) and high *thermal emittance* (the ability to radiate absorbed, or non-reflected solar energy). Most cool roofs are white or other light colors.

**7Q.2: Encourage the installation of a “cool roof” anytime a building is being constructed or re-roofed.**

**7Q.3: Inventory and map all the buildings in downtown that have the potential for green and/or cool roofs, evaluating the cumulative benefit in thermal reduction.**

**7Q.4: Use materials that have low solar reflectance value, generally lighter colored material surfaces as they reduce heat absorption from the sun.**

**7Q.5: Protect, manage and expand the urban forest, which is comprised of trees in the City right-of-way and in City parks, and street trees.** A first task could be a comprehensive, GIS-based tree inventory for Stamford’s urban forest done by a professional firm to be used as a planning, maintenance and risk assessment tool for the City and utility providers. The City should consider a review policy to prevent the loss of trees in the public realm due to new utility placement, construction or sidewalk replacement.

## C. Sustainable Energy

A secure energy supply is critical to the vitality of the City. Energy is derived from a variety of sources, some of which are associated with minimal environmental consequences and some, such as carbon-based fuels, that have varied levels of impact on the environment. Greening the energy supply is aligned with reductions of GHG emissions and also with reduced environmental impact in the extraction of raw fuels. The City has already prepared a Local Action Plan for Green House Gas Emission Reductions in 2005 that encourages the transitioning of energy generation to renewable energy sources, and to more energy efficient generation sources such as district energy. It also recommends strategies for reduced energy consumption.

### **Policy 7R: Implement, monitor and update Local Action Plan: Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions (2004)**

The City completed an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions from both the municipal and community sectors in 2003. Require ongoing reduction measures and monitoring to verify progress toward an emissions reduction target of 20 percent below 1998 levels by 2018.

### **Policy 7S: Create Resource Efficient Energy Infrastructure**

#### **Implementation Strategies**

#### **7S.1: Encourage reduction in energy use.**

**7S.2: Energy Improvement District.** The City's Energy Improvement District Ordinance, established in 2007, can continue to support more efficient and cleaner sources of power and heat. The district supports efforts to develop multiple types of renewable energy including solar and district energy systems.

**7S.2-a: District energy.** District energy systems are highly efficient systems that generate electricity, heating, and cooling for a group of buildings within a close proximity of each other. They produce energy efficiently, and have low GHG emissions. Due to their cost, they are typically used for larger facilities. In recent years, they have been installed for single-ownership groupings of buildings such as universities and hospitals; however, there is growing application in new large redevelopment areas and in new communities.

**7S.2-b: Energy Improvement District boundary.** The boundary of the district should be evaluated for inclusion of significant development that may benefit from district energy systems.

**7S.2-c: C-PACE financing.** The City is part of the C-PACE program. C-PACE financing effectively allows property owners to borrow money from a local government to pay for renewable-energy

systems and/or energy-efficiency improvements. The amount borrowed is typically repaid via a special assessment on property taxes, or another locally-collected tax or bill, such as a utility bill.

### **7S.3: Promote local renewable energy generation**

The City has encouraged smaller installation-scale green energy sources by individual private property owners. The State's adoption of net metering in 2013 allows owners to sell energy they generate on premises to the electrical utility. The system allows green energy systems to become more cost-effective. Additional strategies may allow easier access to green energy sources

**7S.3-a: Incentive programs.** Additional incentive programs that encourage use of green energy include the CTClean Energy Options and Solarize Stamford discussed previously.

**7S.3-b: Zoning revisions.** To further facilitate small-scale green energy installations, the City may revise zoning to make it easier to install small to medium scale renewable energy installations. It may also streamline permitting for these facilities.

**Policy 7S.4: Promote use of renewable energy provided by utilities.** Purchase of green energy generated by larger utilities is provided through the use of REC's, Renewable Energy Credits. There are several providers of these in the Stamford Area.

**Policy 7S.5: Encourage access for lower-income households to renewable energy.** Conduct a study to determine how to effectively expand and enhance energy services for low-income households. Combine the delivery of City and agency programs with other income-qualified assistance programs, such as Community Development Block grants. An integrated suite of low-income programs will provide increased potential for cost savings in energy and water, as well as health-related benefits.

## **D. Infrastructure and City Services**

Infrastructure and City services connect and serve the developed areas of a city. Infrastructure conveys power, water, stormwater, sewer, telecommunications and also comprises our transportation facilities. As the City strives to use power, water, and materials more efficiently, the associated infrastructure must also adapt. Green infrastructure may contribute to resolving drainage and water pollution issues. Public lighting can become more energy efficient and also be designed to reduce light pollution. City services for waste collection can facilitate further recycling of waste. The following are objectives for increasing the sustainability of infrastructure and services.

## **Policy 7T: Create Sustainable Community Water Systems**

Adequate supplies of potable water have become increasingly challenging to secure in many portions of Connecticut. Potable water in Stamford is supplied by CT Water through Aquarion from reservoirs in area or by private wells of individuals. As a steward of the environment, the water company is awarding individuals, non-profit groups and businesses recognition and monies for volunteer efforts to protect or restore Connecticut's natural resources. Winners are chosen based on their project's results in improving or protecting the state's air, water, soil or plant and wildlife communities.

### **Implementation Strategies**

**7T.1: Create water-efficient infrastructure.** A substantial amount of water is often lost in older, degraded pipes with leaks. Leaks in water infrastructure may be repaired to reduce waste. The City may implement a series of strategies to create more water-efficient infrastructure as well as conserve water use. These efforts can supplement water conservation efforts within individual properties.

## **Policy 7U: Create Green Infrastructure to Address Area Drainage Issues and Water Quality**

The existing stormwater drainage system includes stormwater drainage pipes that are separated from sanitary sewer pipes in developed urban areas. In developed areas, the pipes capture stormwater and discharge it into area rivers and Long Island Sound. In rural areas, stormwater runs off the edge of paved surfaces onto the soil or local streams. The existing system is associated with two general areas of concern: the quantity of stormwater that is directed into streams contributing to local flooding, and the pollution of stormwater.

*Quantity:* Compared to the pre-development conditions, post-development stormwater discharges can increase the runoff volume, increase the peak discharge and decrease the infiltration of stormwater, which thereby decreases base flow in headwater streams and in wetlands. The changes to stream hydrology can have negative impacts on channel stability and the health of aquatic biological communities.

*Quality:* Stormwater runoff from urban roads and parking areas is contaminated by chemicals from vehicle exhaust that accumulate on road surfaces. The chemicals mix with rainwater and then are drained through the piping system into natural water bodies. The contamination from both post development discharges and from urban roads includes hypoxia, pathogens, toxic contaminants and floatable debris in Long Island Sound.

### **Implementation Strategies**

**7U.1: Stormwater runoff ordinance.** In order to reduce the quantity of stormwater that is directed into streams, regulations should be adopted that require the volume of stormwater running off of properties post-development be made to approximate predevelopment conditions. This will reduce erosion in streams and local flooding.

**7U.2: Stormwater manual.** Adopt a stormwater management manual that uses green infrastructure strategies in order to provide guidance to property owners on how to manage stormwater on their properties. These would be supplemental to the State’s Stormwater Management Manual. The Town of Greenwich adopted such a manual in 2012 to address similar issues. The manual includes description of Low Impact Development (LID) and green infrastructure strategies.

**7U.3: Catch basin enhancement.** Enhance catch basin and storm sewer maintenance by increasing frequency of cleaning. Identify and eliminate illicit discharges into the storm system. Ensure that all maintenance is well documented, up-to-date, and available to regulatory agencies.

**7U.4: Green infrastructure plan and low impact development (LID).** Sustainable stormwater management is a critical component of green infrastructure. Stormwater can be cleaned using natural plant filter systems called “bio-filters” or rain gardens. Bio-filters can also help alleviate a portion of the flooding issues in the City. Their use also can help maintain natural water table levels and can limit salt water intrusion into the aquifer from the Long Island Sound. The City can create a Green Infrastructure Plan for a network of green infrastructure elements that augment conventional drainage systems. Installation locations may include public spaces as well as the edges of City streets. This infrastructure network may be expanded by private property owners through incentives that link with the City’s broader infrastructure program.

**7U.5: Permeable Paving.** Incorporate permeable paving standards and adopt minimum requirements for parking lot landscaping. As noted in the Transportation section, the utilization of environmental professionals (e.g. landscape architects) should be primary, and not an afterthought in site plan design.

## **Policy 7V: Energy Efficient Lighting and Reduced Ambient Light**

Public lighting consumes energy and can contribute to light pollution. The City has already transformed a substantial portion of its public lighting on streets to more energy efficient fixtures such as LED lighting.

### ***Implementation Strategies***

**7V.1: Continue efforts to transform exterior lighting including on the exterior of buildings and in parks.**

**7V.2: Energy use and light pollution may both be improved by adopting the use of fixtures that reduce ambient light and that focus light more directly toward the required tasks.** Design standards such as the Dark Sky Standard describe these techniques.

## **Policy 7W: Reduce Waste**

Cities can assist residents and employers in reducing waste and increasing recycling. The waste itself emits CO<sub>2</sub> and requires energy to be transported to out-of-state landfills. Stamford reduces waste by providing curbside collection of recyclable products. The City also has a recycling center, the Katrina Mygatt Recycling Center, to allow recycling of larger items and electronics. Hazardous waste is collected a selected day at central location. Stamford also diverts a portion of its waste to the Bridgeport waste-to-heat facility. The State plan establishes a target of 58 percent municipal solid waste disposal diversion by FY2024. In part through source reduction, recycling and composting, the State plan attempts to reduce the state's per capita disposal rate from 0.8 tons/person/year in FY2005 to 0.6 tons/person/year in FY2024.

### **Implementation Strategies**

To further reduce waste, the City may also review methods to reduce construction waste and improve composting of food and vegetation.

**7W.1: Construction and demolition waste.** Construction waste has decreased over recent years as recycling has become more cost effective, but is still a significant volume of waste. Diverting construction waste to recycling can be accomplished using planned recycling programs associated with individual construction projects. The cities of Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco passed ordinances mandating 100% recycling of construction debris within City limits. Portland, Oregon takes a different approach by requiring all projects of construction value over \$50,000 file a recycling plan at the start of construction; however specific recycling limits are not set. The plans often include registration of the hauling services to recycling centers. Construction waste plans typically require separation of items on the construction site into recyclable categories.

**7W.2: Composting.** Encourage composting where possible.

**7W.3: Multifamily recycling.** Encourage property managers and landlords to increase recycling rates in multifamily buildings.

## **Policy 7X: Integrate Sustainability Strategies into City Government**

### **Implementation Strategies**

**7X.1: Sustainability coordinator.** Create a sustainability coordinator position to manage and initiate sustainability projects, promote public awareness, manage the City sustainability website, and monitor the success of City efficiency efforts. The coordinator's duties should supplement the efforts of the City Energy/Utility Manager.

**7X.2: Sustainable procurement policies.** The City may review procurement of various products and services. Products that may be challenging to recycle or dispose of may be banned from procurement.

**7X.2-a: Purchase protocol.** Institute City of Stamford sustainable procurement standards by modifying purchasing protocol. Institute a green cleaning policy for all City and school buildings, including the use of non-toxic cleaning products and recycled paper goods. Reduce the mercury content of the mercury containing lamps acquired for use in City buildings.

**7X.2-b: Municipal fleet.** Explore purchase of new municipal fleet vehicles powered by renewable fuel sources, those with flexible fuel options, and gas-electric hybrids. Potentially utilize federal grant funds to eliminate the cost difference between these and conventional vehicles. Explore fleet vehicle-sharing between departments and/or reduction in vehicle use and fleet size.

**7X.3: Eliminate disproportionate environmental burdens and pollution experienced by historically disadvantaged communities.** For instance, an asthma map of Stamford (2002-10) shows that the highest densities of asthma patients are located in the neighborhoods flanking I-95.

## **E. Education**

A critical strategy for improving sustainable practices around the City is through education. The extent to which individuals incorporate sustainable practices into their home life as well as their work environment can reduce the need for expensive infrastructure modifications. Education can also result in greater utilization of the investments that are made in sustainable design. Sustainable Stamford provides many of these resources through their website, as well as through educational sessions in various communities. Education sessions may include partnerships with the business community, industrial sector leaders, with the public at large or held within the school system.



## **CHAPTER 8.0: FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

### **8.1 OVERVIEW OF UPDATES TO THE GENERAL LAND USE PLAN**

The 2002 Master Plan established a General Land Use Plan consisting of 17 land use categories. This updated Master Plan establishes a General Land Use Plan consisting of 15 land use categories and includes several key revisions, as follows:

The “Downtown Corridor” and “Downtown Collar” categories from the 2002 Plan have been eliminated. The “Downtown Core” category remains (renamed, “Downtown”) and the boundaries revised (see Revised Proposed Master Plan Land Use Category Map). The new “Downtown” category is meant to provide for regional commercial facilities and protect an intensive mixed-use district. Intended is a full array of retail, office, cultural, recreation and residential uses.

A new “Urban Mixed-Use” category surrounds the Downtown. The Urban Mixed-Use category will provide for development of a mixture of uses including housing, offices, retail and restaurant and other approved uses, which – by nature of the type of activity, design and layout – are compatible with each other and their surroundings. This district largely surrounds the Downtown and is intended to be lower-density than the Downtown and not contain uses of a regional nature such as major shopping centers or major office uses.

The “Commercial – Campus Office” category from the 2002 Master Plan has been renamed “Mixed-Use-Campus.” This new category is intended to provide for and protect low-density mixed-use areas, potentially including office uses as well as carefully limited industrial, research and development uses. Such development should be “suburban” in nature.

Figure 22 shows the Proposed General Land Use Plan. The major changes between the existing and proposed plan are in the Downtown and South End. Figure 23 shows the proposed land uses for the southern portion of the City, while Figure 24 shows the proposed land uses for the Downtown area.

### **8.2 2025 MASTER PLAN LAND USE CATEGORIES**

The following land use categories have been structured and defined so as to provide for and protect a suitable environment for residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development and to promote the general welfare, health and safety of the community. These land use categories implement the policies laid out in the prior chapters and are employed in the official Master Plan Map to establish the general land use plan for the City of Stamford, pursuant to Section C6-30-3 of the Stamford Charter. The proposed revised categories are displayed in Figure 22, Figure 23 and Figure 24.

1. RESIDENTIAL—Very Low Density Single-Family
2. RESIDENTIAL—Low Density Single-Family
3. RESIDENTIAL—Low Density Multifamily

4. RESIDENTIAL—Medium Density Multifamily
5. RESIDENTIAL—High Density Multifamily
6. COMMERCIAL—Neighborhood Business
7. COMMERCIAL—Arterial
8. MIXED-USE-CAMPUS
9. URBAN MIXED-USE
10. SHOREFRONT MIXED-USE
11. DOWNTOWN
12. INDUSTRIAL—Water-Dependent
13. INDUSTRIAL—General
14. OPEN SPACE—Public Parks
15. OPEN SPACE/CONSERVATION

**#1. RESIDENTIAL—Very Low Density Single-Family**

This category is intended to provide for and protect a suitable environment for single-family dwellings, as well as compatible uses (e.g., schools, houses of worship, clubs and institutions) as may be permitted by Special Exception being in general harmony with and supportive of very low-density single-family neighborhoods. The great majority of areas so designated are not served by public water supply and public sanitary sewer systems. Residential density shall not exceed one principal dwelling unit per acre, provided that conservation-oriented "clustering" (e.g., Conservation Subdivisions) utilizing reduced lot size are encouraged.

**#2. RESIDENTIAL—Low Density Single-Family**

This category is intended to provide for and protect a suitable environment for single-family dwellings, as well as compatible uses (e.g., schools, houses of worship, clubs and institutions) as may be permitted by Special Exception being in general harmony with and supportive of single-family neighborhoods. Development on parcels less than one acre is permitted where the availability of public utilities, public road systems and other essential public services and the density of existing development so warrant. Residential density shall not exceed six principal dwelling units per acre, provided that conservation-oriented "clustering" (e.g., Conservation Subdivisions) utilizing reduced lot size are encouraged.

**#3. RESIDENTIAL—Low Density Multifamily**

This category is intended to allow the amenities of multifamily living in a single-family neighborhood setting. The category is intended to provide for and protect single-family dwellings and the least intensive of multifamily development (i.e., garden apartments or similar condominium-type units) as well as one- and two-family units on individual lots, and includes such other compatible uses (e.g., schools, houses of worship, clubs, hospitals and institutions) as may be permitted by Special Exception being in general harmony with and supportive of such multifamily neighborhoods. Residential density shall not exceed a total of 17 dwelling units per acre, or a total of 25 dwelling units per acre when exclusively for the elderly. A residential density bonus of 50 percent may be allowed by Special Exception, not to exceed a total of 25 units per acre, provided that (1) a substantial number of such

bonus units are provided at below-market rates, and/or (2) the units are created in connection with the adaptive reuse of an historic structure.

#### **#4. RESIDENTIAL—Medium Density Multifamily**

This category is intended to provide for and protect medium-density multifamily development. The category is appropriate to areas in transition from lower- to medium-density use, or in areas characterized by a mixture of apartment, condominium, attached row house or detached residential mid-rise structures, and such other uses (e.g., schools, houses of worship, clubs, hospitals and institutions) as may be permitted by Special Exception being in general harmony with and supportive of such multifamily neighborhoods. Residential density shall not exceed a total of 29 dwelling units per acre, or a total of 44 dwelling units per acre when exclusively for the elderly. A residential density bonus of 50 percent may be allowed by Special Exception, with a total not to exceed a total of 44 units per acre, provided that a substantial number of such bonus units are provided at below-market rates.

#### **#5. RESIDENTIAL—High-Density Multifamily**

This category is intended to provide for and protect existing high-density multifamily development in areas convenient to shopping, mass transit and park and recreation facilities. New development can be accommodated in a variety of structures (by type and scale), and include such other compatible uses (e.g., limited ground floor commercial, schools, hospitals, houses of worship, etc.) as may be permitted by Special Exception being in general harmony with and supportive of such multifamily neighborhoods. Residential density shall not exceed 108 units per acre, provided that below-market-rate units are included. A residential density not to exceed 125 units per acre may be provided for parcels developed for low- or moderate-income elderly and/or disabled persons. Residential projects shall be subject to approval by the Zoning Board on the basis of compatibility with adjacent development, superior design, amenities for Downtown living and convenience to Downtown jobs and activities.

#### **#6. COMMERCIAL—Neighborhood**

This category is intended to provide for and promote pedestrian-scaled "Main Street" environments: (1) encourage a variety of retail, office, other compatible business and residential uses distinct from the most intensive Downtown development and also excluding auto-oriented retail permitted in Commercial-Arterial (Category #7); (2) be in a layout convenient to the abutting residential neighborhoods; (3) be serviceable by the capacity of existing arterial and mass transit systems; and (4) be characterized by small-scale development oriented to a "Main Street." Development within this category shall be at densities far below those allowed in Downtown (Categories #9, #10, #11), with bonuses subject to Planning Board review and recommendation and approval by the Zoning Board on the basis of (1) compatibility with adjacent residential areas, (2) superior design, (3) "Main Street" amenities, (4) pedestrian enhancements, (5) shared parking, (6) mixed-use development, (7) compliance with the goal of directing most commercial development to Downtown, (8) demonstration that the development will not adversely affect Downtown, and (9) compliance with design guidelines. Residential development within this category shall not exceed the permitted density of Residential-Low Density Multifamily (Category #3), except for development located within referenced "village centers."

### **#7. COMMERCIAL—Arterial**

This category is intended to provide for and protect business-oriented development (1) extending from the Downtown or (2) along major arterial routes. The category is intended to: (1) encourage retail and by Special Exception compatible uses (limited office and residential) distinct from the Commercial-Neighborhood (Category #6) and Downtown (Categories #9, #10, #11) development; (2) be mindful of traffic, safety and community design considerations with regard to the residential neighborhoods abutting; and (3) be serviceable by the capacity of existing arterial systems. Automotive uses and shopping centers shall be permitted subject to Planning Board review and recommendation and approval by the Zoning Board on the basis of (1) compatibility with adjacent development, (2) superior design, and (3) improvement of traffic safety or congestion conditions. Development within this category shall be at densities below those allowed in Commercial-Neighborhood (Category #6), with bonus subject to approval by the Zoning Board on the basis of (1) compatibility with adjacent uses, (2) superior design, (3) superior traffic management, (4) compliance with the goal of directing most commercial development to Downtown, and (5) compliance with design guidelines. Residential development within this category shall not exceed the permitted density of Residential-Low Density Multifamily (Category #3).

### **#8. MIXED-USE – CAMPUS**

This category is intended to provide for and protect low-density office parks and commercial (non-retail) centers in locations outside of the Downtown, by allowing limited expansion and adaptive reuse of compatible office, research and development, residential, government, educational and medical uses. Principal large-format retail uses, shopping centers, sports and entertainment complexes and similar uses shall be prohibited. New buildings and structures shall be compatible with the scale, height and character of existing buildings and maintain a landscaped “campus” setting of relatively low development intensity compatible with surrounding residential properties. Mixed-use development including adaptive reuse of existing buildings shall be carefully planned and designed and shall result in no net increase in traffic impact compared with office development. Development within this category shall be at densities, height and bulk far below those allowed in Downtown (Category 11). Such development may be permitted to locate on sites "suburban" in nature, subject to approval of the Zoning Board, based on (1) compatibility with adjacent uses and residential areas, (2) superior design including landscape design to buffer this use from adjacent residential uses, (3) superior traffic management, (4) compliance with the goal of directing most commercial development to Downtown, and (5) compliance with design guidelines. Total floor area shall not exceed 0.4 FAR for property located adjacent to State highways.

### **# 9. URBAN MIXED-USE**

The purpose of this category is to encourage redevelopment and to provide an orderly transition from the more-intensive Downtown area (Category # 11) to adjoining neighborhoods; and to provide a mix of uses complementary to and supportive of the Downtown. Intended is a full array of uses including high-density residential uses as the primary use in this category, supported by a dynamic mix of neighborhood retail and service uses, office, and recreational uses serviced by mass transportation and quality streetscapes that enhance connections between the Downtown and outlying neighborhoods of

the City. Conservation and preservation of those existing elements of the district having significant architectural or historical value should be encouraged. This category supports and encourages the design and development concepts expressed in the South End Redevelopment Districts, North and South. All new construction and façade renovation in the Urban Mixed-Use area should be subject to review based upon land use standards that promote the objectives set forth herein. Development will be at a significantly lower density than in the Downtown (Category #11) and consist of buildings that are generally compatible in scale to the general character of the surrounding area. Throughout the Urban Mixed-Use area, development should meet superior standards of design and consider such factors as: (1) compatibility with adjacent residential areas, (2) extensive planning and outreach directed or overseen by the Land Use Bureau (3) preference that the uses will not lead to a net decrease in habitable affordable housing (4) safe and efficient movement by pedestrians and bicyclists, (5) proximity to mass transit, (6) determination that the scale and nature of the proposed uses are compatible with available traffic capacities and public infrastructure system, (7) final approval of architectural and site plans and requested uses by the Zoning Board, and (8) compliance with the goal of directing regional commercial development to the Downtown. Residential development within this category shall be at a density not to exceed that permitted in Residential-High-Density Multifamily (Category #5).

#### **#10. SHOREFRONT MIXED-USE**

The purpose of this category is to provide for appropriate mixed-use development of the waterfront in a manner that: (1) protects existing water-dependent uses and encourages new uses which depend upon marine access; (2) encourages the preservation and enhancement of public access to waterfront areas and waterfront vistas; and (3) encourages a mix of compatible uses so designed and integrated as to achieve these objectives within the capacity of the infrastructure and complementary in scale to the general character of the area. Development plans must include significant water-dependent uses such as public access facilities, boatyards, marinas, marine sales and service and businesses requiring waterborne shipping and receiving or water access. Existing water-dependent uses and waterfront vistas shall be protected. Complementing these uses may be limited retail, office, restaurant and other compatible uses that enhance the opportunity for maintenance and development of existing and proposed water-dependent uses. All shorefront development shall include meaningful public access to the waterfront except where public safety would be a risk. After review and recommendation by the Harbor Management Commission and the Planning Board, all development within this category shall be subject to approval of site and architectural plans and requested uses by the Zoning Board. A determination will be made by the Zoning Board that the scale and nature of the proposed development is compatible with available traffic capacities and public infrastructure systems, and will be in compliance with the goal of directing most development to Downtown. Intensity of development shall be generally consistent with the density of Residential-Medium Density Multifamily (Category #4) computed on the basis of land above mean high tide.

#### **#11. DOWNTOWN**

This category is intended to provide for and protect an intensive, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use district. Intended is a full array of retail, office, cultural, recreation and residential uses serviced by mass transportation and integrated pedestrian access systems, always at-grade, enhanced by up-to-date

lighting, seating, planting, signage, etc., to assure a desirable mixing and interaction of people and activities. A variety of scale and design in new construction is to be encouraged. Conservation and preservation of those existing elements of the district having significant architectural or historical value should be encouraged by appropriate zoning controls. All new construction and facade renovation in the Downtown should be subject to review based upon land use and urban design standards designed to promote the objectives set forth herein, including compatible transitions to existing buildings. The Downtown is the most intensive development area in the City, and the primary retail center of the City. Commercial floor area bonuses, where authorized, should further the policies and design criteria of the Urban Design Report or any formally adopted design guidelines, and consider such factors as: (1) compatibility with adjacent residential areas, (2) superior design, (3) public amenities, (4) pedestrian enhancements, (5) proximity to mass transit, (6) shared parking and (7) mixed-use development.

#### **#12. INDUSTRIAL—Water Dependent**

This category is intended to promote and preserve water-dependent uses, meaning those uses and facilities which require direct access to, or location in marine or tidal waters and which therefore cannot be located inland, as defined in Section 22a-93 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Development plans shall be subject to review by and recommendation from the Harbor Management Commission and the Planning Board, and issuance of a Special Exception and Coastal Site Plan Approval by the Zoning Board, and the amount of any non-water-dependent uses shall be strictly limited.

#### **#13. INDUSTRIAL—General**

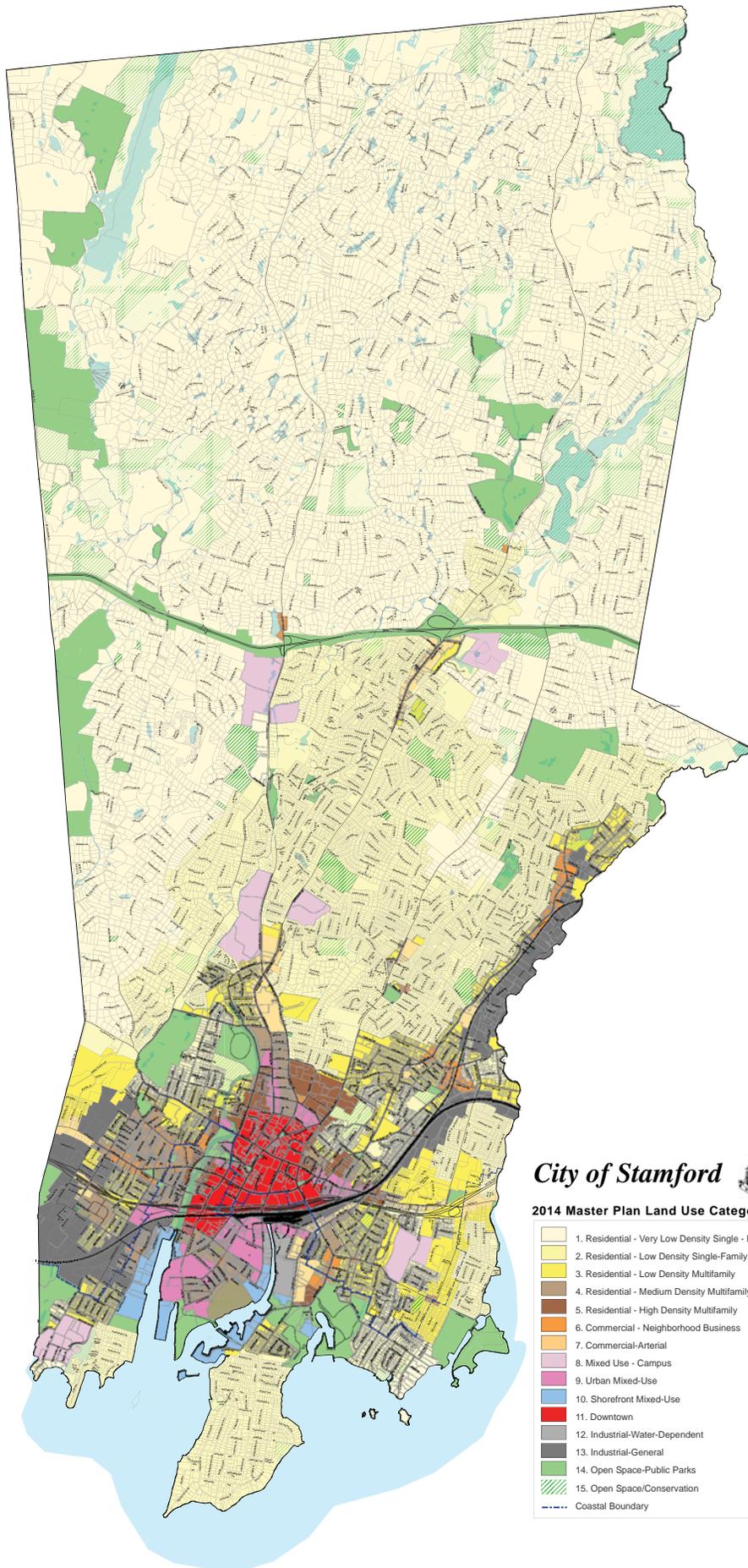
The purpose of this category is to provide for and protect existing industrial development and preserve opportunities for new industrial uses, including the manufacture and assembly of products, wholesale storage and distribution, research and development and such other uses that are ancillary or subordinate to industrial activities. Office uses which are not accessory to bona fide industrial activities, in the aggregate, shall not exceed 50 percent of the maximum permitted floor area for any parcel. Retail uses which are not accessory to bona fide industrial activities shall be restricted to uses (generally by Special Exception) such as supermarkets, furniture stores, occasional small-scale stores and services (e.g., freestanding delis) and construction-related stores (e.g., plumbing supply and lumberyards). It is recognized that in some existing industrial sectors of Stamford, residential and manufacturing/assembly/warehousing have long co-existed as neighborhood uses. Accordingly, the category acknowledges the validity of the continuance of residential use and encourages the adaptive reuse of older industrial structures for live/work and artists' lofts/studios. Public schools shall also be a permitted use. Infilling new residential development may be allowed by Special Exception by the Zoning Board where it serves to promote the maintenance and viability of existing industrial/flex type uses.

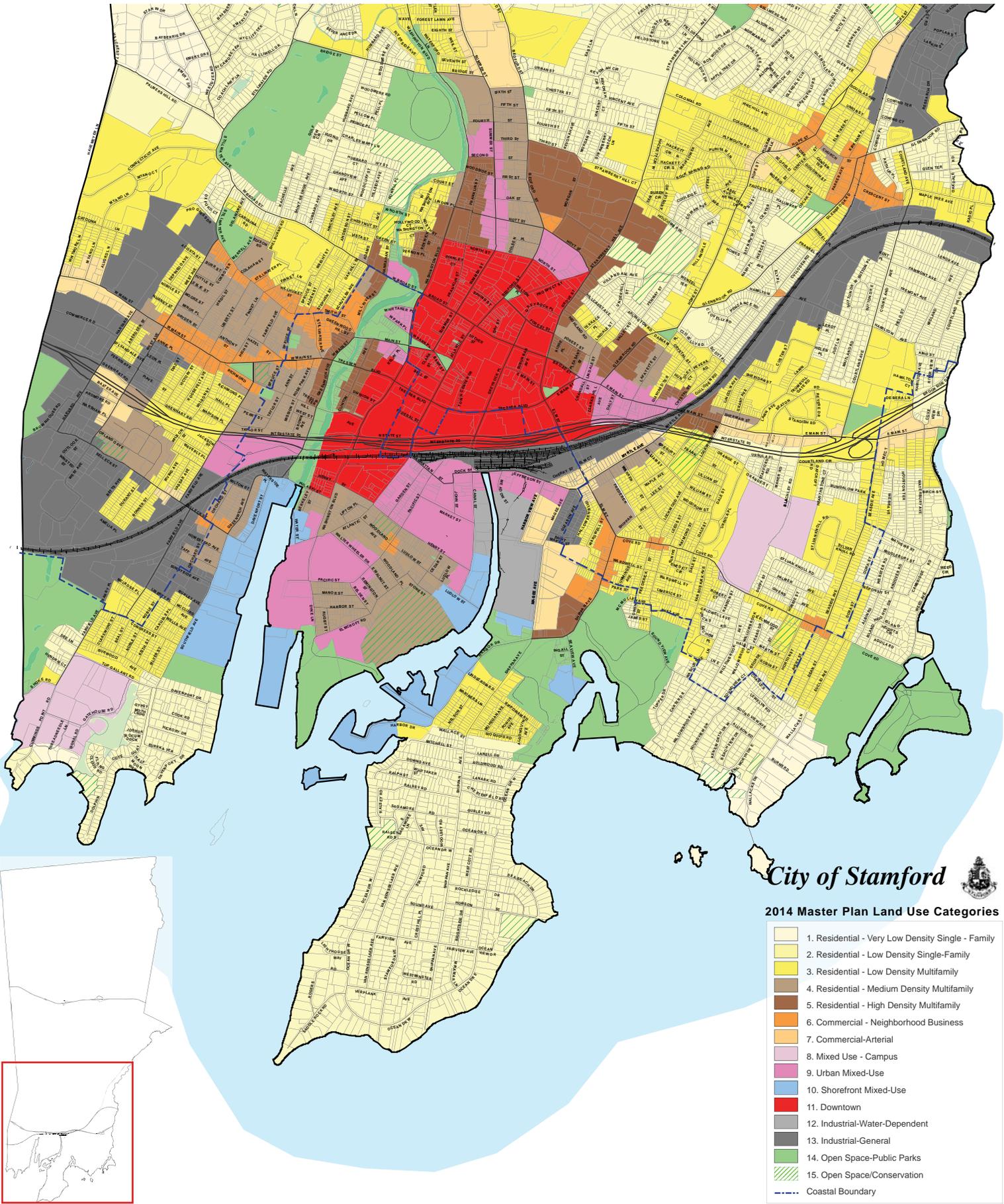
#### **#14. OPEN SPACE—Public Parks**

The purpose of this category is to provide for and protect lands dedicated for public park, recreation and passive open space uses.

#### **#15. OPEN SPACE/CONSERVATION**

The purpose of this category is to protect open spaces for active and passive use, conservation of natural habitats and environments, environmental protection and protection of scenic views. Development shall be mindful of the need to promote preservation and protection of open space, greenways, water quality and natural habitats. Development uses and density shall be consistent with the underlying zoning.



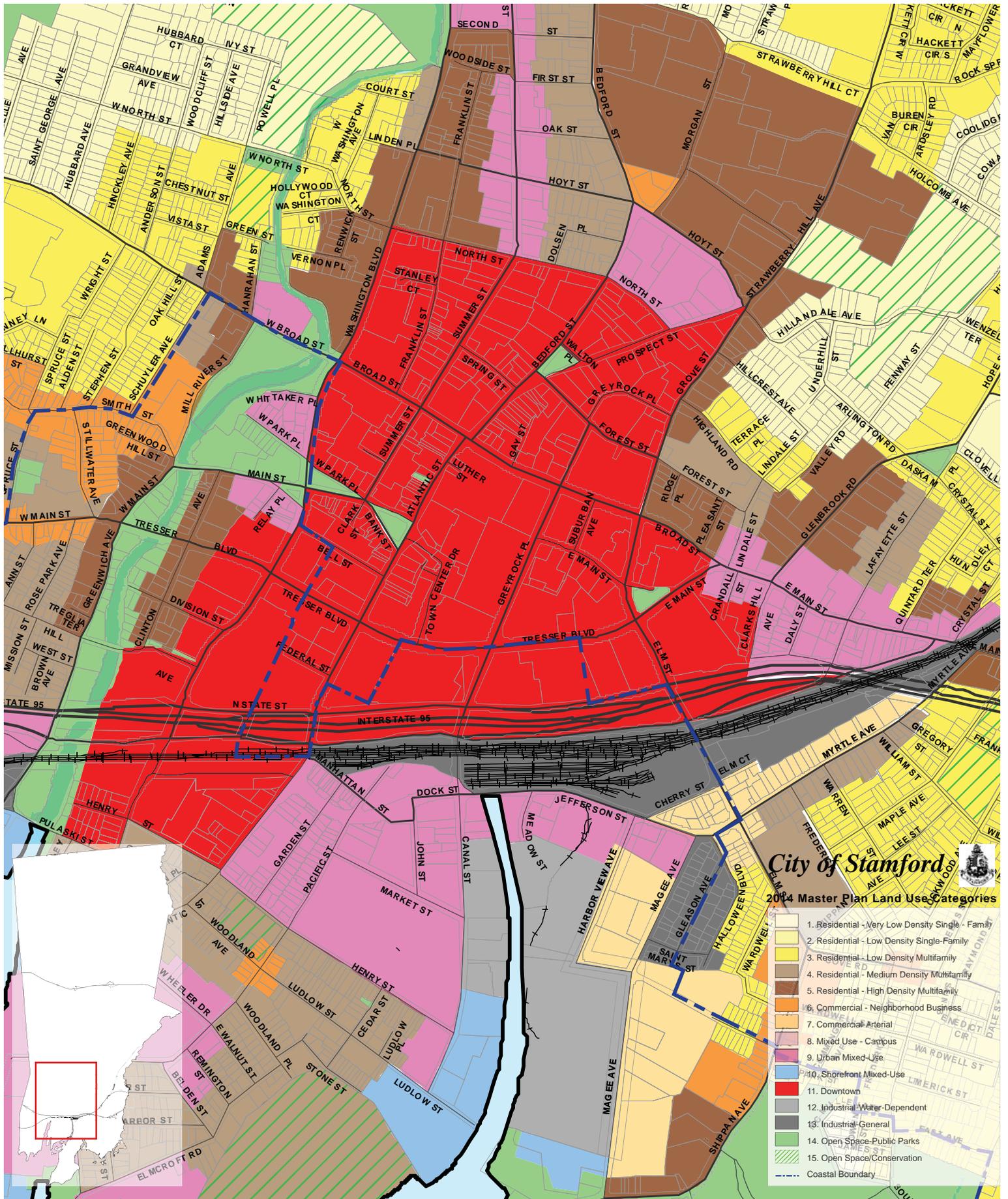


*City of Stamford* 

**2014 Master Plan Land Use Categories**

-  1. Residential - Very Low Density Single - Family
-  2. Residential - Low Density Single-Family
-  3. Residential - Low Density Multifamily
-  4. Residential - Medium Density Multifamily
-  5. Residential - High Density Multifamily
-  6. Commercial - Neighborhood Business
-  7. Commercial-Arterial
-  8. Mixed Use - Campus
-  9. Urban Mixed-Use
-  10. Shorefront Mixed-Use
-  11. Downtown
-  12. Industrial-Water-Dependent
-  13. Industrial-General
-  14. Open Space-Public Parks
-  15. Open Space/Conservation
-  Coastal Boundary





## **CHAPTER 9.0: IMPLEMENTATION**

The chapters of this Master Plan outline numerous policies that will be used to guide land-use and economic development decision-making in Stamford over the course of the next 10 years. In reviewing development applications and responding to requests for Zoning Map changes, the City will use the Master Plan policies to determine the extent to which proposed projects will further Stamford's overall vision for its future.

This chapter provides recommendations for achieving Master Plan policies and describes regulatory controls, capital budget expenditures and lobbying efforts necessary for Stamford to achieve its vision for the future. It concludes with a matrix that outlines action items for achieving the policy recommendations provided in each chapter of the Plan.

### **9.1 REGULATORY CONTROLS**

#### **A. Zoning**

Zoning is Stamford's primary tool for implementing its Master Plan. Zoning dictates allowed uses and controls density and the scale of buildings on a site. Subdivision and site plan regulations inform the layout of lots, buildings, new roadways and landscaping on a property. Together, these regulations are the City's most effective tools for guiding development and ensuring that it is consistent with Master Plan policies. According to City Charter, any proposed Zoning Code amendments or Zoning Map changes must be consistent with Master Plan policies and the Generalized Future Land Use Plan Map. Therefore, aligning zoning regulations with Plan policies is essential to achieving the vision outlined in this Master Plan. Key zoning recommendations that should be explored for implementation are as follows:

- 1) Consider updating zoning to allow for redevelopment of office parks for mixed-use development.
- 2) Explore the creation of zoning incentives to direct regional office and retail development Downtown. Such incentives could include reduced parking ratios.
- 3) Look at rezoning industrial properties in the South End from industrial (M-G) to medium-density multifamily (R-MF).
- 4) Investigate rezoning industrial properties along the Urban Transitway from industrial (M-L) to mixed-use.
- 5) Examine rezoning industrial properties in the northern portion of the South End from industrial (M-G) to mixed-use.
- 6) Look at adjusting zoning regulations to allow for increased building heights in coastal areas in areas where FEMA has raised flood zone levels.
- 7) Consider establishing a neighborhood revitalization-focused fee-in-lieu program for meeting affordable housing requirements of development and redevelopment.
- 8) Explore creating zoning incentives to encourage use of green and cool roofs.

## **B. Historic Preservation**

Historic preservation controls should be strengthened to better protect and enhance Stamford's historic resources. The key to effective historic preservation is to promote rehabilitation and protection of important historic buildings, while recognizing that not every old structure in the city merits preservation. Specific criteria should be developed to evaluate the historic integrity of older structures, which will prevent demolition of important buildings. Rules and procedures should be set out to govern development in historic districts to ensure that new construction complements the character of existing structures without deterring new development.

Stamford has a newly created Historic Preservation Advisory Commission, enacted by ordinance in May 2013, which is responsible for advising the City's land-use boards and commissions on historic preservation issues within Stamford.

In working to preserve Stamford's historic and cultural resources, the Commission should consider actions to protect the following districts and properties, which have been identified as in need of protection:

- Atlantic Street Post Office (Downtown)
- Former Winski Drug Store (South End)
- Former U.S. Naval Reserve Training Center (East Side)
- Former Lincrusta-Walton Factory smokestack (South End)
- South End National Register District

Tools to be employed to protect these and other identified resources include:

- 1) Educating property owners on the importance of preserving historically significant structures and the availability of zoning incentives and tax credits to support historic preservation.
- 2) The use of historic preservation density bonuses currently provided for in Section 7.3 of Stamford's Zoning Code as well as new density bonuses that would encourage retention of historic building facades and street level character while allowing for new construction that is stepped back above historic buildings.
- 3) Authorization of locally designated historic structures and districts. This would empower the City to set designate historically significant structures and districts and to regulate modifications to them.
- 4) Historic preservation tax credits, which provide a tax credit for the rehabilitation/reuse of historic properties.

## **9.2 CAPITAL BUDGET EXPENDITURES**

The capital budget is an important tool for implementing the physical improvements recommended in this Master Plan. As part of the capital budget preparation process, the Planning Board makes recommendations to the Mayor, who in turn submits the Mayor's revised Capital Budget to both the

Board of Finance and the Board of Representatives for funding of projects consistent with the Master Plan. Projects typically include funding for schools, street and sidewalk repairs, traffic calming improvements, park maintenance and upgrades, shoreline protection infrastructure and outside agencies. Capital budget priorities that should be funded in order to carry out the vision of this Master Plan include:

- 1) Downtown streetscape improvements to enhance walkability
- 2) Improvements to Veterans and Columbus Parks and enhanced streetscape connections between these parks and Mill River Park
- 3) Expansion of the Mill River Park Greenway
- 4) Upgrades to Kosciuszko Park
- 5) Expanded Downtown jitney service
- 6) Improvements to Tresser Boulevard
- 7) Maintenance of shoreline structure associated with environmental and flood protection
- 8) Public infrastructure
- 9) Improvements to schools

### **9.3 LOBBYING EFFORTS**

As discussed in Chapter 3 of this Master Plan, improving regional and local transportation infrastructure is essential to capturing Stamford's economic growth potential. Traffic congestion is making it difficult to get in and out of Stamford via I-95 and the Merritt Parkway. At the same time, accidents and system failures on Metro-North's New Haven line have compromised the reliability of rail service to and from the city. Within the City, local bus routes often do not correspond with riders' travel needs. While the region's road and rail systems and local bus service are not within the control of the City, it is crucial that Stamford take an active role in lobbying for regional road and rail improvements at the State and Federal level as well as for improvements to bus service. Working closely with partners such as the Regional Plan Association, the South Western Region MPO, the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCCOG, successor agency to the South Western Regional Planning Agency), and the Business Council of Fairfield County, Stamford must be a vocal advocate for the following transportation infrastructure improvements:

- 1) Bring Metro-North Railroad's New Haven line into a state of good repair
- 2) Enhance the Stamford Transportation Center as a gateway to the city
- 3) Secure funding for roadway widening and pedestrian improvements for I-95/railroad underpasses
- 4) Adjust bus routes to better address travel patterns of residents and commuters
- 5) Improve the frequency and reliability of bus service
- 6) Construct a fourth lane on I-95, where possible

## **9.4 PRIORITY ITEMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Based on discussion and coordination with the City of Stamford Land Use Bureau, the following strategies represent the top priorities for 10-year implementation of the Master Plan:

1. Increase Economic Resiliency and Diversity
2. Implement the Transportation Strategies of this Master Plan
3. Support Downtown as a Regional Center
4. Maintain Character of Residential Neighborhoods
5. Develop a Historic Preservation Strategy
6. Follow up the Plan with a Downtown and South End Implementation Plan
7. Implement the Sustainability Recommendations of this 2015 Master Plan
8. Develop a Coastal Resiliency Plan
9. Create an Affordable Housing Management Strategy
10. Implement a Growth Management Strategy Looking at Potential Impacts on Schools, Infrastructure, Traffic and Municipal Services and Facilities.
11. Examine Re-use Issues of Office Space, Including the Impact of Changing Technology.
12. Coordinate Annual Reports to the Planning Board from Relevant City Department Heads on Progress Made Toward Master Plan Recommendations

## **9.5 INDEX OF POLICIES AND STRATEGIES**

Table 28, on the following page, provides a summary of strategies for implementing the policies of this Master Plan. The matrix is organized by plan chapter and includes a set of action items under each plan policy, with each item located in the body of the Plan for further reference. For each Citywide policy, the municipal entities who would be responsible for coordinating implemented are identified; for some policies, coordination with State or federal agencies or private-sector partners may also be needed.

In addition to Citywide policies and strategies, there are a number of suggested actions for Stamford's neighborhoods. Generally, they support preserving and protecting neighborhood character and quality-of-life; improving mobility and circulation; and preserving and enhancing parks, open space and the natural environment. Creation of mixed-use centers and corridors is recommended for some neighborhoods as appropriate. Neighborhood policies and strategies are found in the Index of Policies and Strategies, Section E.

**Table 28: Index of Policies and Strategies**

**A. A REGIONAL CENTER: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 3A: Increase Economic Resiliency and Diversity</b>	Office of Economic Development (OED) Department of Operations Fairfield County Business Council	<b>67</b>
<b>3A.1</b> Create an Economic Development Plan for the City of Stamford		67
<b>3A.2</b> Market existing and create new incentives to attract small business		68
<b>3A.3</b> Encourage modernization of office space and allow for adaptive reuse		68
<b>3A.4</b> Promote upgraded telecommunications infrastructure.		68
<b>3A.5</b> Explore the feasibility of the development of a convention center in the Downtown		68
<b>3A.6</b> Increase and promote financial, technical assistance and development programs for industry		68
<b>3A.7</b> Promote live/work arrangements		68
<b>3A.8</b> Promote affordable artist live/work space		69

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 3B: Growth Management</b>	Department of Operations Office of Economic Development (OED)	<b>69</b>
<b>3B.1</b> Concentrate regional office, retail and entertainment uses and high-density residential development Downtown		69
<b>3B.2</b> Discourage expansion of office development outside of Downtown in areas that do not have direct access to transit		69
a. Employ a 50 percent floor area ratio (FAR) cap for office development in industrial districts		69
b. Discourage retail and office development in industrial districts		69
<b>3B.3</b> Encourage redevelopment of vacant Downtown office space for housing		70
<b>3B.4</b> Encourage the reconfiguration of existing office and retail space to accommodate market trends and potential new users		70
<b>3B.5</b> Encourage the State of Connecticut to work cooperatively with the City to plan for transit-oriented development at the Stamford Transportation Center		70
<b>3B.6</b> Improve local bus transit service quality and frequency		70
<b>3B.7</b> Implement traffic calming and improvements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the Downtown, along commercial arteries and in neighborhood centers		71

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 3C: Improve Education and Job Training</b>	Board of Education Department of Community Development Charter Oak Communities Land Use Bureau	<b>71</b>
<b>3C.1</b> Create a model “cradle to career” program to educate and train the resident workforce		71
<b>3C.2</b> Foster innovative job training and entrepreneurship programs		71
<b>3C.3</b> Maintain the affordable housing stock to ensure that people who work in Stamford can afford to live in Stamford		71

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 3D: Improve Regional Transportation Infrastructure</b>	South Western Region MPO Western Connecticut COG ConnDOT Department of Operations Mayor's Office	<b>72</b>
<b>3D.1</b> Widen all railroad bridge underpasses to improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation		72
<b>3D.2</b> Advocate for funding to bring Metro-North's New Haven line into a state of good repair and increase capacity		72
<b>3D.3</b> Advocate for funding for infrastructure investments necessary to reduce travel times between New York City, Stamford, New Haven and Hartford		72
<b>3D.4</b> Work with the State to improve the design and function of the Stamford Transportation Center		72
<b>3D.5</b> Advocate for construction of a fourth lane on I-95 for high-occupancy vehicles and buses		72
<b>3D.6</b> Monitor improvements to the Merritt Parkway		73

## B. A REGIONAL CENTER: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 4A: Improve Regional Transportation Infrastructure</b>	South Western Region MPO Western Connecticut COG ConnDOT Department of Operations Mayor's Office	<b>87</b>
See Policy 3D		87

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 4B: Upgrade the Stamford Transportation Center to Serve as an Attractive Gateway to the City</b>	Mayor's Office Land Use Bureau	<b>87</b>
<b>4B.1</b> Work with the State to implement the Stamford Transportation Center Master Plan		87

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 4C: Improve Circulation and Mobility Within Stamford</b>	South Western Region MPO Department of Operations Engineering Department CT Transit Western Connecticut COG Metropool	<b>87</b>
<b>4C.1</b> Roadway Improvements		88
a. Improve traffic circulation and reduce traffic bottlenecks		88
b. Explore Park-and-Ride from the Merritt Parkway to Downtown		89
c. Implement the recommendations of the High Ridge/Long Ridge Roads Corridor Study (when complete)		89
d. Improve east-west connections throughout the City		89
<b>4C.2</b> Transit Improvements		92
a. Improve bus service		92
b. Continue a trolley or priority bus service connecting key travel nodes in central Stamford		92
c. Make transit stops more attractive and accessible		92

	d. Pursue creation of a transit node at the intersection of East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue	92
	e. Coordinate privately operated shuttle routes for efficiency and optimal service	94
<b>4C.3</b>	<b>Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Improvements</b>	94
	a. Fund and create a Citywide bicycle and pedestrian plan	94
	b. Adopt a Complete Streets ordinance	95
	c. Implement traffic calming strategies to improve pedestrian safety and comfort	95
	d. Encourage the use of the National Association of City Transportation Officials' (NACTO) <i>Urban Street Design Guide</i> where appropriate	96
<b>4C.4</b>	<b>Transportation Demand Management Strategies</b>	96
	a. Promote TDM Strategies to Stamford Employers	96
<b>4C.5</b>	<b>Creation of a Transportation Department</b>	96

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Groups</b>	<b>Page #</b>
	Department of Operations	<b>97</b>
<b>Policy 4D: Enhance Parking Efficiency</b>	Downtown Special Services District Police Department Proposed Transportation Department	
<b>4D.1</b>	Prepare a parking management strategy	<b>97</b>
<b>4D.2</b>	Study parking throughout the City	97
<b>4D.3</b>	Continue to evaluate opportunities to reduce parking ratios for development near transit	97

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Groups</b>	<b>Page #</b>
	Proposed Transportation Department Office of Economic Development (OED) Land Use Bureau Department of Operations	<b>97</b>
<b>Policy 4E: Promote Transit-Oriented Development</b>		
<b>4E.1</b>	Encourage the State to coordinate with the City on plans for TOD at the Stamford Transportation Center	<b>99</b>
<b>4E.2</b>	Implement the recommendations of the Glenbrook and Springdale Village District TOD Feasibility Study	99
<b>4E.3</b>	Consider transit-supportive land use policies for development near East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue	99
<b>4E.4</b>	Consider opportunities for mixed-use transit supportive redevelopment of underutilized office parks on High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads	99

### C. DOWNTOWN AND SOUTH END

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Groups</b>	<b>Page #</b>
<b>Policy 5A: Support Downtown as a Regional Center</b>	Office of Economic Development (OED) Downtown Special Services District	<b>112</b>
<b>5A.1</b>	Concentrate regional office, retail and entertainment uses and high-density residential development in the Downtown	112
<b>5A.2</b>	Identify opportunities to relocate office uses that are currently situated in other neighborhoods to Downtown	112
<b>5A.3</b>	Encourage redevelopment of vacant Downtown office space for housing	112
<b>5A.4</b>	Explore the feasibility of the development of a convention center in Downtown Stamford near the Stamford Transportation Center	112
<b>5A.5</b>	Promote a regional arts and entertainment district Downtown	112
	a. Encourage incentives for arts and entertainment Downtown	113
<b>5A.6</b>	Promote infill development on vacant sites within Downtown	113
<b>5A.7</b>	Initiate a planning study by a consultant analyzing and assessing the design, connectivity and build-out of current plans for the Downtown	113

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 5B: Make Downtown a More Pedestrian-Friendly Neighborhood</b>	Department of Operations Downtown Special Services District Stamford Partnership People Friendly Stamford	<b>113</b>
<b>5B.1</b> Improve pedestrian connectivity within Downtown and between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods		113
<b>5B.2</b> Implement streetscape and traffic calming improvements Downtown		113
<b>5B.3</b> Encourage quality urban design that relates well to streets and people		113
<b>5B.4</b> Emphasize ground-floor retail and pedestrian activity		113
<b>5B.5</b> Promote contextual commercial and residential development along Summer and Bedford Streets		113

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 5C: Encourage Public Access to the South End Waterfront</b>	Land Use Bureau Department of Operations	<b>114</b>
<b>5C.1</b> Protect, enhance and promote water-dependent uses		114
<b>5C.2</b> Protect water-dependent industry		114
<b>5C.3</b> This Master Plan encourages the development of a full-service boatyard and marina for Stamford’s future		114
<b>5C.4</b> Make non-water-dependent uses contingent upon providing public access and meeting other public objectives		114
<b>5C.5</b> Promote recreation and boating		115
<b>5C.6</b> Maintain and enhance harbor access		115
<b>5C.7</b> Manage and enhance the natural environment along the South End shoreline		115
<b>5C.8</b> Development in unprotected areas on the shoreline and other flood-prone properties poses a particular challenge for emergency services and should be carefully reviewed and must meet CAM and FEMA regulations		115

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 5D: Improve Connections between Downtown, the South End and Adjacent Neighborhoods</b>	Department of Operations Proposed Transportation Department Private-Sector Partners	<b>115</b>
<b>5D.1 Roadways and Transit</b>		115
a. Improve traffic circulation and reduce traffic bottlenecks		115
b. Continue a trolley or priority bus service connecting Downtown, the Stamford Transportation Center and the South End		115
c. Improve the function of the Stamford Transportation Center as a gateway to and connector between Downtown and the South End		115
d. Implement new express bus service along the Urban Transitway from East Main Street to the Stamford Transportation Center		116
e. Promote bus connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods and make bus travel more desirable		116
<b>5D.2 Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections</b>		116
a. Improve pedestrian connectivity between Downtown and the South End		116
b. Establish clearly delineated bicycle route(s) between Downtown and the South End		116
<b>5D.3 Open Space Connections</b>		116
a. Continue to pursue the Mill River Plan and promote a continuous greenway from Scalzi Park to Kosciuszko Park		116
b. Upgrade Kosciuszko Park to make it more of a neighborhood and citywide asset		116
c. Maximize the potential of public plazas and open spaces Downtown and in the South End		116
d. Link open spaces and public places Downtown along Main Street to create an east-west greenway		116

Policy	Implementation Groups	Page #
<b>Policy 5E: Balance New Development with Neighborhood Preservation in the South End</b>	Land Use Bureau Office of Economic Development (OED) Department of Operations South End NRZ	<b>117</b>
5E.1 Promote neighborhood revitalization		117
5E.2 Promote affordable homeowner housing		117
5E.3 Encourage relocation of industrial uses from residential areas		117
5E.4 Preserve neighborhood parking		117
5E.5 Calm neighborhood traffic		117
5E.6 Promote mixed-use development along the Urban Transitway		117
5E.7 Analyze and assess the design, connectivity and build-out of current plans for the South End		117

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<b>Policy 5F: Support Retention of the Arts Community in the South End</b>	Office of Economic Development (OED) Land Use Bureau	<b>118</b>
5F.1 Promote artist live/work space		118
5F.2 Encourage connections between the South End arts community and Downtown arts and entertainment		118
5F.3 Retain niche antiques market in the South End		118

#### D. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

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<b>Policy 6A: Maintain Residential Neighborhood Character</b>	Land Use Bureau Department of Community Development Charter Oak Communities Housing Development Fund (HDF) Historic Preservation Advisory Commission	<b>133</b>
6A.1 Balance new development with preservation of existing residential communities		133
6A.2 Create a neighborhood revitalization-focused fee-in-lieu program for meeting affordable housing requirements		133
6A.3 Support neighborhood generated revitalization plans		134
6A.4 Expand the City’s neighborhood beautification grant program		134

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<b>Policy 6B: Preserve Existing and Create New Affordable Housing</b>	Land Use Bureau Department of Community Development Charter Oak Communities Housing Development Fund (HDF)	<b>134</b>
6B.1 Continue one-for-one replacement policy for assisted housing		134
6B.2 Maintain inventory of other publicly assisted affordable units		134
6B.3 Encourage rehabilitation and sound management of small multifamily buildings		134
6B.4 Strengthen oversight and capacity within City government to promote neighborhood stabilization and enhance management of Stamford’s Below Market Rate (BMR) program		134
6B.5 Enhance inclusionary zoning incentives		134
6B.6 Support senior and accessible housing		134

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Groups</b>	<b>Page #</b>
<b>Policy 6C: Encourage Development of Mixed-Income Housing</b>	Land Use Bureau Department of Community Development Charter Oak Communities Housing Development Fund (HDF)	<b>135</b>
<b>6C.1</b> Continue to revitalize public housing sites with mixed-income development that is integrated into the community		135
<b>6C.2</b> Promote development of a variety of housing types		135
<b>6C.3</b> Make homeownership more affordable		135
<b>6C.4</b> Continue encouraging conversion of vacant office buildings to residential use		135
<b>6C.5</b> Encourage increased density along transit corridors and within Downtown through land use regulations and developer incentives		135
<b>6C.6</b> Remediate brownfields for new mixed-income housing		135

## **E. NEIGHBORHOOD POLICIES**

<b>North Stamford (NS)</b>	<b>137</b>
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<b>Belltown, Glenbrook and Springdale (BGS)</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>East Side (ES)</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Cove (C)</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>Shippan (S)</b>	<b>152</b>
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<b>Waterside (W)</b>	<b>158</b>

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<b>Policy 6D: Preserve Historic Buildings and Districts</b>	Land Use Bureau Department of Community Development Historic Preservation Advisory Commission	<b>163</b>
<b>6D.1</b> Conduct a citywide historic preservation survey and prepare a historic preservation plan for Stamford.		<b>163</b>
<b>6D.2</b> Seek National Register of Historic Places listing for non-designated historically significant structures		163
<b>6D.3</b> Provide tax and zoning incentives for historic preservation and adaptive reuse		163
a. Promote zoning incentives for historic preservation and adaptive reuse		163
b. Authorize local designation of historic districts and landmarks		164
<b>6D.4</b> Encourage the use of historic preservation tax credits		164

## F. A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

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<b>Policy 7A: Expand and Link the City’s Open Spaces</b>	Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>168</b>
<b>Policy 7B: Create New Streetscape Connections Downtown</b>	Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>168</b>
<b>7B.1</b> Provide high-quality streetscape designs along principal streets		168
<b>7B.2</b> Adopt Complete Streets design standards to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian improvements in street and sidewalk projects		168
<b>7B.3</b> Improve pedestrian convenience at underpasses		169
<b>7B.4</b> Increase access to parks within a quarter-mile walking distance of each neighborhood		169
<b>Policy 7C: Enhance Open Space Management</b>	Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>169</b>
<b>Policy 7D: Aggressively Pursue Open Space Acquisitions, Open Space Dedication and Open Space Easements</b>	Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>169</b>
<b>Policy 7E: Support an Active and Diverse Waterfront</b>	Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>169</b>
<b>7E.1</b> Establish and maintain diversity of viable water-dependent uses		169
<b>7E.2</b> Encourage and support continued operation and, where feasible, enhancement of public and private recreational boating uses and facilities		170
<b>7E.3</b> Maintain and enhance waterfront parks, beach areas and other facilities that provide opportunities for public access to the city’s coastal waterways		170
<b>Policy 7F: Maximize Public Access to the Waterfront</b>	Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>170</b>
<b>7F.1</b> In designated areas, promote continuous waterfront access through easements as well as public acquisition		170

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<b>Policy 7G: Create Compact and Complete Communities</b>		Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>172</b>
<b>7G.1</b>	Encourage active ground floors for developments along pedestrian routes		172
<b>7G.2</b>	Encourage appropriate multifamily density standards		172
<b>7G.3</b>	Where feasible, in multifamily zones, locate and/or design development such that 50 percent of the residential units are within a quarter-mile radius of walkable, diverse uses supportive of the compact and complete community		172

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<b>Policy 7H: Encourage Infill Development</b>		Department of Operations Land Use Bureau	<b>172</b>
<b>7H.1</b>	Develop an inventory of infill parcels		172

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<b>Policy 7I: Provide Greater Transportation Choices</b>		Department of Operations Land Use Bureau Proposed Transportation Department State/Federal Agencies	<b>173</b>
<b>7I.1</b>	Create and implement a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management program		173
<b>7I.2</b>	Encourage alternative modes of transportation to City employees, where appropriate		173
<b>7I.3</b>	Shared parking		173
<b>7I.4</b>	Vehicle charging stations		173
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<b>Policy 7J: Implement the Sustainability Checklist for New Private Construction and Renovations</b>		Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>175</b>
<b>7J.1</b>	Require benchmarking for significant privately owned structures		175
<b>7J.2</b>	Provide incentives to encourage buildings to meet measurable standards of sustainable design, including the Stamford sustainability scorecard		175
<b>7J.3</b>	Require sub-metering for all new and substantially renovated multi-unit buildings		175
<b>7J.4</b>	Encourage upgrading mechanicals for energy efficiency in all major buildings		175
<b>7J.5</b>	Encourage adaptive reuse of existing structures		176
<b>7J.6</b>	Support sustainable design in the industrial sector		176

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<b>Policy 7K: Sustainable Municipal Buildings</b>		Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>176</b>
<b>7K.1</b>	Enforce sustainable remodeling standards		176
<b>7K.2</b>	Select and implement energy efficiency projects with the goal of bringing all municipal facilities to Energy Star levels by 2018		176
<b>7K.3</b>	Encourage adaptive reuse of underutilized municipal buildings		176
<b>7K.4</b>	Continue to source municipal power from renewable sources		177

**7K.5** Continue program to retrofit building commissioning and energy efficiency improvements 177

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<b>Policy 7L: Further Identify Critical Natural Areas</b>		Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>178</b>
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<b>7L.2</b>	Assemble tools to protect and acquire open space		178
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	b. Conservation easements and purchase of development rights		178
	c. Land use regulation		178
	d. Tax incentives		178
	e. Funding		179

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<b>Policy 7M: Protect Watersheds</b>		Department of Operations Land Use Bureau State/Federal Agencies	<b>179</b>
<b>7M.1</b>	Prepare a watershed management plan		179
<b>7M.2</b>	Monitor water quality		179

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<b>7N.3</b>	Consider cumulative impacts		180
<b>7N.4</b>	Avoid new or expanded use, development or activities that would exceed the capacity of coastal resources		180
<b>7N.5</b>	Encourage and support restoration of coastal resources		180
<b>7N.6</b>	Maintain shoreline structures associated with environmental protection		180
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<b>7O.1</b>	Retain the freshwater wetlands in Cummings and Cove Island Parks in their undisturbed state, protect the Rippowam and Noroton Rivers flowing into Stamford Harbor and protect Holly Pond from point and non-point source pollution		180
<b>7O.2</b>	Maintain tidal wetlands in their natural state, and emphasize the value of tidal wetlands in the Cove-East Side and West Branch areas,		181
<b>7O.3</b>	Maintain Jacks and Grass Islands as conservation and natural habitat areas with uses restricted to water-dependent activities, and maintain Vincent Island as both a passive, marine-oriented recreational area and as a wildlife habitat area		181
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<b>7O.5</b>	Institute integrated pest management on City properties to reduce pesticide risk and exposure		181

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<b>7Q.3</b> Inventory and map all Downtown buildings that have the potential for green and/or cool roofs		183
<b>7Q.4</b> Use materials that have low solar reflective value		183
<b>7Q.5</b> Protect, manage and expand the urban forest, which is comprised of trees in the City’s right-of-way and in City parks, and street trees		183

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