

# Stamford 2035 – Draft Revisions Overview

This document outlines updates and edits made to the draft plan since it was released in July. The revisions are based on comments from the public, from Planning Board members during the August 12th Public Meeting, and from one-on-one discussions with Planning Board Members and Staff. Each section highlights key thematic changes, followed by a detailed bulleted list of revisions.

Red text indicates changes following the revised draft released on September 8th.

## Quick reference of changes between 9/8 and 9/19:

### Future Land Use

- Yale & Towne Block: Revised from *CORE* to *MU-3 Mixed-Use Urban* in response to DSSD comments.
- RES1 Intent Text: Clarified description to note: single-family detached homes as the base, with opportunities for senior housing, ADUs, or cottage clusters where zoning permits. Emphasis added on *no large-scale density increases* to protect stability while allowing small-scale infill.

### City of Opportunity

- Digital Twin Tools: Added references to specific providers in ST-5.3, per WestCOG comment.
- Accessory Commercial Units (ACUs): Clarified and relocated to ST-30, now framed as a study on how ACUs can support small business, with ties to cottage food licenses and home-based business rules.
- Case Study: Replaced former ACU case study with an updated Transit Center redevelopment case study.
- ADU Awareness (ST-2.1): Updated to clarify outreach on ADU and cluster housing regulations through city communications to highlight flexibility and independent living options.

### Healthy

- Resilience Tools (ST-9.9): New action to evaluate use of tools from Public Act 25-33 (e.g. Resiliency Improvement Districts).
- North Stamford Connections (ST-12.11): Adjusted focus on city-to-open space connections per WestCOG.

- Harbor Management (ST-10.1): Expanded action to emphasize coordination with updated Harbor Management Plan and 2025 Coastal Vision, including continued referral of development proposals for HMC review.
- Coastal Management Area: Added updated map (p. 101), and a new “Did you know?” call-out box defining the area.
- Building Codes (ST-14.1): Revised per DEEP: encourage *Reversible Building Design* for flexibility in conversions, while limiting residential uses in coastal flood hazard areas unless safe dry egress is provided.
- Policy Call-Out (p. 100): Added reference to goals of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act.
- Water Quality (ST-10.5): Expanded to include shellfish aquaculture and tracking of water quality (PFAS, PFOS, fertilizers) at key sites.
- New Waterfront Framework (ST-13): Introduced a new section aligning 13 actions on public access, recreation, maritime industry, and conservation into a cohesive framework alongside ST-10, ST-11, and ST-12.

## Prosperous

- Urban Agriculture (ST-27.4): New action to work with WestCOG and UConn to activate vacant municipal or land trust parcels for agriculture through lease agreements.
- ACUs: See above – addition of ACU study in ST-30.

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## Changes between 7/14 and 9/19:

### Introduction

The updates to the Introduction focus on acknowledgements and setting the stage for future planning. Hosting partners are now formally recognized, a lingering error about Stamford’s city size ranking in comparison to other Connecticut cities has been corrected, and new language more clearly explains the process for carrying the plan forward.

Revisions:

- Special thanks added in acknowledgements: Ferguson, Fish Church, Avon, Mill River, SPS.
- Removed “New Haven” reference on p.18 (corrected Stamford’s ranking as 2nd largest city).
- Expanded explanation of future planning process with a new spread.

### State of the City

Revisions in this section improve accuracy and clarity of data while ensuring the visuals are more useful to readers. Demographic and energy data were corrected, fact callouts made more visible, and transit-related maps and explanations were expanded for easier interpretation.

Revisions:

- Reformatted key stats for clarity/visibility (e.g., business density on p. 41).
- Added instructions for reading cartogram graphics.
- Ensured all sources cited for figures.
- Updated ISO New England energy demand data (p. 23).
- Corrected senior population statistic to “one in six residents over 65” (p. 32).
- Reconfigured bus service map in “State of Mobility.”

## Future Land Use

Changes in the Land Use section are some of the most substantial. They focus on simplifying terminology, making maps more intuitive, and clarifying how land use categories relate to zoning and growth priorities. Additional annotations, diagrams, and use-case examples strengthen the framework for guiding development.

Revisions:

- Updated future land use map to respond to community feedback. Most changes concentrated on changing RES2 areas with single-family zoning to RES1 to clarify lower-intensity intent.
- Tweaked presentation of future growth per Robin Stein, former Land Use Bureau chief, feedback.
- Added annotations to growth heat map (p. 49) to emphasize key growth areas.
- Renamed residential categories to avoid confusion with zoning categories:
  - R1 → RES1
  - R2 → RES2
- Updated description (p. 55) to emphasize residential placemaking.
- Clarified definitions for MU3/MU4 as to ensure MU3, Mixed-Use Urban is a “step-down” from CORE category.
- Provided examples of potential uses for categories (general, not sites) and indicated anticipated population growth in updated future land use table.
- Added more clear summary of how future land uses have changed from 2015 plan to today with comparative charts and map-based summary.
- Added diagram showing relationship between future land use vs. zoning.
- Re-confirmed MU1 in North Stamford.
- Revised future land use of Yale&Towne block from CORE to MU3, Mixed-Use Urban in response to DSSD comments.
- Slight modification to RES1 intent text for additional clarity: “Low-density residential areas primarily dedicated to single-family detached homes, with

existing and enhanced opportunities for senior housing, ADUs, or cottage clusters as permitted by Zoning Regulations. No new large-scale increases in density are envisioned, ensuring neighborhood stability while accommodating small-scale infill.”

## City of Opportunity

This section saw major updates centered on historic preservation, accessibility, and transit-oriented development. HPAC input has been integrated widely across strategies, while accessibility is elevated as a core value in design and public engagement. TOD actions are prioritized, and new policies for infrastructure investment and developer contributions are added.

Revisions:

- Prioritized all TOD actions at top of ST-1 (p.76-79).
  - Strengthened developer contribution via new BID model action (ST-1.11).
- Updated TOD maps (p.77, p.79).
- Updated ACU action (p.78) with location rules, pre-approved uses, and plans.
- Updated ST-5.1 capital planning to note mapped GIS database; added LUB role (p.88-89).
- Added HPAC to multiple actions (ST-3, ST-5.3, ST-6).
- ST-6.2: refined collaborators based on HPAC comments (p.90).
  - Emphasized design review process and CRI regulations in historic districts.
- Added accessibility strategies:
  - Added ST-7.8 on accessible documents/events.
  - Language on ADA standards & inclusive development in “Balance Growth” community priority (p. 75).
- Added specific digital twin software providers to ST-5.3 based on WestCOG comment
- ACU action moved to ST-30 with clarification on intent: “Conduct a study to understand how Accessory Commercial Units (ACUs) might support small business growth in Stamford, exploring connections to existing cottage food licenses and other home-based business regulations.”
- Case study (formerly about ACUs) changed to update and more details on the Transit Center redevelopment
- Updated ST-2.1 updated to clarify intent: “Promote existing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and cluster housing regulations in regular city communications to increase awareness of this flexible, independent living options.”

## Healthy

Revisions in the Healthy section build on environmental stewardship and community wellness. The plan calls for a stronger sustainability commitment, integration of HMC's updated Coastal Vision, improvements to open space, and expanded library services. Several items also reflect direct community input on parks and senior centers.

Revisions:

- Integrated HMC requests across the Healthy section.
  - Updated Coastal Area Management map and definition to follow once update Coastal Vision received. (p.101)
  - Added Shellfish Commission to ST-10.4 responsibilities. (p.102)
  - Updated metrics for ST-10 (p.102)
  - Added ST-12.9 "Identity and adopt hierarchy of waterfront uses..." (p.107)
- ST-9.4: deleted "explore" → commit to full-time sustainability staff. (p.100)
- Added dog runs / parks best practices (ST-15.3; BID stewardship link).
- Added tree and conservation commissions to ST-10.2 (Conservation Commission) and ST-11.2 (Tree Commission)
- Adjusted Senior Center timeline to "near term" in ST-16.5 (p.117).
- Added ST-16.2: East Side Library capital funding, pop-ups, educational programming. (p.117)
- Added ST-9.9 "Evaluate opportunities to use new resilience tools established by Public Act 25-33, such as Resiliency Improvement Districts" based on WestCOG comment.
- Adjusted focus of ST-12.11 on city vs. open space connections in North Stamford per WestCOG comment
- Updated ST-10.1 to "Support updates to and effective implementation of the Harbor Management Plan to align with the 2025 Coastal Vision, ensuring safe use of the Stamford Harbor Management Area and protection of its coastal and cultural resources. Continue to provide the Stamford Harbor Management and Shellfish Commission with development proposals affecting the Harbor Management Area for review, comment, and recommendations in accordance with state and local statutes." based on HMC comment and Coastal Vision updates
- Added updated Coastal Management Area map to p. 101 and definition of area in "Did you know?" call-out box based on HMC comment and updated Coastal Vision.
- Revised ST-13.1 per DEEP comments: "Revise building codes for flexibility by updating them to encourage "Reversible Building Design," allowing easier conversion between commercial and residential uses to adapt to changing population needs. Residential development or conversions should be limited to sites located outside of coastal flood hazard areas and/or demonstrate the ability to provide dry egress for safe evacuation and emergency access."
- Call-out box referencing the goals of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act added on p. 100.

- Updated ST-10.5 to add water quality indicators: “Expand shellfish fishery initiatives to support aquaculture and enhance water quality, which should be tracked regularly in the harbor, Rippowam River, and Noroton River using indicators such as PFAS, PFOS, and fertilizer levels.”
- Added ST-12.10 to respond to HMC and DEEP publicly accessible waterfront priority: “Continue prioritizing continuous, publicly accessible waterfront paths and recreation opportunities in all new development and redevelopment projects.”
- New ST-13 “Prioritize public access, recreation, maritime industry, and conservation along the waterfront” includes 13 actions dedicated to the waterfront that can be orchestrated along with ST-10, 11, and 12 to create a cohesive framework for coastal access, open space, habitat, etc.

## Connected

Transportation strategies were refined to improve coordination and accessibility. Updates emphasize pedestrian-friendly design and better integration of transit services across local and regional providers.

Revisions:

- ST-17.3: Added Accessible Pedestrian Signals (p.124).
- Added new ST -18.10 “Improve east-west travel for all modes”. (p.126)
- ST-20.2: Coordinated bus schedules with Metro North & Amtrak. (p.134)

## Affordable

Changes to this section were minimal to update the intent of ADU regulation updates.

Revisions:

- Clarified intent of ST-21.1 to study ADU regulation revisions (p.140).

## Prosperous

Changes to this section focus on tweaks to economic development strategies. A broadband initiative update reflects current progress and emphasis on UConn Stamford’s programmatic and physical extent downtown is in the process of being balanced.

Revisions:

- Updated SWIFI program status (p. 161).

- Flagged UConn Stamford growth and re-emphasized programmatic and physical opportunities across multiple strategies in this section.
- Added ST-27.4: "Work with WestCOG and UCONN to activate vacant municipal or land trust properties for urban agriculture through the facilitation of lease agreements." based on WestCOG comments.
- See above re: addition of ACU study in ST-30

## Appendix

The Appendix was strengthened as a resource base, adding demographic and housing data along with further documentation of school district engagement.

Revisions:

- Added SPS engagement spreads in Appendix B.
- Added demographic data appendix for housing and economic development in Appendix C.