



Visioning Workshop

East Norwalk Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Plan

March 23, 2019

City of Norwalk | Harriman | NV5 | RKG Associates

Agenda

- Welcome
- Presentation
 - Planning Process
 - Initial Findings
- Question and Answers
- Break out Sessions
 - Instructions
 - Report Back
- Next Steps



Photo by Geoffrey Steadman

Project Team

Harriman

Steve Cecil – Project Director, Principal

Kartik Shah – Project Manager, Director of Urban Design

Margarita Iglesia – Senior Urban Designer

Jessica Wilson - Urban Planner

- Planning, urban design, landscape architecture
-

Neighborhood planning, urban design

Historic preservation planning, landscape and open space, zoning and design guidelines

RKG Associates

Ryan Kiracofe – Urban Planner/Market Analyst

- Market studies, real estate economics
-

Specialized market evaluations and redevelopment economic planning

NV5

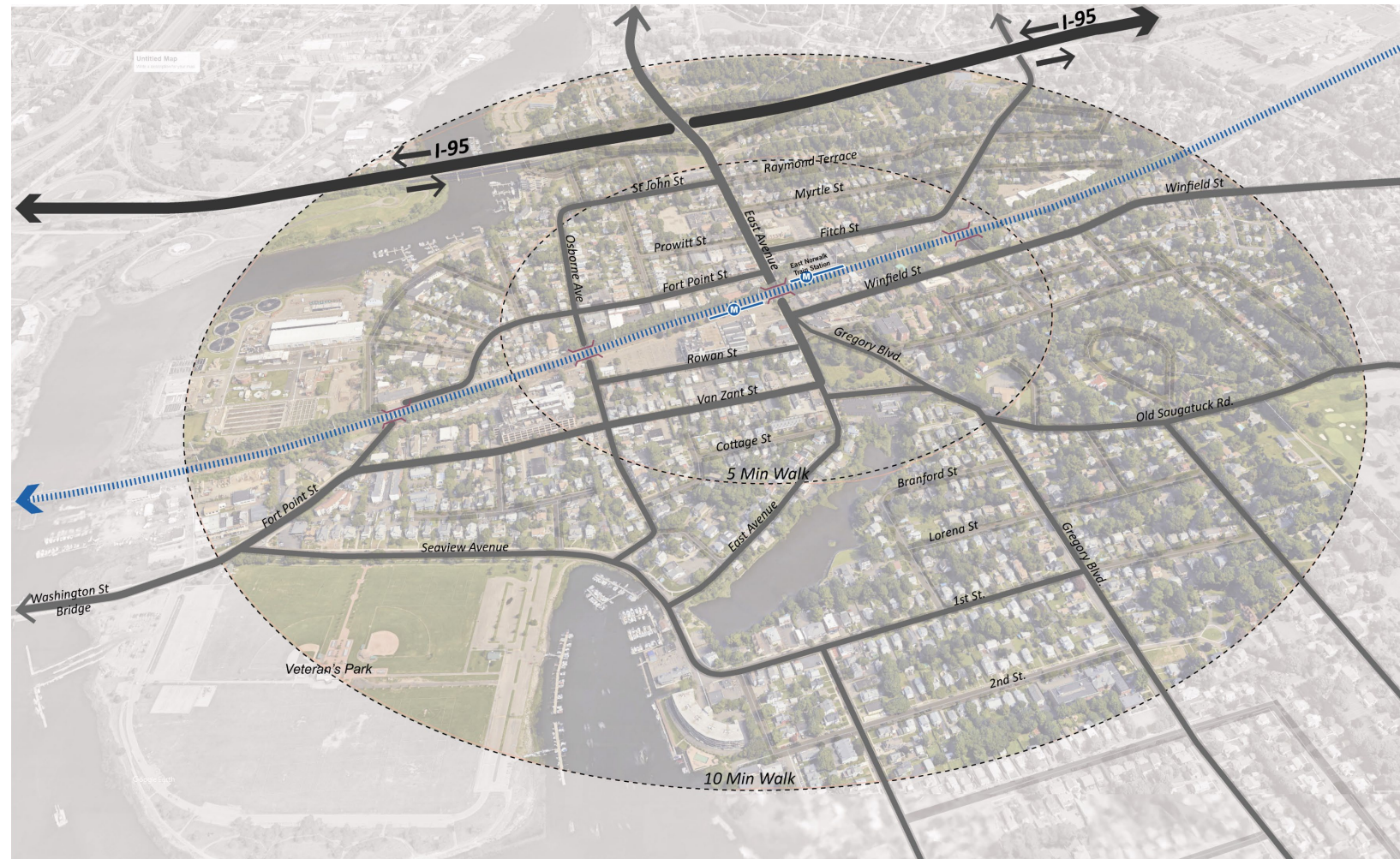
Victor Minerva – Director of Planning

- Transportation, infrastructure planning
-

Transportation, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, infrastructure and utilities assessment

East Norwalk Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study Area

- Half a mile area (10 Minute Walk) around the East Norwalk Train Station
- Distance most people are willing to walk to train station and other amenities
- Historically, center of the East Norwalk with commercial and light industrial uses

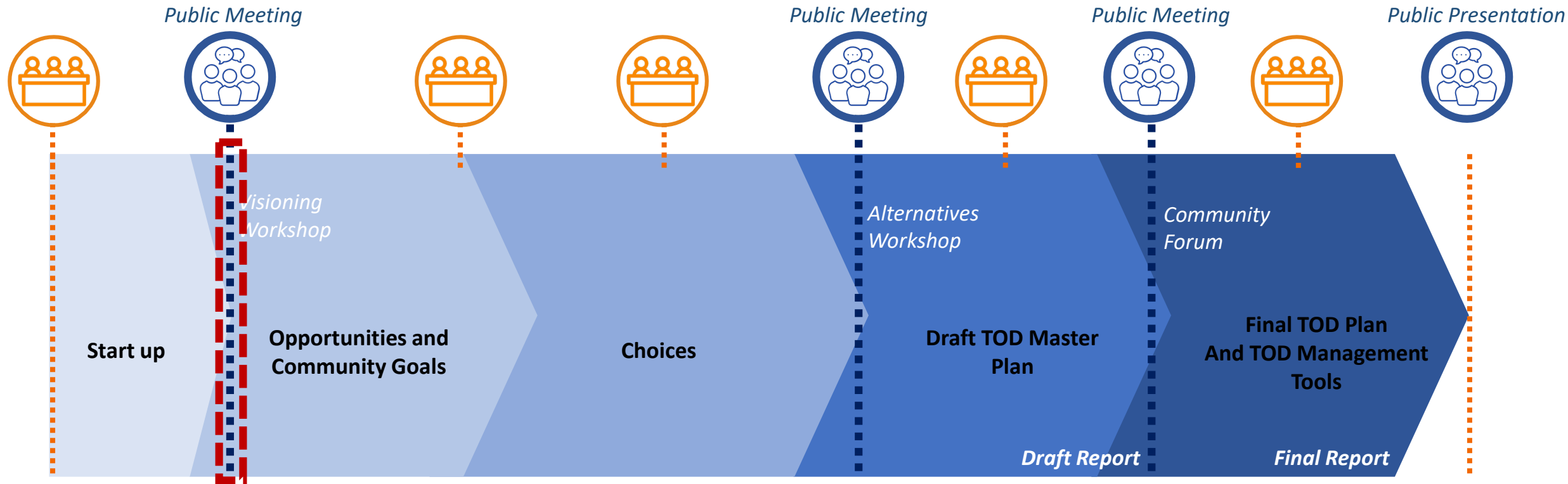


Initial Project Goals

- **Quality of Life**
 - A plan that enhances the quality of life for everyone including residents, visitors, business owners, and property owners
- **Community-based**
 - A plan that emerges out of the community engagement process – with participation of residents, business owners and property owners
- **Balanced**
 - A plan that balances beneficial economic growth with East Norwalk’s neighborhood identity
- **Neighborhood- focused**
 - A plan that is focused on East Norwalk as a unique neighborhood within the City of Norwalk
- **Co-ordinated**
 - A plan that provides a coordinated basis for reinvestment and redevelopment.
- **Multi-modal**
 - A plan that addresses needs of pedestrians, bikers, transit users and drivers for public health and safety



Process



- Kick off meeting
- Previous planning studies
- Communication plan
- Stakeholder interviews
- Assess and identify existing conditions
- Opportunities and constraints
- Market analysis
- TOD scenario alternatives
- Cost benefit analysis
- Confirmation of choices
- Redevelopment and preservation potential
- Documentation
- Final TOD Master Plan
- Implementation tool kit
- Draft zoning changes
- Design guidelines

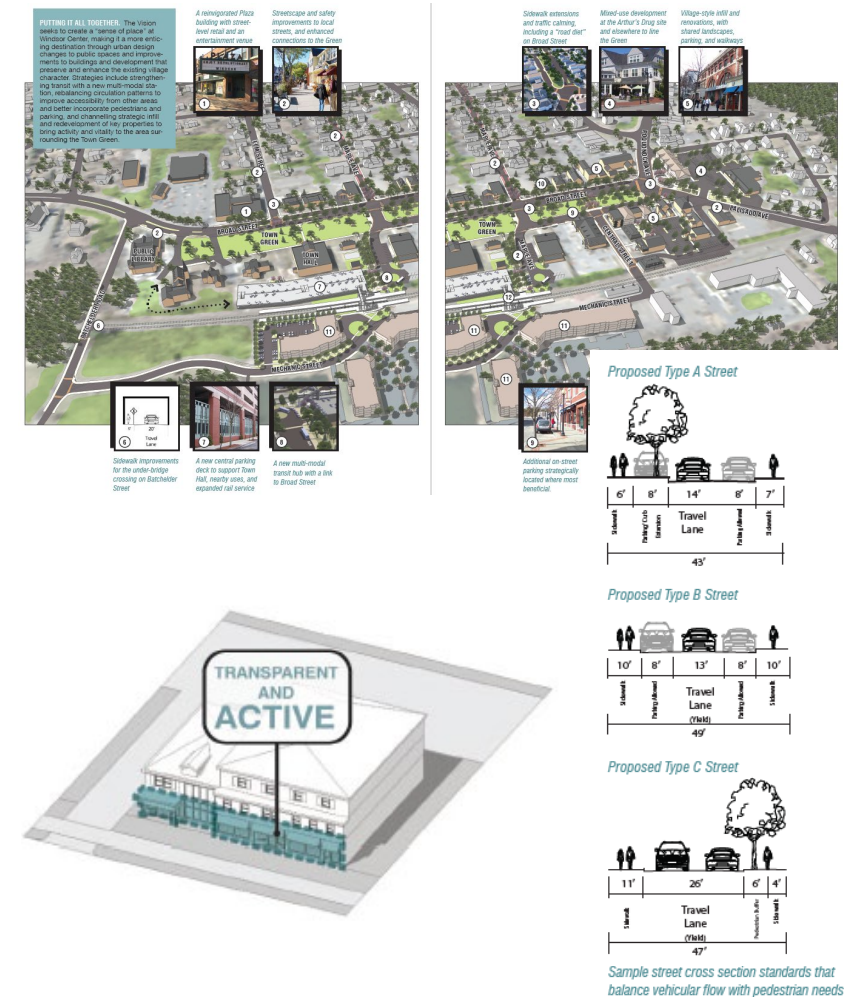
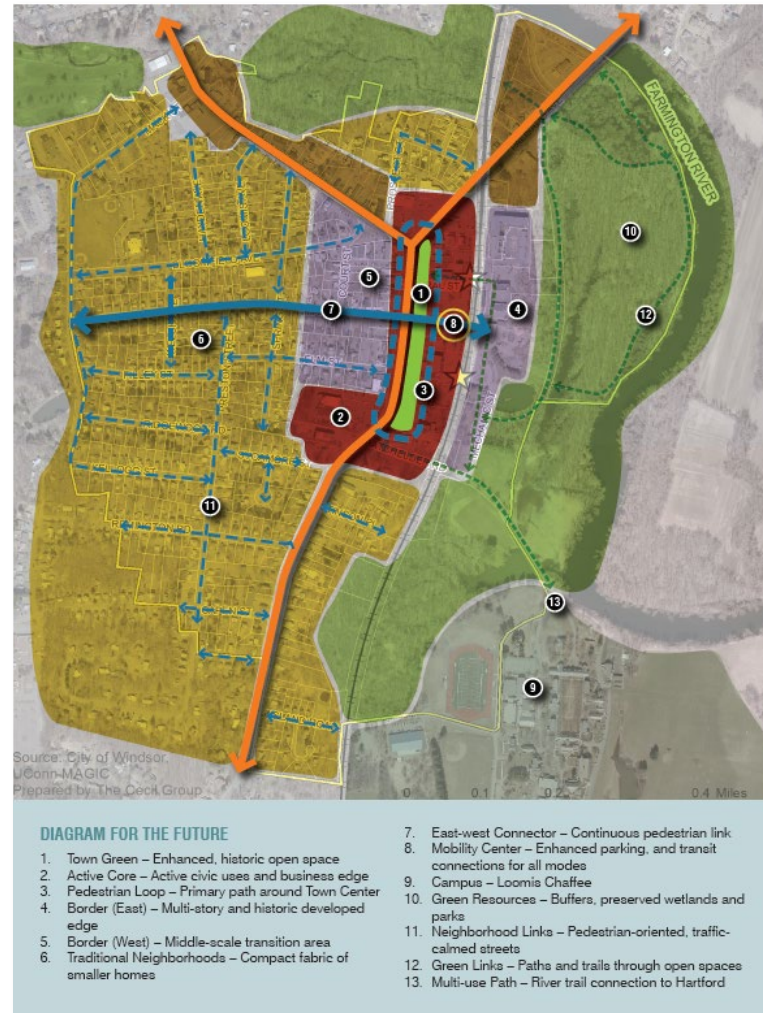
Planning Process - Community Engagement

- Led by the City of Norwalk
- Guided by the Oversight Committee comprised of representatives from the City, residents and area businesses.
- Process will involve conversation and listening to
 - Property owners
 - Business owners
 - City departments, Boards, and Commissions
 - Neighborhood and Business Associations
 - Advocacy groups for Pedestrians, Bicyclists and Seniors
 - Real estate developers



How will the result of the TOD Study be used?

- Community-based vision for East Norwalk
- Coordinated strategies and actions:
 - Land use, Economic development, Preservation/adaptive reuse and conservation, Transportation, Open space, Urban design, Municipal services, Infrastructure.
- Implementation Tools
 - Draft Zoning Amendments
 - Design Guidelines



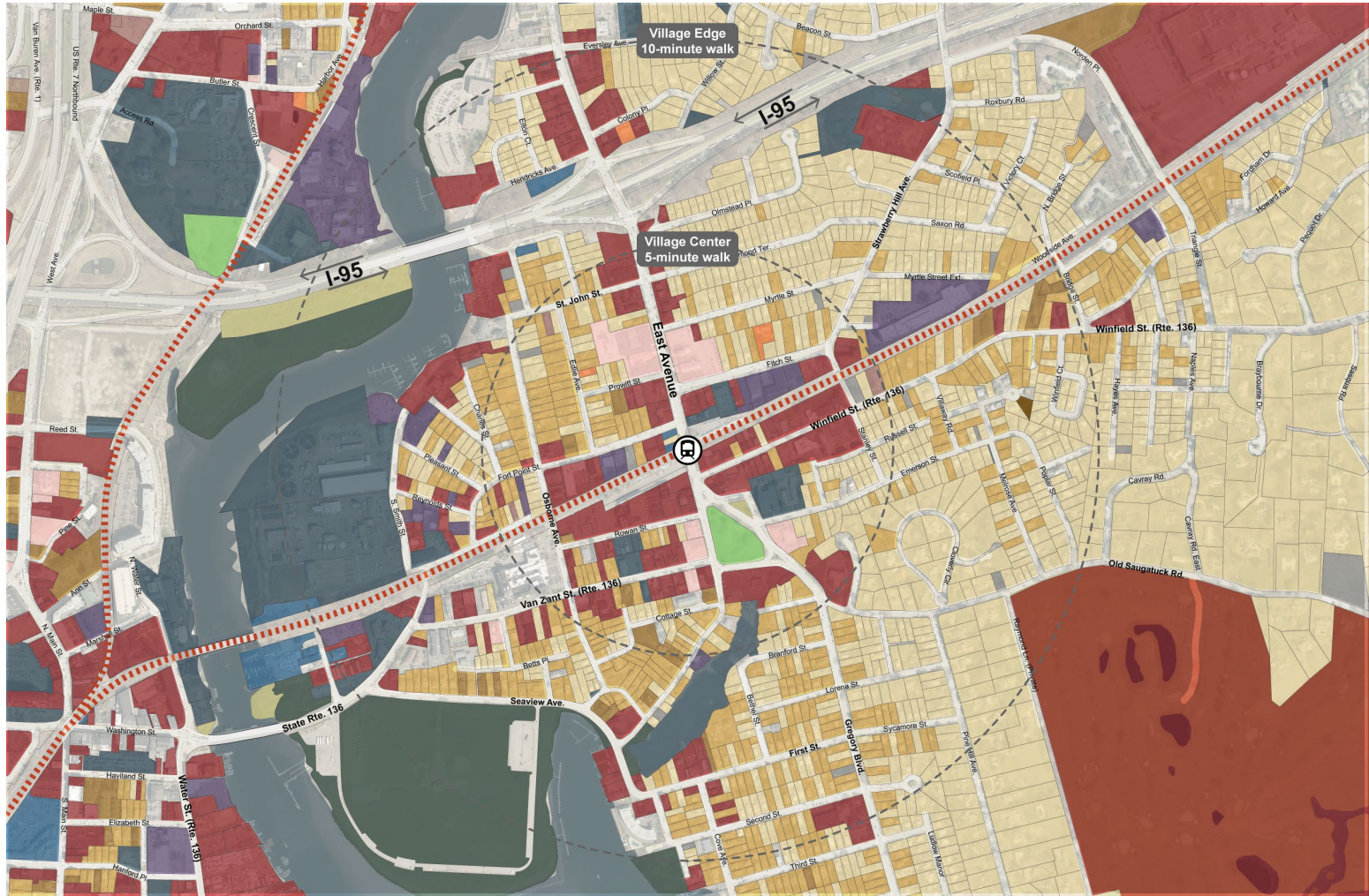
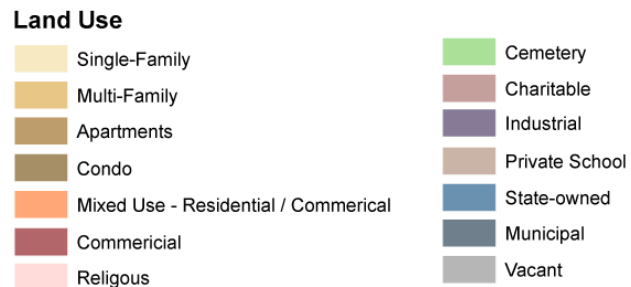
East Norwalk within the City of Norwalk

- Norwalk - A City of Neighborhoods
- East Norwalk – A Village within the City
- Access to water within a 20 Minute Walk
- Access to SoNo activities across the Norwalk River and Norwalk Harbor with 10-15 Minute Walk
- Easy access to the recreational assets like Calf Pasture Park, Taylor Farm Park, Shady Beach Park



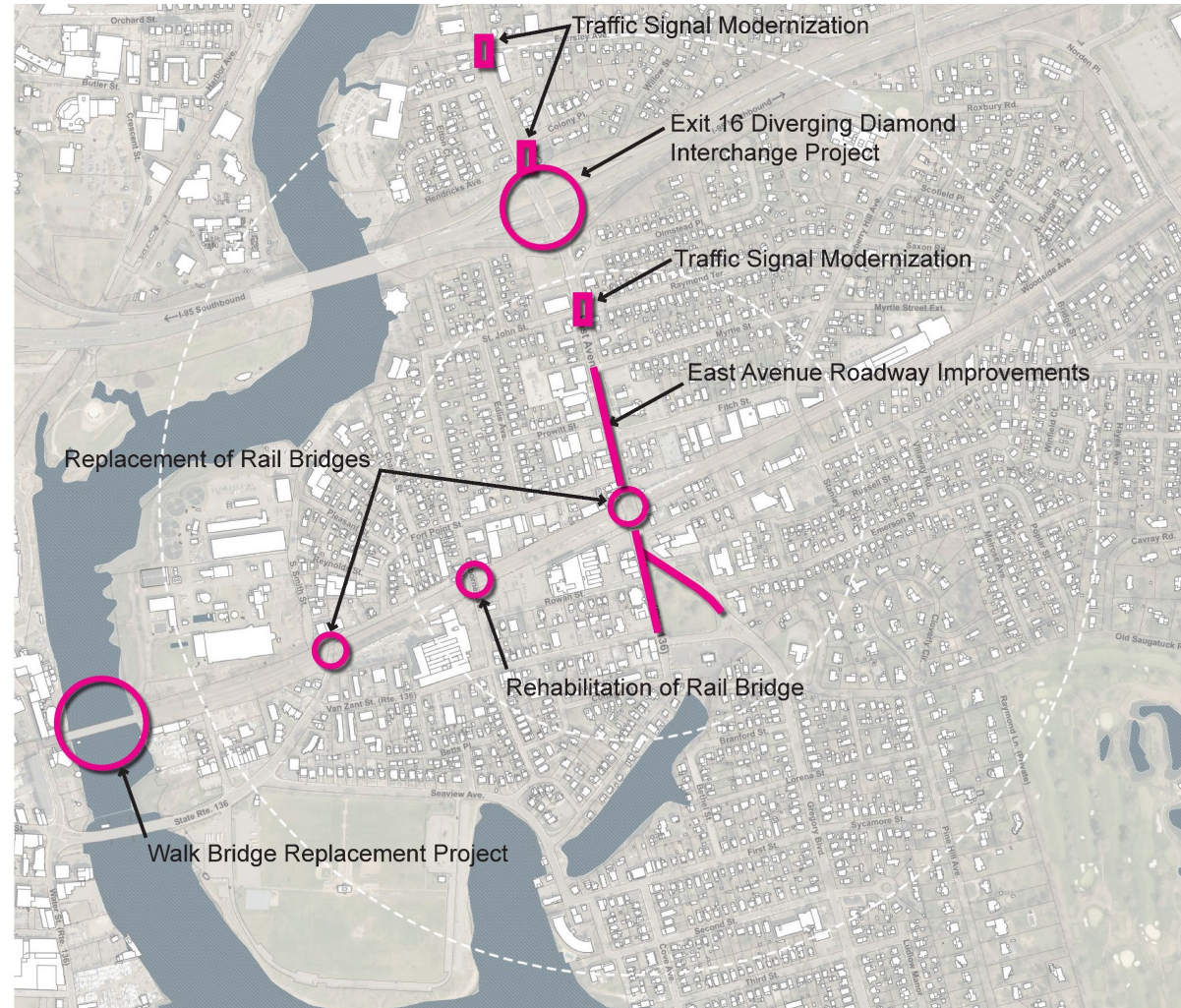
Land Use

- Preserved single family blocks
- Areas undergoing transformation from single family to multi-family and apartments around the Village Center
- Commercial along major transportation routes within the neighborhood



Planned Transportation Projects

- Walk Bridge Replacement Project
- Traffic Signal Modernization
- Exit 16 Diverging Diamond Interchange Project
- East Avenue Roadway Improvements
- Rehabilitation of Rail Bridges



Key Market Takeaways

- East Norwalk is a tight-knit, walkable neighborhood, defined by medium-density, small-scale, mostly residential buildings.
- A lack of development activity and limited new business development since 2008 highlight the area's challenges.
 - Market factors
 - Small-scale sites difficult to develop commercially
 - Population density too low to support some uses
 - Competition with (and easy access to) SoNo
- Planned development near village center - residential and medium-scale, creative office/flex space – can help grow a market for new retail & amenities.



Analysis Review

Demographics

- Norwalk’s overall population has grown at the same rate as Fairfield County’s – but East Norwalk has grown at half the rate.

Total Population Growth, 2010–2017			
	2010	2017	% Growth
Norwalk	84,611	88,537	+ 4.6%
Fairfield County	905,342	947,328	+ 4.6%
Connecticut	3,545,837	3,594,478	+ 1.4%
East Norwalk (06855, 06851)	34,076	34,888	+ 2.4%

Sources: US Census, Census 2010 and American Community Survey 2017 5-year Estimates; RKG Associates.

Analysis Review

Demographics

- Norwalk’s overall population has grown at the same rate as Fairfield County’s – but East Norwalk has grown at half the rate.
- East Norwalk, Norwalk, and Fairfield County are becoming less white, as Hispanic/Latino residents play a larger role.

Population Growth by Race/Ethnicity			
	2010	2017	% Growth
Norwalk Total	84,611	88,537	+ 5%
White	51,178	46,033	- 10%
Hispanic/Latino	17,278	23,832	+ 38%
Black	11,222	12,522	+ 12%
Asian	3,547	4,487	+ 27%
Mixed-Race & All Other	1,386	1,663	+ 20%

Sources: US Census, Census 2010 and American Community Survey 2017 5-year Estimates; RKG Associates.

Analysis Review

Demographics

- Norwalk’s overall population has grown at the same rate as Fairfield County’s – but East Norwalk has grown at half the rate.
- East Norwalk, Norwalk, and Fairfield County are becoming less white, as Hispanic residents play a larger role.
- Norwalk’s population is well-educated, but average academic attainment is shifting.

Population with at least a Bachelor’s Degree

	2010	2017	Growth
Norwalk	26,020	25,576	- 2%
Fairfield County	267,990	298,496	+ 11%
Connecticut	860,375	953,199	+ 11%

Sources: US Census, Census 2010 and American Community Survey 2017 5-year Estimates; RKG Associates.

Population with less than High School Degree

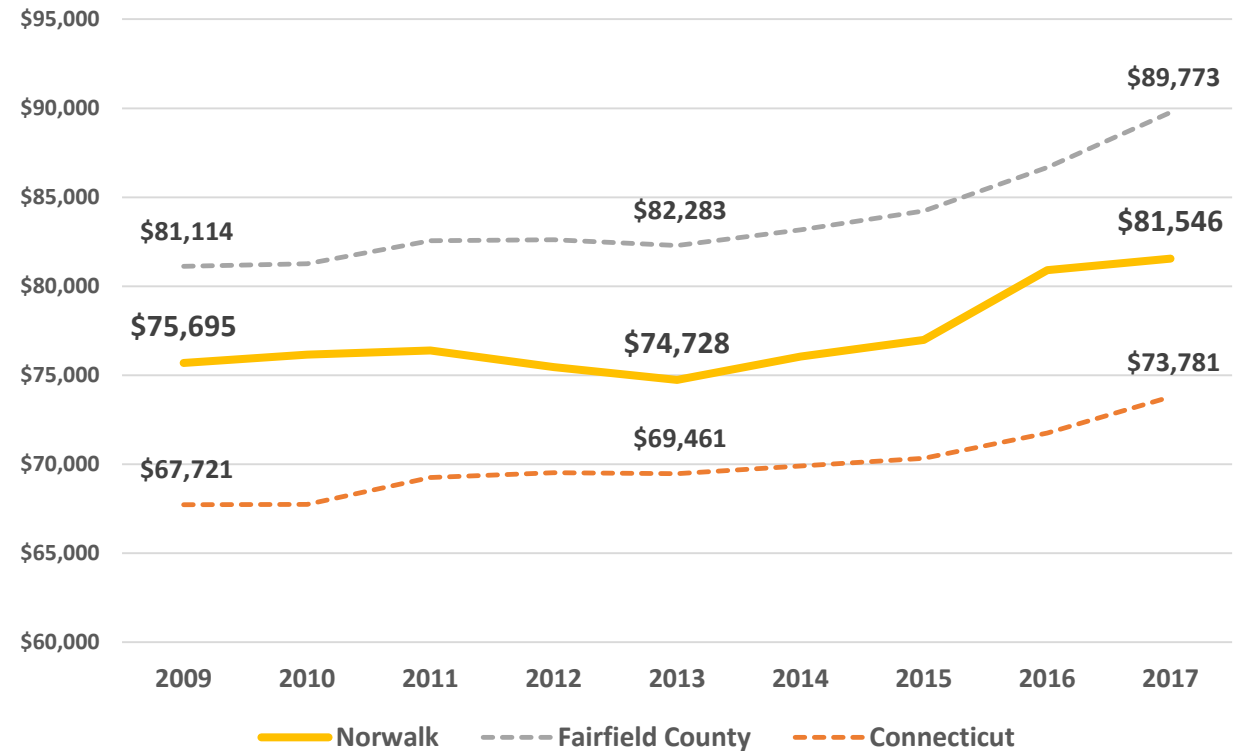
	2010	2017	Growth
Norwalk	7,303	7,881	+ 8%
Fairfield County	72,294	68,146	- 6%
Connecticut	277,092	242,500	- 13%

Sources: US Census, Census 2010 and American Community Survey 2017 5-year Estimates; RKG Associates.

Analysis Review Demographics

- Norwalk's overall population has grown at the same rate as Fairfield County's – but East Norwalk has grown at half the rate.
- East Norwalk, Norwalk, and Fairfield County are becoming less white, as Hispanic residents play a larger role.
- Norwalk's population is well-educated, but average academic attainment is shifting.
- Norwalk remains a high-earning community, with a median household income well above the state's.

Median Household Income, 2009-2017



Sources: US Census, American Community Survey 2010 and 2017 5-year Estimates; RKG Associates.

Analysis Review

Development Trends

- Development in Norwalk has taken on denser forms than in older structures.

Norwalk Development Patterns

Year Built	Properties	Built S.F.	Floor-Area-Ratio
2007 and Earlier	20,029	99.3 million	0.24
2008-2012	113	1.5 million	0.54
2013-2016	127	2.9 million	0.77
Total	20,269	103.7 million	0.25

*Excludes vacant & exempt properties
FAR calculation excludes Avalon East Norwalk
Sources: Norwalk Tax Assessors Department 2016; RKG Associates.*

Analysis Review

Development Trends

- Development in Norwalk has taken on denser forms than in older structures.
- East Norwalk has not seen the same level of reinvestment as other areas of the city.

East Norwalk Development Patterns

Parcels within Half-Mile Radius from East Norwalk Station

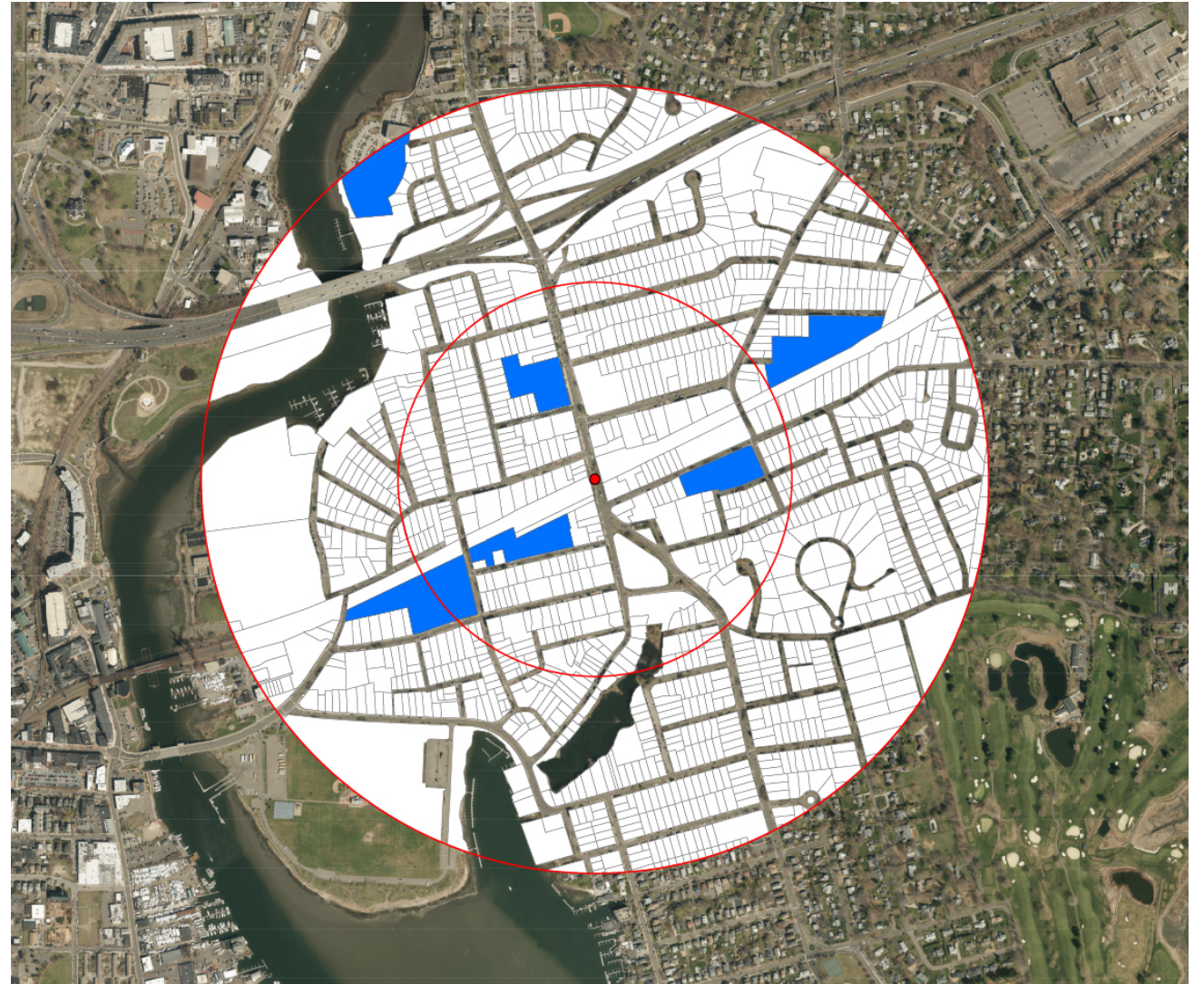
Year Built	Properties	Built S.F.	Floor-Area-Ratio
2007 and Earlier	1,407	6.1 million	0.24
2008-2012	3	14,000	0.54
2013-2016	3	25,000	0.77
Total	1,413	6.1 million	0.25

*Excludes vacant & exempt properties
FAR calculation excludes Avalon East Norwalk
Sources: Norwalk Tax Assessors Department 2016; RKG Associates.*

Analysis Review

Development Trends

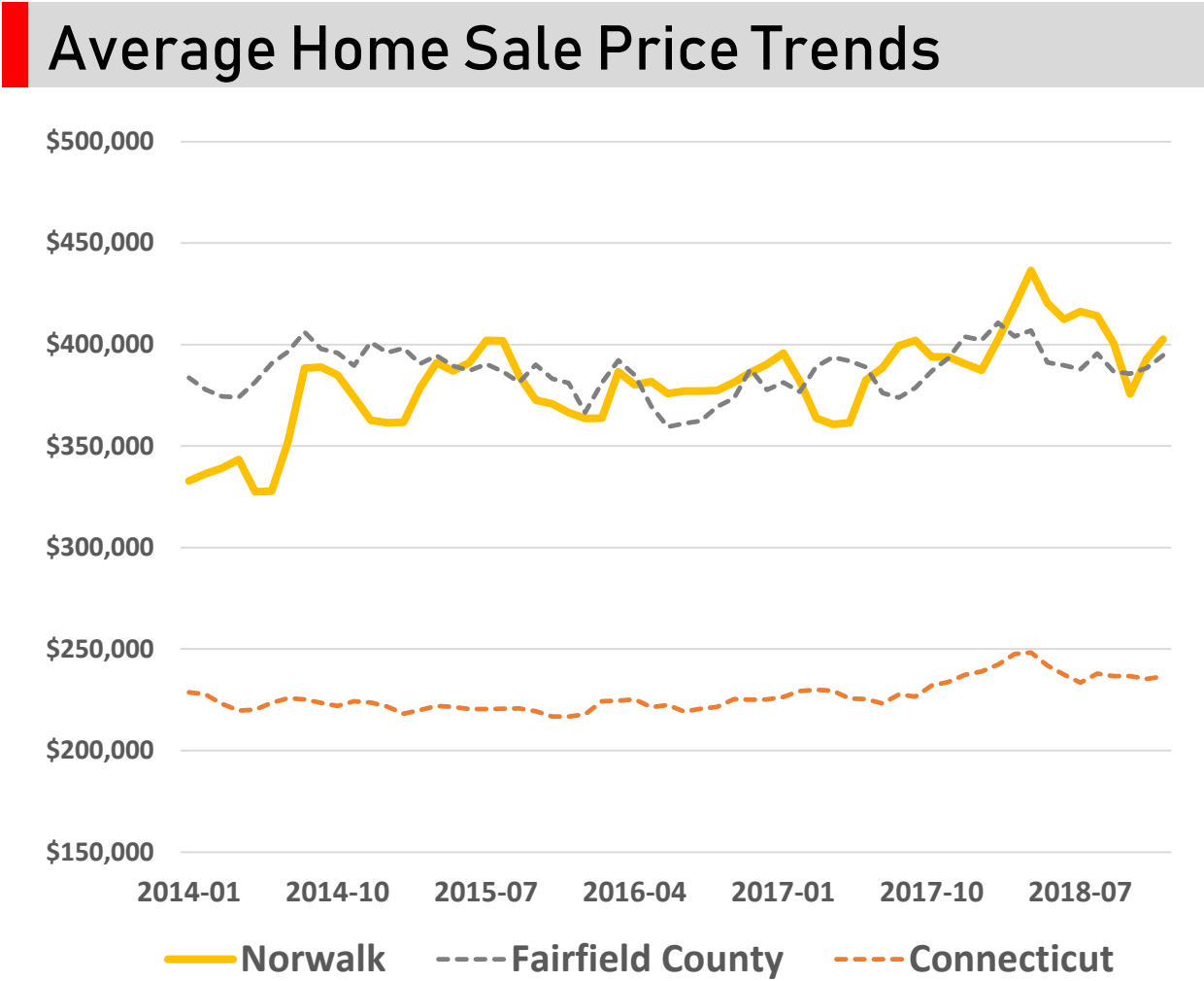
- Development in Norwalk has taken on denser forms than in older structures.
- East Norwalk has not seen its share of the city's redevelopment.
- East Norwalk's small parcels limit the amount of reinvestment possible
 - All large parcels are either occupied or currently experiencing reinvestment



Analysis Review

Real Estate Market

- Norwalk's home sale prices have closed a historic gap with Fairfield County, and now regularly surpass the county's average sale price.



Analysis Review

Real Estate Market

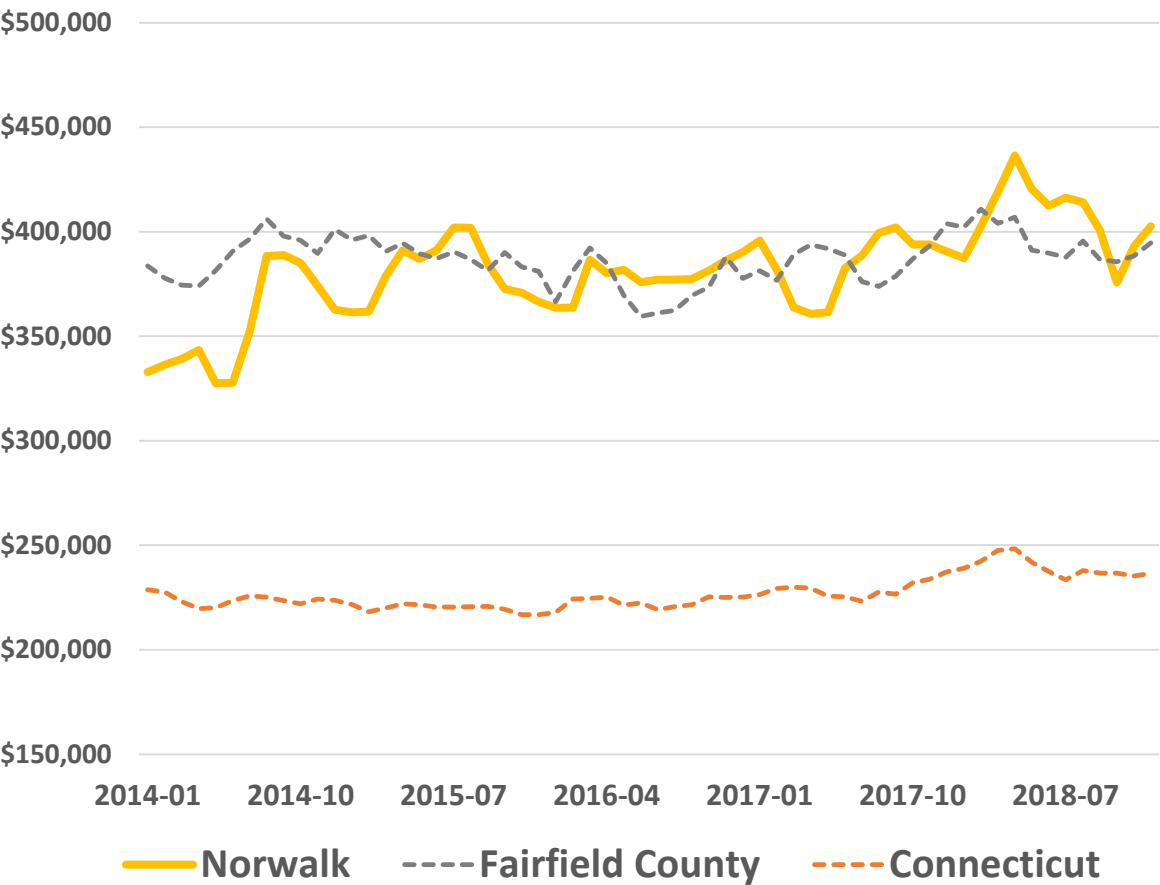
- Norwalk's home sale prices have closed a historic gap with Fairfield County, and now regularly surpass the county's average sale price.

Average Home Sale Prices

	2013	2018	Growth
Norwalk	\$360,200	\$406,700	+ 12.9%
Fairfield County	\$394,400	\$395,300	+ 0.2%
Connecticut	\$227,400	\$239,400	+ 5.3%

Sources: Zillow Home Sales Seasonally-Adjusted Price Index; RKG Associates.

Average Home Sale Price Trends

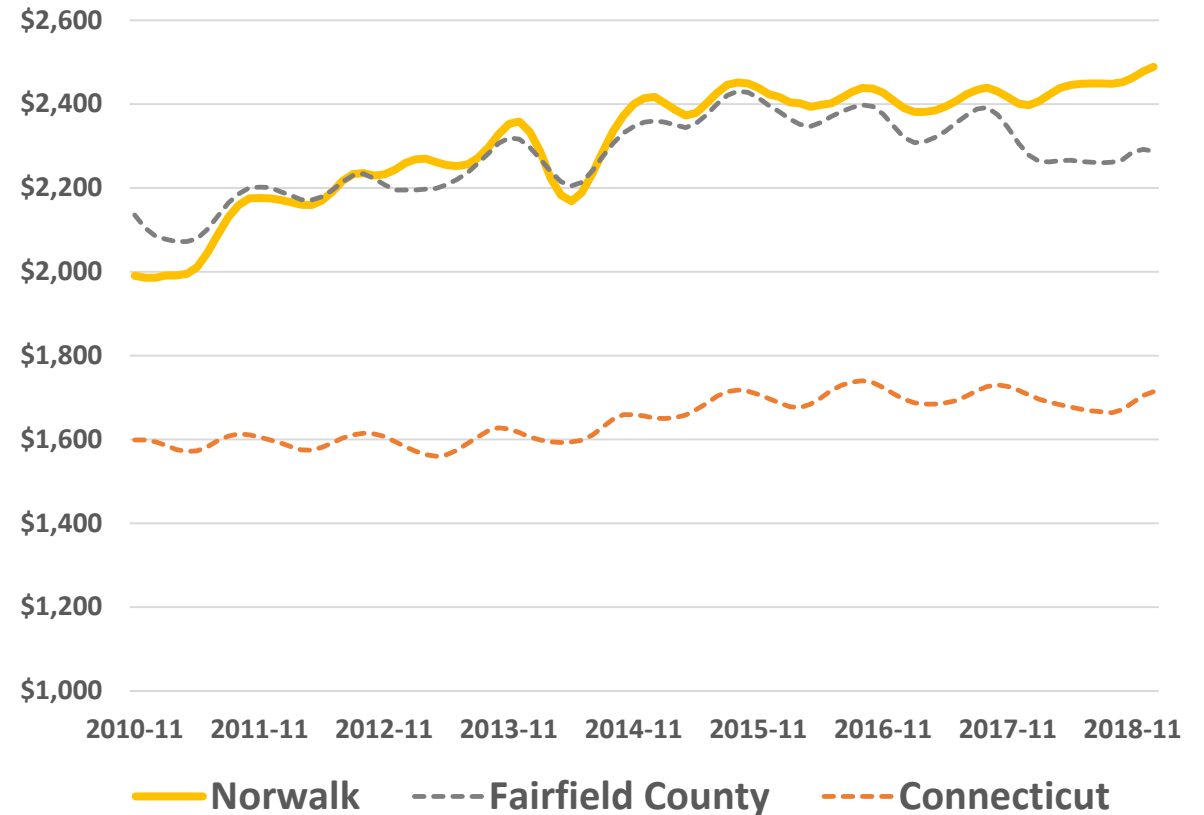


Analysis Review

Real Estate Market

- Norwalk's home sale prices have closed a historic gap with Fairfield County, and now regularly surpass the county's average sale price.
- Norwalk's average asking rents have seen marginal growth, in contrast to declining regional rents.

Average Monthly Asking Rent Trends



Analysis Review

Real Estate Market

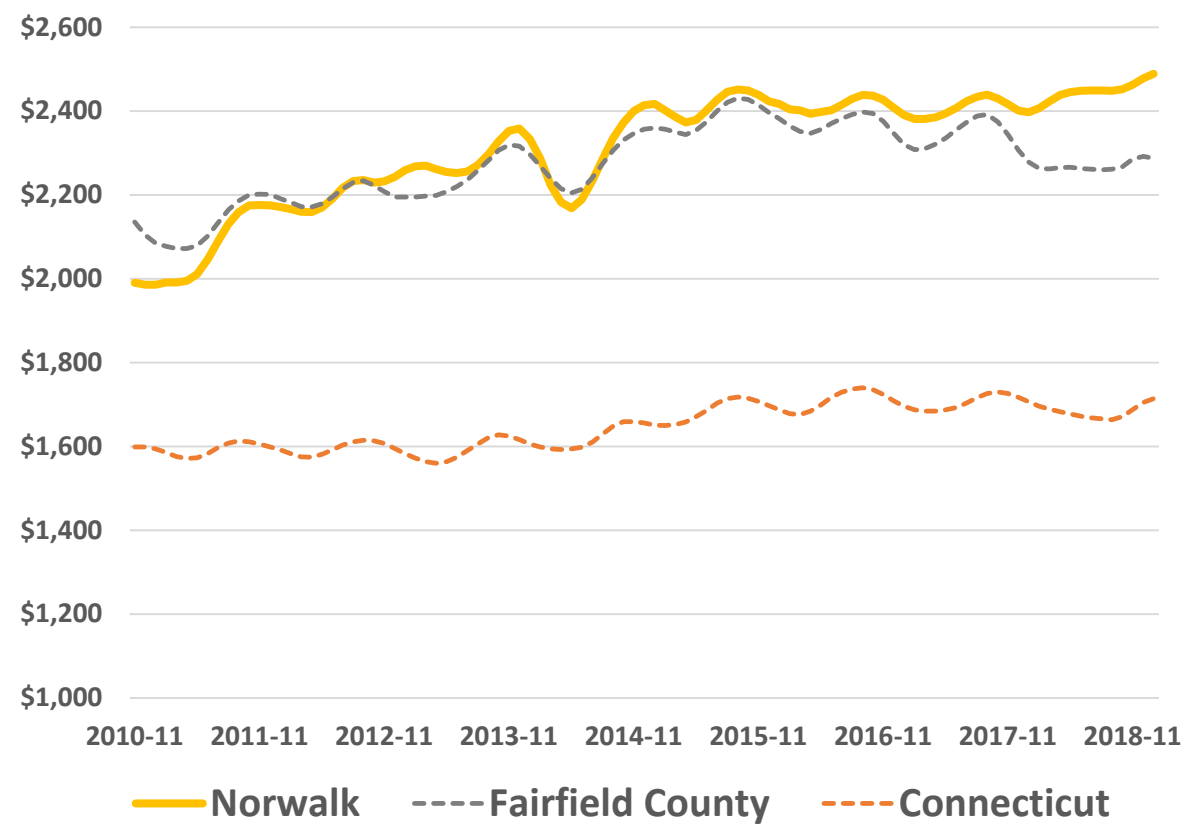
- Norwalk’s home sale prices have closed a historic gap with Fairfield County, and now regularly surpass the county’s average sale price.
- Norwalk’s average asking rents have seen marginal growth, in contrast to declining regional rents.

Average Monthly Asking Rents

	2013	2018	Growth
Norwalk	\$2,290	\$2,440	+ 6.8%
Fairfield County	\$2,240	\$2,270	+ 1.1%
Connecticut	\$1,590	\$1,680	+ 5.7%

Sources: Zillow Rental Index; RKG Associates.

Average Monthly Asking Rent Trends



Analysis Review

Real Estate Market

- Norwalk’s home sale prices have closed a historic gap with Fairfield County, and now regularly surpass the county’s average sale price.
- Norwalk’s average asking rents have seen marginal growth, in contrast to declining regional rents.
- Slow job growth limits large-scale office potential, but Information, Professional Services, and Healthcare may seek small spaces.
 - Projected annual demand of +/- 15,000 sf office, +/- 7,500 sf other commercial/medical

Office Market Trends

2018 Q4

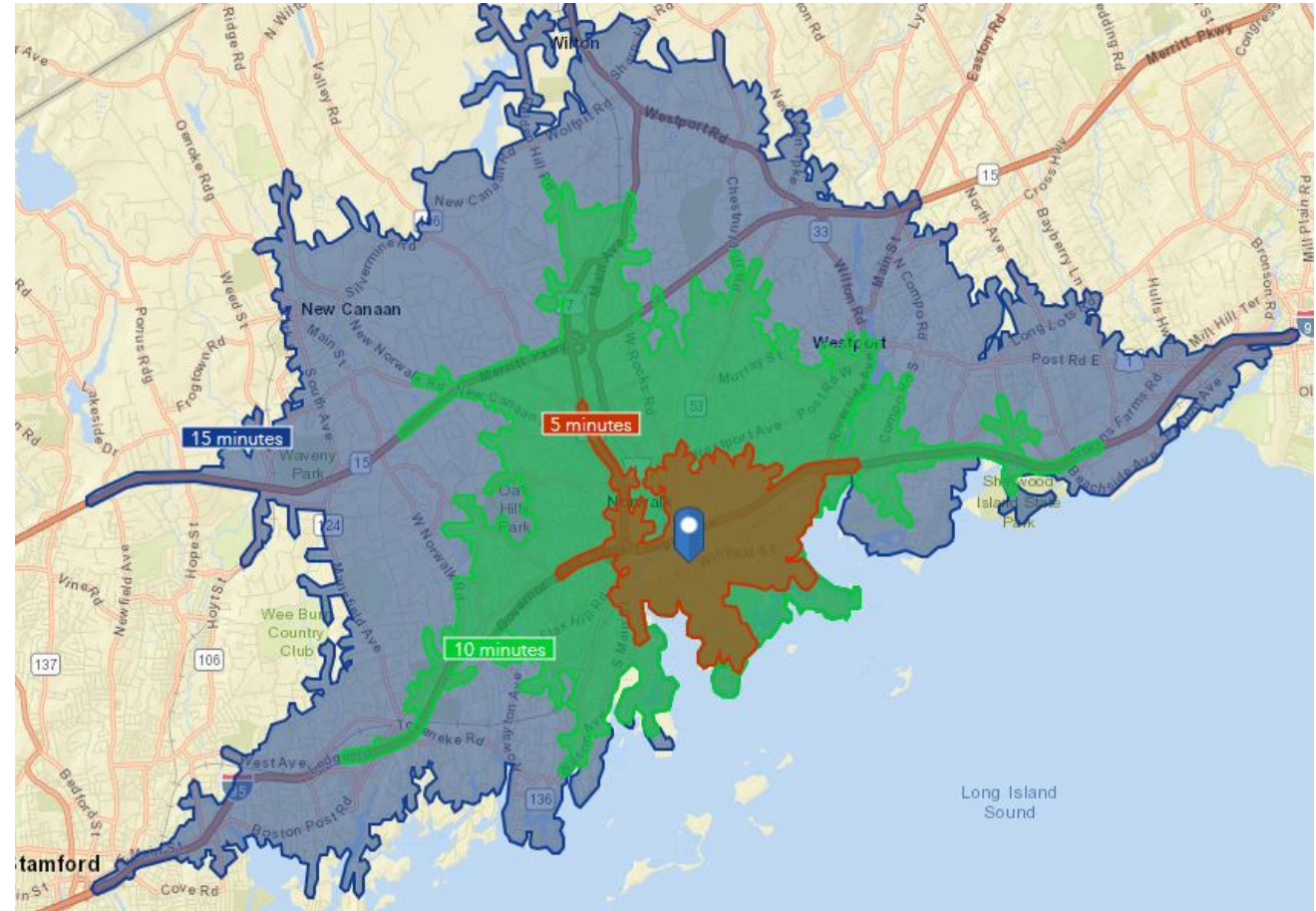
	Fairfield County	Central Fairfield
Inventory (sf)	42.0 million	10.1 million
Vacancy Rate	19.3%	18.5%
Average Asking Rent Range	\$32 - \$35/sf	\$30 - \$32/sf

Sources: CBRE Market Reports; RKG Associates.



Analysis Review Real Estate Market

- Norwalk's home sale prices have closed a historic gap with Fairfield County, and now regularly surpass the county's average sale price.
- Norwalk's average asking rents have seen marginal growth, in contrast to declining regional rents.
- Slow job growth limits large-scale office potential, but Information, Professional Services, and Healthcare may seek small spaces.
- Retail spending power is largely captured by SoNo and regional malls.



Next Steps

- More Stakeholder Interviews
- Visioning Workshop feedback to develop opportunities and constraints
- Work with the Oversight Committee
- Existing conditions analysis, develop TOD alternatives and test uses for feasibility
- Next Workshop – July -2019

- Study updates will be posted on Norwalk Tomorrow - <http://tomorrow.norwalkct.org>
- East Norwalk TOD Plan Updates
 - <http://tomorrow.norwalkct.org/transit-oriented-development/>



Visioning Workshop

East Norwalk Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Plan

March 23, 2019

City of Norwalk | Harriman | NV5 | RKG Associates