CONNECTED AND COMPLETE NORWALK
Public Workshop | May 31, 2018
tomorrow.norwalkct.org
Tonight’s Agenda

• Plan process and context
• The Big Picture
• Complete community and competitive community
• Integrating Land Use and Transportation
  • Housing Choice
  • Transportation choice
• Discussion
The Citywide Plan is also called the Plan of Conservation & Development.

- The **only** plan that covers **the entire city**
- State-required update every ten years for eligibility for discretionary state funding
- Under the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission
- The last plan was adopted in 2008
Citywide Visioning Forum
November 18, 2017

185+ participants

Input for draft vision statement:
• Personal vision statements for the city
• Surveys and group exercises

Citywide Visioning Forum
November 18, 2017
Big Picture Trends
Millennials want choices in living, working, mobility, entertainment

75% of the workforce in 2030
Decline in middle-wage jobs

U.S. Job Polarization
Job Growth by Year

Low-Wage  Middle-Wage  High-Wage


Categories based on median wage for major occupational groups as US level
Source: BLS, Oregon Office of Economic Analysis
Transformation of retail

- Retail is in a mix of restaurants, entertainment, medical, civic, and residential uses
- Food is king - you still can’t eat or drink on the internet...
- “Place” is the new anchor tenant
The suburban office model is becoming obsolete

Employees want amenities in the surrounding area.

Yesterday’s Office

Tomorrow’s Office
Generational transition in housing

49% of Norwalk's housing stock is single family

19% of Norwalk's households are married couples with children

Source: American Community Survey, 2011-2015

Will millennials be able to afford the Baby Boomers' houses? Can the Boomers age in place?
The future of shared and autonomous vehicles is underway.
COMPLETE COMMUNITY
COMPETITIVE COMMUNITY
Complete community

A community where people can

▪ Live, work, and learn
▪ Shop to fulfill most needs
▪ Find recreation, culture and entertainment
▪ Experience parks and open spaces
▪ Honor community heritage through historic preservation
▪ Access community activities in multiple ways
Competitive community

• Excellent delivery of municipal basic services
• High quality of life in all neighborhoods
• Diverse living choices for all kinds of households
• Transportation options balancing mobility and access
• Collaborative and proactive government plans for the future
HOUSING
Housing density in Norwalk

Housing density higher in center and lower at edges

• Older homes, often smaller lots
• Newer homes, often larger lots
Nearly half of housing units are single family houses

- 62% of all units are owner occupied
- 38% of all units are renter-occupied
Housing diversity and choice supports the economy and houses the new workforce
Affordable housing

• 22% of Norwalk households pay more than 50% of income in housing costs
• 12% of all housing units are below-market-rate (4,363 units) – Norwalk meets the state’s 10% goal
Affordable housing in Norwalk today

• Housing Authority: 18 public housing developments with 853 units for families and the elderly
• Housing Authority: 1035 Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) – closed wait list; average wait on the list is 4-1/2 years
• Low Income Housing Tax Credit units: 366 units
• Workforce Housing ordinance: inclusionary zoning units (10%)
• Redevelopment Authority programs
Barriers to affordable housing production in Norwalk

• High cost of real estate
• Limited availability of land in general and potentially available city owned land
• Decline in federal and state funding for housing affordability
• Expected decline in attractiveness of Low Income Housing Tax Credits because of recent federal tax cuts
Opportunities to explore: there is no one solution

- City donates appropriate tax title properties to nonprofit housing developers rather than taking to auction
- City creates a security deposit guarantee program for income-eligible households
- City permits more accessory units
- Community land trust model where land is owned by the trust, households rent or own structure only
- City creates an Affordable Housing Trust Fund – capitalized from a dedicated revenue source
Opportunities to explore: there is no one solution

• Expand first time homebuyer programs focusing on 2-4 family homes
• Expand programs for credit curing to help first time home buyers
• Partner with banks to create downpayment and closing cost assistance programs
• Move affordable housing planning and HUD funds to proposed office of economic and community development
INTEGRATING LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION
The purpose of transportation in a city is to provide access to different land uses.

• *Mobility* is how far you can go in a given time.
• *Access* is how many useful or valuable things you can do.
• *Transportation choice* (multi-modal transportation) provides options for getting around the neighborhood and the city.
• Residents make many small, local trips that are not job-commuting trips.
Complete networks connect community destinations

• Norwalk Bike/Walk Commission map of existing and proposed routes
Mixed use centers on corridors can provide transportation choice and access.
Village centers can be designed to connect residents by short pedestrian/bike trips.

- Bike parking
- Ramps at corners
- Lighting
- Bulb-outs
- Crosswalks
Elements of a “Complete Street”

**ACTIVE SIDEWALKS**
Sidewalks should be smooth, wide, feel safe, and have appropriate transitions to the street, making them easy to walk or use a wheelchair on.

**DEDICATED BIKE LAKES**
Simple pavement markings creating a dedicated bike lane make both motorists and bicycle movement more predictable, and therefore safer for both. They may increase the likelihood of casual riders using bicycles for transportation.

**ACTIVE ROADWAY**
One lane of car traffic going in each direction with a two-way-left-turn-lane (TWLTL) in the center would reduce the amount of car crashes on Government Street by providing turning vehicles a refuge from through traffic, while keeping through traffic moving more efficiently.

**SAFE CROSSWALKS**
Clearly marked crosswalks allow pedestrians and wheelchair users to cross streets safely, while making sure cars know where to expect them.

**PLANTING STRIP**
Street trees and landscaping slow speeding traffic, improve the aesthetics of the roadway, provide shade, and create a buffer between cars and people, making a more inviting environment for pedestrians.

**GREEN SPACES**
Parks and public green spaces create a destination, encouraging community interaction and providing a rest from the surrounding urban environment.
Transportation choice: bicycle access

Typical 15-minute bike ride = 3 miles

Most Norwalk destinations can be accessed in a 3-mile bike ride
• Rail, highway, and water barriers can restrict access
Bicycle route options – bike boulevards

- Low-/slow-traffic streets with traffic calming
- Optimized and marked for safe bicycling
Pedestrian facilities designed to be safe and comfortable

Sidewalk width appropriate to context
Continuous sidewalk network
Pedestrian crossings:
- Right location and design
- Pedestrian activated and countdown signals
- Comfort: shade, buffering from traffic
- ADA facilities
Transportation choice supports housing diversity and economic development

- Pedestrian- and bike-friendly downtowns and commercial areas support clusters of retail, restaurant, and business activity
- Bicyclists and pedestrians shop locally
CONNECTING NORWALK
TRANSPORTATION QUIZ!
Widening a road to create more lanes will reduce traffic congestion.

1. True
2. False
False! Wider streets are not always better.

- Four lanes with a roundabout can carry as much traffic as a six-lane road with a traffic signal
- Slower traffic accommodates more cars
- Alternate routes distribute traffic

“Widening roads to solve traffic congestion is like loosening your belt to cure obesity.”

Florida traffic engineer WALTER KULASH on induced traffic.
Traffic signals are the most efficient way to move traffic through intersections.

1. True
2. False
False! Traditional signals are for moving cars through intersections.

• A new measure of performance by the Federal Highway Administration:
  • How many people get moved, not just cars, giving more priority to transit vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

• Alternative intersection treatments to accommodate all transportation modes: example - roundabouts
Narrow roads are safer.

1. True
2. False
True! Nine to 10 foot lanes (2.8-3.25 meters) are safer than 11 to 12 foot lanes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lane Width in Meters</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Fatality Rate per 100,000 population</th>
<th>Safety Index</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.60 - 2.80</td>
<td>Jakarta, Singapore, Amsterdam, Berlin,</td>
<td>3.6 - 6.4</td>
<td>Less safe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Copenhagen, Paris, Tokyo, Toronto</td>
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<td>2.80 - 3.25</td>
<td>New Delhi, Mumbai, Knoxville, Greensboro,</td>
<td>6.1 - 11.8</td>
<td>Unsafe</td>
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<td>New York, Sao Paulo</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.25 - 3.60</td>
<td>Beijing, Chennai, Fortaleza</td>
<td>20.0 - 27.2</td>
<td>Very unsafe</td>
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<td>3.60 and higher</td>
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</table>

Source: Fatality rate data from WRI Cities Safer By Design, Qiu J et. al. (2014), Shuk and Schoettle (2015); Laneswidth data from Masud Karim (2015), Mohan D et. al. (2015)
Where has traffic grown the most in Norwalk in the last ten years?

1. East Norwalk
2. Central Norwalk (Wall Street/Hospital Hill)
3. South Norwalk
4. West Norwalk (Richards Avenue)
5. Northern Norwalk
South and East Norwalk

- Changes in daily traffic vary around Norwalk
- Traffic studies continue to assume +/- one percent growth in traffic annually

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Average Annual Traffic Growth</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
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What will drive transportation changes?

• New development patterns
• Additional bike and pedestrian facilities
• Changes in modes, such as microtransit
• New modes – shared autonomous vehicles
• Changes in traffic study requirements and assumptions
Use multimodal level of service to evaluate transportation improvements and projects

• The Federal Highway Administration supports complete streets and multimodal level service analysis
• Old method: evaluate the effects of bicycles and pedestrians on vehicles.
• New method: Evaluate the effects of vehicles on bicycles and pedestrians
Consider applying for an autonomous vehicle pilot program

Gov. Malloy Announces Launch of State’s Fully Autonomous Vehicle Testing Pilot Program

Interested Municipalities Must Submit Application to Participate in the Innovative Testing Initiative

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Dannel P. Malloy today announced the launch of Connecticut’s Fully Autonomous Vehicle Testing Pilot Program (FAVTPP) – an initiative created by legislation that the Governor signed into law last year that will help bring Connecticut to the forefront of the innovative and burgeoning autonomous vehicle industry. Under the terms of the program, towns and cities that are interested in participating and allowing the testing of fully autonomous vehicles on their roadways must submit an application to the state. Upon review, up to four municipalities will be selected for participation.
Questions, Exercises and Comments