Norwalk Citywide Plan: 2019-2029

Plan of Conservation & Development

Stantec

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How to Use This Plan

The Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development 2019–2029 includes an Executive Summary and covers a broad range of topics in 13 chapters about current trends, multiple aspects of community life, goals for the future, and strategies and actions to achieve the goals, including early actions to get started on implementing the plan. The chapters are organized into five Parts or sections. The plan can be read all the way through or selectively, according to the reader's interests. Three appendices provide a description of the community engagement program and results; a set of neighborhood and district profiles based on nine neighborhood/district meetings; and an analysis of buildout under current zoning.

- For a quick overview of key themes, major recommendations, and the process used to create the plan, read the Executive Summary.
- For a summary of the previous plan and to understand Norwalk's vision for the future and community values that are the foundation of the plan, read Chapter 1.
- To understand Norwalk's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; Norwalk's role in the state and region; and an overview of existing conditions and trends, read Chapter 2. It lays out the key existing conditions and circumstances of the city when the plan was developed in 2017-18.
- To find out about specific topics, from economic development, housing, and infrastructure to parks, sustainability, and resilience, choose the topics of interest to you from Chapters 3–11. Each chapter provides a table of goals and policies, current conditions and key challenges, a summary of community participation results on the topic, a set of strategies and actions to achieve the goals, and a final section, "Getting Started," identifying possible early action items to get going on the recommendations of that chapter.
- To find out about recommended changes in land use, and principles for new zoning and urban design approaches, read Chapter 12.
- To find out about how to make this a living plan and how to implement it, read Chapter 13. There you will find a matrix of actions, responsible parties, timelines, and potential resources for Chapters 13.

A Note on Terminology & Data

Terminology

In this report and the plan update, “City” will be capitalized when referring to the municipal government, while “city” without an initial capital letter will refer to the community as a geographic and socioeconomic entity.

Data

This plan update is being prepared between the 2010 and 2020 censuses. In addition to the decennial population counts, the U.S. Census Bureau now produces estimated data based on three- and five-year surveys of sample populations called the American Community Survey. Sample surveys of small areas, such as census tracts and block groups, are less reliable than larger populations, such as the entire city, because of sample sizes. Proprietary databases, such as ESRI Business Analyst, also provide estimated data based on the Census and other data sources. These and other sources have been consulted for this plan.

CITY OF NORWALK | CITYWIDE PLAN 2019-2029 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Why & How of this Plan

Why we developed this plan.

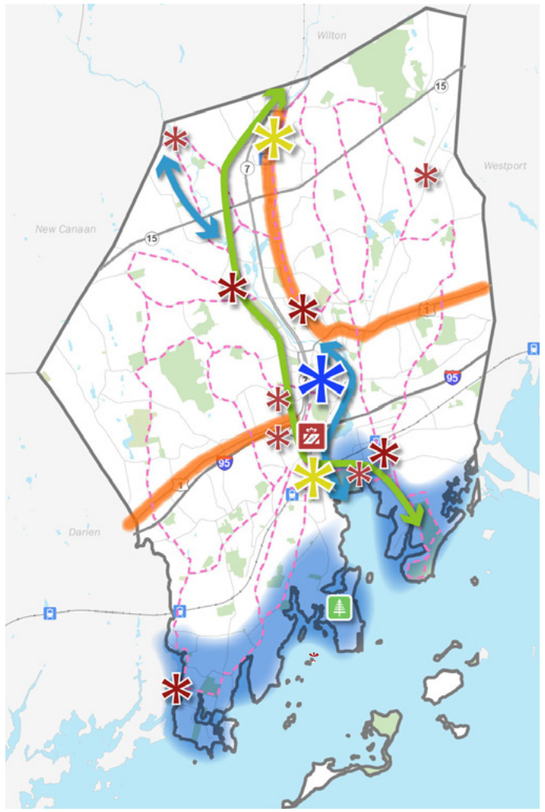
The 2019-2029 Citywide Plan is the only plan for Norwalk that covers the entire city. The State of Connecticut requires municipalities to update their plans every ten years. The plan guides decision making about the physical, economic, and social development of the City.

How we developed this plan.

The Citywide Plan was developed with many opportunities for public participation. Interviews, a citywide visioning workshop, nine neighborhood-based district workshops, four topic-based workshops, a youth meeting, and opportunities for digital participation added to discussion and review by the Planning Commission and Oversight Committee appointed by Mayor Rilling. Norwalkers from all walks of life gave their time to help shape the plan.

How we'll put this plan to work.

The purpose of planning is to get to action. The Citywide Plan includes a ten-year implementation matrix setting out the What, How, Who, and When for policies and actions to achieve the goals of the plan. Annual public hearings will give citizens a report on implementation and the plan will be used in capital improvement planning, work plans, and to guide land use decision making. Partnerships with residents, businesses, institutions, and nonprofits will be important to the success of the plan.



Our Vision for Norwalk

By 2029, the City of Norwalk has become a national example of a small city that boasts a thriving and dynamic economy; varied housing choices for all income levels; many safe and convenient ways to get around the city, including walking and biking; connected, accessible and beautiful open spaces; a commitment to lifelong learning; and an active and resilient coastline. Norwalk is the center of art, culture and entertainment for our region. We combine the character of a historic New England community on the coast of Long Island Sound with a thriving city in the country's largest metropolitan area.

- Our prosperity is rooted in retaining the foundation of **our diversified economy,** including health care and Fortune 500 companies, while attracting businesses in emerging fields. These businesses allow many Norwalk residents to work where they live, provide living-wage jobs for all skill levels, and create a strong non-residential tax base
- We're **a center of culture and entertainment,** attracting local and regional visitors to our urban districts of SoNo and Norwalk Center; our museums, aquarium and historic sites; and our parks and natural open spaces.
- We're proud of our **racial and ethnic diversity** and continue to welcome people from around the world.
- Norwalk's excellent quality of life offers **a choice of housing options** in neighborhoods ranging from lively urban centers of varied densities and suburban–style areas, to quiet, tree-filled enclaves and coastal villages.
- We're **a city of transportation choice:** a connected, walking and biking city, well-served by public transportation, safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes to city destinations, well-maintained and well-functioning local streets, and efficient regional transportation links.
- Norwalk's parks, natural open spaces, and waterfront attractions work as **a green and blue network** linked by trails and other routes and offering recreational and nature experiences to all.
- Norwalk **protects and enhances the natural environment** and land, water, and air resources for the benefit of future generations.
- **Norwalk Harbor remains a major center of water-based activities on Long Island Sound,** providing opportunities for recreation and commerce: public access for recreation and education, recreational boating, commercial shellfishing, and other vital economic, environmental, and cultural values and opportunities.
- **Norwalk embraces lifelong learning** through public-private partnerships. Our schools and Norwalk Community College promote educational achievement to create a highly-qualified workforce for 21st-century jobs. Norwalk seeks a strong higher education presence in its urban center to spark art, innovation and activity.
- We're committed to **energy- and resource-efficiency,** as well as to pursuing **solutions and adaptations to the expected impacts of climate change and sea-level rise**–coastal and inland flooding, extreme storms, extreme temperatures, and drought.
- The City's infrastructure, public facilities, and public services are **resource-efficient, well-maintained, cost-effective, sustainable, and resilient.**

Priority Concepts and Strategies for QUALITY OF LIFE, ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, AND SUSTAINABILITY

Proactive economic development to grow jobs and the Grand List (Chapter 3). Establish effective economic development strategies with appropriate staff.

Enhanced transportation choice and connectivity (10). Develop and implement a multi-modal transportation plan that provides numerous opportunities for all residents to travel safely and efficiently through the city by walking, biking, taking transit, and driving.

Norwalk Public Schools as the best city school system in the state (5). Implement the plan to modernize facilities and continue program and performance improvements that have raised test scores and school performance.

Modernized and user-friendly land use regulations consistent with the plan (12). Rewrite the zoning ordinance and develop corridor and neighborhood plans that incorporate basic principles of good city and neighborhood design, which consider people first.

The Norwalk parks and recreation system as the best city system in the state (7). Develop and implement an integrated parks, beaches, open space, and recreation plan.

Enhanced protection of environmental resources (9). Improve coastal and inland water quality, habitat, and open spaces through green stormwater management and other measures.

Housing policy and affordable housing solutions (4). Establish a comprehensive housing policy that provides opportunities from single-family residential neighborhoods to lively urban centers that are safe and accessible to all, ensuring healthy, vibrant and sustainable neighborhoods.

Leadership in sustainability and resilience (8). Establish and implement a city sustainability program and develop a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Implementation Plan.

Enhanced protection of historic resources and promotion of arts and culture (6). Develop and implement a Historic Preservation Plan and an Arts & Culture Plan.

A higher-education presence in Norwalk Center (5). Develop and implement a strategy for adding a college-level presence in Norwalk Center to provide higher education opportunities for residents and foster revitalization and economic development.

Plan Stewardship and Governance (13). Implement the plan goals through scheduled reviews and accountability.

MAYOR HARRY RILLING
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ZONING
STEVE KLEPPIN

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CITY OF NORWALK | CITYWIDE PLAN 2019-2029 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Rewrite and modernize the zoning code to achieve the plan's goals.
- Establish an economic development office and implement an effective economic development strategy.
- Make City Hall more responsive, customer-friendly and accessible, starting with an up to date, organized, user-friendly and efficient city website.
- Develop a Strategic Operating Plan for the city that uses the POCD as the guide in planning, decision making and policy implementation.
- Implement the School Facilities Master Plan and Strategic Operating Plan and continually promote school achievement to local Realtors and the public.
- Prepare and begin implementing these studies and plans:
  - > Industrial zones and activities
  - > Housing Policy Plan and Strategy, including both market-rate and affordable housing
  - > Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan to include critical infrastructure like the wastewater treatment plant
  - > Land use/transportation corridor plan, including a market analysis, for the Main Street/Main Avenue Corridor first, then Connecticut and Westport avenues
  - > Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation System Plan
  - > Historic Preservation Plan
  - > Arts and Culture Plan

LIVING AND WORKING IN NORWALK

Prosperity and Opportunity

- Establish strong, experienced economic development leadership to collaborate with other departments, agencies, and stakeholders.
- Develop high-quality materials and a website to market Norwalk as a business location.
- Develop a small business entrepreneurial initiative.
- Create a storefront activation program for Wall Street.
- Develop and implement a cohesive tourism strategy.
- Make tax incentive policies consistent and transparent; track and evaluate results.

Housing Choice and Healthy Lifestyles

- Create a housing policy and implementation structure within city government.
- Hire a housing planner for the Planning and Zoning Department.
- Develop a Housing Plan that establishes data to monitor and analyze, a policy framework, an affordable housing strategy, and an implementation plan.
- Maintain the overall character of established single-family neighborhoods.
- Promote diverse housing types in the urban core, at transit-oriented locations, and at mixed-use clusters on major corridors, and in village districts where appropriate.
- Explore innovative housing types and affordable housing options.
- Develop an advisory Health Impact Statement for use when adopting citywide, district, and system plans, and in the permitting process for projects meeting a defined project size.

A Commitment to Lifelong Education

- Continue implementation of the Norwalk Public Schools strategic plan.
- Develop a plan to publicize and market NPS performance, improvements, and benefits of diversity to residents, employers, realtors, and others.
- Implement the "Modern Schools for a Growing City" plan to improve NPS facilities over time.
- Expand communications and collaboration between NCC and the city.
- Actively recruit a higher education presence in Norwalk Center.

Historic Heritage, Arts and Culture

- Continue the successful management of city-owned historic properties.
- Develop a Historic Preservation Plan.
- Establish one or more Local Historic Districts.
- Promote heritage and arts tourism in Norwalk.
- Create a Norwalk Arts and Culture Plan.
- Designate an Arts and Culture District in Norwalk Center.

ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY, AND RESILIENCE

Parks, Open Space, Trail, and Recreation Systems

- Create an Open Space Committee to develop a Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation System Plan.
- Give priority to completing the Norwalk River Valley Trail.
- Identify more opportunities to provide public access to water, including streams, the Norwalk River and coastline.
- Identify potential park opportunities in areas of the city underserved by parks so that all residents can walk or bike to a park.

Sustainability and the Norwalk Environment

- Make Norwalk city government a model of sustainability.
- Use green infrastructure and low-impact development to improve water quality and mitigate flooding.
- Develop a Climate Action Plan for reducing greenhouse gases.
- Collaborate with nonprofits to further protect environmental resources.
- Continue to maintain and increase the shade tree canopy.
- Continue to remediate and redevelop brownfield sites.

Coastal Resources and Resilience

- Continue to implement and enforce the Norwalk Harbor Management Plan.
- Balance environmental protection, water-dependent uses, and public access and recreation.
- Develop a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation plan.

CITY SYSTEMS

Transportation and Mobility Networks

- Adopt multi-modal level of service to measure street performance.
- Make land use decisions that support walking, bicycling, and transit use.
- Explore innovative ways to improve transit service, such as consolidating shuttle services or flexible route service.
- Implement access management in major corridors.
- Expand pedestrian and bike networks.
- Right-size parking.

Public Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure

- Use the Envision rating system to evaluate city infrastructure and facility projects.
- Consider a stormwater utility to fund stormwater management.
- Support long-term water supply planning by the water utilities.
- Support library improvements and innovative programs that contribute to community cohesion.

THE FUTURE CITY

Future Land Use, Urban Design, and Zoning

- Rewrite and modernize the zoning ordinance with best practices and user-friendliness.
- Study the potential for additional Village Districts and mixed-use clusters on Route 1 and North Main Street.
- Prepare corridor plans for arterial streets.

Stewardship and Implementation

- Establish annual public review of implementation of the Citywide Plan.
- Incorporate the Citywide Plan into decision making in city government.
- Enhance transparency and customer service in city government.
- Measure government performance, create an online data portal or information warehouse, and a visual budget.

THE BIG PICTURE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR NORWALK IN TRANSITION

IN ITS LONG HISTORY, Norwalk has gone through many transformations—colonial farming and fishing village to 19th-century manufacturing center to 20th-century suburban city with a successful office sector, thriving marine industry and coastal resources, suburban retail corridors, and leafy suburban neighborhoods. New challenges and changes lie ahead for an increasingly diverse, livable, sustainable, and economically successful 21st-century city.

Norwalk needs to extend a culture of planning for the entire city. What planning initiatives have been undertaken in recent decades have focused, for good reasons, on the urban core. Often, the City has been reactionary to proposals as opposed to clearly articulating the city's and communities' desires. Norwalk needs to extend a planning culture to the entire city. A planning approach that integrates land use, waterfront and transportation, a modernized zoning code, design standards for placemaking, and active pursuit of businesses and institutions that can contribute to achieving Norwalk's goals—while preserving and maintaining successful neighborhoods—requires collaboration across city government and with partners in the community.

Norwalk recognizes the benefits of economic development and sustainable growth. This growth is necessary to fund and support the objectives of this plan.

Norwalk, similar to the rest of the nation, is in the midst of a generational transition from Baby Boomers to Millennials—and Generation Z, the next generation. The Postwar and Baby Boom generations that raised families in Norwalk's suburban neighborhoods from the 1950s to the 2000s are getting older. The Millennial generation and Generation Z—born from the early 1980s to 2010—tend to prefer walkable, urban and village-like environments, biking and walking connections, and connected open space. The City needs to continue land use policies that promote growth in areas where there is transit, city services and infrastructure, employment opportunities, access to goods and services and activities that allow Norwalk to become an 18-hour city.

It's all about placemaking, livability, and the new urban economy. Norwalk is a mature community with little undeveloped land. Transit-oriented development districts in South Norwalk, East Norwalk and Merritt 7, as well as the development of the West Avenue/Wall Street corridor will provide walkable neighborhoods. Economic and redevelopment initiatives, including development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem and an Arts and Culture District, can transform the urban core and older industrial areas. Mixed- use clusters with strong design standards will refresh Rte. 1 and other major corridors in response to a changing retail economy.

Broaden connectivity and transportation alternatives. Bike and pedestrian trails can help connect neighborhoods with city destinations, and options for better transit must be explored. Norwalk established the Bike/Walk Commission and is implementing a bike-share program. These steps, coupled with Complete Streets, Vision Zero, and a modern transportation plan, that is forward thinking and appropriate for Norwalk, should be pursued.

The risks of the future are not the risks of the past. Norwalk must plan and collaborate with regional and state partners for climate change—more extreme storms, drought, more heat and heat waves, sea-level rise, flooding, and other impacts. The impacts of these changes are already being felt and impacting the City. A comprehensive and inclusive action plan should be vigorously pursued.

Norwalk's historic and environmental assets are key competitive resources for livability, sustainability, and economic success. Norwalkers will benefit from more systematic protection of historic resources throughout the city and a deepened commitment to environmental protection and sustainability. Norwalk's harbor, beaches, oyster beds, coastline, and woodlands are unparalleled natural resources, and sustainability commitments—being a "clean and green" city—attract both residents and businesses to the city.

Norwalk aspires to be more proactive, systematic, and data-driven in shaping change to stay successful. Norwalk's urban-suburban character and diversity can be both a strength and a weakness based on different priorities. The City has begun updating its internal processes, using permit software such as Municity and providing more services online; however, understanding change, managing assets, and evaluating possible public investments and integrating public input in relation to overall goals, will result in a more cost-efficient and successful government.

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1

Setting the Stage

CHAPTER 01

Updating Norwalk's Citywide Plan

CHAPTER 02

Norwalk Today: Current Conditions & Trends

Summary Themes

What kind of place do we want to be?

The Norwalk Vision and Principles for 2029 guided the planning process, the content of the plan, and will guide the implementation of the plan. The vision recognizes the need to preserve what everyone values, manage change, and make improvements to achieve citizens' hopes for the future.

- Norwalk will continue to be welcoming and diverse—in population, economy, landscape, parks, and neighborhoods, including diverse housing types and affordable options.
- Norwalk will be increasingly innovative and prosperous, with successful businesses, well-educated workers, and the best city public education system in Connecticut.
- Norwalk will have an enhanced multi-modal transportation system with walking, biking and transit networks connecting successful urban and suburban places.
- Norwalk will continue to protect and manage its natural resources, inland and coastal waters, and its historic and cultural assets.
- Norwalk will become a model of sustainability and resilience to the impacts of climate change.

What's the starting point? What are the city's assets and challenges, and how are conditions trending if we don't make changes?

The baseline conditions in the City of Norwalk—in the region and the state at the time this POCD update was written—serve as the launchpad for this plan: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

CHAPTER ONE

Updating Norwalk's Citywide Plan

A. INTRODUCTION

The Citywide Plan is the city's state-mandated Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The POCD is the only plan that covers the entire city, and is under the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission. In order to be eligible for discretionary State funding, the plan must be updated every ten years[1], and Norwalk's most recent plan was adopted in 2008. The City chose Stantec, with Hodge Economic Consulting, to work with staff and stakeholders to create the plan update.

The planning process for this POCD update provided an opportunity for Norwalk residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to understand where Norwalk is today, identify what they want to preserve and what they want to change, create an inspiring vision for where they want Norwalk to be in 2029, and develop the goals, strategies, and actions. In recent decades, planning in Norwalk has reflected the hybrid character of its mix of urban and suburban development patterns and neighborhoods. The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency was founded in 1950 to focus on revitalization of the urban core of the city as the designated redevelopment area. The rest of the city was built out in subdivisions and city government affected its character through zoning and subdivision regulations but with few urban design controls for the arterial streets and commercial areas outside of the urban core.

1 The City of Norwalk is a special act community, but the City Charter requires that the plan be updated every 10 years, consistent with state statute.

B. NORWALK & A CULTURE OF PLANNING

While the revitalization mission and legal status of the Redevelopment Agency has required planning to identify and implement goals and strategies, there has not been a planning vision for the city as whole, except for plans for infrastructure and some public services in functional silos. Because of the predominantly residential character of the suburban neighborhoods and the complex mix of neighborhood character, the City has tended to react to new development proposals and other challenges by accommodating them on an ad-hoc, project-by-project basis within the regulatory context. For example, only in 2017 were City departments asked to relate their proposed budgets to the goals of the citywide plan.

Change is a constant in any community, as Norwalk's history demonstrates. Today, Norwalk is becoming more complex again--not only with the revitalization of the urban core, but with the need for a more professional economic development department, pressures on the transportation system and demands for connectivity, an emerging mixed-use center at Merritt 7, the imminent opening of SoNo Collection, and opportunities for new mixed-use activity clusters along arterials roads. By extending a culture of planning to encompass the entire community, the City can be more proactive in pursuing community goals, and it can be more strategic, combining initiatives to make the whole more than the sum of the parts when it invests in improvements. Proactive planning includes preservation as well as change—it does not mean that planning for the urban core and for the suburban neighborhoods will be the same. Similarly, the City can take a more systematic approach to policy choices so that projects are evaluated from an interdisciplinary point of view and emerge from policy decisions rather than silo or ad-hoc thinking. By identifying and understanding priorities and how they are related on a citywide basis, Norwalk can become an even better place to live, work, play, shop, and study. In this update of the citywide plan/POCD there is the opportunity to establish a proactive culture of planning and systematic thinking for the entire city.

Source: Geoffrey Steadman

State Requirements

Under CGS Ch. 126, sec. 8-23, the POCD must address:

- Physical, social, economic and governmental conditions, needs, and trends
- Affordable housing and economic diversity
- Drinking water supply protections
- Energy efficient development patterns
- Renewable energy
- Sea level rise scenarios
- Land use and density
- State and regional Plans of Conservation & Development
- Consistency with the municipal coastal program to requirements of section 22a-101 to 22a-104 and in consideration for restoration and protection of the Long Island Sound ecosystem

The State POCD for 2018-2023, awaiting approval by the General Assembly, includes Six Growth Management Principles:

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 Ensure 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.

Municipalities and Councils of Government must note any inconsistencies with these principles when they update their respective plans of conservation and development (CGS Sections 8-23 and 8-35a).

C. NORWALK YESTERDAY

Norwalk was among the earliest European communities in colonial Connecticut, dating from 1640 when settlers from Massachusetts purchased land from Native Americans. Established in 1651, the area that would become the City of Norwalk developed into a farming, port and shellfishing center by the early nineteenth century. Raided by British troops during the Revolutionary War, Norwalk struggled to recover and lost population as people emigrated to the Midwest to take advantage of good farming land. Oystering has been part of life in Norwalk since before colonial times. The oystering business boomed during the nineteenth century, with producers shipping oysters to New York City and beyond, but began to decline in the early twentieth century because of overfishing.

Until the advent of the Industrial Revolution, Norwalk had a limited economy and stable population. South Norwalk, known as "Old Well" until incorporation as a city in 1870, was an urban manufacturing center on the Norwalk River with farms and dairies in the outlying areas. In the 1850s, Irish immigrants arrived, providing labor for farms, factories and railroad construction. Trade with New York City increased with rail access beginning in 1848. Among the important industries in Norwalk were textiles and hats, as well as the manufacture of stoneware, due to the arrival of prominent potters between 1782 and 1906 who made pottery from local and imported clay. Manufacturing growth continued in the 1870 to 1920 period and South Norwalk became a fully urban and independent center with utilities, libraries, and schools. It was the most powerful city at the time of the consolidation of the cities of South Norwalk and Norwalk, the East Norwalk Fire District, and the more rural areas in the Town of Norwalk. This consolidation is the origin of Norwalk's six taxing districts.

By the 1950s, Norwalk was losing its manufacturing businesses as textile and other manufacturing began moving to regions with lower labor costs. Hats, one of Norwalk's iconic industries, were not fashionable any more. However, manufacturing still accounted for almost half of Norwalk's jobs in 1970. By 1990, the

South view of the Borough of Norwalk.

Source: Norwalk Historical Society

number of jobs remained the same but only accounted for one-third of jobs, as Merritt 7 and other office and retail areas were established. The decline of manufacturing especially affected South Norwalk, which by the 1960s was also affected by urban renewal programs that demolished old buildings on West Washington Street, and replaced them with offices, a shopping center, and public housing.

When the redevelopment agency created a plan to demolish the buildings on East Washington Street in the 1970s, many residents fought to save the historic buildings and created a historic district recognized by listing on the National Register in 1977. In the 1980s and 1990s, this area became SoNo, with the opening of the Maritime Aquarium in 1988, and the development of a restaurant row and regional destination.

Similarly, Norwalk Center, the Wall Street and West Avenue areas, lost economic importance over the course of the twentieth century. The Wall Street train station operated between 1896 and 1936, but the specific reasons for the closing of the station are obscure. The city's street trolley system was replaced by buses in 1935 and Wall Street's trolley barn was closed. The flood of 1955 resulted in catastrophic property damage in the Wall Street area. While Norwalk's urban centers based on manufacturing were struggling, the post-World War II suburban housing boom took hold in the rest of the city. The Merritt Parkway (1938), I-95 (1956), and U.S. Route 7 (1970-1990) expanded the regional transportation network. Figure 1.1 shows that Norwalk's greatest period of population growth occurred between 1940 and 1970. This is when Norwalk's suburban neighborhoods were built out. The median age of housing in Norwalk is approximately 60 years. Population began growing again after 2000, and particularly after 2010, because of multifamily development in the urban centers, South Norwalk and Norwalk Center, and new office complexes in the Merritt 7 area.

Norwalk, and Connecticut as a whole, was significantly affected by the Great Recession (2007–2009). Connecticut as a whole has recovered only 76% of the jobs it lost during the recession, and Fairfield County is also not yet back to pre-recession job numbers. Real estate values plummeted and have slowly returned.[2] However, compared to the rest of Connecticut, Fairfield County has done better than the rest of Connecticut in population growth (the only county to grow), job growth, and unemployment. To a great degree, this is because of proximity to New York City, which has been booming. As it becomes more unaffordable, both for households and for businesses, more of them are looking at Fairfield County communities like Norwalk.

2 www.stamfordadvocate.com/business/article/Fed-official-Proximity-to-NYC-boosts-Fairfield-12717745.php

D. THE 2008-2018 POCD

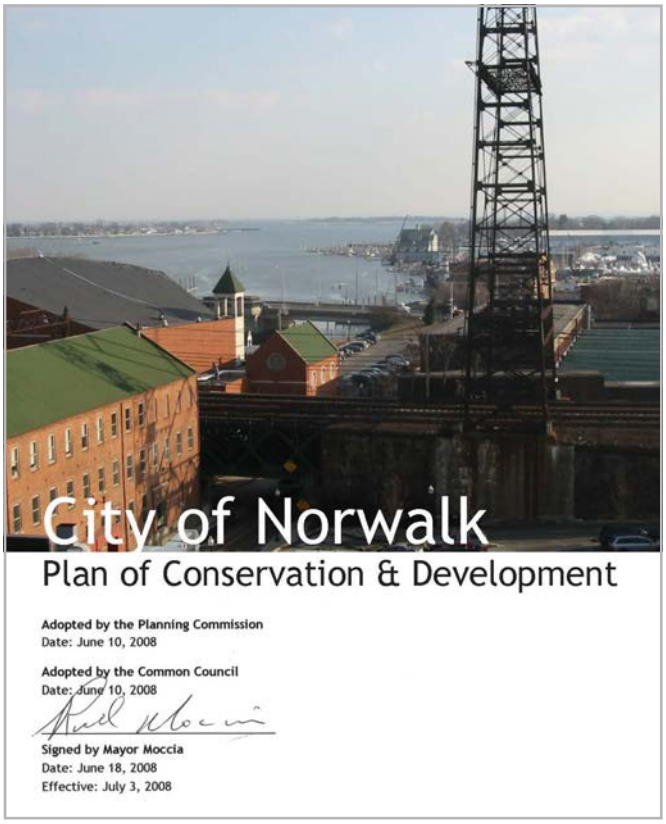
Norwalk's 1990-2000 POCD projected a relatively stable character for the City that is still recognizable in the 2008-2018 plan and as the City creates this plan for 2019-2029 period. In 1990, the plan described the following conditions and trends for Norwalk:

- Little change to the overall pattern of development
- Most new development will be in Norwalk Center, SoNo, and the Route 1 and Route 7 corridors
- Most new housing units will be multi-family and built in the urban cores
- Increasing elderly population
- Infrastructure will focus on the maintenance of existing systems
- Traffic congestion continues to be a challenge

The 2008-2018 plan envisioned preservation and change on a similar trajectory:

- Preservation of Norwalk's assets, described as "good schools, strong neighborhoods, and a beautiful natural harbor….The harbor, streams, beaches, islands, and marshlands are fragile resources that are the foundation of the city's unique appeal. Preservation of these is essential to attracting new residents and businesses." [3]
- Growth will support preservation and enhancement of both natural and man-made assets

3 City of Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development (2008), p. 4.



- Channel growth and planning for dense, mixed-used development in existing corridors
- Continued revitalization of SoNo and the Wall Street area
- Improved public transit
- Location of new businesses adjacent to transit corridors
- Continue to provide and improve services and amenities and adapt to changing demographics, both more aging citizens and immigrant households
- Plan for a sustainable future

The plan's first section, "Balanced Economic Growth," contains a statement that functions as an overall goal and a set of policies for the rest of the plan (Sections A.1.1 – A.1.1.9):

- Promote balanced growth in Norwalk
- Seek private investment within the community
- Encourage diversity in commerce and industry
- Coordinate capital budget expenditures with new development
- Preserve and enhance the character of Norwalk
- Protect property values
- Protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible development
- Encourage a balance between new jobs and housing opportunities
- Encourage a balance between development and protection of the natural environment
- Encourage development that seeks to provide maximum returns to the City in the Grand List tax revenue consistent with public purpose

Throughout the plan there is an emphasis on integrating transportation and land use, improving public transportation, promoting pedestrian-friendly development in urban areas, preserving and enhancing the open space system, intensifying sustainability initiatives, and improving the urban design framework. New planning studies recommended in the plan include the following, some of which have been implemented:

- Intermodal/TOD study for South Norwalk station and area: The South Norwalk TOD study and zoning have been adopted.
- Cranbury Park Master Plan: The master plan has been completed.
- Comprehensive citywide traffic study: The Transportation Management Plan and Pedestrian and Bikeway Transportation Plan have been completed.
- Comprehensive Natural Resources Inventory map and list
- Historic Preservation Plan
- Revisit of the planning goals for the Webster Block
- Plan for public and visual access to the river
- Updated plan of parks and open space

The 2008-2018 plan provided general goals and policy statements and did not clearly indicate priorities or provide much information on strategies and actions needed to achieve the goals. In implementing the plan, the City has focused especially on transportation planning for the entire city, including for bicycles and pedestrians, and planning for transit-oriented development. Much of the more detailed planning and implementation has been sponsored by the Redevelopment Agency for Norwalk Center and SoNo.

E. THE NORWALK CITYWIDE PLAN VISION FOR 2019-2029

During the planning process for this 2019-2029 Plan, many of the same challenges, concerns, and aspirations from former plans emerged: transportation, mobility, and connectivity; balancing growth and preservation; open space and environmental preservation and enhancement; the importance of Norwalk's waterfront and Norwalk's educational system; urban core revitalization. Additional emerging issues with more attention in this planning process include economic development, both for growing the Grand List and to create jobs and new uses for existing industrial buildings, and enhancing integrated planning and implementation in the city.

A vision statement is an important component of a citywide plan because it expresses the overall framework desired for the future. Vision statements are written as word pictures to describe the desired outcome — "this is the kind of place we want to be."

Vision statements focus attention on a community's values, sense of identity, and aspirations. The Norwalk Tomorrow Vision and Principles developed for this update to Norwalk's plan in 2017 expresses the positive expectations that residents have for the future. They were developed based on a visioning workshop, which included personal vision statements from participants, surveys, interviews, research, and analysis. The vision statement tells a story and paints a picture of an ideal future for the next decade and beyond. Accompanying the vision statement is a set of principles based on precepts that are important to Norwalk residents. The principles serve as a set of values that guide the master plan itself and its implementation. Together, the Vision and Principles are like the constitution of the master plan, setting the course for the future.

Our Vision For Norwalk

By 2029, the City of Norwalk has become a national example of a small city that boasts a thriving and dynamic economy; varied housing choices for all income levels; many safe and convenient ways to get around the city, including walking and biking; connected, accessible and beautiful open spaces; an active and resilient coastline; and the highest levels of public safety and emergency services. Norwalk is the center of art, culture and entertainment for our region. We combine the character of a historic New England community on the coast of Long Island Sound with a thriving city in the county's largest metropolitan area.

- Our prosperity is rooted in retaining the foundation of our diversified economy, including health care and Fortune 500 companies, while attracting businesses in emerging fields. These businesses allow many Norwalk residents to work where they live, provide living-wage jobs for all skill levels, and create a strong non-residential tax base.
- We're a center of culture and entertainment, attracting local and regional visitors to our urban districts of SoNo and Wall Street/West Ave; our museums, aquarium and historic sites; and our parks and natural open spaces.
- We're proud of our racial and ethnic diversity and continue to welcome people from around the world.
- Norwalk's excellent quality of life offers a choice of housing options in neighborhoods ranging from lively urban centers of varied densities and suburban-style areas, to quiet, tree-filled enclaves and coastal villages.
- We're a city of transportation choice: a connected, walking and biking city, well-served by public transportation, safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes to city destinations, well-maintained and well-functioning local streets, and efficient regional transportation links.
- Norwalk's parks, natural open spaces, and waterfront attractions work as a green and blue network linked by trails and other routes, and offering recreational and nature experiences to all.
- Norwalk protects and enhances the natural environment and land, water, and air resources for the benefit of future generations.
- Norwalk Harbor remains a major center of water-based activities on Long Island Sound, providing opportunities for recreation and commerce: public access for recreation and education, recreational boating, commercial shell fishing, and other vital economic, environmental, and cultural values and opportunities.
- Norwalk embraces lifelong learning through public-private partnerships. Our schools and Norwalk Community College promote educational achievement to create a highly-qualified workforce for 21st-century jobs. Norwalk seeks a strong higher education presence in its urban center to spark art, innovation and activity.
- We're committed to energy and resource-efficiency, as well as pursuing solutions and adaptations to the expected impacts of climate change and sea-level rise--coastal and inland flooding, extreme storms, extreme temperatures, and drought.
- The City's infrastructure, emergency services, public facilities, and public services are resource-efficient, well-maintained, cost-effective, sustainable and resilient.

Principles To Guide Planning And Implementation

Act Transparently
Promote inclusive civic engagement and keep everyone informed about community conditions, options, and opportunities to participate in decision making.

Be Cost-Effective
Establish cost-effective best practices and systems to support city services, infrastructure, and capital investments, and make data-driven decisions using evidence-based solutions.

Connect People & Places
Provide safe and efficient transportation choices, including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit opportunities, along with well-maintained streets, to connect people to each other, to city destinations and the region.

Be Business-Friendly
Support business growth and entrepreneurship, attracting businesses and jobs in existing and emerging economic sectors, while protecting quality of life and environmental resources.

Make Healthy Lifestyles Easy & Fun
Create opportunities for healthy choices and wellbeing through easy access to physical activity healthy food, and medical care.

Practice Sustainability & Resilience
Make Norwalk a model green and clean community through energy- and resource-efficiency, conservation, and preservation of open space, habitat networks, water quality, and adaptation to climate change.

Pursue High-Quality Development
Make public investments for new development, while conserving and enhancing natural resources and the ecological values and functions of those resources.

Pursue Goals Through Partnerships
Promote coordination among city departments, and connect city government with local businesses and institutions, as well as neighboring towns, and regional, state, and metropolitan agencies to achieve the city's vision and goals.

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CHAPTER TWO

Norwalk Today: Current Conditions & Trends

A. UNDERSTANDING NORWALK TODAY

This chapter of the citywide plan focuses on key issues and data in Norwalk today. First, there is a "SWOT Analysis", an identification and brief analysis of Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities and Threats. This is followed by a discussion of Norwalk's role and potential within the New York City Metropolitan Area, which is an important source of opportunities for Norwalk. Data for Norwalk and some comparison cities in Connecticut and elsewhere in New England, as well as comparisons with Fairfield County, show how Norwalk in the aggregate serves as a "median" city—neither at the top nor the bottom when compared with other communities. This makes sense for the city's urban/suburban character. The remainder of the chapter provides key population statistics and other existing conditions data. In subsequent chapters of the plan, current conditions information on specific topics precedes the goals, strategies, and actions.

B. NORWALK SWOT ANALYSIS: STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES/THREATS

Strengths

- Proximity to New York City
- Commuter rail
- Waterfront / coastal location and identity
- Educated and higher income population
- High-paying economic sectors
- Active private development and recent growth
- Public school improvements in programs and facilities
- Historic resources and intact urban fabric in Norwalk Center and SoNo
- Coastal economy and institutions
- Strengths in Diversity:
    - Racial and ethnic diversity
    - Mix of economic sectors without domination by one
    - Development patterns and neighborhoods: urban, medium density and low-density suburban
    - Relatively affordable housing compared to neighboring towns; single family and multifamily options
    - Landscape character

Opportunities

- Mixed use transit-oriented development at South Norwalk and East Norwalk train stations
- Develop the tourist economy
- Further leverage waterfront location for restaurants, employment, recreation, festivals, etc.
- Become urban area for tech and creative economy start-ups
- Workforce housing
- Niche industrial users
- Regional collaboration and target industries
- Connection of nodes and activity centers

Weaknesses

- Limited multimodal transportation and mobility. Traffic congestion on major highways and internal corridors
- Empty storefronts in Wall Street area
- Lack of research university
- Relatively high real estate and land costs for business
- Perceptions of public schools
- Weakness in Fragmentation:
    - Four activity centers: Merritt 7, Norwalk Center (Wall Street/West Avenue), SoNo, SoNo Collection mall
    - Biggest employment center (Merritt 7) without good transit options
    - Multiple identities: taxing districts and neighborhoods
    - Municipal government silos and limited inter-department coordination
    - Lack of system plans

Threats

- Growing traffic (I-95, Merritt), lack of state transportation funds
- Office market still below capacity and less square feet needed per employee
- Walk Bridge project and impact to local businesses and Norwalk Harbor
- Enhanced downtowns in nearby towns compete with SoNo
- Restricting residential development in urban core areas

Strengths

Location

Norwalk's location is clearly one of the city's strongest assets. Its proximity to New York City with commuter rail connections places the city within a dynamic metropolitan economy. On Long Island Sound and the Norwalk River, the city retains a marine economy and offers waterfront living, parks, community beaches and marinas, historic areas, arts, and culture, and visitor attractions, such as the Marine Aquarium.

Racial & Ethnic Diversity

Norwalk's population diversity makes it a comfortable and welcoming community for people from a variety of backgrounds. About 25% of the population is foreign-born, with a high proportion of working age, persons, and more than a third of the foreign-born holding bachelor's degrees.

Diversity of Character, Form & Landscape

As a physical place, Norwalk has something for everyone. Its landscape includes coastal beaches, marshes and bluffs as well as the river, streams and creeks, and forested hills. Historic buildings and sites testify to the city's near-400-year history. Housing choices include single family houses, condominiums, and apartments. The walkable urbanism quality of SoNo and Norwalk Center is balanced by a handful of villages, and suburban areas ranging from the modest to large-lot neighborhoods. The relative affordability of Norwalk housing, compared to neighboring towns, provides easy access to beaches, the coast, and the water for people with a wider range of incomes.

Educated Workforce & Economic Diversity

The high educational attainment of Norwalk's residents — 41% of adults have a bachelor's or higher degree — is one of the strongest indicators of income and wage levels and is highly correlated with economic dynamism as workforce remains the number one factor for business location decisions. Norwalk has a diverse industry mix that is not dominated by a single sector and produces high average wages. This economic success is led by the wide range of corporate office businesses in the Merritt 7 area of Norwalk, a suburban-style, highway-focused office park that continues to do well despite the declining fortunes of this type of land use in the Northeast. Merritt 7 and the City are working towards creating a more mixed-used character for the Merritt 7 area.

Public School Improvements

The Norwalk Public School system has established many innovative programs, such as the P-Tech Early College High School Model, Global Studies, and International Baccalaureate, and demonstrates increasingly improved student performance. The "Modern Schools for a Growing City" facilities improvement program will include both new and renovated schools.

The waterfront is a defining feature of Norwalk's character

Source: City of Norwalk

Private Investment

The existence of private investment in residential, mixed use development projects over the last five to seven years, even with some city incentives, demonstrates that the private market views Norwalk favorably for its vibrancy and ability to attract tenants. Approximately 1700 housing units in buildings of over 5 units were permitted between 2008 and 2018, the vast majority since 2012. Most of the new development is in the urban core (SoNo, Wall Street and locations in between) that combines strong transportation connectivity (commuter rail and highway) with more urban locations. Many small- to medium-sized cities throughout New England are craving this kind of investment and activity in their traditional downtown areas.

Weaknesses

Limited Multi-Modal Mobility

Throughout the interview, focus group, and community input process, traffic congestion was consistently mentioned as a challenge to city and neighborhood quality of life and economic development in Norwalk. This includes growing highway congestion on major highway routes (I-95 and Merritt Parkway) which are critical for commuting and freight transportation (and which the city does not directly control), as well as internal roadway congestion on arterial roads when getting around Norwalk. Additional transportation modes, public transit (commuter rail and bus) and "active transportation" facilities for walking and bicycles, are inadequate in much of the city. The Norwalk Bike/Walk Commission was officially established in 2017.

Multiple Activity Centers

For a city of its size and population, Norwalk has several dispersed and relatively large activity centers that ideally would all be focused in one or two locations. SoNo and Norwalk Center (Wall Street/West Avenue) represent historic centers, and Merritt 7 is a self-contained suburban office complex developed in the last two decades of the 20th century. Additional office buildings have been built since 2000, and projects are underway to create a more mixed-use and residential environment, as well as improve a commuter rail station, in the Merritt 7 area. Adjacent to SoNo and I-95, a 700,000 square-foot regional mall with a market area of 26 miles along the coast will open in 2019.

The historic Wall Street/West Avenue redevelopment area (Norwalk Center) contains 230 acres and SoNo comprises about 200 acres. Over 20 years, SoNo has become a successful restaurant, entertainment, and cultural destination and includes the city's major commuter rail station. Norwalk Center is still struggling with empty storefronts and upper story space, and it lacks an active rail station. The city's highest concentration of jobs is at Merritt 7 Corporate Park, a six-building, 1.4 million square foot property on 22 acres with a little-used commuter rail station, and an adjacent group of office buildings, the Towers at Merritt River. The Merritt 7 area on Main Ave and Glover Avenue is critical to the economic and fiscal (tax revenue) success of Norwalk, and its continued vibrancy must be a priority for the city. The SoNo Collection will include two department stores and 80-100 smaller retailers, about 40,000 square feet of restaurant space, public spaces, and a circulator to SoNo and Norwalk Center. In addition, Norwalk has suburban-style commercial development along Route 1.

Office space at Merritt 7 is a major employment center in Norwalk

Source: Google Earth

Perceptions of Public Schools

Perceptions of the Norwalk Public Schools often lag the accomplishments, offerings, and improvements in the system. The schools are performing well compared to other urban systems in Connecticut and elsewhere, and they capture some 85% of school-age students in the population. Residents and others who do not have school-aged children sometimes have perceptions based on former conditions and assumptions about the schools in neighboring very affluent towns.

High Real Estate Costs for Business

Norwalk, as a Fairfield County city, has relatively higher costs for real estate and land, making it expensive to operate some kinds of businesses in Norwalk. However, it is much more affordable than New York City and its immediate adjacencies. On average, residential properties are more affordable than in many Fairfield County cities and towns, but housing prices and rents are expensive for lower-income workers.

Lack of a Research University

Norwalk and Fairfield County are limited by the lack of a major research university. While Norwalk Community College is a critical economic engine and workforce asset, it does not provide the kind of positive research and innovation spillover effects of research universities. Similarly, the Norwalk Hospital is strong economic presence, but it does not have the start-up impact of academic medical centers. The Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program studied small to medium sized cities in the Northeast and Midwest and found that cities with Tier I and II research universities are some of the best-performing cities and rank among the most economically vibrant.[1]

Fragmentation of Identity & Government

Norwalk's "something for everyone" is also one of the sources of fragmentation, sometimes causing a weak sense of city identity compared to neighborhood identity. The multiple taxing/utility districts are rooted in historic neighborhood identities. Although all municipalities develop "silo" characteristics, Norwalk staff members report a low level of interdepartmental communication and limited sense of an overall citywide vision or systems thinking. During the 2017 budget period, departments were asked for the first time to relate their requests to the city's POCD. The reorganization and integration of city government approved in summer 2018 is expected to ameliorate the problem of excessive silo fragmentation

Opportunities

Transit-Oriented & Transit-Ready Development

Norwalk is fortunate to have multiple commuter rail stations. Current research on national trends supports the idea that future development and redevelopment is most likely to occur in dynamic, walkable urban locations with good access to rail transit. Norwalk businesses interviewed for the plan emphasized this point as a key to attracting and retaining "talent"—well-educated employees—and businesses. They noted that many companies do not require daily trips to New York City, but that access is critical.

Residential development reinforces business development in transit-served locations. Transit-oriented development (TOD) starts with multifamily and mixed-use development to provide employee housing near transit and urban amenities. In Norwalk, along the Metro-North New Haven Line the South Norwalk TOD District has been established and a study will be undertaken in 2019 to establish an East Norwalk TOD District. "Transit-ready" development brings similar options to areas where transit is expected to be improved or established.

Merritt 7 was built in the 1980s and 1990s as a Class A, self-contained, office park on a multi-level parking podium with many internal amenities, from cafés and dry cleaning to gyms. While Merritt 7 concentrates more jobs than any other area in Norwalk, the nearby Merritt 7 train station on the Danbury Line is not convenient for most employees. Recognizing that the suburban office park model has lost its luster in comparison to walkable urban districts, the owners have been investing in interior and exterior renovations and new amenities. Approximately 1,000 apartments nearby and amenities such as a bike route connected to the NRVT will create a transit-ready center. The State in 2017 funded a new Merritt 7 station with a footbridge, a raised platform and an expanded shelter that will serve employees in the office buildings as well as residents in apartments on Glover Ave and adjacent to Merritt 7.

1 Brookings Institution, "Renewing America's economic promise through older industrial cities, 2018, www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-04_brookings-metro_older-industrial-cities_full-report-berube_murray_-final-version_af4-18.pdf

The Danbury Branch has less frequent service than the New Haven Line and does not currently serve the former Wall Street station. The development of multi-family housing in Norwalk Center since 2012 would support a revived rail station in Norwalk Center. In 2018, the State approved funds for a feasibility study to revive the Wall Street station.

Workforce Housing

The new multifamily development clustered in Norwalk's activity centers plays an important role in providing housing for young workers and empty-nesters interested in urban living. Norwalk's current regulations require that a minimum of 10% of units in buildings with at least 20 units be affordable to income-eligible tenants. While there is more demand than supply for these units, this multifamily development has produced 172 new workforce units as of June 2018.

Tourism

Norwalk's combination of tourism resources—historic, museum, arts and culture, coastal, restaurant, and festival—has the potential to bring more visitors to the city. It is within easy reach of New York City and, as noted by one resident, is the first city that New Yorkers encounter when traveling north to Connecticut that offers a sense of New England character. State tourism offices have been closed in a budget-saving measure. The Historical Commission and the Arts Commission have been collaborating to develop tourism resources, but they do not have the capacity or funding to market or build out Norwalk as a tourism destination.

Coastal & Waterfront Opportunities

Norwalk's coastal location and miles of waterfront land provide a wide mix of opportunities from traditional working waterfronts (fishing, shipping, ferries) to recreation, boating and waterfront restaurants.

Regional Collaboration in Target Sectors

On the industry side, Norwalk is obviously part of a larger regional economy and its opportunities should be positioned and promoted as part of the region (which is what Stamford "sells"). The "Fairfield Five" initiative is attempting to solidify regional collaboration and should focus on target sectors, such as finance, software, and professional services.

Creative Economy Start-ups

Norwalk can position itself as a somewhat lower-cost urban location compared to New York City for start-up firms in the creative economy, technology, graphic design and similar areas.

Niche Industries

Norwalk also has a diverse set of thriving small to medium-sized industrial users and could attract more of these types of firms. The city should continue to reserve industrial land and seek out niche industrial opportunities to fit Norwalk's strengths.

Multiple Activity Centers

While also listed as a weakness, the possibility of leveraging the strengths and uniqueness of each neighborhood center as an anchor for the immediate area and connecting them through a modern multi-modal transportation network should be explored.

Threats

Transportation & Mobility

As mentioned earlier, traffic congestion and limited mobility alternatives are major issues in Norwalk for business owners, commuters, residents, and visitors. The lack of state funding for transportation investment, combined with the multi-year Walk Bridge project that will affect SoNo and the Aquarium area, is a threat to future business growth and retention.

Changing Markets for Office Space

In terms of business growth, which is strongly desired by local stakeholders, the biggest question remains what kinds of industries are most likely to locate and expand in Norwalk. Norwalk's competitive strength is based on a variety of professional services and corporate offices, but those are generally located in Class A office space concentrated in the Merritt 7 area. SoNo and the Wall Street area have seen some business growth activity and are desirable to companies seeking an urban, walkable location. However, an important challenge is vacant office space, as office users continue to demand fewer square feet per employee. New office buildings are not being built—rather, existing buildings are being renovated and updated, as is happening in the Merritt 7 area, to make them more attractive to businesses and their employees. Similarly, re-use and

rehabilitation of existing space in Norwalk Center and SoNo to attract small to mid-sized technology and creative economy firms can attract office tenants.

Competition for SoNo from Nearby Towns

SoNo is no longer the only regional restaurant row and retail area in a historic, walkable setting. While it remains a regional draw, nearby towns have enhanced their town centers and now have dining and shopping options that can compete with SoNo.

Restrictions on Urban Core Residential Development

Norwalk's recent growth is a function of the multifamily development in the city's urban core and Merritt 7 area, and of immigration. The residential development has provided new tax income (and will provide more with the sunset of tax incentives) and has attracted young professionals and empty-nesters to live in the city.[2] It has created a foundation for the revitalization of Norwalk's urban core. Some residents who live outside the urban core have expressed concerns that the apartments have negative impacts on city infrastructure and services (such as traffic and schools), or that they will not be fully occupied. Stakeholder concern has been voiced about new development being focused on apartment units, but the creation of new restrictions could be very detrimental to Norwalk if it erases the positive momentum the city has created. Two points are worth emphasizing. First, as shown in Stamford and many other cities, business location decisions are driven by workforce, and residential growth fully supports business growth by creating a cluster of talent proximate to businesses. Second, for first floor retail and restaurants to be successful, a lot of nearby people (residents and workers) are required. Prematurely cutting off residential growth will ensure that Norwalk's desire for mixed use development will face major challenges attracting and retaining first floor tenants.

Recent mixed-use development along West Avenue has increased the population living downtown

2 A 2016 fiscal and economic impact analysis of redevelopment projects analyzed seven redevelopment projects containing 1,149 housing units and 250,000 sq ft commercial. It concluded that, over the ten-year period from 2005 to 2014, these projects generated a current net new benefit of $3.68 million annually and a ten-year cumulative total of $18.12 million, accounting for both net new annual property tax levies (revenue) and public service burdens (costs). 625 new jobs are directly attributable to these projects and another 370 new jobs were "induced" by new resident spending. (Source: www.norwalkct.org/652/Redevelopment-Agency). In 2017, CP IV Waypointe BP I LLC was the third-highest property taxpayer in the city and Avalon Bay Communities Inc. was the tenth-highest. (Source: City of Norwalk Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), 2017).

C. NORWALK IN THE REGION

Norwalk is part of the New York Metropolitan Area, the nation's largest metropolitan region, whose economy is an important driver of economic opportunity in the city. As part of Fairfield County, Norwalk is an anchor of the Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk Metropolitan Statistical Area, which encompasses all of Fairfield County and had a 2017 estimated population of 949,921 people.[3] The county is part of the New York Metropolitan Area, which includes five of the seven largest cities in Connecticut (including Norwalk) as well as parts of New Jersey, upstate New York, and Pennsylvania. The Metro Area has approximately 24 million people and 10.3 million jobs, of which 4.4 million are in New York City. In fact, since the Great Recession (2007-2009), New York City captured 80% of the new jobs in the region. However, New York City's economic success has been accompanied by a severe crisis of housing availability and affordability, and the city is placing increased emphasis on sustainability. A recently-established regional planning division within the New York City government has been reaching out to communities within the Metropolitan Area to develop a regional strategy through enhanced partnerships and complementary growth. Norwalk needs to think about its competitive position within the Metropolitan Area as a place to live, to have a business, to work, and to visit.

Two recent regional planning initiatives include the New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities Consortium, which produced the federally-funded **Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in the New York – Connecticut Metropolitan Region** in 2014 and the **Regional Plan Association's (RPA) Fourth Regional Plan** for the Metro New York region published in 2017. The goal of the Sustainable Development Plan, in which the City of Norwalk participated, is a globally competitive regional economy that will require strategic investment in infrastructure, business centers and neighborhoods to maintain and expand prosperity and improve quality of life. The focus of the plan is on investment in transit and transit-oriented development as a way to reduce per capita energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions and to support jobs and housing in downtowns and neighborhoods. The South Norwalk TOD study was the specific project supported by this Plan. Similarly, the 2017 Fourth Regional Plan identifies four key areas of challenge and opportunity:

- Transforming institutions, policies, and practices
- Adapting to climate change
- Improving transportation--local and regional, small-scale and large-scale
- Expanding affordability and economic opportunity

While the region added 600,000 jobs from 2012 to 2017, growth is projected to slow over the next 25 years if the region continues in a "business-as-usual" scenario. A summary of the RPA Fourth Plan recommendations can be found in Figure 2.1.[4] Although many of these recommendations are specific to New York City, many others are relevant to the City of Norwalk which faces many of the same challenges on a smaller scale, such as promoting improved transit and opportunities for transit-oriented development, rethinking auto-dependent landscapes, and adapting to climate change.

The **Long-Range Transportation Plan 2015-2040** prepared by the Southwestern Region Metropolitan Planning Organization, the transportation planning arm for Fairfield County of the Western Connecticut Council of Governments is the region's required plan for federal transportation funding.[5] Like the Fourth Regional Plan for New York but in a more local context, this plan emphasizes the connection between transportation, land use, and economic development, promoting efficient higher density and mixed use development which reduces congestion; support for increase transit use; and support for bicycle and transportation initiatives.

3 U.S. Census Bureau 2017 estimate.

4 RPA Fourth Regional Plan, Executive Summary, library.rpa.org/pdf/RPA-4RP-Executive-Summary.pdf

5 www.westcog.org/transportation/long-range-transportation-plans

Figure 2.1 Regional Plan Association Fourth Regional Plan Recommendations

Recommendations at a glance

Fix the institutions that are failing us

Transform the way we govern and pay for transportation

1. Reduce the cost of building rail transit
2. Restructure the Port Authority to function as a regional infrastructure bank
3. Create a Subway Reconstruction Public Benefit Corporation
4. Modernize transit systems outside New York City
5. Charge drivers to enter Manhattan, price highways, and transition to vehicle-miles tolling

Create new institutions and funding to tackle climate change

6. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions with a cap-and-trade market modeled after California's program
7. Establish a Regional Coastal Commission
8. Institute climate Adaptation Trust Funds in all three states

Change fundamental inequities in how we govern land use

9. Reduce reliance on local property taxes
10. Create regional school districts and services
11. Make New York City property taxes fair
12. Make the planning and development process more inclusive, predictable, and efficient

Make technology policy a core part of government's business

13. Increase participation in local government
14. Expand affordable internet access across the region
15. Create a Regional Census to support better use of data for public purposes

Create a dynamic, customer-oriented transportation network

Create a fully integrated, regional transit system

16. Build a second bus terminal under the Javits Convention Center
17. Build new rail tunnels under the Hudson and East Rivers
18. Expand, overhaul, and unify the Penn Station Complex
19. Combine three commuter rail systems into one network

Rebuild the subway system

20. Adopt new technology for fast, reliable subway service
21. Modernize and refurbish New York City's subway stations
22. Build new subway lines to underserved areas of the city

Adapt streets and highways for a technology-driven future

23. On city streets, prioritize people over cars
24. Improve bus service, and introduce new light rail and streetcar lines
25. Expand suburban transit options with affordable, on-demand service
26. Reduce highway congestion without adding new lanes
27. Remove, bury, or deck over highways that blight communities

Create world-class airports and seaports

28. Expand and redesign Kennedy and Newark airports
29. Build fast and affordable rail service in the Northeast Corridor
30. Modernize the region's seaports and expand rail freight access

Rise to the challenge of climate change

Adapt to our changing coastline

31. Protect densely populated communities along the coast from storms and flooding
32. Transition away from places that can't be protected
33. Establish a national park in the Meadowlands
34. Determine the costs and benefits of a regional surge barrier

Bring nature into our communities

35. End the discharge of raw sewage and pollutants into waterways
36. Restore the region's harbor and estuaries
37. Cool our communities

Improve the natural and built systems that sustain us

38. Prioritize the protection of land to help adapt to a changing climate
39. Create a tri-state trail network
40. Upgrade infrastructure to high standards of resilience
41. Connect the region's water supply systems

Create a greener energy system, with more capacity

42. Modernize the electric grid
43. Scale up renewables
44. Manage demand with energy-efficient buildings and variable pricing
45. Electrify buildings and vehicles

Make the region affordable for everyone

Provide affordable housing for all incomes, ages, races, and ethnicities

46. Protect low-income residents from displacement
47. Strengthen and enforce fair housing laws
48. Remove barriers to transit-oriented and mixed-use development
49. Increase housing supply without constructing new buildings
50. Build affordable housing in all communities across the region
51. Make all housing healthy housing
52. Reform housing subsidies

Expand access to more well-paying jobs

53. Maintain a globally competitive regional business district
54. Restore regional job centers
55. Make room for the next generation of industry
56. Promote partnerships between anchor institutions and local communities

Support healthy and livable communities

57. Remake underutilized auto-dependent landscapes
58. Turn environmentally burdened neighborhoods into healthy communities
59. Support and expand community-centered arts and culture
60. Expand access to healthy, affordable food
61. Expand and improve public space in the urban core

Fourth Regional Plan Recommendations – New York Metropolitan Area

D. COMPARING NORWALK TO SIMILAR CITIES

Figures 2.2 and 2.3 compare Norwalk to a set of nearby Connecticut cities and other cities in the Northeast with similar attributes in terms of size, income and coastal location. These comparison cities were chosen in consultation with the Norwalk planning department and are intended to be illustrative of Norwalk competitive position, comparative advantages and weaknesses, and potential for improvement. Norwalk's has a median income in the same range as most of the comparison cities (Stamford, Danbury, and White Plains), but well above New Haven ($37,192) and Portland, Maine ($46,280). In the case of New Haven, that city also has the highest poverty rate and unemployment rate, indicative of a larger urban city that has economic strengths (especially "eds and meds" – universities and hospitals) but also lingering concentrations of poverty. Warwick, Rhode Island, a coastal suburb that also hosts regional malls, regional transportation hubs, and older industrial areas, is otherwise the most residential of these comparison cities. Portland, Maine's largest city, is a center of employment, entertainment and arts, and tourism, but reflects Maine's lower incomes and higher poverty.

Figure 2.2 Socioeconomic Data for Norwalk and Comparison Cities - Resident-Based Data

Town	Population (2016)	Median Household Income (2015)	% Bachelor's Degree or Higher (2015)	Poverty Rate (2015)	Unemployment Rate (Aug 2017)
Norwalk	88,438	$76,987	41.0%	8.4%	3.8%
Danbury, CT	84,992	$66,676	30.2%	12.0%	3.6%
New Haven, CT	129,934	$37,192	34.4%	26.6%	6.2%
Stamford, CT	129,113	$79,359	47.1%	9.4%	3.8%
White Plains, NY	58,241	$80,442	49.0%	12.2%	3.8%
Warwick, RI	81,579	$66,044	31.9%	7.0%	3.6%
Portland, ME	66,937	$46,280	46.2%	19.7%	2.4%
Connecticut	3,576,452	$70,331	37.6%	10.5%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS 2011-2015; 2016; state Labor Market Information (LMI) web sites

Figure 2.3 Housing Market Data for Norwalk and Comparison Cities -- Resident-Based Data

Town	% Owner Occupied	% Single Family (Detached)	Median Home Value	Median Gross Rent	% Rent More than 30% of Income
Norwalk	61.8%	48.6%	$410,000	$1,408	50.5%
Danbury, CT	59.9%	43.7%	$288,000	$1,287	53.2%
New Haven, CT	28.9%	19.7%	$191,800	$1,100	61.0%
Stamford, CT	55.8%	39.3%	$501,200	$1,603	53.8%
White Plains, NY	50.9%	28.7%	$511,600	$1,554	58.1%
Warwick, RI	71.5%	71.4%	$195,700	$1,064	47.7%
Portland, ME	43.4%	36.8%	$239,400	$946	52.8%
Connecticut	67.0%	59.2%	$270,500	$1,075	53.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS 2011-2015; 2016

In these comparisons, Norwalk shows its character as a hybrid urban-suburban city, somewhat more affordable than cities closer to New York City like Stamford and White Plains with bigger economies, but more prosperous than Danbury and New Haven and the more-distant Warwick and Portland.

When compared to the State of Connecticut as a whole, and Fairfield County as a whole, Norwalk often functions as the "median" community. In the Fairfield Community Foundation's 2015 Community Well-Being Survey, Norwalk data tracked the state's and county's equity and health data quite closely.

Figure 2.4 Fairfield County Comparisons

Town	Personal Well-Being Index	Community Index	Smoking	Obesity	Financial Security Index	Walkability Index	Underemployment	Quality of Society Index	College Degree	Commute Time	Pre-K Enrollment	Opportunity Youth	Severe Housing Cost Burden	Low Income Children
Connecticut	0.58	0.57	15%	26%	0.61	0.49	14%	0.57	37%	34%	64%	6%	18%	30%
Fairfield County	0.66	0.64	11%	22%	0.72	0.45	14%	0.67	45%	38%	69%	6%	20%	26%
Bridgeport	0.17	0.24	18%	36%	0.17	0.45	23%	0.07	16%	38%	62%	14%	29%	65%
Danbury	0.50	0.51	13%	21%	0.50	0.21	16%	0.53	30%	35%	53%	7%	19%	36%
Fairfield	0.83	0.86	8%	18%	0.94	0.86	10%	1.00	66%	37%	77%	5%	19%	12%
Greenwich	0.99	0.90	10%	16%	0.99	0.86	10%	1.00	62%	44%	78%	5%	15%	10%
Norwalk	0.66	0.63	13%	22%	0.61	0.66	14%	0.57	41%	32%	72%	7%	22%	28%
Central	0.58	0.55	16%	25%	0.50	0.62	16%	0.57	37%	29%	64%	5%	24%	35%
Other	0.74	0.73	11%	18%	0.77	0.74	11%	0.57	46%	34%	80%	10%	20%	20%
Stamford	0.74	0.67	10%	22%	0.72	0.66	16%	0.60	46%	31%	60%	3%	23%	32%
Stratford	0.42	0.54	17%	27%	0.61	0.66	12%	0.50	31%	38%	75%	9%	21%	27%
6 Wealthiest	0.99	0.86	6%	10%	1.00	0.33	11%	1.00	76%	48%	83%	2%	17%	7%
Other towns	0.83	0.73	10%	19%	0.88	0.17	8%	0.87	51%	42%	68%	2%	16%	12%

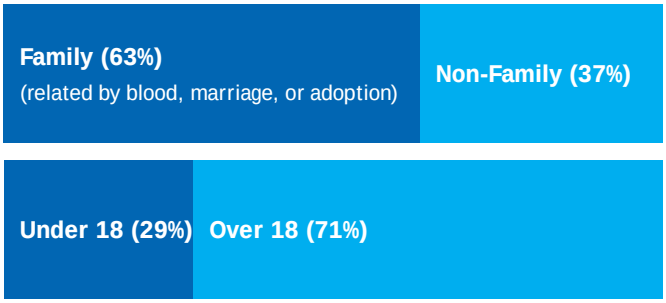
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS 2011-2015; 2016; state Labor Market Information (LMI) web sites

E. NORWALK AT A GLANCE & KEY POPULATION TRENDS

Who we are

- Norwalk is a growing community of more than 88,000 people.
- We're the sixth-largest city in Connecticut, second-largest in the WestCOG region, and third-largest in the county.
- We're getting older, like the rest of Fairfield County and the state, with a median age of 40 in 2015 compared to 37 in 2010.
- We are increasingly diverse. Our share of foreign-born residents increased 34% since 2000.

Our households ACS Estimates (2011-2015)



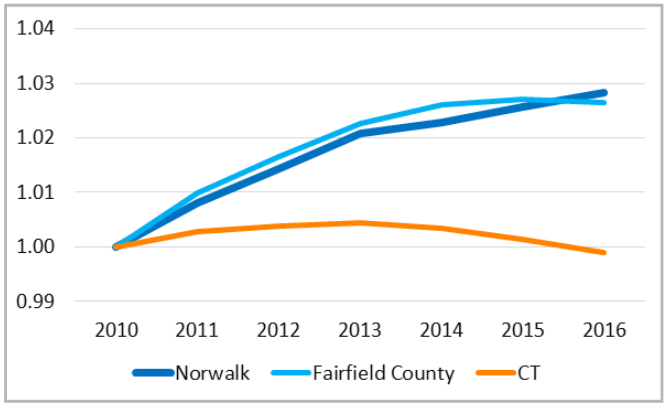
29% households with children under 18

Average household size: 2.55 people

We're growing faster than the state

Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates

Population Growth Index - 2010 to 2016



We're a diverse community

Census Bureau (2010) and ACS Estimates (2011-2015)

74% White
15% Black
5% Asian
4% Some Other Race

24% Latino (any race)

26% foreign-born

Source: www.norwalkct.org

Norwalk at a Glance

How We Live

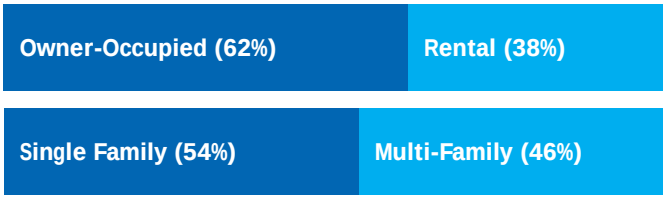
- **Housing** (ACS 2011-2015, Zillow.com 2017)
  - The median home value in Norwalk is $410,000.
  - Norwalk home values have gone up 2.2% over the past year, and are predicted to rise 1.5% within the next year.
  - The median rent in Norwalk in mid-2017 was approximately $2,200.

Norwalk's Home Prices are Rebounding

Zillow.com home prices index (through August 2017)

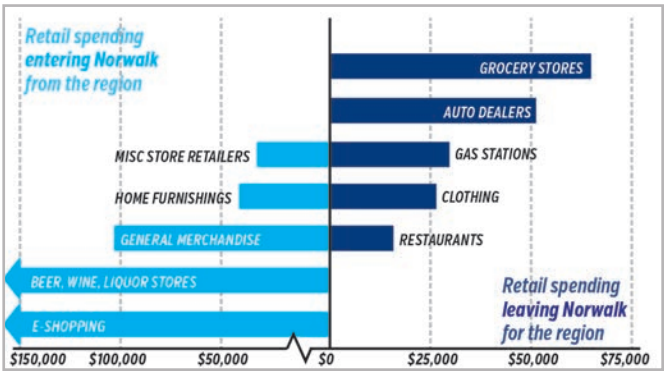
Most Housing is Owner-Occupied & Single-Family

ACS Estimates (2011-2015)



Dining & Shopping

Commercial areas are located in the CBD and SoNo and along major corridors like Route 1 and Main Avenue.



Institutions

- Public and non-profit institutions are distributed throughout Norwalk neighborhoods including schools, police and fire stations, and community centers.
- Norwalk has one major hospital, Norwalk Hospital, and several smaller health centers.
- Norwalk Community College is the only post-secondary educational institution in the city.

Norwalk Community College

Source: www.norwalk.edu

Downtown & South Norwalk

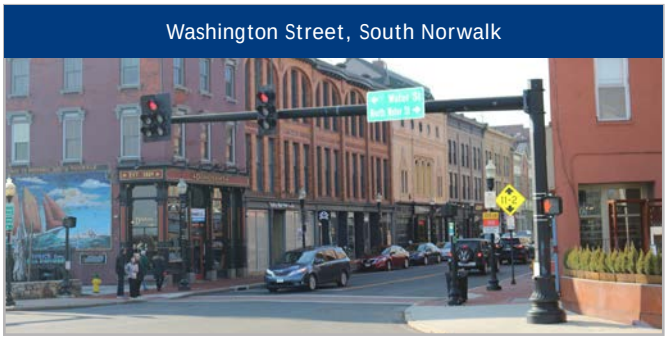
Important assets in downtown and South Norwalk include:

- South Norwalk train station (serving Metro-North) and WHEELS transit hub (buses).
- Norwalk Harbor.
- Maritime Aquarium.
- Mathews Park and Stepping Stones Museum for Children.

Issues and opportunities for these areas include:

- SoNo Collection, approved for 1 million square feet of retail and public space.
- Development opportunities on Wall Street and West Avenue.
- Need for improved pedestrian environments.

Washington Street, South Norwalk



Healthy, 'Green,' & Infrastructure Systems

Healthy for Life

- City program started in 2012 with primary goals to "Eat Well" and "Move More".
- Popular NorWALKer program encourages increased physical activity.
- Program recognized by the Mayor's Challenge for Safer People and Safer Streets in 2016 for its progress and improvements.

NorWALKers in Silvermine

Source: Healthy4LifeCT

We Still Have Some Health Challenges

- Eleven percent of Norwalk public school children have asthma.
- Among the adult population, approximately 38% are considered overweight and 22% obese.
- Among the adult population, 18% do not get weekly exercise.

Open space, parks and the waterfront

- From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk's character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
- Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
- We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
- Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
- Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Infrastructure & Utilities

Energy: Eversource and the Second and Third Taxing Districts provide electricity to most of Norwalk.

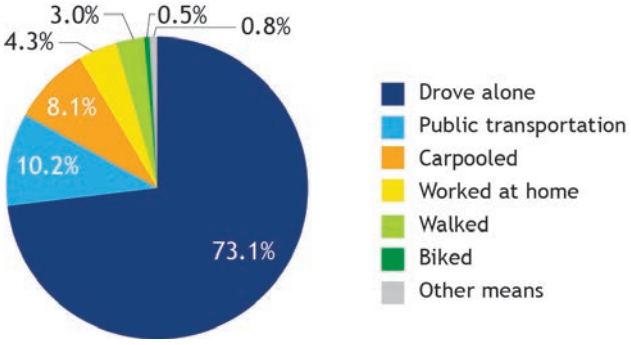
Water: The First Taxing District and Second Taxing District provide water to most of Norwalk.

Mobility: Our transportation assets connect us to the region but require upgrades and investment.

- Metro-North provides commuter rail service to New York City, Stamford, and New Haven. The Danbury Branch serves Merritt 7, Wilton, and Bethel.
- Convenient access to Interstate-95, U.S. Routes-1 and -7, and State Route-15 (Merritt Parkway).
- Norwalk is served by WHEELS with 14 bus routes.
- Walkability varies throughout our city.
- The Norwalk River Valley Trail will eventually provide 38 miles of multi-use trail between Calf Pasture Beach and Danbury.

Most Residents Drive Alone to Work

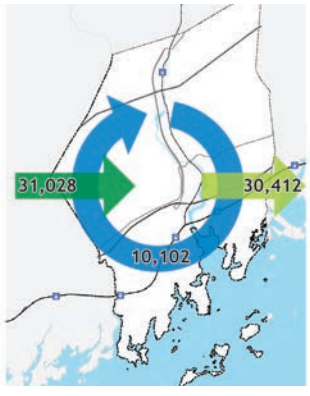
ACS Estimates (2011-2015)



Equal Numbers of Workers Commute Into & Out of Norwalk

Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies (2014), number of employees

- About a quarter of Norwalk workers both live and work in the city.



Prosperity & Opportunity

ACS 2011-2015, LEHD OnTheMap 2015, Hodge Economic Consulting

Norwalk's prosperity

- Our city is strategically located and well-connected via highway and train to New York City, Stamford, and other regional centers of economic activity. In many ways, it is the first place with a "New England" feel outside New York City.
- The recession ended in 2009 and Norwalk is growing again, but has not yet reached pre-recession levels of jobs or home sales.
- There are 45,469 jobs in Norwalk.
- The largest employment sector in Norwalk is health-care and social assistance, accounting for 14% of all jobs. Retail trade is the second-largest jobs sector.
- Information, finance and insurance, professional/technical services, and miscellaneous business services have a relatively large share of jobs in Norwalk.
- Approximately 32% of our working population commutes more than 30 minutes to work, and 9.2% commutes more than an hour to work.
- Our median household income of $77,000 is above the state median but lower than the county's.
- 8.4% of all residents and 10.2% of children live in poverty.

Fiscal Resources

- The City's primary source of revenue is the property tax—89.5% of total revenue. Other revenue primarily comes from operating grants and charges for service.
- The most significant government expenditures are for education, public safety, and public works.
- The City maintains an Aaa/AAA bond rating.

Economy

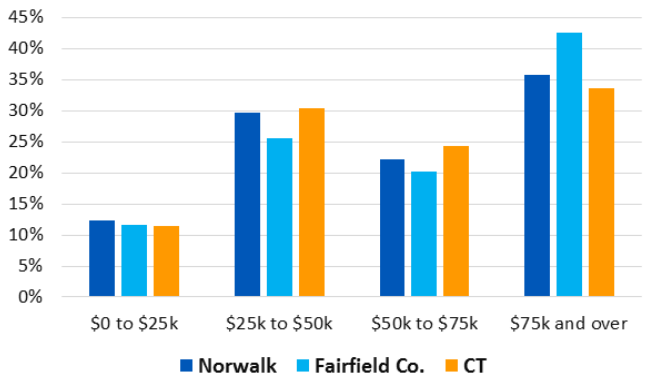
- Norwalk has the second-largest office market in Fairfield County behind Stamford, but both are struggling with high vacancy rates and limited to flat growth since the recession.
- Norwalk has a very small manufacturing sector, but a relative industry concentration in wholesale trade compared to the metro area and state.
- Information and finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) saw the greatest job gains in Norwalk during 2002-2015. Manufacturing saw the biggest job decline, losing almost 4,000 jobs.

Norwalk's Economic Strengths & Challenges

- Norwalk has a diverse economy not dominated by a single sector, providing resilience through downturns.
- Our 3.8% unemployment rate is below the state's 4.6% rate, and down from a peak of 7.7% in 2010.
- Large employers, such as the Western Connecticut Health Network, provide a steady employment base. Despite this, office market growth is limited due to a large amount of existing space and shrinking employer requirements.
- The industrial market has potential due to Norwalk's access to I-95 and rail, but outdated space and zoning limitations constrain growth. A clear plan for the future of local industry is needed.
- Educational attainment remains relatively high in Norwalk, with 41% of the population aged 25 and older holding a bachelor's degree or higher (compared to 38% statewide and 46% in Fairfield County).
- 41% of employed residents work outside the city; 25% of employed residents also work in Norwalk.
- Stamford is the top commute destination for Norwalk residents working outside the city, followed by New York City and other Connecticut cities and towns.

Over one-third of jobs provide more than $75k per year

ACS 2011-2015 estimates, % of jobs



Population Trends In Norwalk

Total Population

The City of Norwalk has seen modest population growth in recent decades, like other cities in Fairfield County. Between the census years of 1990 and 2010 the city added 7,648 persons. Between the census year of 2010 and 2017, the population is estimated to have grown by 0.5% (3,000 persons) to a total of 89,005 in 2017.[6] The population has been growing more diverse since 2000, with greater numbers of people identifying as Hispanic/Latino (of any race) and Asian.

Age Composition[7]

Children under 18 years old make up about 21% of the population and persons 65 or older comprise 14% of the population. The median age is 39.[8] Like other cities in Connecticut and the Northeast, the population is aging as baby boomers move into retirement and millennials are postponing having children.

Foreign Born Population[9]

Immigration accounts for a significant amount of the net population growth in Fairfield County. About 25% of Norwalk's population is foreign born. Half of the city's foreign-born population are U.S. citizens. The overwhelming majority (85%) are of prime working age (18-64) and a third have a BA or higher degree.

Thirty-five percent speak a language other than English at home. Some 21% of all Norwalk residents are native speakers of Spanish, and the most common other languages are Creole, Italian, and Greek. Research has found that immigrants are more likely to be of working age and to start businesses than the native-born population.[10]

Household Types & Sizes[11]

Most households in Norwalk contain one or two people. According to the Census, "family households" contain people related by blood, marriage or adoption. Although 63% of the city's households are "family households," many are empty-nesters who no longer have children at home (27% of total households). The traditional household of a married couple with their own children makes up only 19% of Norwalk households. Nearly a third of Norwalk households contain one person, making up most of the "non-family" households. A quarter of Norwalk households include a person 65 years old or more, and 29% contain persons under 18. (Single parents with children make up 7.5% of total households.) This range of household types and sizes is not unusual for cities.

6 U.S. Census Bureau: Census 1990, 2000, 2010; American Community Survey (ACS) 2012-2016; 2017 Population Estimate

7 ACS 2012-2016

8 ACS 2012-2016

9 Fairfield County Community Wellness Index

10 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/forbrn.pdf; indicators.kauffman.org/indicator/opportunity-share-of-new-entrepreneurs

11 ACS 2011-2015

Figure 2.5 Norwalk Households by Type (2011-2016)

Total Households	**34,137**	**100%**
Total family households (related by blood, marriage, or adoption	21,596	63%
> Married-couple family with own children	6,531	19%
Total non-family households	12,541	37%
> Single person households	10,482	31%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey (ACS) 2011-2016

Population Projections & Growth Implications

In 2015, the Connecticut State Data Center projected that Norwalk's population would reach 90,247 by 2040 based on birth and death rates, age composition, and in-migration and out-migration. Given that the Census Bureau estimates 2017 population at 89,005, it appears likely that the population may be higher in 2040. Norwalk Public Schools peak enrollment was approximately 17,000 students in 1970, and today in 2017-2018 the school enrollment is over 11,000 students. An indication of population growth is that the public school system is currently experiencing an increase of about 100 students a year. For the purposes of this ten-year plan, should the 2020 census find that the estimated population in 2017 represents a generally accurate growth number and if there is a continuation of Norwalk's modest growth pace of approximately 0.5% over ten years, the city's population could reach approximately 93,000 by 2028, an increase of 4,000 persons.

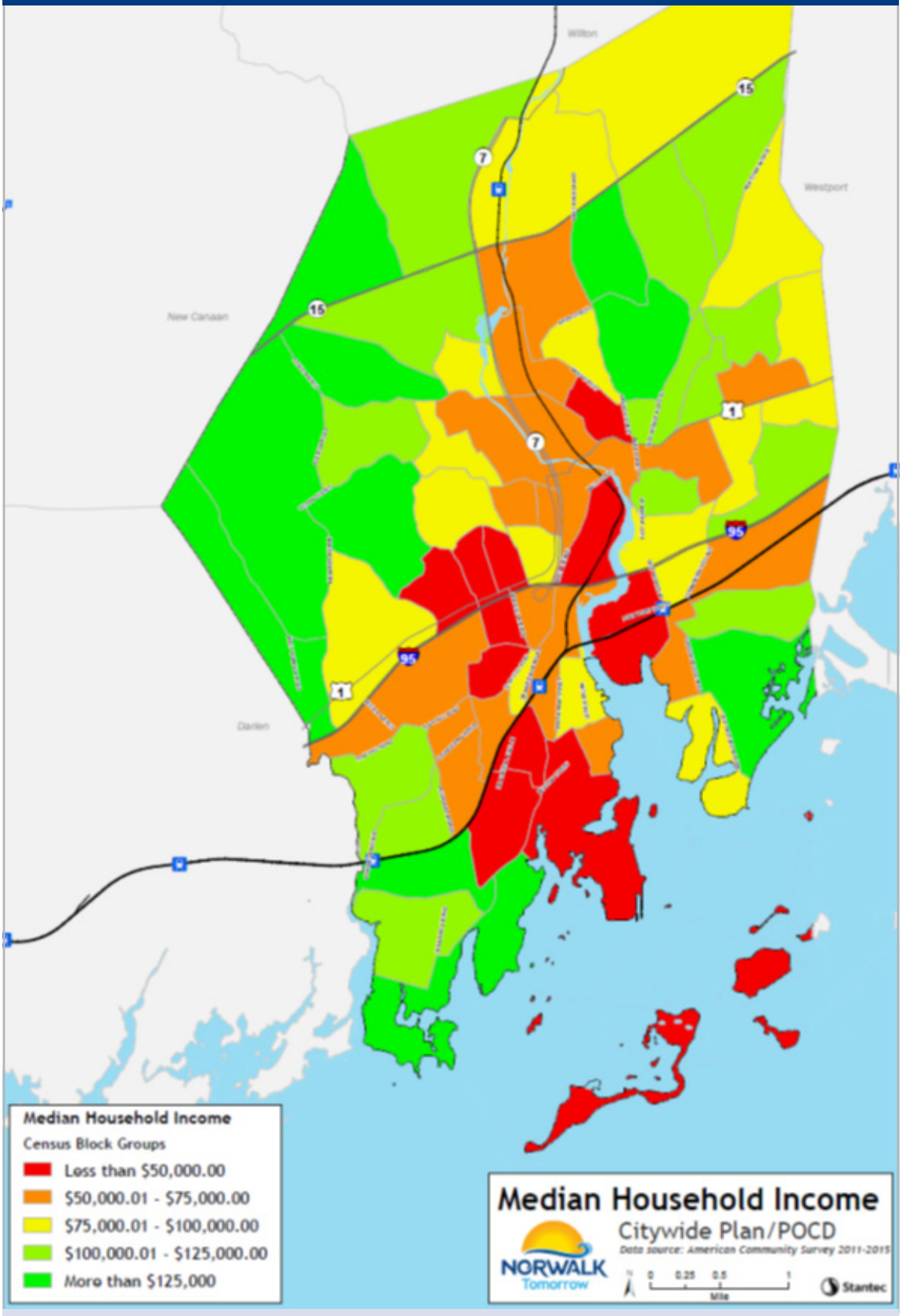
Population growth can occur through net increases in births over deaths and in-migration over out-migration, with different characteristics and impacts. Some of Norwalk's in-migrants are millennial young professionals who come to the city for work-related reasons. Most, though not all, are postponing forming families. In addition, Norwalk, like other Connecticut cities, has been experiencing growth in the immigrant population, especially Hispanics/Latinos (now 29% of the population) and Asians (now 5% of the population). Immigrants are typically of working age, though the city is also seeing unaccompanied minors arriving directly from Central America in particular. Immigrants are also typically of child-bearing age. The oldest millennials are now 38 years old and as they age, more will be forming families. They will be potential buyers for Norwalk's single-family homes, if they can afford them, and for multifamily and condominium developments that offer two- and three-bedroom units.

Norwalk could accommodate different kinds of growth in several ways. Norwalk's single-family neighborhoods are substantially built out, but a generational transition in these neighborhoods, from baby boomers to millennials and Generation Z (the post-millennial general) households with children, could bring new population through an increase in household size. More children may not require as many new housing units, but they would affect the school population and associated costs. If population growth comes through the addition of single-person and two-person households, continuing current redevelopment of older non-residential properties into mixed-use and multifamily areas would accommodate more population. Finally, there should be attention to affordability and family-sized housing units for lower income households.

Income & Education Disparities

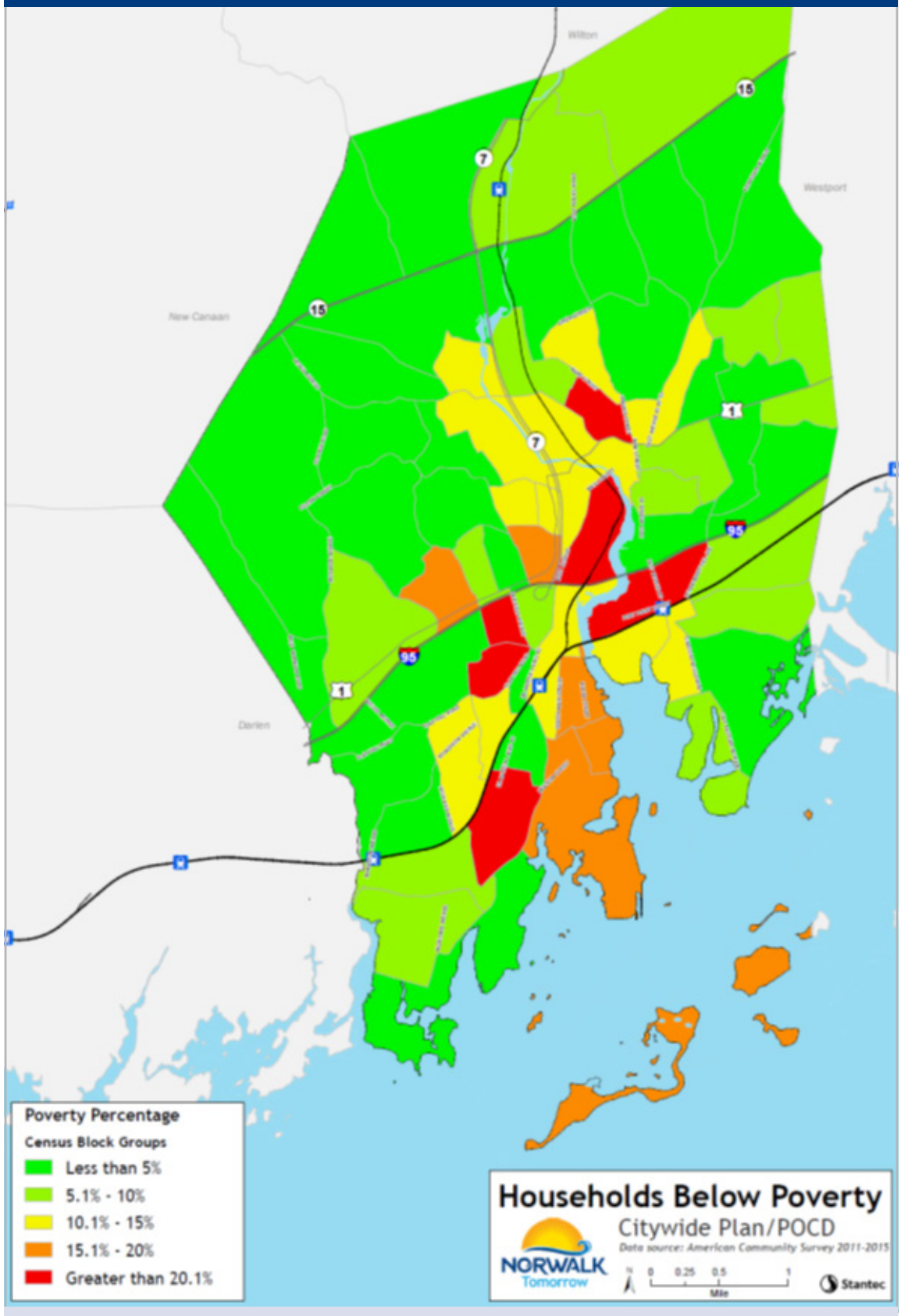
According to the Fairfield County Community Foundation's Well Being Index, in 2014 Fairfield County had the most income inequality of the 100 largest U.S. metropolitan areas based on comparison of the salaries of top and bottom earners. The highest average incomes in the county were 18 times the lowest average incomes for the county as a whole. In Norwalk, internal geographic disparities in 2014 can be seen in Figures 2.6 and 2.7. Additionally, while 41% of the population as a whole has a bachelor's or higher degree, 11.5% of the population has less than a high school diploma.

Figure 2.6 Median Household Income by Census Block Group



21% of all persons (18,550) and 28% of children (4,600) live in low-income households (less than twice poverty level)
Source: Fairfield County Community Wellbeing Index 2016

Figure 2.7 Households Below Poverty by Census Block Group



8.4% of all persons (7,400) live below the federal poverty level // Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey

Land Use

Based on the City's land use data, residential land uses account for more than 65% of land uses, including vacant residential areas, and combined commercial and industrial land uses account for almost 11%. These numbers do not include the small number of acres occupied by mixed use development. Approximately 78-80% of Norwalk land is non-tax-exempt property. The remaining land is open space, cemeteries, institutional, and government owned land.

Commercial/Industrial Contribution to the Grand List

In Connecticut, the aggregate valuation of taxable property in a city or town is called the Grand List. Municipalities are heavily dependent on property tax and Connecticut provides very little municipal aid. Norwalk taxpayers have been paying 89-90% of the cost of government, with permit revenue accounting for 5-6% and other government (state and federal) accounting for another 5%. Because of this situation, residential taxpayers always have an interest in seeing more tax revenue from non-residential land uses and from business development that would increase the value of commercial and industrial properties. Of course, there are jobs and other benefits from more non-residential activity. Some residents question whether the tax incentives made available for multifamily developments in the urban core are needed in order to attract and spur investment, even though the tax incentives will sunset in less than 10 years. At the same time, for a small city like Norwalk in the 21st century, an enhanced commercial/industrial share of the Grand List has other implications, such as attracting a younger skilled workforce with live-work-play environments and multimodal transportation.

Figure 2.8 Existing Land Use

Land Use	Area (acres)	Percent	Parcels
Residential - 1 or 2 family	7,457	57.1	18,328
Residential - 3 or more family	686	5.3	873
Mixed Residential/Commercial	64	0.5	199
Mixed Use - Village	0	0	1
Commercial	1,201	9.2	872
Industrial	201	1.5	117
Government/Institutional	805	6.2	226
Open Space	705	5.4	73
Cemetery	130	1	17
Utility	107	1	21
Vacant - Commercial	99	1	165
Vacant - Industrial	20	0	37
Vacant - Municipal	157	1	22
Vacant - Residential	365	3	524
Vacant - Utility	148	1	18
Other	906	7	603
Total	**13,050**	**100.2***	**22,196**

***over 100% due to rounding**

Source: City of Norwalk

The percentage of combined commercial/industrial property in Norwalk has increased steadily over the past five year and is comparable to Danbury and slightly below Stamford, the other major cities in western Connecticut.

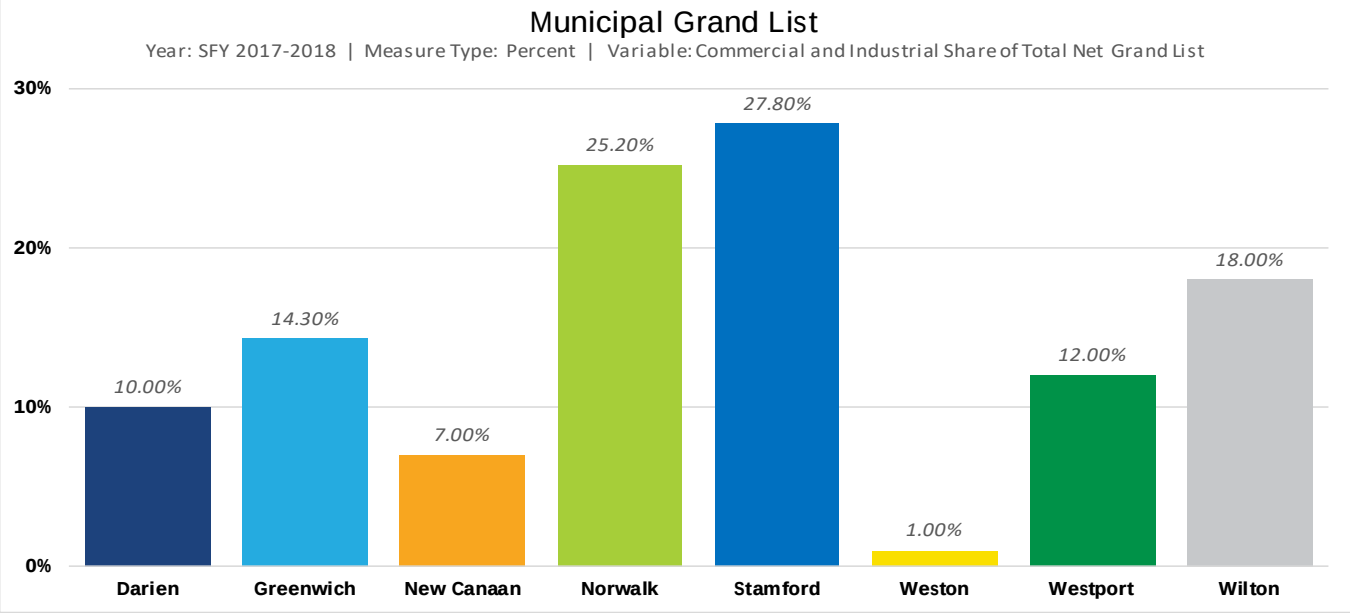
Figure 2.9 Commercial and Industrial Share of Total Net Grand List, Norwalk, Stamford and Danbury, 2010-2018

Location	SFY 2010-2011	SFY 2011-2012	SFY 2012-2013	SFY 2013-2014	SFY 2014-2015	SFY 2015-2016	SFY 2016-2017	SFY 2017-2018
Danbury	27.10%	26.85%	26.49%	25.53%	25.83%	25.26%	25.6%	25.4%
Norwalk	18.90%	18.75%	18.55%	18.08%	20.49%	20.32%	23.2%	25.2%
Stamford	28.50%	28.07%	27.94%	27.62%	27.73%	27.82%	27.4%	27.8%

Source: City of Norwalk

The residential suburbs in Fairfield County have much lower commercial/industrial shares of the total Grand List than Norwalk, as shown in the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2017-2018 data in Figure 2.10.

Figure 2.10 Municipal Grand List Fairfield County



Note: Grand List indicators are derived from October of the year preceding the State Fiscal Year – i.e. SFY 2017-2018 uses Grand List data from October 2016.
Source: CTdata.org

F. NORWALK AT A GLANCE & KEY POPULATION TRENDS

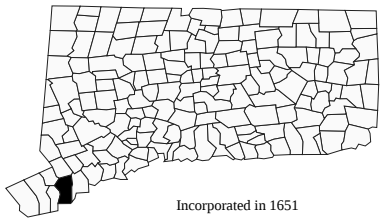
This profile provides data from the State CT Data Collaborative. Data may vary somewhat from numbers provided earlier in this chapter due to use of different sources of estimates.

Norwalk, Connecticut

CERC Town Profile 2018 *Produced by The CT Data Collaborative*

Town Hall
P.O. Box 5125
Norwalk, CT 06856
(203) 854-7701

Belongs To
Fairfield County
LMA Bridgeport - Stamford
Western Planning Area



Incorporated in 1651

Demographics

Population

	Town	County	State
2000	82,951	882,567	3,405,565
2010	85,603	916,829	3,574,097
2012-2016	87,930	941,618	3,588,570
2020	86,302	944,692	3,604,591
'16 - '20 Growth / Yr	-0.5%	0.1%	0.1%

	Town	County	State
Land Area (sq. miles)	23	625	4,842
Pop./Sq. Mile (2012-2016)	3,846	1,507	741
Median Age (2012-2016)	39	40	41
Households (2012-2016)	33,184	335,209	1,354,713
Med. HH Inc. (2012-2016)	$80,896	$86,670	$71,755

	Town	State
Veterans (2012-2016)	3,209	188,759

Age Distribution (2012-2016)

	0-4		5-14		15-24		25-44		45-64		65+		Total	
Town	5,085	6%	9,871	11%	11,110	13%	24,817	28%	24,723	28%	12,324	14%	87,930	100%
County	53,839	6%	127,239	14%	124,148	13%	231,225	25%	269,733	29%	135,434	14%	941,618	100%
State	188,812	5%	439,100	12%	494,529	14%	878,077	24%	1,033,029	29%	555,023	15%	3,588,570	100%

Race/Ethnicity (2012-2016)

	Town	County	State
White Alone, Non-Hispanic	46,731	598,017	2,464,450
Black Alone	13,917	107,282	372,696
Asian	4,702	47,742	152,782
Native American	403	2,441	9,399
Other/Multi-Race	5,155	89,139	284,582
Hispanic or Latino	22,080	175,480	537,728

	Town	County	State
Poverty Rate (2012-2016)	8.5%	8.8%	10.4%

Educational Attainment (2012-2016)

	Town		State	
High School Graduate	14,288	23%	673,220	27%
Associates Degree	4,106	7%	184,426	7%
Bachelors or Higher	25,716	42%	938,319	38%

Economics

Business Profile (2016)

Sector	Units	Employment
Total - All Industries	3,463	45,397
23 - Construction	272	1,273
31-33 - Manufacturing	115	1,300
44-45 - Retail Trade	352	6,405
51 - Information	107	4,074
62 - Health Care and Social Assistance	293	6,168
72 - Accommodation and Food Services	263	3,123
Total Government	44	4,159

Top Five Grand List (2017)

	Amount
Eversource Energy	$353,065,738
Merritt 7 Venture LLC	$222,750,890
CP IV Waypointe BP I LLC	$85,847,330
Thirty Five Glover Partners LLC	$69,167,890
Twenty Fiver Glover Partners LLC	$59,500,000
Net Grand List (SFY 2015-2016)	$11,902,540,587

Major Employers (2017)

Western Connecticut Health Network (Norwalk Hospital)
General Electric Company, Inc.
MBI
Cablevision Systems Corporation
Stew Leonard's

Education

2017-2018 School Year

	Grades	Enrollment
Norwalk School District	PK-12	11,573

Smarter Balanced Test Percent Above Goal (2016-2017)

	Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 8	
	Town	State	Town	State	Town	State
Math	54.3%	53.1%	50.5%	50.0%	29.0%	41.8%
ELA	50.1%	51.8%	52.1%	54.1%	48.8%	53.7%

Pre-K Enrollment (PSIS)

	2016-2017
Norwalk School District	274

Rate of Chronic Absenteeism (2016-2017)

	All
Connecticut	9.9%
Norwalk School District	8.5%

4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (2016-2017)

	All	Female	Male
Connecticut	87.9%	90.9%	85.1%
Norwalk School District	93.0%	94.9%	91.3%

Public vs Private Enrollment (2012-2016)

	Town	County	State
Public	78.8%	81.8%	86.8%
Private	21.2%	18.2%	13.2%

profiles.ctdata.org

No representation or warranties, expressed or implied, are given regarding the accuracy of this information.

Norwalk, Connecticut

CERC Town Profile 2018

Connecticut Economic Resource Center

Government

Government Form: Mayor - Council

Total Revenue (2016)	$356,597,097	Total Expenditures (2016)	$351,042,468	Annual Debt Service (2016)	$27,377,859
Tax Revenue	$298,453,609	Education	$195,581,632	As % of Expenditures	7.8%
Non-tax Revenue	$58,143,488	Other	$155,460,836	Eq. Net Grand List (2016)	$17,956,313,819
Intergovernmental	$42,252,345	Total Indebtedness (2016)	$211,908,621	Per Capita	$203,038
Per Capita Tax (2016)	$3,365	As % of Expenditures	60.4%	As % of State Average	134.2%
As % of State Average	117.2%	Per Capita	$2,396	Moody's Bond Rating (2016)	Aaa
		As % of State Average	96.6%	Actual Mill Rate (2016)	24.91
				Equalized Mill Rate (2016)	16.57
				% of Net Grand List Com/Ind (2016)	20.3%

Housing/Real Estate

Housing Stock (2012-2016)

	Town	County	State
Total Units	35,168	364,737	1,493,798
% Single Unit (2012-2016)	47.8%	57.9%	59.1%
New Permits Auth (2017)	429	1,719	4,547
As % Existing Units	1.2%	0.5%	0.3%
Demolitions (2017)	21	538	1,403
Home Sales	NA	7,243	26,310
Median Price	$416,800	$413,400	$269,300
Built Pre-1950 share	31.2%	29.3%	29.7%
Owner Occupied Dwellings	20,290	226,707	900,223
As % Total Dwellings	61.1%	67.6%	66.5%
Subsidized Housing (2017)	4,506	34,307	168,576

Distribution of House Sales

	Town	County	State
Less than $100,000	NA	439	3,417
$100,000-$199,999	NA	890	7,522
$200,000-$299,999	NA	1,117	6,031
$300,000-$399,999	NA	980	3,380
$400,000 or More	NA	3,817	5,960

Rental (2012-2016)

	Town	County	State
Median Rent	$1,477	$1,385	$1,094
Cost-burdened Renters	50.1%	54.0%	52.5%

Labor Force

	Town	County	State
Residents Employed	48,484	459,238	1,795,519
Residents Unemployed	2,237	23,180	96,273
Unemployment Rate	4.4%	4.8%	5.1%
Self-Employed Rate	13.3%	13.0%	9.9%
Total Employers	3,463	35,142	117,337
Total Employed	45,397	423,648	1,666,580

Connecticut Commuters (2015)

Commuters Into Town From:		Town Residents Commuting To:	
Norwalk, CT	11,459	Norwalk, CT	11,459
Stamford, CT	4,278	Stamford, CT	6,744
Bridgeport, CT	3,512	Manhattan, NY	4,555
Fairfield, CT	2,088	Greenwich, CT	2,178
Stratford, CT	1,484	Westport, CT	1,686
Trumbull, CT	1,155	Wilton, CT	1,670
Danbury, CT	992	Darien, CT	1,373

Quality of Life

Crime Rates (per 100,000 residents) (2016)

	Town	State
Property	1,641	1,780
Violent	338	224

Disengaged Youth (2012-2016)

	Town	State
Female	6.3%	4.5%
Male	9.2%	5.5%

	Town
Library circulation per capita	5.24

Distance to Major Cities

	Miles
New York City	41
Hartford	60
Providence	115
Boston	151
Montreal	307

Residential Utilities

Electric Provider

Eversource Energy
(800) 286-2000

Cable Provider

Charter Communications
(800) 827-8288

profiles.ctdata.org

No representation or warranties, expressed or implied, are given regarding the accuracy of this information.

2

Living & Working in Norwalk

CHAPTER 03

Prosperity & Opportunity

CHAPTER 04

Housing Choice & Healthy Lifestyles

CHAPTER 05

A Community Committed to Life-Long Education

CHAPTER 06

Preserving & Promoting Our Historic Heritage, Arts & Culture

Summary Themes & Priorities

Proactive Economic Development to Grow Jobs & the Grand List

Establish an economic development office with experienced, professional staff to develop and implement an effective economic development strategy.

Housing Policy with Innovative Affordable Housing Solutions

Establish a housing policy and implementation structure within city government.

Norwalk Public Schools Continue to be the Best City School System in Connecticut

Implement plans to modernize school facilities and for continuous educational performance.

Historic Resources, Arts & Culture

Plan systematically for preservation of Norwalk's historic character, create a strategic approach to arts and culture, and make historic heritage, culture, the arts, coastal character central to a tourism program.

CHAPTER THREE

Prosperity & Opportunity

A. BUILDING ON NORWALK'S ECONOMIC ASSETS

Norwalk has an enviable economic and business environment. Clusters of economic activity are located around the Merritt 7 area (the leading job and income generator), the urban cores of Wall Street/Norwalk Center, SoNo, and commercial areas along Route 1. Unlike many small to mid-sized cities in the northeast, Norwalk enjoys relatively high education and income levels, and has experienced a measurable uptick in private development in recent years focused on mixed use, multi-family residential projects. The city's location along the waterfront with frequent commuter rail access to New York City makes it an ideal location for a wide range of residents, businesses, and attractions.

Nonetheless, Norwalk has economic development challenges to address and to determine its path forward. City government has not had a strong economic development office. As a result, Norwalk has been missing out on business development opportunities because the City has not been engaged in attraction and expansion projects like other cities in Connecticut. There has been very limited proactive marketing or engagement with regional and state leaders, which is where many opportunities start. Moreover, from helping to grow existing businesses to setting appropriate business incentive policies to prioritizing growth areas in the city, an economic development office with experienced and professional staff is essential to implementing the strategies and actions outlined in the Citywide Plan/POCD. As of this writing, the Mayor and Common Council have agreed to reorganize City government to include a Director of Economic and Community Development. Creating a professional and proactive economic development office should be the city's top economic development priority.

B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision:

- Our prosperity is rooted in **retaining the foundation of our diversified economy**, including health care and Fortune 500 companies, **while attracting and growing businesses in emerging fields**. These businesses allow many Norwalk residents to work where they live, provide living wage jobs for all skill levels, and create a strong non-residential tax base.
- **We are a center of culture, entertainment, and tourism**, attracting local and regional visitors to our urban districts of SoNo and Norwalk Center, to our museums, aquarium and historic sites, and to our parks and natural open spaces.

From the Principles:

- **Be business-friendly.** Support business growth and entrepreneurship, attracting businesses and jobs in existing and emerging economic sectors while protecting quality of life and environmental resources.
- **Pursue goals through partnerships.** Connect city government with local businesses and institutions, as well as neighboring towns and regional and metropolitan agencies to achieve the city's vision and goals.
- **Connect people and places.** Provide safe and efficient transportation choices, including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit opportunities, along with well-maintained streets, to connect people to each other, to city destinations, and the region.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
The City of Norwalk has the right policies, infrastructure, and leadership for business growth and development.	• Support dedicated professional and proactive economic development leadership in City government • Support establishment of efficient and transparent permitting processes • Support development of infrastructure and amenities attractive to businesses and workers
Norwalk has a diversified economy with a larger business tax base and more high-quality, good jobs for residents.	• Seek to retain, grow and attract a wide range of businesses to increase Norwalk's competitiveness and the Grand List • Seek businesses that provide local high-quality jobs with opportunities for growth and advancement

Fairfield County, which is part of the broader New York City metropolitan region, is the only county in Connecticut that has been growing. Norwalk has been participating in that growth. The 2017 US Census Bureau population estimate for Norwalk is 89,005 persons.

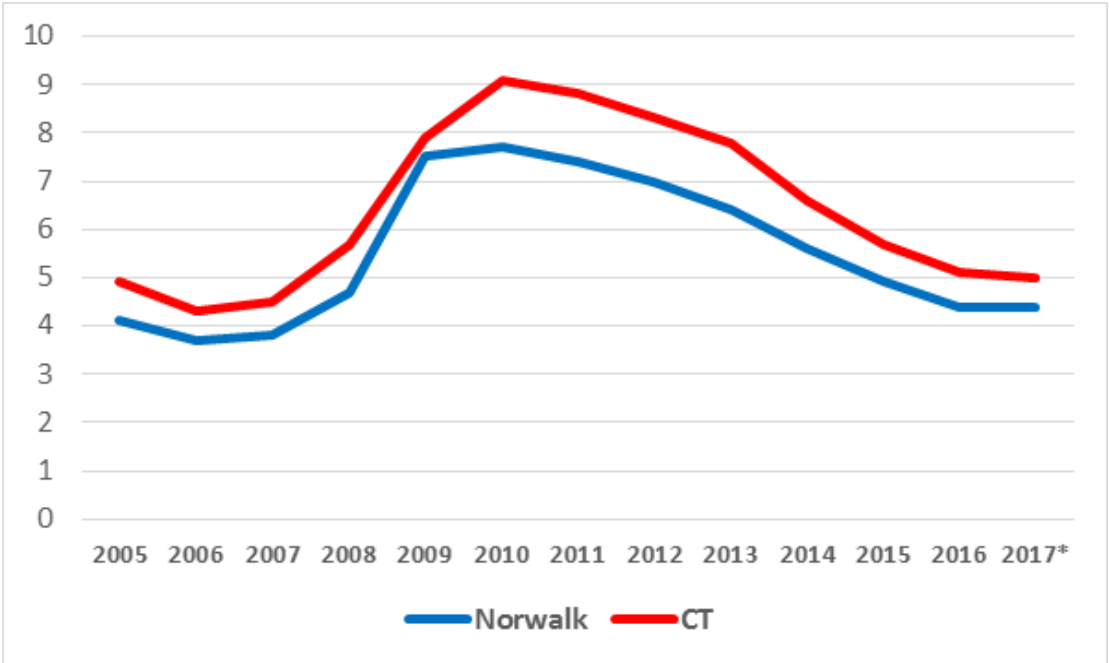
Unemployment

Norwalk's unemployment rate stood at 4.0% as of March 2019, compared to 4.2% statewide. Over the past 12 years, Norwalk's unemployment rate has generally been slightly lower than the statewide rate (Figure 3.1). While Norwalk did experience a significant increase in unemployment as a result of the 2007-2009 recession, the rate peaked at 7.7% in 2010 (on an annual basis), compared to a peak unemployment rate of 9.1% statewide. The number and percent of unemployed has fallen steadily as the economy gradually rebounded.

Workforce Educational Attainment

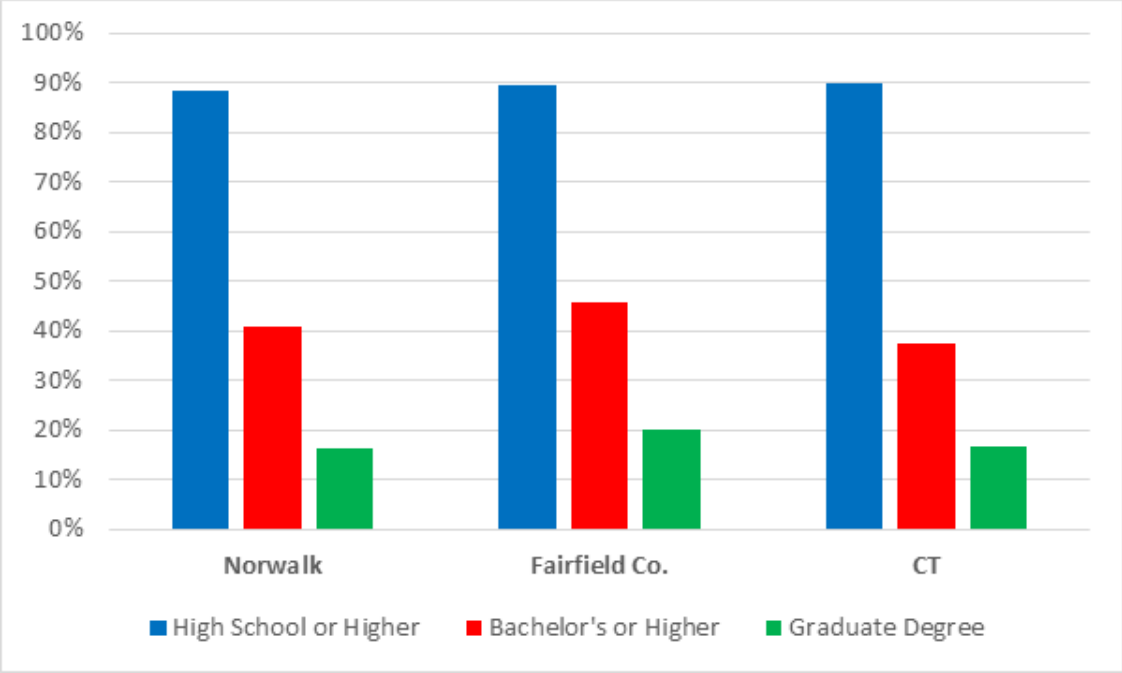
The most important factors in economic development are the skills, education levels, and availability of the workforce. This is generally a strength throughout Connecticut, including Norwalk. Educational attainment levels in Norwalk and Fairfield County are similar to statewide averages (see Figure 3.2). The percentage of adults with at least a high school degree is 89% to 90% in all three areas. In slightly greater contrast, 41% of Norwalk adults 25 years or older have a bachelor's degree compared to 46% in Fairfield County, and 38% statewide. Sixteen percent of Norwalk adults have a graduate degree, compared to 20% in Fairfield County and 17% statewide. In general, these data point towards the higher average wages earned by Norwalk workers, as the share of the population with a bachelor's degree is highly correlated with earnings. Norwalk is slightly behind Fairfield County averages where the large percentage of residents with a graduate degree are consistent with the area's strengths in higher-wage, higher-skill jobs in professional services, finance, and research and development (R&D).

Figure 3.1 Unemployment Rates for Norwalk and CT - 2005 to 2017*



Source: Connecticut Department of Labor, Labor Market Information
*Note: Data for 2017 is through August 2017 (4.4% in Norwalk)

Figure 3.2 Educational Attainment (Adults 25+) for Norwalk, Fairfield County, and CT



Source: American Community Survey (ACS) data 2011-2015

Jobs & Industries

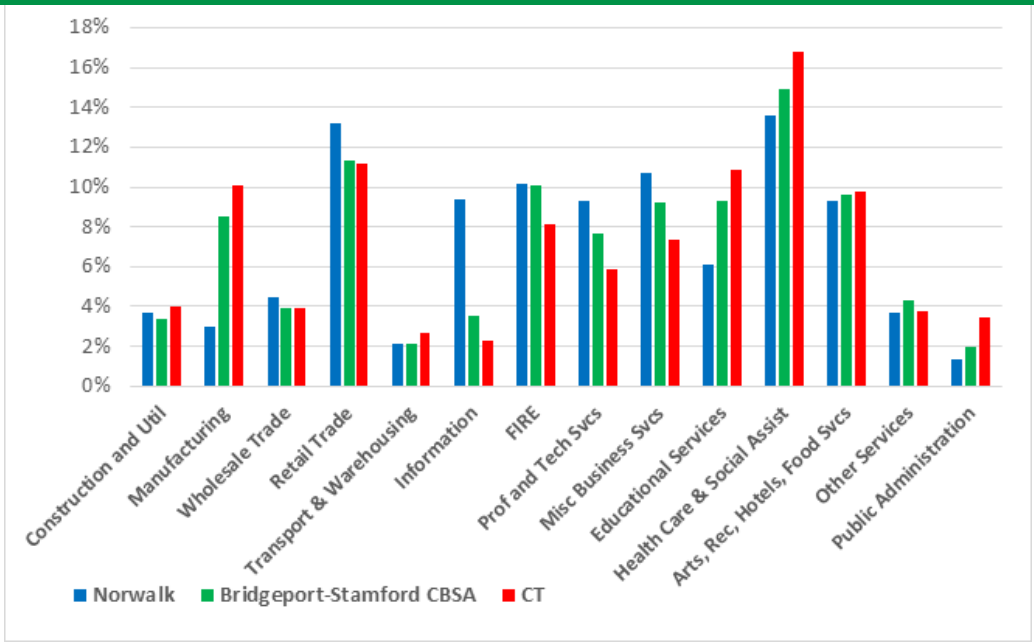
Norwalk's businesses and organizations generated and provided 45,469 jobs in 2015, slightly up from 2002 when total employment was about 44,570. As discussed in Chapter 2, Norwalk is part of a broader regional and state economy. Norwalk had relatively stronger job growth in the mid-2000s and reached a total employment peak above 46,000 jobs in 2006. The broader metro area, state and Norwalk all experienced job loss during the 2007-2009 Great Recession, but have been recovering since. However, while the U.S. economy has now exceeded its previous employment peak and keeps expanding, Norwalk and the state of Connecticut still have not reached their previous peak employment, demonstrating that the economic recovery has not been as robust.

Figure 3.3 provides data on the industry share of employment in Norwalk compared to the metro area and Connecticut. The largest single sector in Norwalk is health care and social assistance at 14% of all jobs, slightly below the share in the metro area (15%) and statewide (17%). This industry includes the hospital and medical outpatient offices, along with a wide mix of non-profit social assistance organizations. The next largest industry in terms of jobs in Norwalk is retail trade with about 6,000 jobs, representing a higher share of jobs than in the metro area and statewide.

In an era where "eds and meds" (educational and medical care institutions) are often the dominant foundational industry sectors in cities, these industries are less prevalent in Norwalk than statewide. Instead, the industries with a relatively large concentration (share of jobs) in Norwalk include information, finance and insurance (FIRE), professional/technical services, and miscellaneous business services (which includes temporary placement services). The large share of jobs in information (almost 10%) is largely driven by software publishing firms. Norwalk has a very small manufacturing sector with about 3% of jobs compared to 10% statewide, and also a relatively modest number of government jobs. Over the near-fifty-year period from 1970, when about 50% of Norwalk jobs were still in manufacturing, even though manufacturing had been in retreat for the previous fifty years, office-based jobs and other sectors combined with continuing manufacturing decline to reduce manufacturing jobs in Norwalk.

The city's industry mix is not static but rather ever-evolving as shown in Figure 3.4 which presents industry employment in 2002, 2009 and 2015. The biggest job decline over this period was in manufacturing

Figure 3.3 Share of Employment by Industry – Norwalk, Bridgeport-Stamford CBSA, CT – 2015



Source: U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), OnTheMap
Note: CBSA stands for core based statistical area, similar to metropolitan statistical areas

with a large loss from almost 4,000 jobs to fewer than 1,400. Retail trade and professional/business services also experienced a slight decline over this period. The biggest job gains came in the sectors of information, finance/insurance, health care, and arts, recreation, hotels, and food services. The effects of the recession are visible in some sectors, such as construction, which saw a measurable decline from 2002 to 2009, but a full recovery by 2015. While Norwalk has a relatively small manufacturing sector, it is well-located for warehousing and distribution companies like UPS and has an industry concentration in wholesale trade compared to the metro area and state. This reflects Norwalk's geographic location with strong highway access (I-95, Routes 1 and 7). A diverse mix of small- to mid-sized industrial tenants can be found, including craft food products, beverage distribution, baseball bat wood products, building products, New York Times distribution, and so on.

Geography of Employment Centers

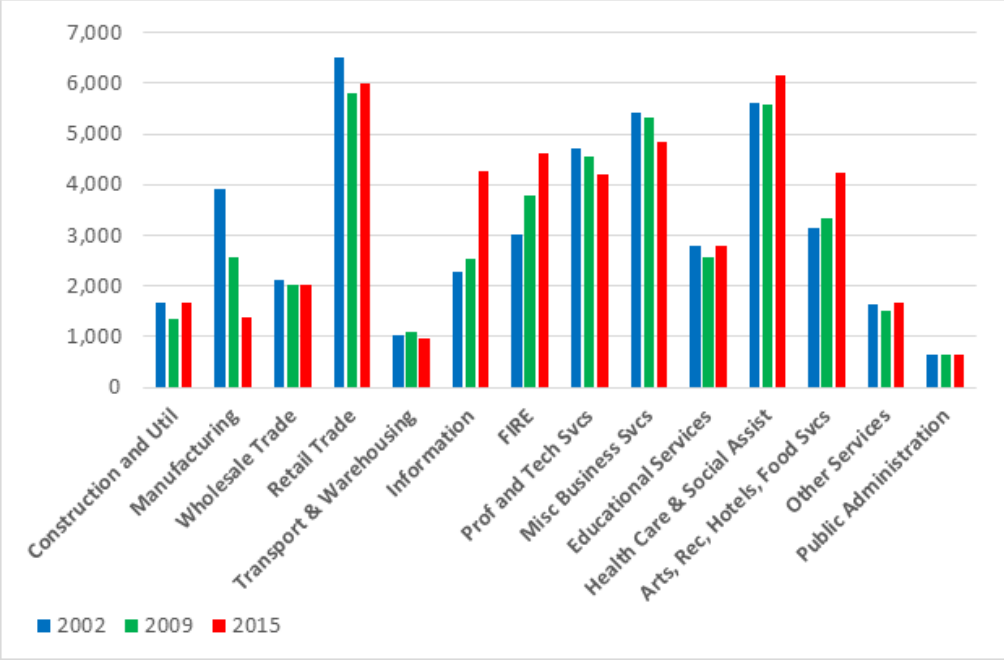
Economic activity in Norwalk is clustered in a few areas. Figure 3.5 shows these concentrations in terms of both a "heat map" concept as well as circles that indicate smaller centers (1 to 9 jobs) and larger employment centers (2,000 to 5,000 jobs). The Merritt 7 area in northern Norwalk, just north of the Merritt Parkway, has the largest job cluster: over 11,000 jobs, accounting for about one-fourth of all employment in the city, with a heavy concentration in the finance, information, and professional/technical services sectors. The next largest concentration is just north of I-95 near Main Street and connecting to the Wall Street downtown area. That economic cluster stretches south to the South Norwalk (SoNo) area near the Norwalk River as well as just west to the industrial areas near MLK Boulevard. Other concentrations include commercial/retail areas along Route 1 both east and west of Route 7. There is a modest level of employment activity in the East Norwalk and Rowayton areas but very little in the more residential west/northwest and northeast parts of Norwalk.

Jobs & Residence

The latest data on commuting patterns from the U.S. Census Bureau (Figure 3.6) estimate that in 2015:

- Almost 11,500 workers both lived and worked within Norwalk. Norwalk has a roughly equal number of commuters coming to jobs in Norwalk

Figure 3.4 Norwalk Employment by Industry – 2002, 2009, and 2015



Source: U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), OnTheMap

and residents commuting out of Norwalk to work.

- Over 34,100 workers commuted into Norwalk for work on a daily basis.
    - After Norwalk, the cities and towns providing the most workers commuting to Norwalk were Stamford (4,278), Bridgeport (3,512), Stratford (1,418), New York City (reverse commute), Trumbull, Danbury, and Westport.
- About 32,650 Norwalk residents commute to jobs outside of Norwalk each day.
    - The cities and towns to which Norwalk workers commute most frequently are Stamford (6,744 workers), New York City (5,157), Westport (1,686), Darien, Greenwich, and Bridgeport.

Housing Market

Providing housing that is attractive and affordable for a wide range of workers is important to expanding businesses. As the sixth largest city in Connecticut, it is not surprising that Norwalk has a slightly lower share of owner-occupied housing units (62%) than the statewide average (67%). Neighboring suburban and predominantly residential towns such as Darien and Westport have higher rates of owner-occupancy. Eighteen percent of housing units are in buildings with 10 or more units.[1]

Norwalk's median home value (both single family and condominium) according to census data estimates is $410,000 which is similar to median sales prices found online by Trulia.[2] However, some areas within Norwalk have a median sale price below $300,000 and housing prices are low in Norwalk compared to neighboring towns like Westport, Darien, New Canaan, and Greenwich, with median sales prices well above $1 million. Despite that, data show that a substantial minority of residents (45%) are "cost-burdened," meaning that they pay 30% or more of annual household income on housing costs ("cost-burdened"). This includes 41% of homeowners and half of renters.[3]

The single-family neighborhoods in Norwalk are largely built out. However, Norwalk has experienced an

1 See the ACS data (2011-2015) for Norwalk and comparison cities in Figure 2.2.

2 www.trulia.com/real_estate/Norwalk-Connecticut/market-trends

3 ACS 2012-2016 via CTData.org

uptick in residential development in recent years, largely concentrated in multi-family residential buildings such as the multi-phase Waypointe project. Norwalk permitted nearly 1,700 more housing units in buildings with five or more units between 2010 and 2017, similar to growth seen in New Haven. Stamford dwarfed this number by permitting more than 3,000 units in the same period.

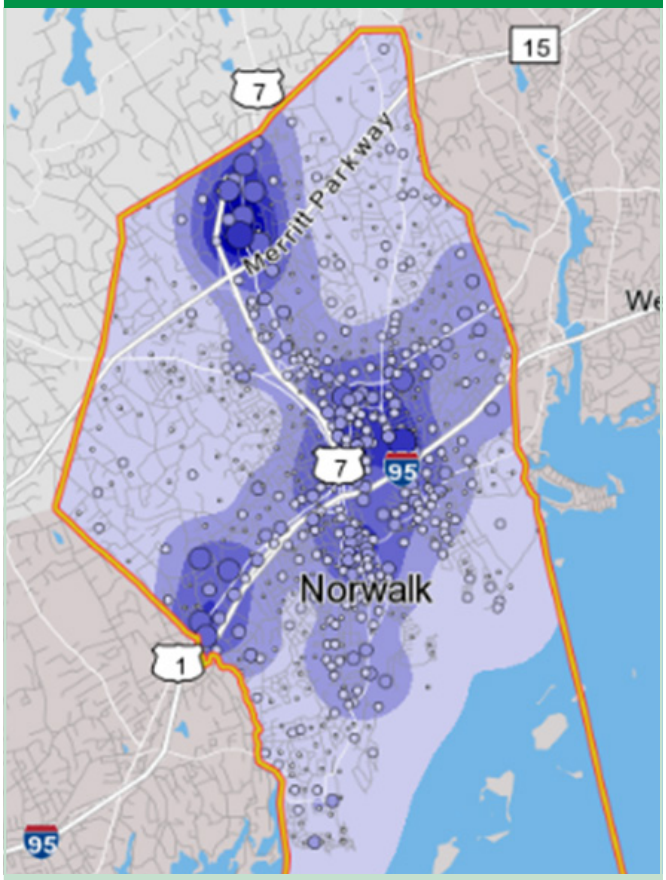
Costs of Doing Business

While there are many cost factors that businesses consider when making decisions about where to expand or locate their operations, two key costs are property taxes and electricity costs (as they can vary substantially within a state, unlike sales taxes).

Property Tax

The property tax rate is not a major factor for businesses considering Norwalk. Norwalk's millage rate of $25.44 per $1,000 in value compares well to other cities and towns in Connecticut.[4] The property tax rate in nearby Stamford (the biggest competitor for commercial business) is a similar 25.26, with Danbury slightly higher at 28.68 (see Figure 3.7). Meanwhile, property taxes in Connecticut cities and towns are further differentiated into: a) more affluent towns with a smaller commercial base which tend to have a lower property tax rate; and b) larger, more economically distressed cities that tend to have higher property tax rates. For example, adjacent and nearby affluent towns such as Westport, Darien, and New Canaan have lower property tax rates ranging from 15.77 to 16.86, but they also do not have the same amount or variety of land zoned for nonresidential uses. Meanwhile, larger cities like New Haven, Bridgeport and Hartford have higher rates from 41.55 to 54.37.

Figure 3.5 Norwalk Employment Concentrations and Centers of Economic Activity - 2015



Source: U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), OnTheMap

The Grand List

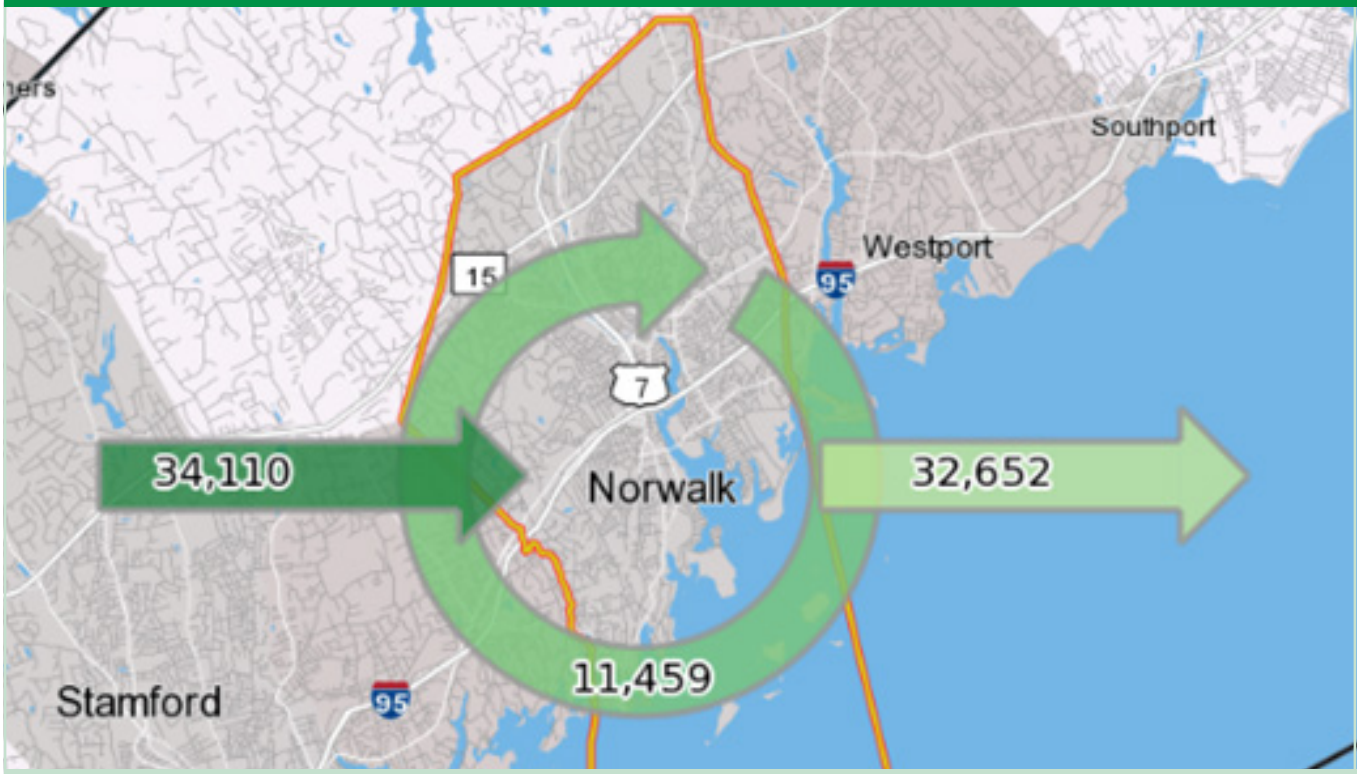
Twenty-three percent of 2016 net real property valuation (commonly known as the Grand List) in Norwalk stems from commercial and industrial properties compared to 71% from residential properties (see Figure 3.8). The share of valuation (the basis for property tax revenue) from commercial and industrial properties is slightly below Stamford (27%), Danbury (28%), and Bridgeport (26%). Industrial properties in Norwalk account for only 6% of the business tax base with 94% from commercial uses.

Energy Costs

Primarily served by Eversource (formerly Northeast Utilities), with electricity also provided by the Second and Third Taxing Districts, electricity costs do not appear to be a major concern in Norwalk. As shown in Figure 3.9, electricity costs in the Stamford-Norwalk area are consistently below statewide averages and competitive with U.S. electricity prices (slightly above for residential, below for commercial and industrial customers). Energy prices are often a concern in some New England areas as the region struggles to compete with other parts of the country (where cheaper energy results from more dependence on coal or better access to natural gas).

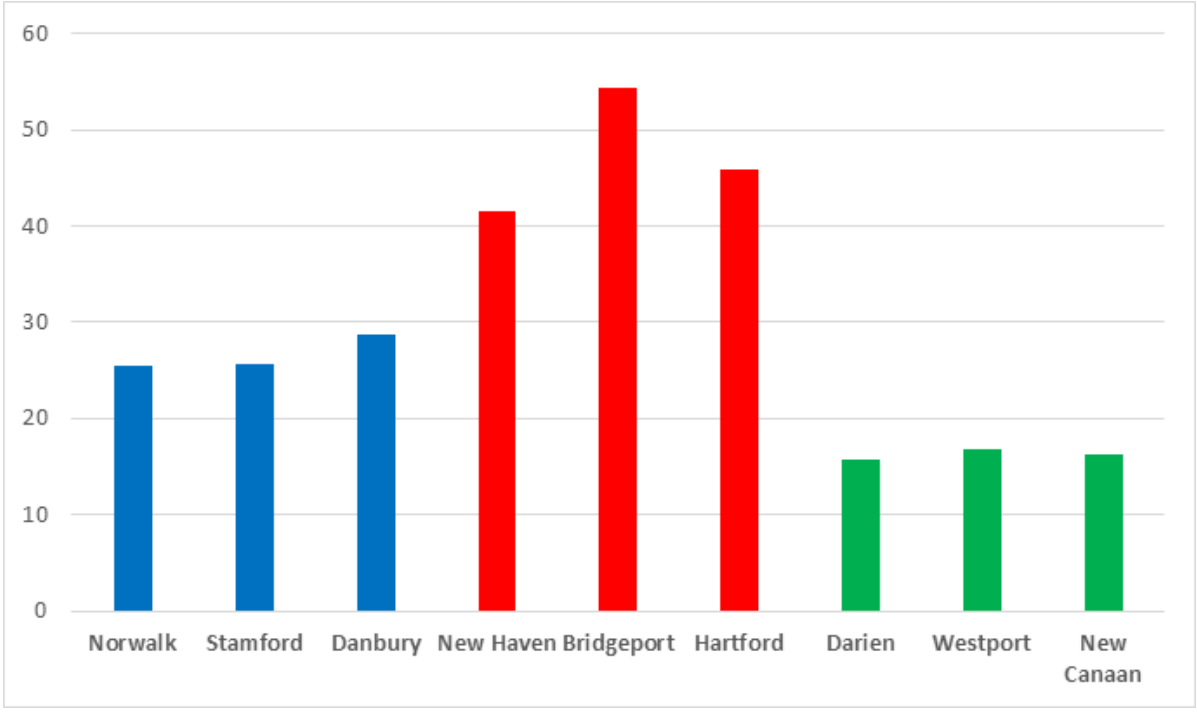
4 Actual millage rates can vary by taxing district and by local services for cities and towns in Connecticut. The data shared here are close approximations or averages based on data from the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.

Figure 3.6 Norwalk Commuting Patterns (2015)



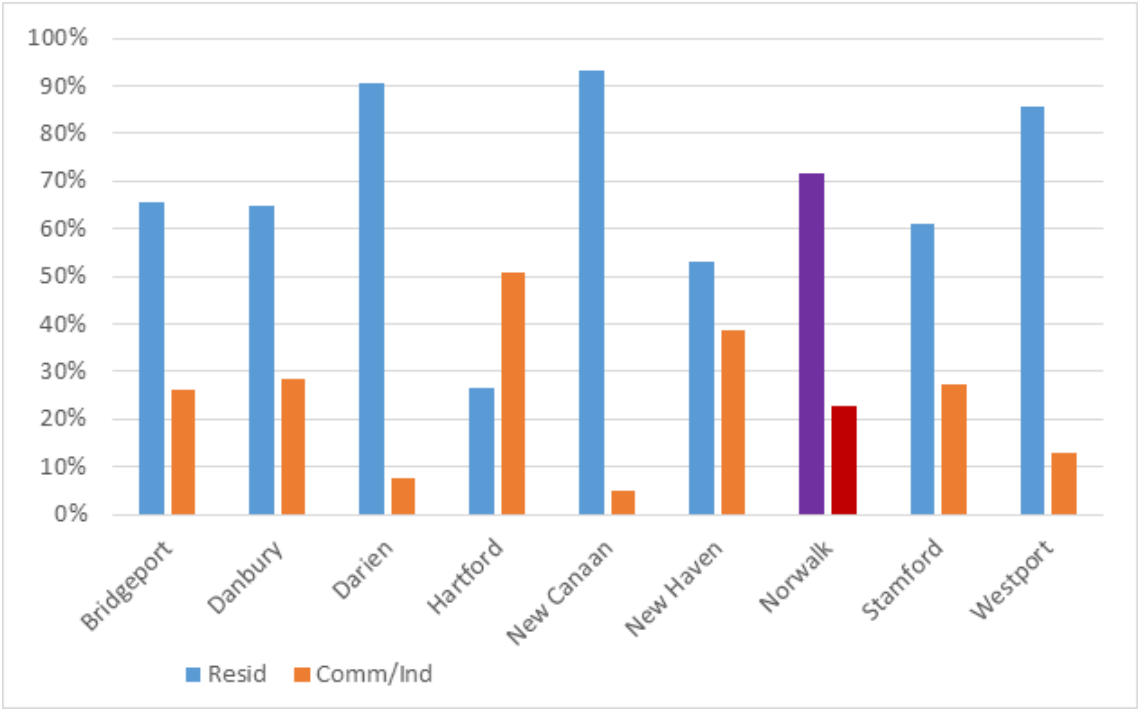
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (OnTheMap)

Figure 3.7 Property Tax Rates for Connecticut Cities and Towns (millage for FY 2017)



Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management

Figure 3.8 2016 Grand List - Share of Property Value for Residential and Commercial/Industrial Properties



Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management

Economic Development Planning

In recent years (2014-2017) Norwalk had one professional focused on economic development: an economic development director who worked within the mayor's office and the Redevelopment Agency. With the exception of a 2015 plan, most of the economic development focus has been on the urban core's redevelopment area.

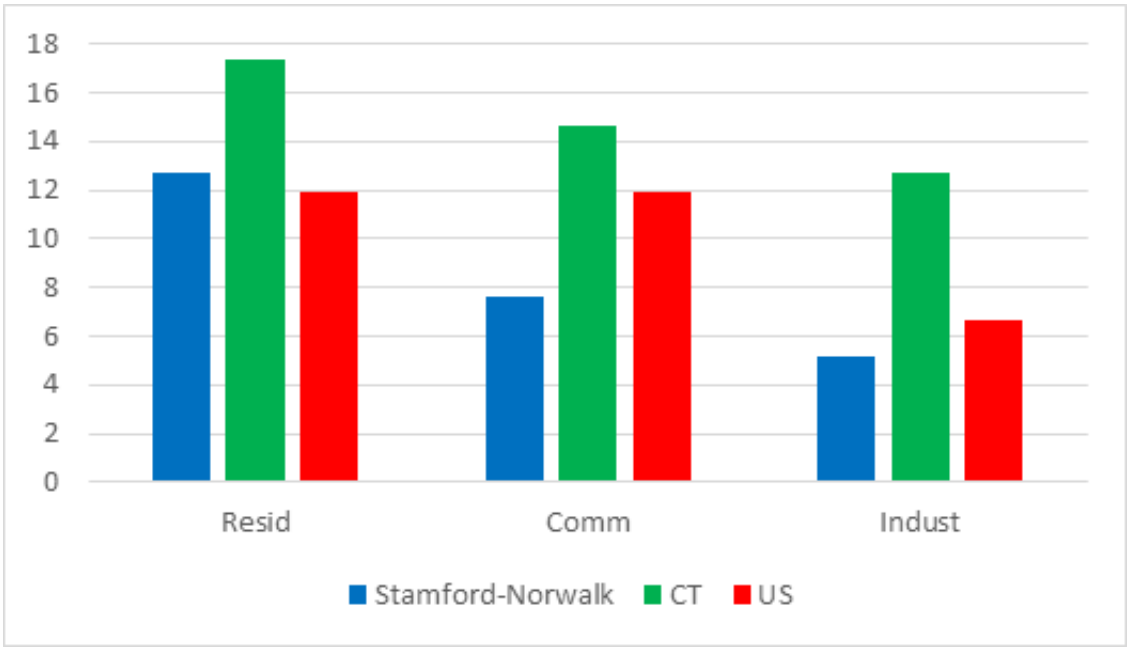
- **Economic Development Action Plan**
  In September 2015, the City issued an Economic Development Action Plan with a set of goals and proposed actions broadly aimed at economic development throughout the city, including establishing a business retention and expansion program, rebranding the city, streamlining permitting and approval, leveraging arts and culture, and promoting multimodal transportation. Full implementation of this plan with only one economic development staff person would be very difficult and it would require strong commitment to collaboration among city departments and agencies. Many of the goals, strategies and actions in this plan remain useful and will be reflected in the present plan.

- **City Reorganization**
  A reorganization of city government approved in September 2018 by the Common Council will give a stronger role to economic development with a new Department of Economic and Community Development. This department will have a new division of Business Development and Tourism, as well as Planning and Zoning, Building and Code Enforcement, and Transportation, Mobility, and Parking.

- **Norwalk Innovation Places Strategic Plan**
  This plan was completed in March 2017 when Norwalk was chosen as a semi-finalist in the state's public-private CT Next program designed to help cities support start-ups and entrepreneurs. The Norwalk Plan focused on SoNo "because it has the strongest combination of critical factors identified by CT Next as essential to an Innovation Place: proximity to transit, vibrant urban character, entrepreneurial culture and development opportunity."[5] Norwalk did not go

5 Norwalk Innovation Places Strategic Plan, March 2017, page 5, library.rpa.org/pdf/RPA-Norwalk-Innovation-Places.pdf

Figure 3.9 Average Electricity Costs per kWh



Source: Electricity Local (electricitylocal.com/states/connecticut/norwalk)

on to become a designated "Innovation Place" and receive state funding.

- **Economic Development in the West Avenue/ Wall Street Corridor**
  In 2018, the Redevelopment Agency proposed an update of the Wall Street/West Avenue Redevelopment Plans.[6] The goal is to "build an economic development strategy aimed at revitalizing underutilized parcels of land. We look to encourage business relocation, expansion, retention and new development attracting both established companies and emerging entrepreneurs. Our approach is to further develop our infrastructure and amenities as well as provide valuable incentives. The goal is to create neighborhood ecosystem that is amenity-rich, operates 24/7, has diversified housing opportunities and is a hyperconnected area via both technology and transportation." The business themes are health care, science, design, and technology, to include anchors such as Norwalk Hospital, Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital, Steppingstones Museum, King Industries, and Factory Underground.[7]

6 Innovation District: www.nancyonnorwalk.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Innovation-District-brochure-18-0301.pdf; Draft Wall/West Plan: tomorrow.norwalkct.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Revised-Draft-Wall-Street_West-Ave-Plan_011918.pdf

7 Innovation District, pages 3-5.

Key Findings & Challenges

- As discussed in Chapter 2, Norwalk has some compelling regional economic development strengths including location (proximity to New York City), transportation (highway and rail connections), and an educated workforce. Norwalk's coastal location and amenities, diversity, and variety of housing opportunities make it an attractive place to live for the workforce. At the same time Norwalk has weaknesses that complicate economic development efforts, such as congestion on regional transportation routes that it cannot directly control, and the geography of multiple economic activity centers resulting from decisions made in the past.
- There are multiple competing priorities for economic development, which makes it difficult to be fully successful at all of them: strengthening the Merritt 7 area as a live-work ecosystem with better rail transit; revitalizing Norwalk Center; bringing more residential and commercial uses to SoNo; attracting entrepreneurial, maker/artisan enterprises, and new industrial uses in various parts of the city. Owners of industrial land perceive a lack of planning for industrial uses, outdated zoning that does not accommodate less traditional industrial uses without a special permit, and resident concerns about noise and trucks.
- While multifamily residential development in the urban core has been generally successful, attracting ground floor retail and service uses in these buildings, and a reduction in storefront and upper-story vacancies in traditional buildings in Norwalk Center has proven more challenging.
- Many Norwalkers want to grow businesses in the City, either for tax revenue or for jobs (including for the city's low- and middle-skill workers).
- While Norwalk's leading office center, the Merritt 7 area, continues to do well, the office market in general is not growing, as employers use less space per employee. Residents would like to see SoNo and Norwalk Center with a stronger commercial and office market. Ground floor retail has proven hard to attract.
- Many stakeholders would like to protect the remaining industrially-zoned property in Norwalk for new industrial activities. In addition to the larger industrial areas in South Norwalk, there are

What's an "Entrepreneurial Ecosystem?"

Places with many start-ups that can become high-growth firms have a unique mix of characteristics, often including the following:

- Locations that are good places to live with populations with knowledge and skills
- At least one and often several large established businesses that are rich in technology, attract talent, and provide business training for employees—who may start their own firms
- Availability of finance, often with "angel" investment from "entrepreneur recycling" as successful entrepreneurs reinvest their wealth and experience in new startups
- Information-rich environments with informal and formal information-sharing
- An inclusive culture of experimentation, fast failure, and fast renewal of ideas
- Presence of service providers, such as lawyers and accountants

See Colin Mason and Ron Brown, "Entrepreneurial Ecosystems…" (2014), www.researchgate.net/publication/260870819

small but vibrant pockets of industrial users in other parts of the city such as Perry Avenue area and the Muller Industrial Park, home to a wide-mix of companies including small manufacturers like Green Mountain Products

- Without a research university, it is more difficult but not impossible to follow the path of small- and mid-sized cities that have grown with start-ups. However, attention to creating an "entrepreneurial ecosystem" unique to Norwalk's conditions can support homegrown start-up businesses that may become high growth firms.
- Although the City has made many improvements to the permitting process, further modernization (including a rewrite of the zoning code) and streamlining, while protecting the public interest, would be beneficial.
- The potential impacts of the Walk Bridge project are a major concern for SoNo area businesses and property owners. The city is working with the state on providing assistance to mitigate effects on business.
- The SoNo Collection project represents major private investment by a leading high-end retail firm; redevelopment of a large, underutilized area of the city near I-95 located between SoNo and Wall Street; and planned amenities like pedestrian/bike connections, a circulator, and public green space. Market studies anticipate that it will attract shoppers from the region after it opens in October 2019.

Norwalk already has new, 21st century businesses applying innovative technology to traditional industries in legacy buildings

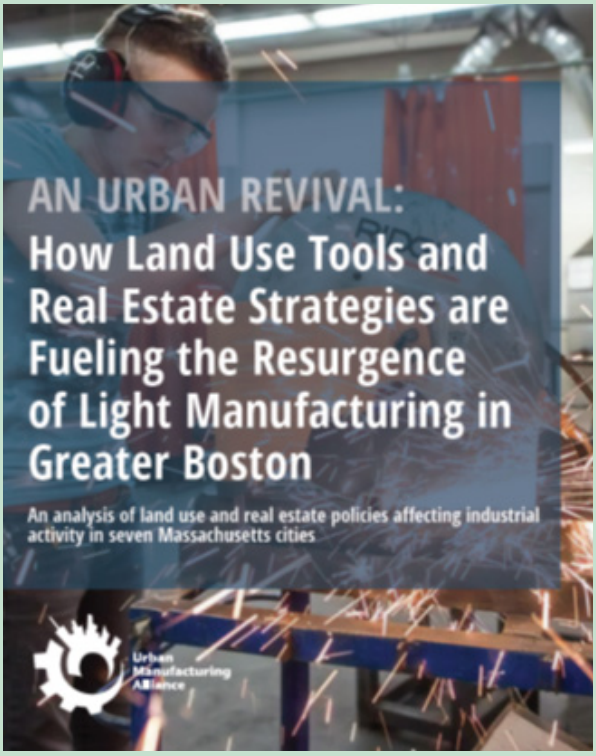
Urban Farm No. 1 on Van Zant Street in East Norwalk is part of the new urban indoor agriculture industry using hydroponic techniques and LED lighting that produce more produce with less water. The Norwalk company has begun hydroponic production of lettuce with LED lighting. The business owners say they have created the capacity to grow 100,000 heads of lettuce a year to supply restaurants as well as consumers. See www.thehour.com/news/article/Urban-farm-takes-root-in-East-Norwalk-13302988.php. Indoor agriculture businesses can be found in New York, Chicago, and Detroit, among other cities, and the large-scale producers are attracting venture capital investment.

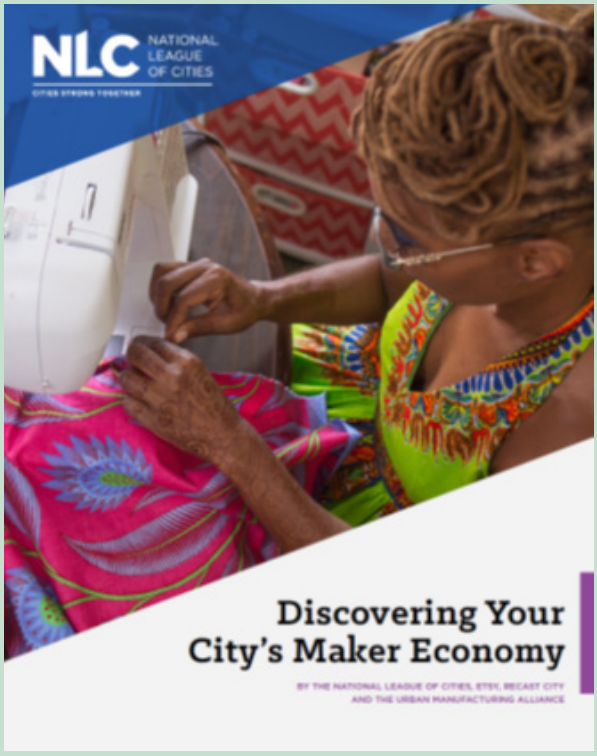
Potential for Manufacturing 4.0 and the New Urban Small Manufacturer

In cities around the country, opportunities for small, micro, and artisan manufacturers are expanding through a combination of digital sales platforms and social media marketing, crowd-funding for start-up capital, low-cost prototyping, and production through 3-D printing. Urban areas can bring together technologists, makers, and people in the arts and creative professions. Often, start-ups and jobs in this economy do not require a four-year college degree and community colleges are beginning to create certification programs for these kinds of manufacturing jobs. Manufacturing firms with 10 or fewer employees make up nearly 60% of the nation's manufacturing economy. The Urban Manufacturing Alliance (UAM) is an organization that supports small- and mid-sized manufacturers in urban areas, with focus areas around local branding, equity, workforce development and land use policy.

The UAM partnered with MassDevelopment on a report about the land use and real estate development frameworks that have proven successful to create spaces for small and low-impact manufacturers in cities, including downtowns and mixed-use neighborhoods. The report includes case studies from seven Massachusetts cities, often with the same kind of legacy industrial buildings as Norwalk, exploring strategies from artisan zoning to "right-sizing" space in historic buildings. With the National League of Cities, the UAM, Etsy and Recast City prepared a report on how cities can understand and support the artisan-based maker economy, Discovering Your City's Maker Economy.

- www.urbanmfg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/UrbanManufacturingAlliance_MassDevelopmentReport.pdf
- www.urbanmfg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Discovering-Your-Citys-Maker-Economy-Final.pdf





E. WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

Throughout the planning process, Norwalk stakeholders were highly supportive of business and job development as a high priority. At the economic development workshop, where participants were asked about their level of agreement with statements on economic development, the greatest agreement was found for creating an economic development department with experienced leadership; increasing business expansion and attraction to help lower the residential tax burden; finding better ways to connect Norwalk's multiple employment and commercial centers; pursuing a wider range of niche and artisan industries; and continuing to focus on train station areas for walkable, mixed use development. The second exercise asked their ideas on the priority economic development activities for the next 10 years. Comments included the following: niche industry and manufacturing; co-working and work/live spaces; more walkable mixed-use areas; reduction of government silos; develop a tourist-driven economy; limit the further development of large retail stores; develop a city market; house the people who work in Norwalk. The online results were similar for levels of agreement with economic development statements as follows:

Norwalk needs more jobs with good wages and opportunities for advancement for local residents who have low to middle skill levels: 50% strongly agree; 33% somewhat agree

Norwalk should increase its business expansion and attraction efforts to help lower the residential tax burden: 58% agree; 25% somewhat agree

The City should have an economic development department with experienced leadership and staff focused on business retention and recruitment: 67% strongly agree; 17% somewhat agree

Norwalk should allow and pursue a wider range of niche and artisan industries for its light industrial zones: 58% strongly agree; 25% somewhat agree

The city should continue to focus on leveraging its train stations for walkable, mixed-use development and dynamic urban areas: 58% strongly agree; 17% somewhat agree

The future economic success of Norwalk is closely related to transportation, including finding better ways to connect Norwalk's employment and commercial centers: 42% agree, 33% somewhat agree

Norwalk should use a stronger mix of tools (business incentives, storefront activation, etc.) to stimulate redevelopment in Norwalk Center: 17% strongly agree; 50% somewhat agree

F. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

GOAL 1

Norwalk has the right policies, infrastructure, and leadership for business growth and development

Policies:

- Support dedicated professional and proactive economic development leadership in City government
- Support establishment of efficient and transparent permitting processes
- Support development of infrastructure and amenities attractive to businesses and workers

Implementing the ambitious and multi-faceted economic development strategies and actions outlined in the POCD will require, first and foremost, the establishment of a strong economic development office in Norwalk. Virtually all activities hinge on having proactive engagement by the City and an economic development office is the ideal lead to engage with a wide range of city departments, the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, employers, developers, residents, and all other stakeholders. This office should be led by a seasoned economic development professional with a track record of business development, including retention, expansion and attraction activities. The city reorganization approved in late 2018 provides the opportunity to make proactive and strategic economic development for all relevant areas of the city—not just the urban core--a key function of city government, as long as it receives the necessary financial and political support.

Strategy

A. Ensure that the new Department of Economic and Community Development has strong economic development leadership in close coordination with Planning and Zoning, the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, the Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce, and regional economic development groups.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Hire a new senior economic development official to represent and lead Norwalk's economic development initiatives.** This person should review and update the 2015 Economic Development Action Plan in the context of this citywide plan/POCD, any changing needs and opportunities, and work to integrate the Norwalk Now initiative (a Parking Authority program to market businesses in Norwalk Center) as a more effective economic development effort. As of this writing, plans are to hire a department director and a Business Development and Tourism professional for the new Economic and Community Development Department.	2019	City of Norwalk; Mayor's Office	New staff: Department head; Business Development and Tourism staff
ii. **Develop high-quality economic development marketing materials and a website to promote Norwalk's economic assets and opportunities to external audiences (site selectors, state officials, trade associations, developers).** See Stamford's website as an example: www.choosestamford.com	2019–2022	Economic and Community Development staff; IT department	Staff time with consultant assistance
iii. **Implement a business outreach initiative to better understand and anticipate employer needs and opportunities (in coordination with the Chamber).** For example, this should include the city's major employers (many of which are located in the Merritt 7 area) to understand their business needs and issues as a business retention and expansion effort.	2020–2029	Economic Development staff	Staff time

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iv. **Develop an action-oriented strategy to enhance the non-auto transportation (mobility) connections between SoNo, Norwalk Center, and the Merritt 7 areas.** This will also include linkages with the new SoNo Collection, and Norwalk Hospital area and take into account challenges of traffic congestion within Norwalk. See Chapter 12 – Transportation and Mobility.	2020-2025	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Economic Development	Staff time; potential capital improvements
v. **Enhance Norwalk's participation in the Fairfield Five and other regional economic development initiatives within Fairfield County, Connecticut, and the New York City Metropolitan Area.**	2019-2029	Economic Development	Staff time
vi. **Improve and maintain Norwalk's attractiveness as a business location and as a place to live for employees: the public realm, parks, infrastructure, schools, and enhanced amenities.**	2019-2029	Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time; consultant assistance; operational and capital improvements

GOAL 2

Norwalk has a diversified economy with a larger business tax base and more high-quality, good jobs for residents

Policies:

- Seek to retain, grow and attract a wide-range of businesses to increase Norwalk's competitiveness and the Grand List
- Seek businesses that provide local high-quality jobs with opportunities for growth and advancement

Strategy

A. Create a multi-faceted strategy to support entrepreneurs, startups, and tourism, as well as regional target industries, to grow new and existing businesses.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Develop a small business / entrepreneurial initiative in Norwalk,** including City support for actions such as relocating the Fairfield County Makers' Guild to a higher visibility location, developing more co-working spaces (in addition to SoNo spaces), implementing small business incentives and financing, and creating conditions for a Norwalk entrepreneurial ecosystem.	2019-2022	Mayor; Common Council; Economic Development; Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce	Staff time; possible consultant assistance
ii. **Convene a "blue ribbon panel" of local business owners, including businesses at Merritt 7, SoNo, Norwalk Center and other areas to provide recommendations for Norwalk to attract businesses to the city.**	2019-2020	City of Norwalk; Mayor's Office; Economic Development	Staff time
iii. **Study industrial zoning and update zoning and land use regulations to allow and encourage a wider set of uses in targeted industrial zones, focused on market opportunities in warehouse/logistics, brewing/distilling, artist/artisan uses, and other light industrial uses that do not have detrimental externalities on nearby areas.** Explore the work of the Urban Manufacturing Alliance and other groups that are supporting new small- and micro-manufacturing enterprises.	2019-2020	Economic Development; Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission	Staff time and consultant assistance
iv. **Focus on industry growth in regional target industries, partnering with the Fairfield Five to promote professional/technical services, finance, tourism/recreation, and niche industrial users.**	2019-2022	Economic Development and Regional Partners	Staff time
v. **Re-brand and promote Wall St and SoNo areas for small to mid-size office users in the areas of technology, software, graphic design, and other creative economy activities** priced out of other markets but wanting proximity to NYC, supported by business incentives with clear and consistent rules for transparency.	2019-2022	Economic Development; Redevelopment Agency; Chamber of Commerce	Staff time; possible consultant assistance; partnership with NYC planning

Actions	When	Who	Resources
vi. **Develop a cohesive tourism strategy by optimizing Norwalk's historic, cultural and historic resources, coastal location, unique waterfront areas, Norwalk River and other natural assets** for an enhanced set of recreation, tourism, economic, and transportation uses. This should include exploring locations for waterfront restaurants, water taxi services, and boats to the islands.	2020-2029	Economic Development; contributions from the Historical Commission and the Arts Commission; Chamber of Commerce	Staff time; commissions including Historical, Arts Harbor Management, etc.; possible consultant
vii. **Expand workforce housing options, including conducting a citywide housing study and reviewing the existing workforce housing regulations, to allow more employees to live in Norwalk and avoid costly commutes from distant locations.** Workforce growth and new residents are critical to supporting first floor retail and an essential component of business growth.	2020-2029	Economic Development; Redevelopment Agency; Planning and Zoning; Housing Authority; Fair Housing Commission	Staff time; possible consultant

GOAL 3

Continue to Strengthen Norwalk's urban core with a mix of uses to attract residents, visitors, and businesses

Policies:

- Invest in the urban core to attract businesses and workers, especially millennials
- Pursue a college or university center to locate downtown
- Build on Norwalk's urban character, waterfront, and transit amenities.

Strategy

A. Enhance business attraction and expansion tools in urban core areas.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Make tax incentive policies consistent and transparent.** This also includes leveraging newly designated Opportunity Zones, deciding on the future of the proposed Innovation District in Norwalk Center, and determining whether (or not) to continue the Enterprise Zone in SoNo.	2019-2022	Mayor; Common Council; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
ii. **Create and implement storefront activation programs to help provide vibrancy and near-term momentum for SoNo and Wall Street.** Program examples include Activated Spaces in Dayton, OH; Dining District in Springfield, MA; and MemShop in Memphis.	2019-2022	Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
iii. **Explore strengthening Norwalk Center's Main Street Program to manage programs and events for a portion of the Wall Street Area.** ctmainstreet.org	2019-2022	Redevelopment Agency; Norwalk 2.0	Staff time
iv. **Attract a higher education presence in Norwalk Center.** This could be Norwalk Community College or another college or university presence. Business or arts departments or special centers are often particularly successful in bringing more vitality to downtowns.	2022-2029	Mayor; Economic Development; NCC	Staff time; possible consultant
v. **Implement any parking improvements recommended in the parking study to be completed in 2019** for SoNo and Norwalk Center with better signage, simpler payment options, and so on.	2019-2022	Parking Authority; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
vi. **Continue implementation of transit-oriented development (TOD) and a range of mixed-use opportunities for sustainable live/work/play communities in the city.** This includes approving TOD project(s) in East Norwalk, implementing the pedestrian bridge and Merritt 7 station project, and TOD projects in SoNo, and mixed-use clusters along commercial arterials.	2020-2029	Planning and Zoning; Economic Development; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time

Actions	When	Who	Resources
vii. **Track and evaluate development and business incentives**, partnering with the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) to set clear criteria, and project scoring based on job creation, private investment, ROI, and so on.	2020 and ongoing	Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
viii. **Review and update if needed the Harbor Management Plan to evaluate maritime industries and uses and employment related opportunities.**	2021-2023	Harbor Management, Planning & Zoning	Staff time; possible consultant
ix. **Conduct a study and needs assessment of the industrially zoned land to identify uses, locations and land areas needed to accommodate, "clean" industrial growth.**	2019-2021	Planning & Zoning; Economic Development	Staff time; consultant

G. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Early Actions	Who
Create a system of communications and coordination between departments and divisions and with business and other stakeholders.	Department of Economic and Community Development
Hire an experienced professional economic development staff person for Business Development and Tourism to market the city to business, visitors and residents.	Mayor; Department of Economic and Community Development
Establish a business retention program with regular visits and contacts.	Business Development staff and IT
Align incentive policies with economic goals and ensure they are consistent, transparent, and measurable.	Department of Economic and Community Development; Redevelopment Agency; Mayor and Council
Develop a website to promote Norwalk's economic assets and opportunities	Department of Economic and Community Development; IT

CHAPTER FOUR

Housing Choice & Healthy Lifestyles

A. HOUSING CHOICE & HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

This chapter focuses on the extent to which housing in Norwalk meets the needs of existing and future residents and how the City can support healthy lifestyles for residents. The topics of this chapter are intertwined with other aspects of this plan such as economic development and multimodal transportation.

Housing is, of course, one of the major elements of any community. Compared to many communities in Fairfield County, the region, and the state of Connecticut, Norwalk already has considerable housing choice in terms of housing types and household incomes. Suburban-style, single-family neighborhoods are close to built-out under current zoning, so new housing types and densities are generally found in the urban core and arterial corridors where they are intended to support mixed-use districts. Norwalk's relative affordability in a regional sense, however, does not mean that workforce/affordable housing policies are not needed – in fact, providing housing affordable to households with the city's entire range of incomes is a significant need.

Healthy lifestyles start with having a secure and decent place to live, but include a variety of issues. Modern citywide plans include a perspective called Health in All Policies or HiAP. HiAP is focused on the "social determinants of health," which are the social, physical, and economic environments that affect health and health inequities.[1] This chapter will provide an overview of health conditions in Norwalk and strategies for promoting healthy lifestyles in neighborhoods.

1 Health in All Policies: A Guide for State and Local Governments, www.apha.org/hiap

B. HOUSING AND HEALTH IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision

- Norwalk's excellent quality of life offers **a choice of housing options** in neighborhoods ranging from lively urban centers of varied densities and suburban–style areas, to quiet, tree-filled enclaves and coastal villages.

From the Principles

- **Make healthy lifestyles easy and fun**
  Create opportunities for healthy choices and wellbeing through easy access to physical activity, healthy food, and medical care.
- **Pursue high-quality development**
  Make public investments a model of excellent design and maintain high-quality design standards for new development.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
Norwalk has a neighborhood and housing strategy that maintains a variety of neighborhood types and housing choices through a variety of mechanisms.	• Support housing policies that provide housing for Norwalk's households across a range of preferences and all household incomes. • Preserve and maintain the overall character of traditional single-family neighborhoods. • Support housing policies that promote higher-density housing near existing and future employment centers and availability of public transportation.
Incorporate healthy lifestyles in city design and improvements.	• Include health impacts when designing neighborhood improvements.

Housing[2]

Total Housing Units & Tenure

There are 35,168 housing units in Norwalk, of which 33,184 are occupied. Sixty-two percent of all units are owner-occupied and 38% are renter-occupied.

Type & Age of Housing

Single family houses make up 54% of all units, while 18% of total units can be found in multifamily buildings with ten or more units. Sixty-nine percent of the housing in Norwalk was built after 1950.

Household Types

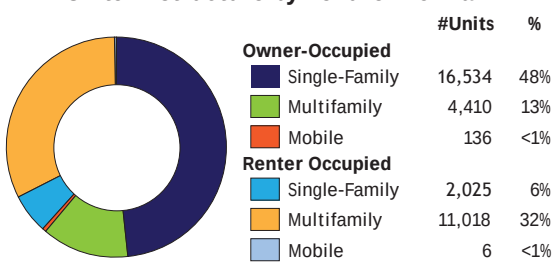
The average household size is 2.62 persons. A quarter of Norwalk households include a person 65 years old or more, and 29% contain persons under 18. (Single parents with children make up 7.5% of total households.)

New Housing Growth

The single-family neighborhoods in Norwalk are largely built out and only a few single-family houses on infill lots are typically built in any year. Growth in housing units since 2008 has overwhelmingly been in multifamily apartment developments (including the redevelopment of Washington Village public housing). Figure 4.3 presents available data on building permits and the housing units in buildings with 5 or more units from 2008 to 2017. Between 2011 and 2017, 1692 units were permitted in buildings with five or more units, a number dwarfed by Stamford, which added more than 3,000 units.

2 Data are estimates from the Census Bureau: ACS 2011-2015 or ACS 2012-2016 depending on the data type.

Figure 4.1 Units in Structure by Tenure

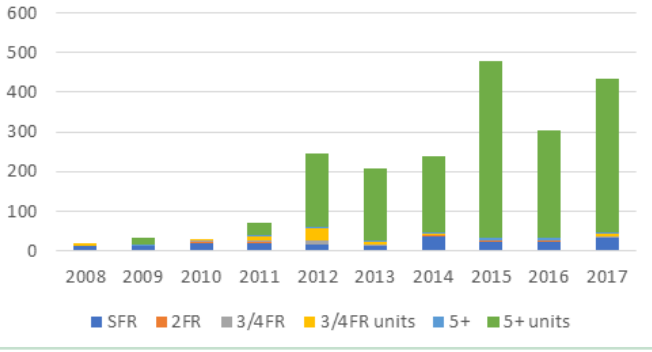


Source: 2011-15 American Community Survey

Figure 4.2 Household Types

Total Households	34,137	100%
Total family households (related by blood, marriage, or adoption	21,596	63%
Married-couple family with own children	6,531	19%
Total non-family households	12,541	37%
Single person households	10,482	31%

Figure 4.3 Building Permits for Dwelling Units, 2008-2017



Housing Costs

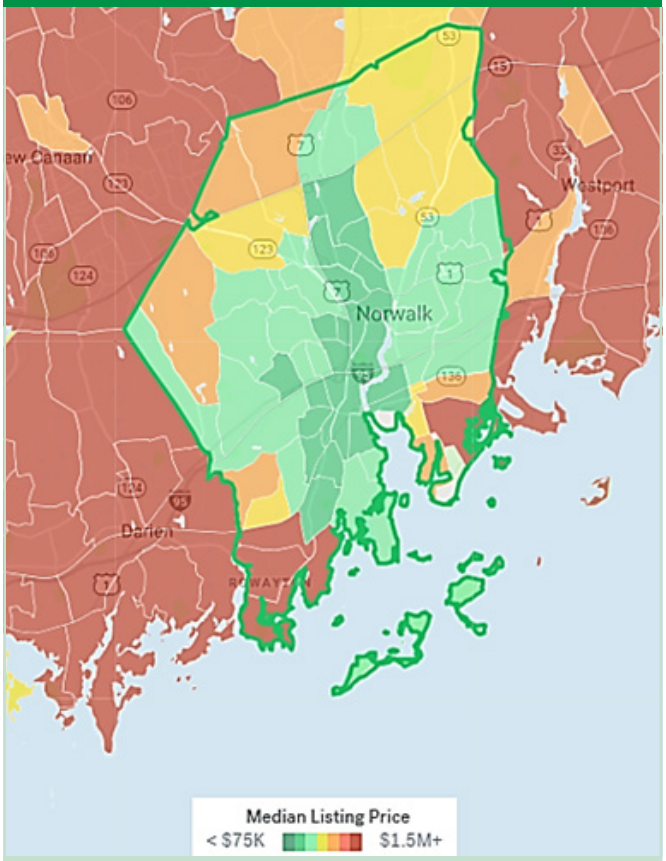
Norwalk's estimated median home value (both single family and condominium) in Census Bureau estimates is $410,000, which correlates with median sales prices found online. Median monthly gross rent is approximately $1,400, while the average rent is $2,400, reflecting wide differences in rent based on size and type of rental. As demonstrated in Figure 4.4 some areas within Norwalk have a median sale price below $300,000 and housing prices are low in Norwalk compared to neighboring towns like Westport, Darien, New Canaan, and Greenwich which have median sales prices well above $1 million.

Norwalk, like many communities with an aging homeowner population predominantly made up of empty-nester Baby Boomers, is undergoing a generational transition. Today, only 19% of Norwalk households are married-couple families with children –the traditional occupants of suburban-style housing. While Norwalk housing tends to be less expensive than in the surrounding residential suburbs, the traditional single-family neighborhoods are expensive and many homeowners would not be able to afford their houses if they had to buy them at today's prices. Members of the millennial generation beginning to form their own families, some fleeing extremely high housing costs in and closer to New York City, will be the target market for the existing single-family neighborhoods in Norwalk. Moreover, the millennials living in Norwalk's urban core and Merritt 7 area apartments would be prime candidates for the more suburban neighborhoods as they form families.

Housing affordability in Norwalk

- **The "Housing Wage"** Every year the National Low Income Housing Coalition calculates the "housing wage" –the income needed to afford a rental unit in various metropolitan areas. The 2018 annual income in the Stamford-Norwalk area required to rent an apartment of various sizes is:[3]
    - Studio: $50,680
    - One-bedroom: $62, 840
    - Two-bedroom: $79,440
    - Three-bedroom: $101,760

Figure 4.4 Median Listing Price for Housing



Source: www.trulia.com, (October 8, 2018)

- **"Cost-Burdened" Households**
  Data show that 45% of all households in Norwalk are "cost-burdened," meaning that they pay more than 30% of household income in housing costs. This includes 41% of owner households and 50% of renter households. Stamford has a slightly higher percentage of cost-burdened households and the adjacent towns of Darien (33%) and Westport (37%) have lower cost burdens for all households. However, the percentage of cost-burdened renter households in both the cities and the towns are all higher than for owners, ranging from 46% in Westport to 53% in Stamford.[4]

  Twenty-two percent of Norwalk households pay more than 50% of income in housing costs. The most cost-burdened households are preponderantly low-income and very low-income minority households. Eighty percent of the callers in 2017 to the United Way's 2-1-1 service from Norwalk

3 nlihc.org/oor/connecticut

4 CTdata.org

What is Affordable Housing?

Housing affordability is a function of housing cost (including utilities), household income and, in the case of home ownership, financing terms. The most widely accepted definition is that used by the federal government. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) considers housing to be affordable if costs do not exceed 30 percent of gross household income. A tenant whose housing costs are between 30 and 50 percent of income is considered to be moderately cost burdened. Those with housing costs that exceed 50 percent are considered severely cost burdened. For renters, housing costs include utilities, and for homeowners, housing costs include the mortgage payment, real estate taxes and homeowners' insurance. Other terms to understand:

- **"Affordable housing"** is a term typically used to mean housing that a household with income at 80% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI) can afford by paying 30% of income.
- **"Assisted housing"** is affordable housing subsidized through government or nonprofit organizations to remain affordable in perpetuity or for thirty or more years, depending on program requirements. Assisted housing is made available at below market-rate cost to income eligible households.
- **Area Median Income (AMI).** For the purposes of AMI, Norwalk is part of the Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk Metropolitan Statistical Area and the Stamford-Norwalk HMFA (Fair Market Rent Area). Every year HUD calculates median incomes (by household size) and 80% (moderate income), 50% (low income), and 30% (very low income) of AMI to serve as eligibility levels for various kinds of assisted housing. In 2018, the Area Median Income for a family of four in the Stamford-Norwalk HMFA was $134,900. Eighty percent of median was $121,410; 50% of AMI was $67,450; and 30% of AMI was $40,450. These numbers reflect the very high cost of housing in the HMFA, which covers Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, Norwalk, Stamford, Weston, Westport, and Wilton.
- **"Workforce"** housing is sometimes used as an alternative term for affordable housing. In some places where housing is very expensive, it means housing for households with incomes between 80% and 120% of AMI.

who were seeking rental assistance were not able to find any.[5]

Norwalk's Consolidated Plan, prepared every five years for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development describes housing cost burden as "by far, the largest need in the city….Over 3,000 households now experience substandard housing, overcrowding, or housing cost burden greater than 50% of income….Documented housing problems fall disproportionately on minorities, particularly African Americans and Hispanics."

- **Affordable & Workforce Housing in Norwalk**
  Norwalk has 4,363 below-market-rate housing units. This includes a variety of affordable housing units and developments which are funded and managed in different ways, for example, public housing, housing vouchers (Section 8), inclusionary zoning units, and nonprofit housing developments. This housing serves families, seniors, disabled people (physically, mentally, and developmentally), and people transitioning from homelessness. While most of the housing is permanently affordable, 117 housing units have deed restrictions that will be expiring before the end of 2028 because they were funded in programs that allowed 30-year affordability.

- **The Norwalk Housing Authority**
  Public housing tenants usually are very low income (30% and below area median income). The NHA owns and manages 18 public housing developments with 853 units. It is currently replacing Washington Village in South Norwalk, which was the oldest public housing development in Connecticut, with a mixed income project to include replacement of 136 public housing units, addition of 67 rent and income-restricted affordable workforce units, and 70 unrestricted market-rate units. According to the NHA, current demand for senior housing units is currently moderate and applicants spend about 18 months on the waiting list for a unit. However, as the Baby Boomers age, demand for senior units is expected to expand significantly.

  The NHA has an associated nonprofit organization, the Norwalk Housing Foundation, that currently focuses on education and scholarships for NHA residents. The non-profit subsidiaries of public housing authorities in many cities are taking an increasing role in producing non-governmental affordable housing, which could be explored in Norwalk. An example is Trout Brook Realty Advisors, which was created by the West Hartford Housing Authority to acquire, develop, manage, and rehabilitate affordable housing, such as a mixed-income transit-oriented project completed in 2018 with apartments for tenants at

5 "2-1-1 calls illuminate Norwalk's affordable housing crisis," The Hour, April 8, 2017, www.thehour.com.

Phase One of Washington Village is under construction

Source: NorwalkCNI.org

different income levels, including market rate, and supportive housing for veterans.

- **Section 8 Housing**
  In addition to public housing, the NHA manages 893 Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8). Vouchers allow recipients to go into the private rental housing market, pay 30% of their income in rent and utilities, with federal funding for the remainder of the rent up to a Fair Market Rent determined by HUD. Since 2007, because of the high cost of housing in this market, the NHA has had a "Two Tier Payment Standard," authorizing a higher payment in census tracts with a lower percentage of poverty households. This allows households to move away from areas of concentrated poverty. The NHA reported that by FY2017, most new and existing voucher holders chose to move to higher income census tracts. The biggest obstacle for voucher holders is often lack of a security deposit. The state formerly had a program which provided landlords for voucher holders with a security deposit guarantee. It was not a costly program because in most cases, the landlords did not make claims when the tenant left. The waiting list for Section 8 vouchers has been closed for more than four years.[6]

- **Workforce Housing/Inclusionary Zoning**
  In 2007, before the boom in multifamily development began in Norwalk, the city adopted a regulation (Sec. 118-1050) requiring that a minimum of 10% of units in buildings with at least 20 units be affordable to income-eligible tenants in 18 zoning districts. In five urban core districts, a density bonus is available for deeper affordability (60% of the state median income, which is lower than the Stamford-Norwalk median income). The regulation was amended in 2015 to disallow building off-site units to meet the requirement. A proposal to increase the inclusionary zoning requirement to 20% has been controversial. The City commissioned a study which concluded that:
    - Building for households making 80% of the state median income means the eligibility requirement would really be 48% of the Norwalk Median Area Income (i.e. a deeper subsidy)
    - Norwalk multifamily development today is profitable but "no home runs"
    - A 20% requirement would increase the risks and require subsidy such as use of city-owned land or Low Income Housing Tax Credits (the value of which is currently hard to predict because of the effects of the 2017 federal tax cuts)

  As part of the rezoning (SSDD Zone) around the South Norwalk train station, the Zoning Commission established new criteria for developments within the zone:
    - Each three-bedroom unit may be counted as two workforce housing units
    - Ten percent (10%) of the units, affordable at no more than sixty percent (60%) of the state median income; or,
    - Ten percent (10%) of the units, affordable at no more than eighty percent (80%) of the state median income.
    - In addition, a one percent (1%) fee, based on residential construction cost, shall be paid to the City of Norwalk and placed into a fund to be used to construct affordable housing.

- **State Affordable Housing Goal**
  CGS, Chapter 126a, Section 8-30g provides that communities with at least 10% affordable housing units as determined by the Connecticut Department of Housing are exempted from the Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Procedure. Municipalities with less than 10% affordable housing must show to the court that rejection of an affordable housing development proposal is supported by sufficient evidence in the record. Regulations of this type are designed to promote the availability of affordable housing in all communities in the state. However, they are not based on an analysis of affordable housing need in a specific area. Norwalk has 4,506 affordable units on the state's list, accounting for 12.6% of total housing units in the city. Within the Stamford-Norwalk region, the two cities have over 10% affordable units while the residential suburbs all have less than 4% affordable units on the list.

- **South Norwalk Affordability**
  Participants in the planning process reported concerns about displacement of current residents in South Norwalk through redevelopment for

6 www.housingfinance.com/developments/mixed-income-development-uplifts-west-hartford-conn_o (July 1, 2018)

the South Norwalk TOD district. Much of the traditional housing thought to be at risk is 2- to 4-family housing. A market study was prepared in 2013 to analyze existing conditions and make recommendations to promote housing stabilization. The study reported the following conditions:

- Properties are older than average for Norwalk.
- Properties are predominantly owner-occupied, especially in two-family homes, but there are significant investor-owners as well.
- Over time, some owner-occupants of 2- to 4-family houses choose to move to another house but retain their original house as a source of cash income, rather than selling it. They often stay in the same neighborhood and continue to maintain their original 2- to 4-family house in good condition. The income the house provides, and its asset value can help low- and moderate-income families move into the middle class by enabling them to finance college education and/or retirement without government support.
- This stock of housing functions as unassisted affordable housing, offering a route to homeownership for moderate-income households. Nonetheless, occupants of these buildings tend to be cost-burdened, paying a high proportion of their incomes in housing costs.
- Hispanic/Latino households are increasingly attracted to these properties to become owner-occupants.
- Because of the Great Recession, there were many foreclosures of these properties.

The study's recommendations included flexible financing options; help for borrowers to shift from owner-occupant to landlord; marketing of programs to the Hispanic community with Spanish-speaking staff; programs to help households with no credit history to become eligible for a mortgage; city purchase, renovation and sale of a two- to three-family house as a pilot program to create a set of model renovation plans and cost estimates to promote interest in this housing; and, a landlord training program. The Redevelopment Agency has implemented the pilot program recommendation by creating the South Norwalk Renovation Program. Several properties were purchased on Lexington Ave and Haviland Street for renovation and improvement as two-family homes for sale as deed-restricted affordable housing for owner-occupants who receive landlord training.

- **Sources of Funding for Affordable Housing**
  The Connecticut Housing Finance Authority has a full spectrum of programs to support affordable housing creation, affordable homeownership, and training in Connecticut, including in high-cost communities like Norwalk. A number of non-profit affordable housing developers operate in Connecticut, of which one of the largest is the Housing Development Fund (HDF). HDF's programs include the Landlord Entrepreneurship Affordability Program (LEAP), similar to the South Norwalk pilot program, which is designed to help income-eligible landlord entrepreneurs purchase 2-4 family homes. Programs include pre-development, acquisition, rehabilitation, and construction of affordable housing, as well as down payment and closing cost assistance loan programs for low- and moderate-income families. Affordable housing in Norwalk has benefited from assistance from these and other sources.

  Various social service agencies provide assistance to individual households with housing needs. For example, the Senior Center receives funds from the Fairfield County Community Foundation to help needy seniors with security deposits, moving expenses, first/last rent payments, and large appliance purchases.

- **Homelessness in Norwalk**
  In 2010 the Greater Norwalk Ten Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness was developed by a coalition of eleven communities represented in the Norwalk/Fairfield County Continuum of Care. This group, along with the Stamford/Greenwich Continuum and the Bridgeport Continuum, have now merged to form a Fairfield County Continuum of Care, also known as Fairfield County Opening Doors. The January 2018 point-in-time count for Norwalk found 153 persons in shelter (emergency shelter or transitional housing) and 5 outside shelter for a total of 158, including 36 children. This represents a substantial decline from the recent 2014 peak total of 243 persons, of whom 76 were outside of shelter. In addition, the 2018 count found only two chronically homeless persons and one homeless veteran, compared to

76 and 5 respectively in 2014, which indicates that programs to end chronic and veteran homelessness have been effective.[7] However, the media report that in 2017, of more than 1500 calls to the United Way's 2-1-1 service from Norwalk seeking housing services, 69% were seeking emergency shelter.[8] Open Door Shelter is the major housing and services organization for homeless persons in Norwalk, providing emergency shelter, food assistance, supportive housing, and job training.

- **Fair Housing**
  The Norwalk Fair Housing Advisory Commission and the position of Fair Housing Officer were established by court order and municipal ordinance in 1986 and arose from a lawsuit brought by the Norwalk chapter of the NAACP against the City of Norwalk. The purpose of the Commission is to monitor compliance with fair housing laws and make recommendations to enhance compliance. The laws include the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule, which was issued in 2015 to direct local governments to address housing segregation as part of their responsibility to implement the 1968 Fair Housing Act. According to a HUD Fact Sheet: "The AFFH rule sets out a framework for local governments, States, and public housing agencies to take meaningful actions to overcome historic patterns of segregation, promote fair housing choice, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination."[9] www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/AFFH-Fact-Sheet.pdf

7 www.cceh.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018Norwalk.pdf

8 "2-1-1 calls illuminate Norwalk's affordable housing crisis," The Hour, April 8, 2017. www.thehour.com

9 www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/AFFH-Fact-Sheet.pdf

Housing Key Findings & Challenges

Citywide Housing Policy

The City of Norwalk has a demonstrated commitment to affordable housing and fair housing, but the City has not created a comprehensive set of housing policies based on understanding the overall housing market and how it is related to city goals and needs. Housing is an important support for economic development and housing needs are affected by demographic changes, such as a growing elderly population or school enrollments. Most policy attention to housing has focused on affordable housing in the urban core through the inclusionary zoning ordinance and the Consolidated Plan prepared for federal funding. Outside of the urban core, the Norwalk Housing Authority has implemented the very successful Section 8 voucher program that allows voucher holders to move to low-poverty, high-opportunity neighborhoods.

Traditional Single-Family Neighborhoods

These neighborhoods are starting a generational transition that will accelerate over the next decades. Today, housing values are just returning to the last peak ten years ago, before the Great Recession. At the same time, the millennial generation is often burdened by student loans and is forming families later in life. Will there be enough millennials to buy the Baby Boomers' houses? Many former New York City residents have discovered the relative affordability and small-city urbanity of Norwalk—marketing Norwalk to them could be worthwhile.

Waypointe is one of several recent multifamily developments providing greater housing choice

Multifamily Housing

The multifamily housing development over the last decade in SoNo, Norwalk Center, and the Merritt 7 area is helping to enhance or create mixed-use activity centers valued by businesses because they attract employees. These live-work-play centers bring young adults to Norwalk and provide local options for empty-nesters who want to downsize. Young people will continue to be attracted to urban living. Millennials who move to traditional single-family neighborhoods as they age will be replaced by members of Generation Z (born 1996 to 2010). Analysis for the school system facility plan found that the apartment projects built and permitted over the last decade do not have a major impact on ten-year enrollment projections.[10]

Aging Population

The elderly population will be increasing during the next ten years and some will desire or require new housing options. Norwalk Hospital's plans for the former YMCA site include a 72-apartment assisted living center, and there are four independent living retirement homes and two additional assisted living developments.

10 Norwalk Public Schools Demographics, Enrollments, and Projections, January 2016

Continued Need for Affordable Housing

While, from the state's point of view, Norwalk has fulfilled its regional responsibility to provide affordable housing, there is a continuing need for affordable housing to serve the city's very low- and low-income population, including seniors and disabled persons. The City has documented this need and identified disproportionate impact on minority populations in the Consolidated Plan. City staff and others have anecdotal evidence that low-income households are finding housing in illegal apartments. The Consolidated Plan states that 88% of low-income renter households and 76% of low-income owners experience overcrowding. According to Housing Authority staff, most low-income households are looking for one- and two-bedroom units. However, there will always be some need for affordable units that can accommodate larger families.

HUD Rule on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)

Under the AFFH rule, an "Assessment of Fair Housing" (AFH) will replace the current "Analysis of Impediments" (AI) process. The AFH Assessment Tool, which includes instructions and data provided by HUD, consists of a series of questions designed to help program participants identify, among other things, fair housing issues pertaining to patterns of integration and segregation; racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty; disparities in access to opportunity; and disproportionate housing needs, as well as the contributing factors for those issues. Based on these data, the Assessment of Fair Housing will include a plan to further fair housing, including reduction in residential segregation.

Barriers to Affordable Housing Production:

- **High Cost of Real Estate & Land**
  Affordable housing nonprofits, who create significant amounts of affordable housing in New England, find it very difficult to do projects in Norwalk and the rest of Fairfield County because of the high cost of real estate and land.
- **Limited Availability of Land in General & Municipally-Owned Land in Particular**
  In high-cost locations, municipalities and others make affordable housing production possible through donations of land and houses. Norwalk does not have much unbuilt land and the City does not own much property which could be

donated for housing development. However, the City could review tax title properties for affordable housing potential and make them available to nonprofit housing developers rather than send them to auction.

- **Decline in Federal & State Funding for Affordable Housing**
  Federal funding for affordable housing has been declining for many years. Norwalk was extremely fortunate to be one of four communities in the United States to win $30 million in the first round of HUD's Choice Neighborhoods competition. This funding, with state and other funds, is paying for the transformation of the Washington Village public housing development into a mixed-income neighborhood, including replacement of existing public housing units. Low Income Housing Tax Credits have been the principal source of affordable housing funding in recent years, but their attractiveness to investors may decline because of the 2017 federal tax cuts. The State continues to provide some funding but has budget difficulties of its own. Norwalk has begun to create an affordable housing fund by requiring a one percent payment by development projects in the South Norwalk TOD zone.

2. Community Health[11]

Planning Areas that Affect Health

The American Planning Association has identified five general areas where planning decisions can improve health: active living, healthy food systems, environmental exposure, emergency preparedness, and social cohesion.[12] Norwalk is already working in many of those areas through the City's membership in the Healthy for Life Project, a coalition of organizations, agencies, and community members from the Greater Norwalk area, which originated in the 2012 community health and improvement plan conducted by Norwalk Hospital and the Norwalk Health Department. The slogan of the project is "Eat Well + Move More = Live Better," emphasizing the importance of active lifestyles and nutritious food.

- **Health Statistics and Concerns:**
  - The majority of Norwalk residents (89%) perceive their health status as good, very good, or excellent.
  - Thirty-eight percent of the adult population is overweight, and another 22% is obese.
  - Eighteen percent do not get weekly exercise, while 32% exercise five or more times a week.
  - Thirteen percent smoke.
  - The leading causes of death are cancer and cardiac disease, while high blood pressure and Type 2 diabetes are the top conditions for hospitalization.
  - Chronic diseases are the top concerns: heart disease, diabetes, and asthma.

Obesity, mental health & substance abuse are also major health concerns. Because obesity is associated with chronic diseases, the Norwalk Health Department promotes healthy lifestyles through the Healthy for Life program, which includes nutrition education programs and the NorWALKer program. The Department has produced maps for 17 walking routes in different Norwalk neighborhoods, including five maps in Spanish with translations for the remaining 12 maps in process. Regular walks are led by volunteers in Silvermine, and during the summer in East Norwalk and at Calf Pasture Beach. In addition, the Mayor and his wife lead walks in different locations throughout the year. The Health Department supports more investment in connectivity and transportation alternatives to the car.

Food Security

There is limited information on food security in Norwalk. While there is a sufficient number of grocery stores, affordability may be an important issue for some residents. Ten percent of Norwalk respondents to the Community Wellbeing Survey in 2015 reported not having enough money to buy food at least once in the previous year. Food pantries say that they could serve more people. Approximately half of public school students are eligible for free or reduced lunch and a food backpack program provides food to eligible students for the weekend. Community stakeholders participating in

11 Data from the *Greater Norwalk Region Community Health Needs Assessment and Priorities 2016*. The Greater Norwalk Region = New Canaan, Norwalk, Weston, Westport, and Wilton.

12 American Planning Association, Metrics for Planning Healthy Communities, 2017.

the Health Enhancement Community Initiative identified difficult access to healthy food as a significant barrier to good health and suggested the need to address hunger in food-insecure populations as well as affordable, convenient healthy food overall. The Eat Well Healthy Restaurants Initiative is a collaboration with Norwalk restaurants to highlight healthy menu options.

Air Pollution & Asthma

With an interstate highway and major regional highways going through the city, Norwalk is subject to air pollution. The American Lung Association's 2018 State of the Air report ranked Fairfield County as the 19th most ozone-polluted county in the nation. It was the only county out of the worst 25 counties that is not in a western state. Ozone causes respiratory harm (asthma, COPD, inflammation) and can cause earlier death, cardiovascular harm, central nervous system harm, and possibly reproductive system harm. Pollution levels are higher along busy highways, which means people who live near these roads are at higher health risks. Studies indicate that the area within 1000 to 1500 feet of a major highway are the most affected.[13]

Opioid Crisis

According to Health Department staff, Norwalk has experienced overdose deaths but is affected at a slightly lower rate than the state as a whole. There are many substance abuse and mental health resources in Norwalk and the region.

Access to Health Care

There are two federally-qualified health centers and a free clinic in Norwalk. The Norwalk Community

13 www.lung.org/assets/documents/healthy-air/state-of-the-air/sota-2018-full.pdf

Community gardens are part of healthy nutrition programs

Source: United Way of Coastal Fairfield County

Health Center also has a mobile unit. The 2015 Community Wellbeing Survey reported that 10% of Norwalk residents lack health insurance.

Senior Services & Healthy Aging

Health providers in Norwalk have strong collaboration systems for healthy aging. The Western Connecticut Health Network has many healthy aging programs. The Senior Center and the Senior Services Coordinating Council, also known as the Senior Umbrella, are very active.

Community Gardens

There are approximately 300 community garden plots at Fodor Farm. The Health Department developed the Growing Gardens, Growing Health program to give gardening instruction, nutrition education, and cooking demonstrations.

Health Department Activities

The Health Department also provides beach and other water quality monitoring, monitors recreational and commercial shellfishing areas, conducts comprehensive lead investigations, monitors and regulates septic systems, enforces the housing code to ensure safe and sanitary housing, inspects food service establishments and salons, provides clinical services and disease investigations, prepares for public health emergencies, and implements other grant programs. The Department and the Board of Health work closely with a wide array of other City departments: the Public Schools, Fire Department, Police Department, Department of Public Works, Planning and Zoning Department, Building/Code Enforcement Department, Recreation and Parks Department, Early Childhood Office, Human Relations and Fair Rent Department, Fair Housing Officer, Senior Services, the Library, Shellfish Commission, Bike/Walk Commission, Water Quality Committee, and the Health, Welfare and Public Safety Committee of the Common Council. In addition, the Department works with many partner organizations in the Healthy for Life Project.

Key Findings & Challenges

Overall Good Health & an Active Health Department

Norwalk's overall health conditions are good and reflect the relatively comfortable economic and educational characteristics of the community as a whole, but vulnerable populations, such as low-income households and the elderly, can face greater health challenges. In addition, there are issues that affect all members of the community to some degree, such as obesity, good nutrition, and air pollution. The Health Department has taken an active role in developing programs through the Healthy for Life Program.

Enhancing Connectivity

Expanding active transportation—walking and biking—in Norwalk is complex because of the city's topography and variety of development patterns. The NorWALKER program and the establishment of a permanent Bike/Walk Commission provide a good foundation.

Food Security

Public health professionals in Norwalk agree that more information is needed on the issue of food security in Norwalk to see if additional programs or marketing of existing programs to vulnerable households and individuals is needed.

Air Pollution

Although Norwalk will continue to be the location of major high-traffic highways, the City can work to reduce greenhouse gas emission from trips within the city and consider the health impacts of ozone and particulate matter on residential development within 1500 feet of high-traffic routes.

Visioning Workshop

Affordable housing was one of the priority themes that participants identified in their discussions and in the polling.

Complete & Connected City Workshop

A number of possible options for affordable housing were discussed at this workshop and participants were asked in a written exercise to give their reactions—from "strongly agree" to "neutral" to "strongly disagree" to these options. The options with the more "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" reactions included City government donation (instead of auction) of tax title properties appropriate for affordable housing to nonprofit affordable housing developers; consideration of a program for a security deposit guarantee for income-eligible renters (similar to a former State program); and exploring programs to assist income-eligible first-time homebuyers. Participants were somewhat less supportive of creating an Affordable Housing Trust to fund affordable housing, allowing more accessory units, and exploring a community land trust model.

In addition, participants were asked to suggest their top priorities for the next ten years in affordable housing. Among the priorities listed were locating affordable housing near transit and near employment centers; initiatives that encourage moving from renting to owning; maintaining existing affordability initiatives; and making affordable rental housing a priority to allow younger people and employees to live in Norwalk. A few participants noted that Norwalk now meets the State's goal for affordable housing and that towns like Darien and Westport should do more to take their share of affordable housing. Because affordable housing is a topic with many technical dimensions, many people will need more in-depth discussion than is possible in a citywide planning process of this type.

Priority themes from the visioning workshop

GOAL 1

Norwalk has a neighborhood and housing strategy that maintains a variety of neighborhood types and housing choices through a variety of mechanisms.

Policies:

- Support housing policies that provide housing for Norwalk's households across a range of preferences and household incomes.
- Preserve and maintain the overall character of traditional single-family neighborhoods.
- Support housing policies that promote higher-density housing near existing and future employment centers.

Strategy

A. Create a housing policy and implementation infrastructure within City government.

Norwalk does not have an integrated housing policy that encompasses market rate and affordable housing. There is not a common base of data and information on which to base policy decisions. Different groups within city government are focused on aspects of affordable housing programs, such as the Redevelopment Agency, Planning and Zoning, the Fair Housing Advisory Commission and Officer, and the Norwalk Housing Authority, but there are no systems that promote collaborative understanding and decision making. An integrated housing policy is important to the city's future in a variety of ways, including economic development, quality of life, multifaceted diversity, public health, and mobility.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Designate or hire a planner for the Planning Department who has expertise in housing.**	2019-2020	Mayor and Council; Director of Planning and Zoning	New staff or designate existing staff
ii. **Create a Housing Policy Advisory Committee to develop and advise on housing policies that support Norwalk's quality of life, economic development, and affordable housing goals.** The purpose of this Committee is to create an integrated understanding of Norwalk housing needs for both market-rate and affordable housing. The Committee should be staffed by the Planning Department housing planner and include representatives of the Housing Authority, Redevelopment Agency, the Fair Housing Officer, economic development, the transportation planner, Planning and Zoning Commissions, other departmental staff as appropriate, and representatives of for-profit and nonprofit housing developers, realtors, neighborhood organizations, and economic development organizations. The Committee should meet at least three times a year to review housing market conditions and review policy recommendations. Its activities should include: • Annual report on housing market, housing needs, priorities, and policies to the Mayor, Common Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Commission. • Development of policies that promote mixed-income, diverse housing environments, reduce concentration of poverty, and support economic development. • Review of policies and implementation that promote harmonious neighborhood design. • A public hearing on housing needs, priorities and policies at a combined Common Council and Planning Commission meeting once a year.	2019–2022	Mayor and Council	Staff time
iii. **Move responsibility for the City's federal housing and community development block grant planning and funding from the Redevelopment Agency to the Planning Department and the housing planner.** The Redevelopment Agency focuses on urban core redevelopment areas. Although these areas will continue to be important areas for implementation of affordable housing and other community development activity, there are other parts of the city that meet the program criteria that may benefit from these programs.	2019-2021	Mayor and Council	Staff time

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iv. **Market the City of Norwalk as a place to live.** As part of a website and other activities to market Norwalk to the New York City metropolitan area, create a marketing plan that promotes Norwalk as a unique and vibrant coastal city with easy access to New York City.	2020 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time; possible consultant
v. **Implement the recommendations of the Affordable Housing Action Plan (2025, as amended).** The City will further evaluate, modify as necessary and implement recommendations within the plan.	2025-2029	Common Council; Mayor's office; Planning & Zoning	Staff time
vi. **Encourage the establishment of neighborhood organizations where they do not exist today.**	Ongoing	Planning Department	Staff time

B. Maintain the predominantly single-family character of established single-family neighborhoods

Norwalk's established single-family neighborhoods are not expected to change their character. Accessory apartments in single family neighborhoods are currently permitted and regulated in the zoning ordinance (Chapter 118 Article 42).

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Create a system to work with neighborhood residents to identify priority improvements to maintain their neighborhoods.** The neighborhood-based district workshops and neighborhood plans (for those areas that have plans) can serve as a starting point. Neighborhood groups could be asked to provide priorities every year in advance of the city budgeting process.	2020-21	Planning Department; Finance Department; Public Works; other departments as relevant	Staff time
ii. **As part of a rewrite of the zoning code, establish transition design standards for commercial and mixed-use areas in corridors on the edges of traditional single-family neighborhoods.**	2019-2022	Planning Department; Planning and Zoning Commissions	Staff time; consultant

C. Promote diverse housing types, such as townhouses, condos, live-work units, and rental apartments in Norwalk's urban core, at transit-oriented locations and in mixed-use clusters on major corridors, in village districts when appropriate, and through redevelopment.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Continue to encourage the development of vibrant transit-oriented districts within walking distance of the South Norwalk, East Norwalk, and Merritt 7 train stations. Housing near transit is important for Norwalk's economic development and revitalization goals.** At the same time, the city should monitor housing markets and support these districts with urban design and programming initiatives.	Ongoing	Planning Department; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time; consultant as needed
ii. **Explore adding live-work units, artist/artisan housing, and townhouses as part of the residential mix in Norwalk Center, including use of underused historic buildings and storefronts.** Efforts to identify Norwalk Center as an arts and culture district would benefit from providing housing opportunities for artists. Live-work units are typically loft or townhouse-type buildings that combine a small work space for production, retail, or office with living quarters either above or behind the work space. Marketing to artist communities in high cost locations like New York City could be worthwhile. A successful effort of this type in New England was the creation of an artists' community in the City of Lowell by zoning changes and attracting artists priced out of Boston artist neighborhoods. These kinds of initiatives typically include programs to ensure that the units are affordable and occupied by artists.	2019-2029	Redevelopment Agency; Economic and Community Development Department; Planning and Zoning Commissions	Staff time; possible consultant
iii. **Encourage redevelopment in mixed-use clusters, including housing, of suburban-style commercial land uses along major corridors such as Route 1.** Retail land uses tend to redevelop in faster cycles than other land uses because retailers need to meet changing consumer desires. In addition, the retail panorama is changing with the growth of online shopping for many goods and customers' desire for "experience" retail when they do go shopping. In Norwalk, the new mall will provide a new version of experience retail. All of these conditions will affect Norwalk's suburban-style corridors. The City should take a proactive approach to the redevelopment that will happen over the next ten years with new zoning and design standards, and support for alternative transportation and mixed-income housing. See Chapter 14 for more discussion.	2019-2029	Economic and Community Development Department; Planning and Zoning Commissions	Staff time; zoning and urban design consultants

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iv. **Identify potential markets for downsizing by empty-nesters and aging seniors who want to stay in Norwalk and encourage housing for that market.** Downtown and SoNo have attracted some empty-nesters. Others may want to downsize but would prefer other options.	2019–2023	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time – housing planner
v. **As part of a zoning re-write, explore innovative housing types such as cottage communities, and create zoning and design standards.** Cottage communities provide modest-sized housing as infill on vacant or underused lots designed to give a single-family experience. See box below.	2019-2022	Planning Department; Planning and Zoning Commissions; Common Council	Staff time; consultant

D. Seek solutions to provide sufficient safe and affordable housing for low-income and very low-income residents.

The high cost of housing and land in Norwalk makes providing new affordable housing very challenging.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **As part of the Housing Policy Plan, develop an integrated citywide strategy for affordable housing in Norwalk.** The Housing Policy Advisory Committee should identify the most appropriate entity to lead this strategy in collaboration with other city and other agencies and groups. The Norwalk Housing Authority's nonprofit subsidiary, working with the housing planner, may be an appropriate lead entity. This plan will then be a source for HUD-required documents such as the Consolidated Plan and the Assessment of Fair Housing Plan.	2019-2020	Housing Planner; Housing Authority; Housing Policy Advisory Committee members	Staff time; possible consultant
ii. **Continue to meet or exceed the state's 10% goal for affordable housing.** The current housing appeals exemption list is based on 2010 housing unit census data. After the 2020 census, the City should review its percentage and make sure that all eligible units are counted. In addition, a review of the current Workforce Housing Regulations should be conducted and a review of the newly enacted SSDD regulations considered for other areas of the City.	Ongoing	Mayor and Council; Housing Policy Advisory Committee; Planning & Zoning	Staff time

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iii. **Continue the inclusionary zoning program.** New mixed-use clusters with housing on Route 1 and other arterials should be included in this program.	Ongoing	Planning Department; Zoning Commission; Council	Staff time
iv. **Prepare the HUD-required "Assessment of Fair Housing," to replace the current "Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing" process and incorporate it into the citywide Housing Strategy and the Consolidated Plan.** HUD provides data and an assessment tool to assist in identifying issues related to patterns of integration and segregation; racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty; disparities in access to opportunity; and disproportionate housing needs.	2024-2025	Fair Housing Officer; Fair Housing Advisory Commission; Housing Planner	Staff time; possible consultant
v. **Continue the Housing Authority's two-tier housing voucher (Section 8) program.** This program facilitates tenant choice to move to high-opportunity neighborhoods from areas of concentrated poverty.	Ongoing	Housing Authority	Staff time
vi. **Protect existing affordable units by ensuring continued affordability of existing units whose affordability contracts may be expiring.** There are approximately 117 "expiring-use" affordable housing units in jeopardy of becoming market rate housing by 2028 if their affordability restrictions are not extended.	Ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time
vii. **Explore creating a rental security deposit guarantee program.** The City could create a program modeled on a former state program to provide rental security deposit guarantees for income-eligible households. Since the program is a guarantee, not a grant, it would not require a large funding outlay.	2019-2021	Housing Authority; Housing Planner; Mayor and Council	Staff time
viii. **Expand a program similar to the South Norwalk Renovation program for 2- to 4-unit housing aimed at owner-occupants to include other parts of the city.**	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time; acquisition and rehab costs (financing from state or other programs)
ix. **Expand credit-curing programs.** The lack of credit, or poor credit, can be a barrier to low-income renters and first-time homebuyers.	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time; nonprofit organizations

Actions	When	Who	Resources
x. **Explore innovative affordable housing options such as creation of a Community Land Trust or Limited Equity Cooperatives.** A community land trust (CLT) is a nonprofit organization formed to hold title to land to preserve its long-term availability for affordable housing and other community uses. The largest CLTs in the country are in Vermont and Rhode Island and control thousands of housing units. While usually a private nonprofit, there are some cities that have chosen to use the land trust model for their affordable housing programs. A land trust typically receives public or private donations of real property or uses government subsidies to purchase land on which housing can be built. The homes are sold to lower-income families, but the CLT retains ownership of the land and provides long term ground leases to homebuyers. The CLT also retains a long-term option to repurchase the homes at a formula-driven price when homeowners later decide to move. Community land trusts can be used for homeowner single-family housing, multifamily rental developments, for cooperatives, and can be scattered-site housing. (See community-wealth.org/strategies/panel/clts/index.html and lincolninst.edu/pubs/dl/1395_712_City-CLT-Policy-Report.pdf) Community Land Trusts and similar organizations in Connecticut can be found at centerforneweconomics.org/apply/community-land-trust-program/directory/#connecticut. Limited equity cooperatives (LECs) are housing cooperatives in which low-income eligible members purchase shares at below market prices. If members resell their units, their profit is limited because their equity is limited. LECs today tend to be conversions of existing buildings. shelterforce.org/2017/04/25/will-limited-equity-co-ops-make-comeback	2019-2029	Housing Planner; Housing Policy Advisory Committee; Fair Housing Advisory Commission	Staff time; nonprofit organizations

New Housing Options: Cottage Communities

Cottage communities, sometimes called pocket neighborhoods, are infill developments that can fit into existing blocks. ("Infill" refers to new housing on vacant or underused lots within an existing built up area.) The housing is designed in a cottage style compatible with Norwalk housing types, and typically modest in scale—approximately 1,000 - 1,200 square feet. They are built in densities similar to garden apartments but preserve the atmosphere of single family neighborhoods. This housing is especially suitable for singles, couples, retirees, and single parent families at all income levels. Though not yet common in Connecticut, cottage communities are becoming more common in high-cost housing states like Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Design characteristics include:

- Developments are built in clusters of 4-12 units on existing blocks
- Integrated design provides shared functional open space, off-street parking, external and internal site access, and consistent landscaping.
- The units may be separately platted or developed as condominiums.
- A transition from public to private space—from the street through a low gate to a common open space to a small yard for each unit surrounded by a low fence or hedge—gives each residence a defined private space. Active spaces in the house look out on the common area, providing "eyes on the street."
- Houses are sited to promote privacy by matching the side of a house with more windows to the more closed side of the neighboring house.
- Individual units are marked by variety in design, color, materials, and other aspects to provide visual interest, while retaining a general cottage character (elements such as porches, dormers, bay windows, visible trim, etc.).
- Off-street parking for the development is screened and located away from the street.

Sources and for more information: www.rosschapin.com and www.cottagecompany.com.

GOAL 2

Incorporate healthy lifestyles in city design and improvements

Policies:

- Include health impacts for residents of all ages when evaluating programs and projects.

Strategy

A. Incorporate health metrics into planning and project evaluation.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Consider creating an advisory Health Impact Statement for use when adopting citywide, district, and system plans, and in the permitting process for projects meeting a defined project size.** This can be done relatively quickly using checklists available from the American Planning Association, the Center for Disease Control, and similar groups. See APA, Metrics for Planning Healthy Communities, 2017 www.planning.org/publications/document/9127204 CDC, Healthy Places, www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/health_planning_tools.html	2019 – 2022	Health Department; Economic and Community Development Department; Zoning Commission	Staff time
ii. **Prepare an Aging in Norwalk report to identify future needs to provide a supportive city environment for seniors to help them age in place.** "Aging in Place: A toolkit for local governments," produced by AARP, provides a framework for evaluating city conditions and making improvements to provide an aging-friendly city. www.aarp.org/livable-communities/Plan/planning/info-12-2012/aging-in-place-a-toolkit-for-local-governments.html	2022 – 2024	Planning Department; Senior Services; Health Department; Transportation, Mobility and Parking	Staff time
iii. **Support improvements and design standards that encourage walking and biking access to city and neighborhood destinations, such as village retail areas, parks, and schools.**	2019 and ongoing	Planning Department; Bike/Walk Commission	Staff time
iv. **Expand the number of NorWALKer routes.**	2019-2029	Health Department	Staff time

G. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Early Actions	Who
Designate or hire a housing planner.	Mayor; Department of Economic and Community Development
Establish a multi-stakeholder Housing Policy Advisory Committee for regular policy guidance on housing policy that includes both market-rate and affordable housing.	Department of Economic and Community Development
Prepare a housing policy white paper as the foundation for a Housing Policy Plan—identifying the elements for the plan in terms of data, policy options, types of housing solutions, administration of housing functions, and so on. This white paper will focus on structuring the process, not on finding the right solutions—which will be the province of the housing plan itself.	Department of Economic and Community Development

Source: Noroton at English Wikipedia

CHAPTER FIVE

A Community Committed to Life-Long Education

A. INTRODUCTION

From the perspective of a citywide plan, a city's school system is important to the whole community for five reasons. First is the responsibility to educate students and serve their families. Second, perceptions about the quality of the public school system can affect housing values, especially in traditional single-family neighborhoods. Third, school spending is one of the largest portions of a municipal budget. As this plan is being written, Norwalk is undertaking a significant capital program, including the construction of two new schools and renovations to two existing schools, which will impact municipal budgets over the plan period. Fourth, the schools prepare the future workforce. Fifth and finally, school buildings and activities are important sources of neighborhood identity and community cohesion. How schools fit into the physical fabric of the community is part of that identity.

Norwalk, in the aggregate, is a highly educated community, with 41% of the population over 25 years old holding a bachelor's degree or more. Like the city as a whole, Norwalk Public Schools (NPS) have been experiencing rapid change since 2000. And, compared to the affluent and more homogeneous suburban towns that surround it, Norwalk's public education system serves a complex and diverse urban community and is supported by a broad coalition of community organizations. NPS data show significant improvements in performance in recent years. The system has established a variety of innovative programs, including International Baccalaureate, Global Studies, and the P-Tech Early College High School Model.

Norwalk does not have a research university campus. The city's only post-secondary educational institution is Norwalk Community College (NCC), which plays a multi-faceted role in the community. Unfortunately, its location in West Norwalk near Darien does not contribute to vitality in the urban core. A downtown presence, though discussed, has not yet materialized. However, NCC will have a presence in the SoNo Collection mall in conjunction with a retail training program.

B. EDUCATION IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision:

- **Norwalk embraces lifelong learning through public-private partnerships.** Our schools and Norwalk Community College promote educational achievement to create a highly-qualified workforce for 21st-century jobs. Norwalk seeks a strong higher education presence in its urban center to spark art, innovation and activity.

From the Principles:

- Pursue goals through partnerships.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
The Norwalk Public School system is the most successful city school system in Connecticut, with students exceeding state average achievement and high-need students having the smallest achievement gap.	• Continue to support the NPS Strategic Plan to improve system performance.
The Modern Schools for a Growing City plan provides new and renovated schools to alleviate overcrowding and better serve students.	• Support the facilities improvement plan for the school system.
Norwalk Community College (NCC) continues innovative programs to serve Norwalk and the region.	• Continue to work closely with NCC to benefit the Norwalk community.
Norwalk is a center of education, research and innovation.	• Communicate and coordinate with NCC, institutions such as Norwalk Hospital, and local and state officials to leverage as many assets as possible.

Educational Institutions in Norwalk

- **Norwalk Public Schools (NPS)** includes 4 high schools, 4 middle schools, 12 elementary schools, and 1 pre-school center. Special high school programs include the Center for Global Studies, International Baccalaureate Diploma, P-Tech Early College High School Model (with IBM and Norwalk Community College), Healthcare Academy, Marine Science Academy, and Digital Media and Communications Academy. School overcrowding and deferred maintenance led to the creation of a ten-year facilities improvement plan.

  According to the State Accountability Report for 2016-17, Norwalk is the number one urban school district in the state. 2016-2017 system performance included:

  - Four-year graduation rate of 93% exceeded the state average (88%) for the third consecutive year.
  - Second highest CT Next Accountability Index Score of any K-12 school district in the state
  - Top ranked district in Norwalk's District Reference Group (grouping of school systems similar to Norwalk's)
  - NPS adopted a Strategic Plan 2016-2019 that it is implementing with new rigorous academic programs; reform and improvement of the special education program; enhanced parent outreach programs; and other operational improvements.
  - NPS adopted a Ten-Year Facilities Master Plan in 2017 to address overcrowding, renovation and repair, and enhanced academic programs.
  - NPS also operates an adult education division, the Norwalk Public Schools Continuing Education Program. It offers ESL, GED, High School Diploma and Adult Basic Skills classes to Norwalk, Weston, Westport, and Wilton residents who are 17 years and older. In 2017, it served a total of 735 students.

  The 2017-18 state Accountability Report showed that NPS again surpassed the statewide accountability index and ranked first among urban school districts. In addition, four elementary schools are now recognized as Schools of Distinction: Kendall, Jefferson, Rowayton, and Tracey. Schools of Distinction are recognized for high overall performance, high academic growth, and/or improvement in overall performance.

- **Private schools** include K-8 parochial school, Montessori middle school, Pre-K to 8 charter school, and a 4-12 school for students with learning differences.
- **Norwalk Community College** is the only post-secondary educational institution in Norwalk and has educated more than 170,000 students since opening in 1961 as the first public, two-year college established in Connecticut. The Norwalk main campus on Richards Avenue opened in 1991 and NCC now has campuses in Stamford and other locations. In Fall 2018, 1,588 students were from Norwalk, comprising 29% of the total 5,508 students.[1] Approximately 850 students attend the Norwalk campus during the academic year.

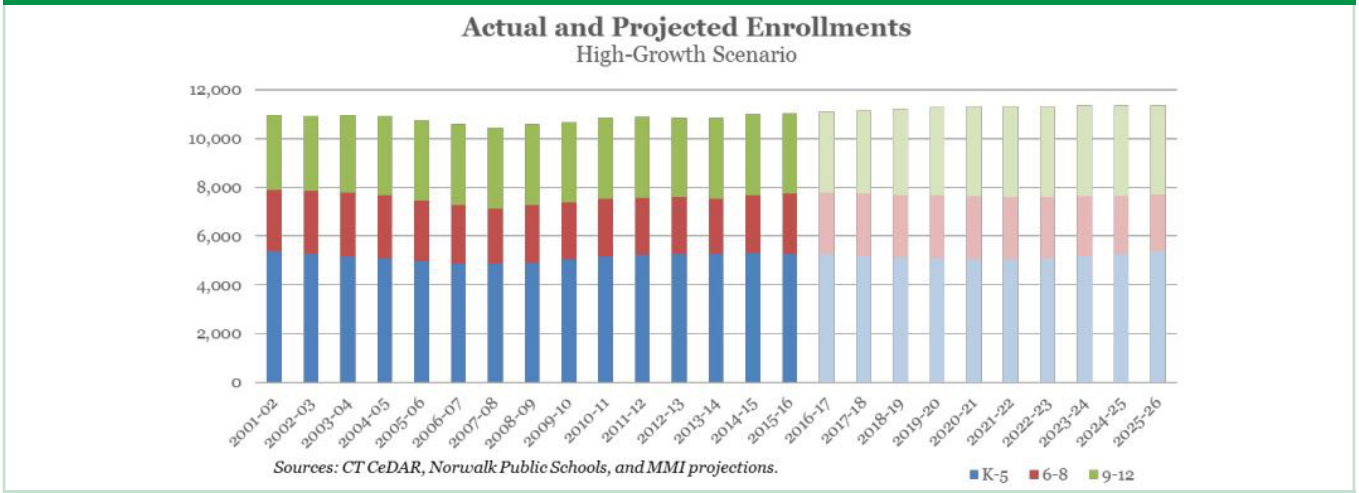
1. Norwalk Public Schools

Demographics & Enrollment

- Peak enrollment was in 1970 with approximately 17,000 students
- Lowest enrollment in 2007-2008 with 10,595 students
- 2018 enrollment: 11,588 students
- 2018 per pupil expenditure: $16,981
- Private and non-Norwalk enrollment: approximately 15% of school-age students living in Norwalk are enrolled in private schools or public schools outside the Norwalk Public Schools (e.g., Stamford magnet schools and the Side by Side Charter School).
- Students eligible for free and reduced lunch: 57%

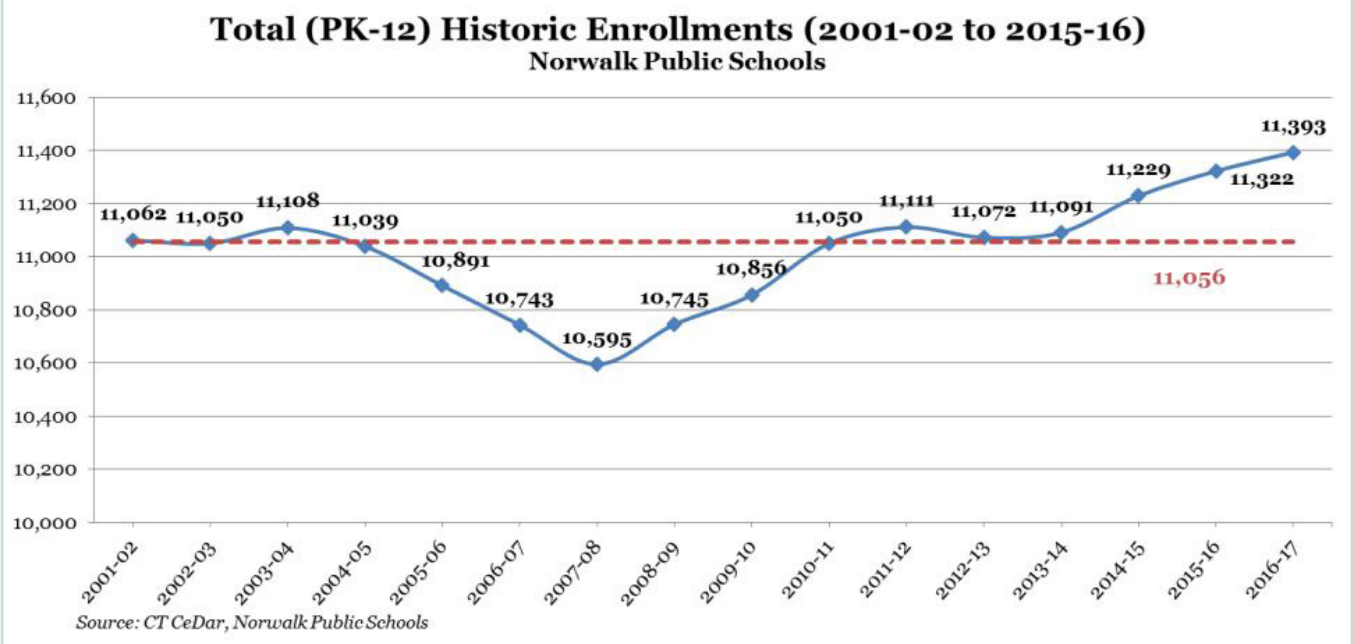
1 NCC Fact Book, 2018.

Figure 5.1 Actual and Projected Enrollments 2001-2026



Source: NPS Facilities Master Plan

Figure 5.2 NPS Enrollment 2001-2015



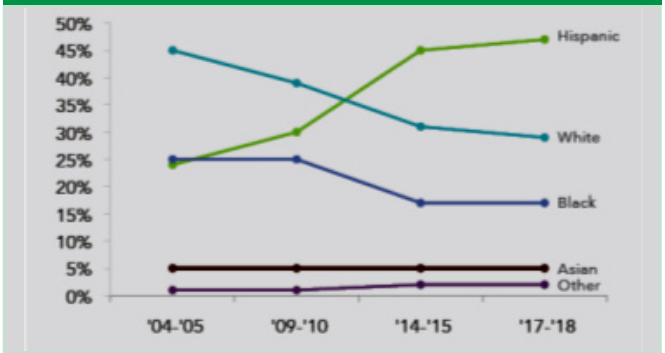
Source: NPS Facilities Master Plan

Demographic Change

Like the City of Norwalk, the public school system has been growing in numbers and changing in composition. Norwalk's population has become more diverse since 2000. For example, the Hispanic population grew from 16% to 25% of Norwalk's population between 2000 and 2010 and, in the school system, it grew from 25% in the 2004-5 school year to 49% in the 2017-18 school year. At the same time, because of the aging of the population in traditional suburban-style neighborhoods, their households tend to have fewer children.

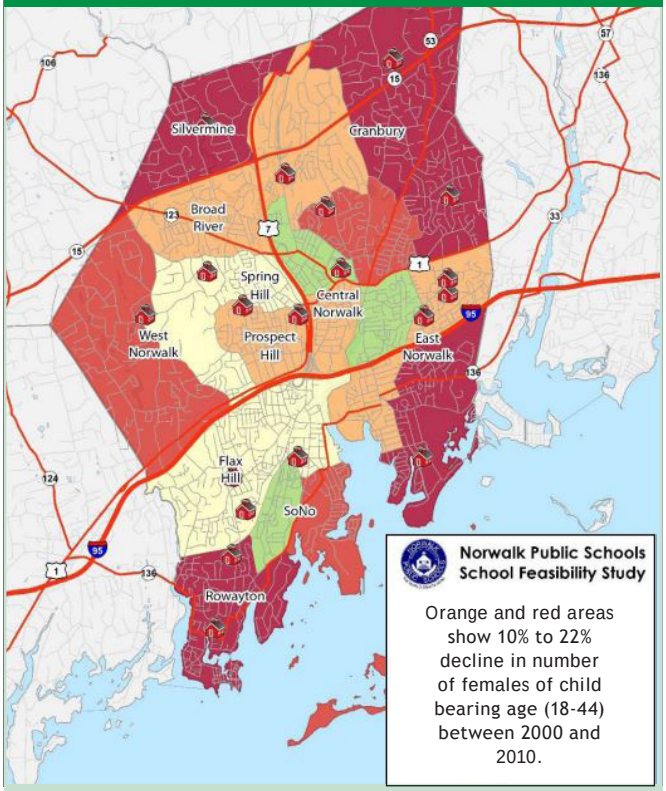
The overall change in demographics has resulted in changes to the composition of Norwalk's school population. The adult Hispanic population is concentrated in the working and child-bearing age groups as compared to other racial and ethnic groups. Figure 5.3 shows the increase in the Hispanic percentage of NPS students between 2004 and 2017. Figure 5.4 shows a decline in

Figure 5.3 NPS Ethnic/Racial Change 2004-2017



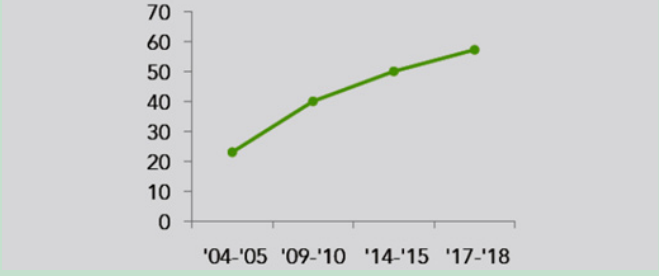
Source: NPS Facilities Master Plan

Figure 5.4 Change 2000-2010 in Females of Child Bearing Age



Source: NPS Facilities Master Plan

Figure 5.5 NPS Free and Reduced Lunch



Source: NPS Facilities Master Plan

the female population of child-bearing age between the 2000 and 2010 censuses in the suburban-style neighborhoods of Norwalk. With the aging of the Baby Boom generation, a similar decline is expected to be evident in the 2020 census.

Since 2010, NPS has seen a growth in the English Language Learners program from 1,292 in 2011-2012 to 1,860 in fall 2017. Recent years have also seen the arrival of unaccompanied minors from Central American societies in crisis. Forty-two percent of NPS students now speak 64 languages from 68 countries. NPS's English Language Learners program is very successful, producing high-performing students, including some valedictorians. The change in student population has also resulted in a growing percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch (See Figure 5.5) and the number of students classified by the state as "high needs" is at a record 6,390.

Enrollment Growth & Multifamily Housing Development

The development of multifamily housing in the urban core and Merritt 7 area has produced concerns that households with children in these apartments make a significant contribution to the NPS student population.

The Facilities Master Plan demographic study analyzed the school population of all existing multifamily units, including affordable, market rate, and luxury developments, to develop a local multiplier. They also consulted an industry-standard study from Rutgers University that includes multipliers for different types of housing based on Connecticut data. The Facilities Master Plan survey of 99 multifamily developments built between 1956 and 2014 with 5,700 housing units found:

- 87% of the units were one- and two-bedroom units.
- In the 2014-15 academic year these units generated 599 students.
- Each unit generated an average of 0.1 students, resulting in 10 students per hundred units.
- Rutgers multipliers were slightly higher.

The local and Rutgers multipliers were then applied to 2,581 multifamily units in the development pipeline to the year 2020 (and later for Glover Avenue), including Washington Village and major developments in Norwalk Center, SoNo, and the Merritt 7 area. The projected student numbers range from 171 at the low end to 281 at the high end. The largest number of students expected to be generated from this housing would

be in the Washington Village project that includes new public housing units as well as some market-rate units (a projected 62 to 106 students). In contrast, the multi-family developments with studio to 2-bedroom apartments were projected to produce many fewer students. The 232 one- and two-bedroom units in the Waypointe developments were estimated to produce between 12 and 19 students. The Facilities Master Plan concluded that the apartments then in the development pipeline would not affect their ten-year enrollment projections.

Modern Schools for a Growing City: Ten-Year Facilities Master Plan[2]

With enrollment growth and many years of deferred maintenance, the Board of Education commissioned an enrollment and facilities study that resulted in a ten-year facilities master plan in two phases. Phase I has begun implementation.

PHASE I

- Addition of 900 additional student seats
- A new school including magnet programs with new and renovated buildings in South Norwalk, where the need is greatest.
- Renovation as new of the current Columbus Magnet School; K-5 International Baccalaureate Early Years Program
- Expansion of Ponus Ridge into a full Pre-K to Grade 8 STEM intra-district magnet campus
- Renovations of Norwalk High School

PHASE II PLANS

- Renovate as new Jefferson Elementary, returning it to a neighborhood school
- Expansion at Roton Middle School and renovations at Norwalk High will also be priorities.
- Expansion of dual-language school at Silvermine to K-8.
- Potential renovations at Roton Middle School.

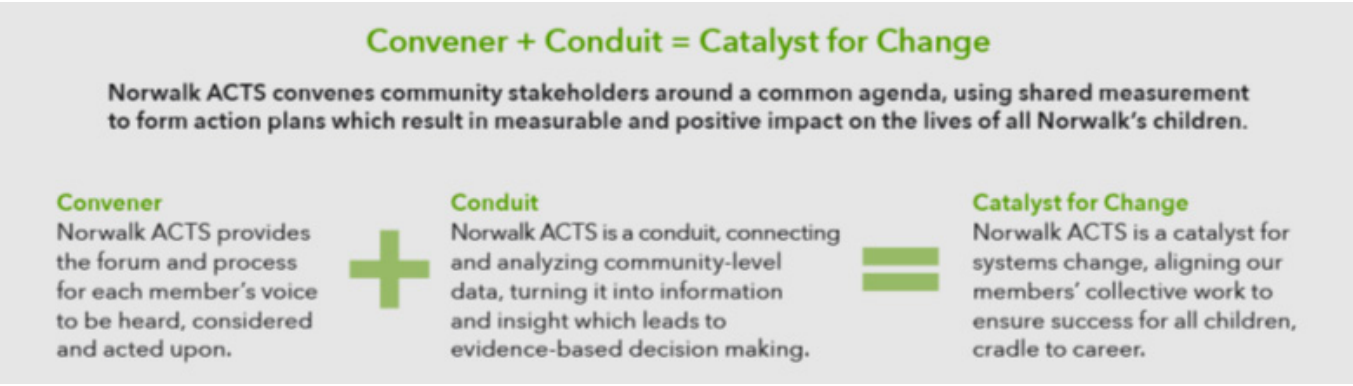
2. Norwalk Acts: Community-Based Coalition

The focus of this organization is cradle to career support for Norwalk children and youth through identifying indicators of success, data collection and analysis, and creation of action plans for improved outcomes. It is a member of the nationwide Strive Together Cradle to Career Network and is comprised of more than 100 organizations. Desired outcomes that guide activities are:[3]

- Norwalk children are ready to learn in kindergarten.
- Norwalk students meet the goal level in third grade reading.
- Norwalk students have the necessary skills to successfully transition from 5th to 6th grade.
- Norwalk students have the necessary skills to successfully transition from 8th to 9th grade.
- Norwalk students successfully graduate from high school in 4 years, ready for college, post-secondary training or full-time employment.
- Norwalk graduates are career-ready with a College degree or professional certificate.

2 www.norwalkps.org

3 Norwalk ACTS Community Impact Report, 2018



3. Norwalk Community College (NCC)

NCC is an Extremely Important Asset to Norwalk & Serves the City in Multiple Ways

- Leadership is active in the community, chairing the most recent search committee for a school superintendent and the coordinating committee for the Choice Neighborhood Initiative (Washington Village neighborhood); co-founder of NorwalkACTS
- Created P-Tech Early College High School Model with NPS, supported by IBM
- Programs such as nursing and wellness educate many local health care practitioners
- English as a Second Language (ESL) program serves about 1,500 people
- Approximately one-third of students come from Stamford; 28% from Norwalk; and the remainder from Greenwich, Bridgeport, and other towns
- Approximately 50% of students are Hispanic and the majority of students are members of minority groups
- Offers non-credit programs such as summer camps and the Institute for Retirement
- Works closely with the Library and the Housing Authority
- First poet laureate is in the NCC English department
- Transit district services NCC; students pay $20 fee per semester (U-Pass) for unlimited free rides throughout CT

NCC Current Construction Projects Include

- Performing arts space including a 300-person theater
- New Student Commons that can hold 400 people for events, and is designed to be a community gathering place

Key Findings & Challenges

- NPS is a strongly-performing city school system which is improving and soon will have state of the art facilities.
- Norwalk's diversity is continually ranked as one of its strengths. Students of all backgrounds are represented in every school. NPS and the state correctly compare NPS with other city school systems and it is ranked at the top of its comparison group.
- NPS is working to meet the challenge of growing enrollment and a more diverse population, while funded at a per-pupil level lower than Stamford and significantly lower than its suburban neighbors.
- NPS is working successfully to meet the challenge of growing enrollment and a more diverse population.
- The demographics of the school system derive from two dynamics: increased immigrant households of child-bearing age combined with the aging of households in the traditional suburban-style neighborhoods, which are generating fewer children.
- The development of multi-family housing in SoNo, Norwalk Center, and the Merritt 7 area, made up of studios and 1- or 2-bedroom units, does not produce large numbers of school children. The NPS demographic analysis for the Facilities Master Plan found that development in the pipeline through at least 2020 was not expected to have a significant effect on enrollment through 2024-2025.
- When the generational transition in the single-family neighborhoods takes hold, Norwalk may see a growing student population from these neighborhoods. In the heyday of suburban development, Norwalk's peak school enrollment was 17,000. Families are smaller in the 21st century, so future growth may not attain that peak again.
- Perceptions of the public school system can affect values for family-oriented housing. It is important that realtors, employers, businesses, and the community as a whole have an accurate understanding of the performance and opportunities in the Norwalk public school system.
- NCC has made many important contributions to the Norwalk community and could play an important role in Norwalk Center's revitalization.

E. WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

In community meetings, there was general agreement on the value of a good school system, but participants did not make many specific comments about the schools.

Visioning Workshop

Having an excellent school system was a value expressed repeatedly in the personal visions and in the various exercises by participants in the workshop, and good schools appeared as one of the top priorities identified in the table discussions during the workshop. There was also some discussion about having more programs to prepare students for jobs, such as bringing back vocational training.

Neighborhood-Based District Workshops

There was little discussion about schools in the neighborhood workshops. In a few cases, the schools were seen as an asset. In a few others, traffic issues related to school drop-off and pick-up was mentioned

Youth Meeting

Participants in the youth meeting are closer to the schools and made more specific references to the school system including: renovation of Norwalk High School; traffic improvements around the schools; and continuing progress in the school system.

F. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

GOAL 1

The Norwalk public school system is the most successful city school system in Connecticut, with students exceeding state average achievement and high-need students having the smallest achievement gap.

Policies:

- Continue to support the NPS Strategic Plan to improve system performance.

Strategy

A. Continue implementation of the NPS Strategic Plan and publicize NPS performance, improvements, and benefits of diversity.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Continue implementation of the NPS Strategic Plan and develop subsequent plans.**	Ongoing	Board of Education; Superintendent	Staff time; funding
ii. **Make the State of the Schools report issued in 2018 an annual report to parents and the community.**	Ongoing	Superintendent	Staff time; funding
iii. **Create a plan to market the Norwalk Public Schools to residents, employers, realtors, and others.** This initiative should be connected to the proposed website and marketing efforts mentioned in Chapter 4 to promote Norwalk as a place to live.	2019 and ongoing	Board of Education; Housing Planner; Chamber of Commerce; Mayor's Office, Economic and Community Development; Planning	Staff time; funding
iv. **Explore creation of new educational programs.** Evaluate a K-8 Dual Language program at Silvermine Elementary School and an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program at Roton Middle School.	2019-2020	Board of Education; Superintendent	Staff time; funding

GOAL 2

The Modern Schools for a Growing City plan provides new and renovated schools to alleviate overcrowding and better serve students.

Policies:

- Support the facilities improvement plan for the school system.

Strategy

A. Implement the facilities improvement plan over time.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Implement Phase 1 of the plan and prepare for Phase 2.**	2019–2020	Board of Education; City of Norwalk	Staff time; capital funding
ii. **Implement Phase 2 of the plan.**	2021–2025	Board of Education; City of Norwalk	Staff time; capital funding
iii. **Prepare a demographic study based on the 2020 census to analyze enrollments and project the next ten years of enrollments.** Detailed census data often take several years to be published.	2025–2029	Board of Education; City of Norwalk	Staff time; consultant
iv. **Support sustained maintenance and renovation of all schools.** Implement the plan to air condition all schools.	2019–2029	Board of Education; City of Norwalk	Staff time; capital funding

GOAL 3

Norwalk Community College (NCC) continues innovative programs to serve Norwalk and the region.

Policies:

- Continue to work closely with NCC to benefit the Norwalk community.

Strategy

A. Expand communication between NCC and the City.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Schedule an annual presentation on NCC's impact on the City at a joint meeting of the Common Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Commission.** This is a good way for the college to communicate publicly with City leaders, encourage dialogue, and strengthen ties.	2019 and ongoing	NCC; Council and Commissions	Staff time
ii. **Work with NCC to create a downtown presence.** NCC could have the most impact on Norwalk's revitalization areas by bringing a program or activity space to Norwalk Center, especially in an arts and culture district. Possibilities include a bookstore (mentioned by NCC leadership and with an example in the City of Lowell (MA), where Middlesex Community College established its bookstore downtown); a specific academic program; an art studio and gallery; and so on. It is possible to begin with pop-up activities without the need to support a physical space. The purpose is to have activities that bring people to downtown.	2019-2024	Economic and Community Development; Planning Department; Arts Commission; NCC	Staff Time; possible capital funding

GOAL 4

Norwalk is a center of education, research and innovation.

Policies:

- Coordinate closely with NCC, local and state leaders, and anchor institutions to realize the goal.

Strategy

A. Attract a higher education presence to downtown Norwalk

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Work collaboratively to promote the city and actively recruit a higher education institution looking to establish a presence in Fairfield County.**	2019 and ongoing	NCC; NPS; Mayor; Economic & Community Development	Staff time; possible capital funding

Strategy

B. Continue NPS and NCC public-private partnerships, working with private industry as well as educational institutions and community groups.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Continue to work with Norwalk ACTS in supporting the school system for "cradle to career" success.**	2019 and ongoing	NPS; Norwalk ACTS	Staff time
ii. **Work with all stakeholders in the community to build strong, sustainable public-private partnerships.**	2019 and ongoing	NPS; NCC; Economic & Community Development; nonprofit and for profit organizations	Staff time

G. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Early Actions	Who
Implement Phase I of the Facilities Master Plan.	Board of Education; City of Norwalk

The Mill Hill Complex centers on the Town House

Source: Norwalk Historical Society

CHAPTER SIX

Preserving & Promoting Our Historic Heritage, Arts & Culture

A. REVEALING & SHOWCASING NORWALK HISTORY, ARTS & CULTURE

History, arts, and culture have proven to be important drivers of revitalization and economic development for cities. Planning for the birth of SoNo in the early 1980's not only saved historic buildings but purposefully included many arts elements including recruiting galleries along with restaurants, painting murals, providing artists' lofts, establishment of an Arts Council with office/meeting space in SoNo, and an annual arts/music celebration.

As one of the oldest cities in Connecticut, Norwalk has many historic structures and sites. Surprisingly, however, it has a relatively weak approach to preserving historic resources. The City's stewardship of the historic buildings it owns has been successful, but a partial inventory of historic sites dating from the 1970s and 80s has not been updated. The city needs a more systematic approach to set priorities and be more proactive in preservation. Similarly, Norwalk's many dispersed arts and culture offerings, activities, and participants need a framework and more city support to help them be successful as they contribute to the community.

B. EDUCATION IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision:

- **We are a center of culture and entertainment, attracting local and regional visitors** to our urban districts of SoNo and Wall Street/West Ave, to our museums, aquarium and historic sites, and to our parks and natural open spaces

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
Norwalk protects its most important historic resources and encourages adaptive reuse of historic sites to maintain and enrich the city's character.	• Support a systematic approach to historic resources planning, protection, and heritage tourism.
Norwalk has a thriving arts and culture community.	• Provide a framework to connect and support arts and culture activities.
Norwalk is known for its public art, and public arts and culture programming.	• Commit city resources to public arts.

1. Historic Heritage & Preservation

Norwalk is one of the oldest communities in Connecticut. Settlers from Massachusetts purchased the land that would become Norwalk in 1640 and 1641, the first settlers arrived in 1649 from Hartford, and the town was incorporated in 1651. The early farmers grew flax and hemp and raised cows and a small town grew up at the head of the estuary, where fishing and shell fishing flourished. In 1779, British forces destroyed the town, which recovered very slowly. Eighteenth century rural houses and stone walls can still be found in West Norwalk and similar parts of the city. The city also attracted some mid-nineteenth century New Yorkers to build large country retreats, such as the Mathews Mansion. The preponderance of Norwalk's historic resources date from the second half of the nineteenth century, when "Old Well"—subsequently South Norwalk—and Norwalk Center became more urbanized and ultimately industrial.

Current City Historic Preservation Tools

Norwalk's Historical Commission oversees historic sites owned by the City. There are no local historic districts, despite the existence of an ordinance setting up one local district and a separate Historic District Commission.

- Norwalk Code, Chapter 57A: Historical Commission (1975): This ordinance created an 11- member Historical Commission to "designate sites and buildings owned or hereafter acquired by the City of Norwalk as historic land sites" which, if approved by the Council, would "come under the control and direction of the Commission."
- Chapter 56: Historic District (1981): This ordinance created a Norwalk Green Historic District and established a five-member Historic District Commission "which shall hereafter perform all functions relative to the establishing of new districts and administering existing districts…," including regulation and issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness for work to the exterior of historic buildings. This local historic district was never officially established, and the Historic District Commission does not exist.
- Demolition Delay Ordinance (Chapter 55): When demolition permits are sought for buildings or structures at least 50 years old, the Building Department refers the cases to the Historical Commission. If they deem the structure preferable preserved, they can order a 120-day delay for interested parties to seek a solution that could preserve the structure.

City-Owned & Managed Historic Properties

The Norwalk Historical Commission oversees ten City-owned historic properties and four historic cemeteries. No city staff is assigned to support the Commission. A 2010 Comprehensive Preservation Plan for the properties made recommendations on physical improvements to preserve the properties. The plan is being implemented and projects are planned through 2024. With a program of $500,000 a year in capital improvements, the deferred maintenance program is almost complete, including updating to meet ADA requirements. The buildings are occupied by nonprofit organizations, such as the Historical Society and the Center for Contemporary Printmaking. In addition to capital improvements, the Commission focuses on historical interpretation on the grounds and production of marketing materials to attract locals and visitors to learn more about Norwalk's historic resources. The City has also restored the Fodor Farm farmhouse, which it owns and is on the State Register of Historic Places.

- The Mill Hill complex centers on the Town House, which was Norwalk's 1836 town meeting house, with additional historic buildings moved later to Mill Hill.
    - School house (1826; occupied by the Norwalk Historical Society)
    - Governor Fitch Law Office (partial reconstruction circa 1740; occupied by the Norwalk Historical Society)
    - Mill Hill Town House (1836; occupied by the Norwalk Historical Society)
    - Mill Hill Burying Ground
    - Two small buildings are on Smith Street at the side of Mill Hill: Old Jail or Lock-up; and Smith Street Barn
- The Mathews Park buildings center on the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion and related

buildings dating from the 1860s.

- Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum
- Lockwood-Mathews Gate Lodge
- Lockwood-Mathews Carriage House (occupied by the Center for Contemporary Printmaking)
- Lockwood-Mathews Gardener's Cottage (occupied by the Center for Contemporary Printmaking)

- Historic cemeteries managed by the Historical Commission:
  - Mill Hill Burying Ground
  - Brookside Cemetery
  - Kellogg-Comstock Cemetery
  - Pine Island Cemetery

Historic Designations & Protections

- National and State Registers of Historic Places include individual sites and districts deemed of national or state historic significance (many are on both registers). While listing on these registers honors the significance of these sites and districts, it does not provide any protection except in the case of potential impacts from federal and state projects. Property owners are free to do anything with these properties, including demolition, subject to local regulations.
- Local Historic Districts or Local Historic Properties are subject to review of exterior changes visible from a public way (CGS, Section 7-147b and Section 7-147q). The review is performed by the municipal Historic District Commission or Historic Property Commission.[1] There are no local historic districts in Norwalk.
- Historic preservation easements or restrictions are legal agreements made by private property owners, recorded in the property deed, which permanently protect significant historic and landscape features of the property. The easement is typically held by a preservation organization, such as the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. Occupation, sale, lease, and estate planning are not affected by a preservation easement and owners continue to maintain and pay taxes on the property.
- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) require that federal and state projects evaluate impacts on historic, archaeological, and cultural resources.

Historic Tax Credits[2]

Federal and state tax credits are available for rehabilitation of historic buildings that meet certain requirements.

- **Federal Historic Tax Credits**
  A 20% tax credit is available for the certified rehabilitation of certified historic structures that are on the National Register and in an income-producing use. A certified rehabilitation is a completed rehabilitation project that is approved by the National Park Service as being consistent with the historic character of the property.
- **State Historic Tax Credits**
  The CT Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program (C.G.S. Sec. 10-416c) allows a 25% tax credit on the Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures associated with the rehabilitation of a Certified Historic Structure for either 1) residential use of five units or more, 2) mixed residential and nonresidential use or 3) nonresidential use consistent with the historic character of such property or the district in which such property is located. An additional credit is available for projects that include affordable housing as provided in section 8-39a of the general statutes. State credits may be combined with federal tax credits.

  The CT Historic Homes Rehabilitation Credit provides a thirty percent tax credit, up to $30,000 per dwelling unit, for the rehabilitation of 1-4 family buildings and based on a minimum of $15,000 in qualified rehabilitation expenditures. After completion of rehabilitation work, one unit must be owner-occupied for a period of five years.

1 For more details on local districts, see Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Handbook for Historic District Commissions and Historic Property Commissions in Connecticut (2010) www.lhdct.org/handbook/handbook_overview

2 The State Historic Preservation Office provides information on tax credits. www.ct.gov/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=3948&q=293806

Historic Inventory & Historic Districts

In the mid-1970s, Norwalk inventoried over 600 historic buildings with a state grant. While important, the inventory is incomplete, does not cover all historically significant buildings in the city, and needs to be updated. The Historical Commission and preservation advocates are seeking new state grants to update the inventory. Norwalk has 10 historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places and three additional districts have been nominated. The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation erroneously lists a local historic district in Norwalk.

If one or more Local Historic Districts were to be established in Norwalk, property owners in the districts would have to go before an entity acting as a local Historic District Commission when they wished to make external changes to the building (painting is not included). The Commission would review the plans and, if satisfied, issue a Certificate of Appropriateness, based at a minimum on the Secretary of Interior's Design Guidelines. Property owners sometimes fear the time, money, and individual autonomy they would give up being in a local historic district. However, local historic districts also guarantee that the historic character of an area is preserved, which very often results in increased market value. Numerous studies have shown that designation as a local historic district typically increases market value and stabilizes value during real estate downturns. Historic preservation has also proven to be economically beneficial on a community-wide basis.

National Register Districts

- Five Mile River Landing Historic District (Rowayton): 72 acres, 17 buildings, 1 object
- Hanford Place Historic District (Haviland and Elizabeth Streets): 43 acres, 36 buildings; 1850-1924
- Norwalk Green Historic District: 350 acres, 54 buildings, 1 object; 1700-1949
- Oysterman's Row: Pond Street, Logan Place, Crockett Street, part of Craw Avenue, Cook Street, and the stretch of Rowayton Avenue that connects them all.
- Silvermine Center Historic District: 1000 acres, 97 buildings, 15 structures; 1700-1974
- Verneur Pratt Historic District (114-116 Perry Ave)
- Wall Street Historic District: 57 acres, 27 buildings, 2 structures; 1850-1074
- Village Creek Historic District: 540 acres, 48 buildings; 1925-2000
- South Main and Washington Street Historic District: 55 acres, 26 buildings, 2 structures plus added 30 acres, 10 buildings plus 25 acres, 9 buildings; 1850 - 1949Merritt Parkway: 1925-1949
- Nominated: Silvermine Avenue Historic District; Whistleville Historic District; Rowayton Depot Historic District

Washington Street has been a bustling commercial center for many years

Source: Norwalk Inn

National Register Individual Listings

- Beth Israel Synagogue (31 S. Concord St)
- Gallaher Estate (300 Grumman Ave)
- Greens Ledge Lighthouse (Long Island Sound) – 1900-1924
- Enos Kellogg House (210 Ponus Ave Ext) –
- LeRoy Shirt Company Factory (11 Chestnut St) –
- Lockwood-Mathews Mansion (295 West Ave) – 1850-1874
- Joseph Loth Company Building (25 Grand St) – 1900-1924
- Norwalk City Hall (41 N. Main St) – 9 acres, 1 building; 1925-1949; 1900-1924
- Norwalk Island Lighthouse (Sheffield Island) – 1850-1924
- Norwalk River Railroad Bridge (Walk Bridge) – 1875-1899
- Peck Ledge Lighthouse (Long Island Sound) – 1900-1924
- Perry Avenue Bridge (Silvermine River) – 1875-1974
- US Post Office – SoNo (16 Washington St); 1925-1949
- Rock Ledge (33, 40-42 Highland Ave) – 210 acres, 6 buildings; 1900-24
- Norwalk Lock Company Factory, 18 Marshall Street – 1850-1949

Privately-Owned Historic Cemeteries

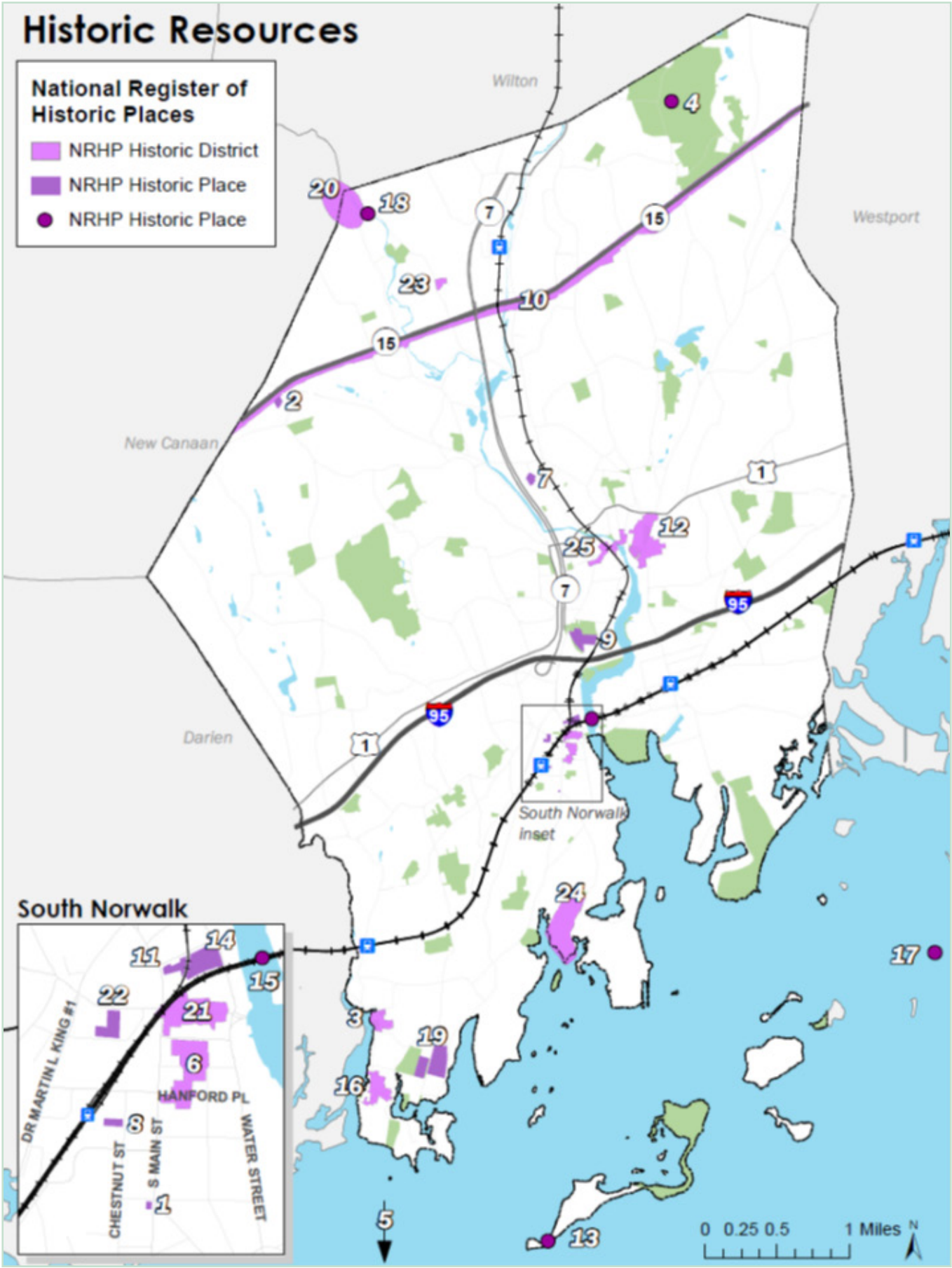
- Rowayton Avenue & Woodchuck Lane
- Crescent Street Norwalk, CT 06850
- 2 East Wall Street
- Ponus Avenue & Nursery Street

Nonprofit Organizations with an Interest in Historic Preservation & Resources

- The Norwalk Historical Society occupies and manages some of the city-owned historic properties (see above) and the City Museum, which is located across from the City Hall parking lot. The Society also provides research and a plaque for historic properties for a fee.
- The Norwalk Preservation Trust advocates for historic preservation, organizes historic preservation tours, and gives awards.
- The Rowayton Historical Society leases the Seeley-Dibble-Pinkney House, the Barclay Boathouse, and the Raymond Marine Exhibit in Pinkney Park. The Society advocates for historic preservation in Rowayton and organizes exhibits.

Norwalk Island Lighthouse on Sheffield Island

Figure 6.1 Norwalk National Register Historic Resources (Map Key)		
ID	**Name**	**Location**
1	Beth Israel Synagogue	31 S. Concord St
2	Enos Kellogg House	210 Ponus Ave Ext
3	Five Mile River Landing Historic District*	Rowayton
4	Gallaher Estate	300 Grumman Ave (Cranbury Park)
5	Greens Ledge Lighthouse	Long Island Sound
6	Hanford Place Historic District	Haviland and Elizabeth Streets
7	Joseph Loth Company Building	25 Grand St
8	LeRoy Shirt Company Factory	11 Chestnut St
9	Lockwood-Mathews Mansion	295 West Ave (Mathews Park)
10	Merritt Parkway Historic District	Merritt Parkway
11	Norwalk City Hall	41 N. Main St
12	Norwalk Green Historic District	Norwalk Green
13	Norwalk Island Lighthouse	Sheffield Island
14	Norwalk Lock Company Factory	18 Marshall St
15	Oysterman's Row Historic District	Norwalk River
16	Oysterman's Row Historic District	Rowayton
17	Peck Ledge Lighthouse	Long Island Sound
18	Perry Avenue Bridge	Silvermine River
19	Rock Ledge	33, 40-42 Highland Ave
20	Silvermine Center Historic District*	Silvermine and Perry Aves
21	South Main and Washington Street Historic District	South Norwalk
22	United States Post Office – SoNo Branch	16 Washington St
23	Verneur Pratt Historic District	114-116 Perry Ave
24	Village Creek Historic District	South Norwalk
25	Wall Street Historic District	Downtown
	* historic district boundaries approximate	
	Rowayton Depot Historic District (nominated)	Rowayton Ave, roughly between Arnold Lane and Witch Lane
	Silvermine Avenue Historic District (nominated)	South of Silvermine Center Historic District
	Whistleville Historic District (nominated)	Lexington Ave and surrounding area


Historic Resources
National Register of Historic Places
NRHP Historic District
NRHP Historic Place
NRHP Historic Place
Wilton
Westport
New Canaan
Darien
South Norwalk inset
South Norwalk
DR MARTIN L KING #1
HANFORD PL
CHESTNUT ST
S MAIN ST
WATER STREET
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles
N

Arts & Culture in Norwalk

Norwalk Arts Commission

The Norwalk Arts Commission was established in 2017 by ordinance (Chapter 17A). The commission developed a strategic plan with the following principles:

- Mission: To infuse the arts into Norwalk civic and cultural experiences.
- Vision: To foster a vibrant arts culture that reflects Norwalk's community identity.
- Values: To encourage organizations, institutions and individuals to connect with the creative community

The Commission focuses its activities in several categories:

- Community engagement through events and exhibitions such as SLOW Art Day; the Commission sees a need to expand beyond visual arts in the future
- Maintenance and expansion of arts and culture partnerships with artist studios, the library, the historical society, public schools, housing authority and other local entities
- Act as stewards of public art by maintaining the public art inventory and reviewing public art proposals for according to the Commission's adopted public art policy

Museums

- The Maritime Aquarium opened in 1988 with a unique focus on the Long Island Sound ecosystem. It is a Top 25 US aquarium with over 3000 animals representing over 300 species. The 140,000 sq ft aquarium also has an IMAX theater, a research vessel, and many educational programs. The reconstruction of the Walk Bridge adjacent to the Aquarium will take place during the 10-year horizon of this citywide plan and require moving the IMAX theater. The Maritime Center conducts research on Long Island Sound from a vessel docked near the facility.
- SoNo Switch Tower Museum (built 1896). Railroads used "towers" to house the mechanism of switching trains from one track to another. These towers were staffed by operators who would operate the switch tracks by throwing levers in the tower. Located in South Norwalk, this museum invites visitors to learn about the unique role of these buildings in the railroad industry.
- Stepping Stones Museum for Children dedicated to early childhood learning and development.
- Lockwood-Mathews Mansion is a fully restored historic museum in one of the earliest and most significant Second Empire Style country houses in the city. It was the former home of LeGrand Lockwood and is now part of a city park.
- The Center for Contemporary Printmaking is dedicated to the print arts on numerous media from lithography to silkscreen. It features exhibits and education opportunities.
- The Norwalk Mill Hill historic site has been preserved and restored under the oversight of the Norwalk Historical Society. Recent streetscape improvements provide a better connection to Wall Street.
- The Rowayton Historical Society preserves local history and provides programs and exhibits about Rowayton's past.

Festivals

- Seaport Oyster Festival
- SoNo Arts Festival
- Norwalk Art Festival
- Norwalk NICE (International Cultural Exchange)

The NICE Festival brings performers together to celebrate diverse cultures

Source: Erik Trautmann, The Hour

Hyperbolic Ribbed Mace, Charles Perry, 1998, Merritt 7 Building #4

Source: charlesperry.com/sculpture/hyperbolic-ribbed-mace.com

Public Art in Norwalk

The Arts Commission maintains an inventory of public art. A partial list of public art in Norwalk includes:

- A distinguished collection of WPA murals in public buildings. The Arts Commission has a docent program for the murals.
  - Norwalk City Hall - 31
  - Norwalk Transit District - 5
  - Norwalk Community College - 2
  - Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk - 1
  - Norwalk Public Libraries – 3
- People's Gallery: exhibits in the City Hall corridor to the Community Room
- Charles Perry sculptures at Merritt 7 plazas and buildings
- Light art: SoNo under the bridge; Yankee Doodle Garage facade
- Maritime Garage Gallery
- South Norwalk Station – two art installations

Arts Centers & Galleries

- Rowayton Arts Center – classes and workshops; exhibitions
- Silvermine Arts Center – located just across the border in New Canaan. An Artist' Guild and School of Art were established in the 1920s. The Silvermine Arts Center has a Guild of over 300 professional artists, five galleries, and an art school; a gift shop; public programs; and outreach programs in the Norwalk and Stamford schools.
- ARTWorks Gallery on the Green exhibition space in the Chittim-Howell House owned by St Paul's Episcopal Church on the Green. (Seabury Academy for Music and the Arts, Inc.)

Artists' Studios

- SPAG Studios (St. Philip Artists' Guild) located in the Oakhill Mansion, on the grounds of St. Philip Church. Studios are in the upper level rooms and the rest of the mansion has gallery spaces for displaying work.
- Firing Circuits Studios, with 24 artists, is in an industrial building on Muller Avenue, just off Main Avenue.
- Wilson Avenue Loft Artists, 225 Wilson Avenue in South Norwalk. The second floor of old industrial building renovated for 15 artists' studios and a gallery space.

Performing Arts

- Norwalk Crystal Theater: Childrens' theater in the Ben Franklin Center (66 Bayview Ave)

- Norwalk Symphony Orchestra: Comprised of professional musicians and founded 1939
- Mid-Day Music and Concerts: St Paul's on the Green. (Seabury Academy for Music and the Arts, Inc.)
- The Wall Street Theater: features live arts performances in a building listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Music Theater of Connecticut: professional and student productions, and a conservatory-style School of Performing Arts with curriculum-based training for students ages four through high school.

Sound Studios

- Factory Underground Studio in Norwalk Center is a combination sound and video studio, concert space, and entertainment space.
- Sono Studios. Soundstage and event space.

Key Findings & Challenges

Historic Resources

- Norwalk has done a good job in restoring and maintaining the historic resources owned by the City.
- Although there are many National Register Historic Districts and individual sites, designation does not provide protection against exterior changes incompatible with historic character.
- There are no Local Historic Districts, which provide the strongest protection for historic character.
- There are four Village Districts, established under C.G.S Section 8-2j. These are zoning designations which require that all development be subject to review by an architectural consultant to the Zoning Commission for compatibility with the immediate neighborhood, including historic resources.
- Norwalk lacks a Historic Preservation Plan to provide a systematic understanding of the city's historic resources, identification of priorities, and approach to preservation.
- There is no organized heritage tourism strategy, though there are some materials to guide residents and visitors interested in the city's history. Studies find that heritage tourism visitors typically spend more time and money than other tourists.

Arts & culture

- Norwalk has many arts and culture activities and public art dispersed in different organizations and locations.
- Creation of the Arts Commission in 2017 as a city organization is a good first step in developing a City role and strategy for the arts. However, the Commission has a tiny budget and no staff. The Stamford Arts and Culture Commission, for example, has a program manager.
- Maintenance and conservation of public art, such as the WPA murals, must continue to be prioritized.
- There has been interest in creating an arts district, possibly in conjunction with an entertainment district. Informal efforts include branding part of the Wall Street area as an arts district; reference to SoNo as a "design district;" a proposal to brand MLK Avenue as the "street of dreams," with a public art component.
- Public art and art activities in Norwalk have been sponsored by government, private property owners (such as Merritt 7), nonprofit groups (such as Norwalk 2.0), churches, and artist groups.
- The Arts Commission has two representatives on the Walk Bridge design committee to advocate for an arts component.
- Public art activity has tended to focus on visual arts, though there are a few organizations focused on performing arts.
- An important contribution to a more integrated cultural tourism approach is a set of five mobile apps developed by the Arts Commission and the Historical Commission with 60 points of interest in six geographic areas. Other departments and the Redevelopment Agency also contributed to the cost of the apps, which are free to users.

E. WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

Visioning Workshop

Participants identified historic resources as assets. Personal visions included "historical preservation of buildings," access to "historic sites," "historic character". Among the top priorities: Protect/preserve/maintain history and historic buildings

Neighborhood-Based Workshops

In many of the workshops, enjoying and preserving historic character was cited as important, for example in Silvermine, South Norwalk, and Downtown/The Green.

Youth Workshop

Participants would like to see better entertainment options for teens, such as movies in the park and music concerts.

Topic Workshops

In the City Design workshop, participants were very supportive of preserving historic and cultural character.

F. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

GOAL 1

Norwalk protects its most important historic resources and encourages adaptive reuse of historic sites to maintain and enrich the city's character.

Policies:

- Support a systematic approach to historic resources planning, protection and heritage tourism.

Strategy

A. Preserve the integrity and character of historic structures, historic landscapes, and cultural resources sites within the City of Norwalk.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Continue the successful maintenance and management of city-owned historic properties.** Provide city funding as needed to keep the buildings and sites in good condition.	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Common Council	Capital funding as needed

ii. **Designate a staff person from the Planning and Zoning Department to act as staff and liaison to the Historical Commission.** This staff person should focus on preservation activities other than the city-owned properties, for example, creation of a Historic Preservation Plan.	2020 and ongoing	Planning Department; Historical Commission	Staff time
iii. **Develop a Historic Preservation Plan to establish policies, practices, and criteria for preservation of buildings and sites important to the history of Norwalk.** A plan will assist in identifying any historic and cultural resources that have not been inventoried, assessing their current status, and recognizing issues and opportunities to better protect those resources, including funding opportunities. It will establish policies, practices, and criteria for preservation of buildings and sites important to the history of Norwalk. Archaeological resources should also be included in the preservation plan. When completed, the plan can be adopted as an appendix to the POCD.	2022-2025	Historical Commission; Historic Society; Norwalk Preservation Trust; Planning Department	Staff time; consultant
iv. **Continue to identify and document significant historic resources with state-funded surveys – buildings, structures, and sites 50 years old or older.**	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historic Society; Norwalk Preservation Trust	Staff time; possible consultant or volunteers
v. **Prepare and submit buildings and districts for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and State Register of Historic Places as part of the Historic Preservation Plan.**	2022 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historic Society; Norwalk Preservation Trust	Staff time; consultant
vi. **Become a Certified Local Government (CLG).** This program is jointly administered by the National Park Service and the state. CLGs become partners in the Federal Historic Preservation Program with access to the benefits of the program, including grant funding. www.ct.gov/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=3933&q=464434	2024-2029	Historical Commission; Planning Department	Staff time
vii. **Consider using PastPerfect Online to make selected items in historic collections available to the public.** The Historical Commission uses PastPerfect, a collections management software.	2024-2029	Historical Society; Historical Commission	Staff time

B. Establish one or more local historic districts.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Identify potential local historic districts and work with property owners to explain the advantages and responsibilities of being in a local historic district.** Local historic districts provide more protection of historic character than National Register Districts and can enhance property values because of the greater certainty that changes will not adversely affect the historic character of the district. Include analysis and recommendations on local historic districts in the Historic Preservation Plan.	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historic Society; Norwalk Preservation Trust	
ii. **Review and amend the existing ordinance on local historic districts (Norwalk Code Chapter 56) to give the existing Historical Commission (Norwalk Code Chapter 57A) the role of granting Certificates of Appropriateness in local historic districts.** Most cities have one Historical Commission that also acts as the Historic District Commission. In a city the size of Norwalk, it is unnecessary to create an additional body.	2019	Planning Department; Historical Commission; Common Council	

C. Improve Village District historic design standards and consider creating additional Village Districts.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Strengthen existing Village District design standards to clearly identify the unique design elements or historic features that establish the context for renovations and new construction.** This should occur during the zoning code rewrite.	2022-2025	Planning and Zoning Department; Historical Commission	Staff time; consultant
ii. **Study the potential for additional village districts.** See Chapter 14, Goal 2, Strategy A for potential locations.	2025-2029	Planning and Zoning Department; Historical Commission;	Staff time; possible consultant

D. Revise zoning and development regulations to promote preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Develop a preservation checklist for City boards and commissions when they are reviewing development proposals that might affect buildings that are over 50 or years old, regardless of whether they are officially designated as historic.** Require advisory comment from the Historical Commission to the relevant city agency prior to approval of any project that will affect a building or group of buildings fifty years old or older.	2022-2025	Historical Commission; Planning and Zoning Department	Staff time
ii. **As part of the Historic Preservation Plan, develop priority categories or criteria for historic properties outside of local historic districts to be used in preservation efforts and demolition delay cases.**	2022-2025	Historical Commission	

E. Seek grants and funding for historic preservation projects

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Apply for historic preservation grants from the State Historic Preservation Office and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, as well as other funding sources.**	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission	Staff time
ii. **Promote the use of preservation tools including Federal and State tax credits and preservation easements.**	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historical Society; Preservation Trust	Staff time

F. Expand public awareness of Norwalk's historic heritage, character, and resources.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Enhance the presence of the Historical Commission on the City web site with links to other historical and preservation organizations.**	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; IT Department	Staff time
ii. **Make all Historic Resource Inventory documents available on the City website,** ideally in a City Data Warehouse or Open Data Portal (see Chapter 13).	2020 and ongoing	Historical Commission; IT	Staff time
iii. **Promote the Historical Society's historic building plaque program to encourage property owners to identify their historic buildings.**	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historical Society	Staff time; Historical Society
iv. **Send notices once a year to property owners in National Register listed districts or individual properties to raise awareness about the historic value of their properties and encouraging voluntary consultation with the Historical Commission when making renovations.**	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Planning and Zoning Department	Staff time; printing and mailing expenses
v. **Revive an award program for historic preservation by private property owners.**	2019 and ongoing	Preservation Trust	Preservation Trust

G. Promote heritage and arts tourism in Norwalk.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Develop a heritage tourism plan as part of a Tourism Plan with leadership from the City's economic development staff** and the Historical Commission, and collaboration from the Chamber of Commerce, the Arts Commission, the Historical Society, and other stakeholders.	2022-2023	Economic and Community Development Department; Historical Commission; Arts Commission	Staff time; possible consultant
ii. **Expand public activities such as historic walks, building visits, and so on.**	2019 and ongoing	Preservation Trust	Preservation Trust

GOAL 2

Norwalk has a thriving arts and culture community.

Policies:

- Provide a framework to connect and support arts and culture activities.

Strategy

A. Create a Norwalk Arts and Culture Plan.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Designate a City staff member to serve as staff to the Arts Commission and act as liaison with City departments and with non-profit groups to organize and promote arts and culture projects and programs.**	2019	Economic and Community Development Department; Arts Commission	Staff time
ii. **Consider creating a City Office of Arts and Culture to coordinate planning and implementation of arts and culture policies.** The Arts Commission would be the policy-making group for this office.	2025	Economic and Community Development Department; Arts Commission; Common Council	Staff time; operational funding

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iii. **Inventory the arts and culture community in Norwalk,** including individual artists, musicians, and performers, galleries and venues, related businesses, festivals, zoning and other ordinances that affect the arts, and so on.	2019 and ongoing	Arts Commission	Staff and volunteer time
iv. **Develop a strategic plan for arts and culture that is focused on enhancing Norwalk's identity as destination for arts and culture.** This plan should include an analysis of the current and potential economic contribution of arts and culture to Norwalk.	2025-2029	Economic and Community Development Department; Arts Commission	Staff time; consultant

B. Designate an Arts and Culture District in Norwalk Center.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Work with stakeholders, including property owners, to identify and zone an appropriate area in Norwalk Center to provide incentives for artists' studios, live-work options, gallery spaces, performance spaces, and so on.** Start with a relatively restricted area, in order to create critical mass and avoid dissipating the impact of early investments.	2020-2021	Economic and Community Development Department; Arts Commission; Planning Commission	Staff time
ii. **As part of the zoning rewrite, amend zoning to allow for incubator and fabrication space, as well as live/work space.** Current zoning restricts what is called "boutique industrial" operations to 3,000 sf. This is too small and inflexible.	2020-2021	Zoning Commission; Economic and Community Development; Arts Commission	Staff time; consultant
iii. **Assist the Fairfield Makers Group and/or similar makers' organizations, artisan operations, and so on, to move to Norwalk Center.**	2020 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time
iv. **Organize an arts program for empty shop windows and related events, such as "window gallery" walks and/or performances in empty shop fronts, to attract people to Norwalk Center.** Examples include: the Activation Spaces program in Dayton, Ohio; and Memshop in Memphis, Tennessee. www.activatedspaces.org/activated-spaces/ www.memshop.org	2019 and ongoing	Arts Commission; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time

Actions	When	Who	Resources
v. **Promote arts, entertainment and cultural activities and venues to cities and towns outside of Norwalk.**	2019 and ongoing	Arts Commission; Economic and Community Development	Staff time

GOAL 3

Norwalk is known for its public art and public arts programming.

Policies:

- Commit city resources to public arts.

Strategy

A. Create consistent funding for public art and public arts programming.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Create a 1% for Art program as part of City infrastructure projects or by designating a percentage of Parking Authority receipts for public art or public art programming.** One percent for Art programs reserve one percent of the funding for infrastructure projects above a certain threshold for public art as part of the project. The Arts Commission would be responsible for choosing individual projects or programs.	2020	Common Council; Arts Commission; Transportation, Mobility and Parking	Part of capital funding or Parking Authority revenue
ii. **As part of the zoning rewrite, include provision of public art among elements for which developers of commercial and mixed-use buildings can receive incentives.**	2019-2021	Economic and Community Development Department; Zoning Commission; Common Council	Staff time; consultant

G. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Early Actions	Who
Designate a staff person from the Planning and Zoning Department to support the Historical Commission.	Planning and Zoning
Develop a structure for a Historic Preservation Plan.	
Designate a staff person from the Planning and Zoning Department to support the Arts Commission.	Planning and Zoning
Inventory and survey the arts and culture community in Norwalk.	Arts Commission

3

Environment, Sustainability, & Resilience

CHAPTER 07

Enhancing Open Space, Park, Trail & Recreation Systems

CHAPTER 08

Sustainability & the Norwalk Environment

CHAPTER 09

Coastal Resources & Resilience

Summary Themes & Priorities

Creating the Best City Parks & Recreation System in the State

Develop and implement an integrated plan for open space, parks, trails, and recreation programs that enhances quality of life, provides recreation for all ages, and helps protect the environment.

Making Norwalk a Leader in Sustainability & Environmental Protection

Develop and implement a citywide sustainability program and plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance resource-efficiency, and improve water quality in streams and coastal waters.

Protect & Enhance Coastal Resources While Preparing Norwalk for the Impacts of Climate Change

Continue a balanced approach to coastal and harbor management while developing a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan to prepare for implementation in future years.

Source: City of Norwalk

CHAPTER SEVEN

Enhancing Open Space, Park, Trail & Recreation Systems

A. CITY OF OPEN SPACE AND PARKS

Norwalk residents see the city's parks and open space as major assets. One of the most appealing aspects of the city is that it has so much public open space on the coast that is open to Norwalk residents. At the same time, there are several very large woodland parks with walking trails and passive recreation. Residents want to make sure that resources are used to manage and maintain the existing parks before focusing on acquiring additional parks. However, they also support more connections among open space resources through trails and walking routes. Previous planning attention to the park system has focused on open space and environmental characteristics, with little focus on recreational programming, despite the combination of recreation and parks in one department. An integrated approach to open space and recreation will strengthen the overall system to serve all residents better and enhance the environmental value of the system. With a more systematic approach to parks and recreation, Norwalk can have the best city park and recreation system in the state.

B. OPEN SPACE, PARKS, TRAILS & RECREATION IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision

- Norwalk's **parks, natural open spaces, and waterfront attractions** work as a green and blue network linked by trails and other routes, and offering recreational and nature experiences to all.
- Norwalk protects and enhances the **natural environment and land, water, and air resources** for the benefit of future generations.

From the Principles

Make healthy lifestyles easy and fun. Create opportunities for healthy choices and wellbeing through easy access to physical activity, healthy food, and medical care.

Practice sustainability and resilience. Make Norwalk a model green and clean community through energy- and resource-efficiency, preservation of open space and habitat networks, and adapting to climate change.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
Norwalk aims to have the best city park and recreation system in Connecticut.	• Support a systematic and integrated approach to open space, park, and recreation planning and management. • Support development of a connected green and blue network of parks, open space, and trails • Avoid development, encroachments or other activities that would affect opportunities for beneficial use and enjoyment of existing city parks and open space.
Norwalk's recreation system and programs serve residents throughout the city while protecting and managing natural resources.	• Enhance recreational programming to serve the changing needs of all types of households and individuals.

1. Parks & Trails

Inventory of Parks

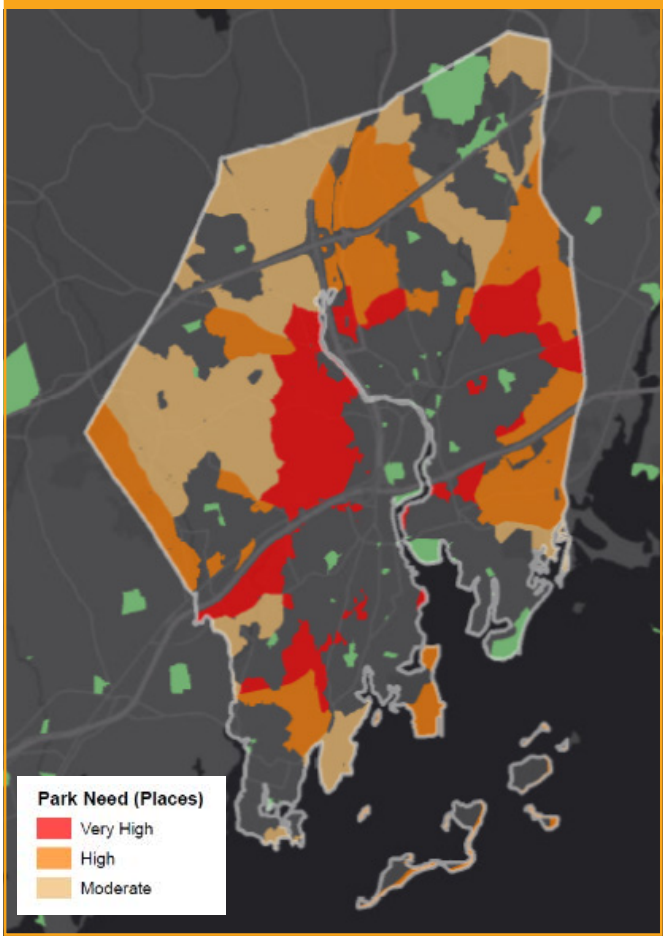
Norwalk has a variety of parks and open spaces but no integrated open space and recreation system plan. Large parks with access to water and several large woodland parks serve the whole city:

- **Calf Pasture Park/Shady Beach/Taylor Farm**
  ¾ mile coastal parks with beaches, picnic areas, skateboard park, sailing school, baseball/ softball, volleyball, basketball, bocce, and a 45-acre off leash dog park, Taylor Farm Park.
- **Cranbury Park**
  A 227-acre wooded park with trails in north-east Norwalk, Cranbury also includes the Gallaher Mansion, a disc golf course, picnic areas, a playground, pavilion, and sculpture garden.
- **Fodor Farm**
  Acquired in the mid-1990s when the farm dating to the mid-1600s was going to be a subdivision. The 8-acre park includes a tree farm, 300 community garden plots, an orchard, bee hives, green houses, a recently-restored historic barn, and tool sheds.
- **Mathews Park**
  Located adjacent to Norwalk Center and I- 95, the park includes two museums, Matthews Mansion and Stepping Stones Childrens' Museum, historic buildings, playground, tennis courts, and picnic areas.
- **Oak Hills Park Golf Course**
  This 144-acre park has been operated as an 18-hole golf course and tennis facility since 1969. It also includes a clubhouse restaurant and gardens, trails, and natural areas. The Oak Hills Park Nature Advisory Committee assists the Oak Hills Park Authority in the protection and betterment of the natural resources in the park and advocates for the continued conservation, protection, and sustainability of the natural environment.
- **Oyster Shell Park**
  A 25-acre waterfront park in SoNo near the Aquarium, the park was built on an old landfill site and has walking trails and disc golf. The park's design is designated under the Sustainable SITES Initiative for green landscape design and maintenance.

Oyster Shell Park is a waterfront park built on reclaimed land

Source: Norwalk Redevelopment Agency

Figure 7.1. ParkServe 2018 Park Access in Norwalk



- **Veteran's Memorial Park**
  Located on 35 acres in East Norwalk across the bridge from SoNo, the park includes an esplanade overlooking Norwalk Harbor, boating center and marina, bike and walking paths, playground, basketball, and multi-use athletic fields (soccer, hockey, football, lacrosse, and baseball).
- **Grassy, Shea (Ram) & Chimon Islands**
  owned or managed by the City and operated as carry-in, carry-out recreation areas with overnight camping available in designated areas.

The Recreation and Parks Department maintains 1,215 acres, including 32 parks, 19 school sites, and other City-owned property.

- Of the recreation areas and parks maintained by the City (totaling 842.3 acres), 227.1 acres are school sites which are open to the public only if not programmed for school activities.
- Of the 557.7 acres of park land, Cranbury Park accounts for 39% and the camping islands off-shore account for 7.4%.
- The Oak Hills Park and Golf Course is managed by the Oak Hills Park Authority.
- The First Taxing District Water Department manages 12 parks and land parcels including:
  - Norwalk Town Green
  - Andrew Santaniello Park, Fair Street; on the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) adjacent to Route 7
  - Union Park, Mott Avenue and Byington Place; on NRVT adjacent to Route 7
  - Willie Moorer Park, Holmes and West Main Street; near Main St Village
  - Cannon Street Park, corner of Sawmill Road and Cannon Street
  - Small parks and parcels including Rocks Park, Church Park, Gateway Park, Lewis Park, and Nick Bredice Park.
- The Sixth Taxing District owns Pinkney Park and Bayley Beach.

Parks Level of Service

The National Recreation and Park Association has traditionally measured Level of Service for Parks and Recreation in terms of acres and facilities per 1,000 persons. More recently, the Trust for Public Land has launched the ParkServe website to map ten-minute walking access to parks.[1] ParkServe includes an analysis for Norwalk. It does not count school sites as park land and also leaves out parks not managed by city departments. The 2018 ParkServe for Norwalk indicates that 52% of Norwalk residents live within a ten-minute walk of a park.[2] The most underserved areas, shown in red in Figure 7.1, are the denser single-family neighborhoods around the urban core.

Norwalk Land Trust Properties

There are 31 properties (90 acres) throughout Norwalk owned or stewarded by the Norwalk Land Trust. Many are conservation lands not open to the public. Major properties include:

1 www.parkserve.tpl.org; also see www.parkscore.tpl.org/methodology.php

2 www.parkserve.tpl.org/mapping/index.html?CityID=0955990

Walking the Norwalk River Valley Trail

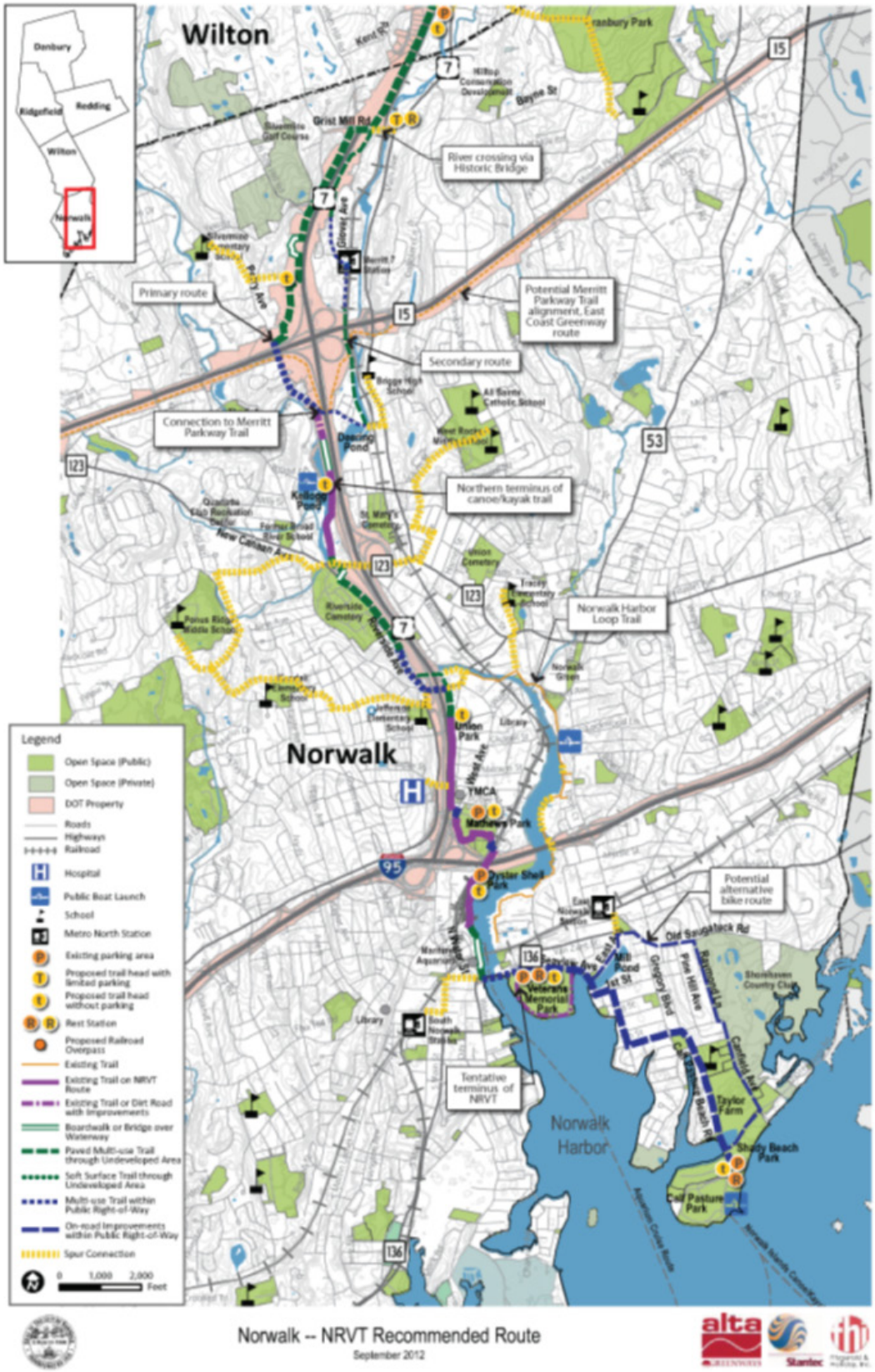
- Farm Creek Nature Preserve – 16 acres including trails, open marsh vistas, and native meadows.
- White Barn Preserve – 5.5 acres of land protected under conservation easements. Potential for additional conservation of land with the purchase of the historic White Barn Theater.
- Hoyt Island – 3 acres at the mouth of Village Creek in South Norwalk, donated as a bird sanctuary/nature preserve.
- Yost Street Marsh – 3 acres.
- Wood Acre – 1.5 acres

Trails

Norwalk's large parks have pedestrian trails, for example, Cranbury and Oak Hills Parks.

- The major trail initiative in progress is the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT). When completed, the trail will extend 38 miles from Calf Pasture Beach through five towns to Danbury. It will be a 10-foot wide, wheelchair-accessible trail.
- In Norwalk, the beginning of the NRVT is an on-road route, with bike lanes or sharrows (shared roadway) towards the Maritime Aquarium.
- From the aquarium, 1.5 miles of paved, off-road trail are complete and travel past Oyster Shell Park, Stepping Stones Museum and Lockwood-Mathews Mansion to Union Park near the downtown library.
- An additional 1.7 miles of off-road trail are in construction to Broad Street. A trail section along the Norwalk River between New Canaan Avenue and Broad Street is complete.
- The segment from New Canaan Avenue is in design.
- It is expected that the trail will be complete in Norwalk within a few years.
- The NRVT can function as the spine of a walking and biking network. For example, the Harbor Loop Trail connects to the NRVT.
- Figure 7.2 shows the trail route and proposed connections into Norwalk neighborhoods.

Figure 7.2 NRVT Trail Route



Major Sites of Potential Future Open Space Interest

Although Norwalk is very built out, there are some remaining large parcels of land whose current uses may change and be of open space interest.

- **The Manresa** site of a decommissioned coal-fired power plant attracts the most attention. The future use of the land has been under study. All potential uses currently under discussion include a major open space dimension and maintain a water dependent use.
- **The LaKota Oaks site**. Formerly a seminary and then the Dolce Resort, this 66-acre site and hotel was recently sold. There are some conservation easements on the land and the owners have traditionally allowed neighborhood residents to walk on the site. With a new owner, it will continue to be in private hands. However, the City will always have an interest in a private or public use that preserves the open space character.
- **Liberty Square site.** This area will be a staging area for the Walk Bridge project. After the project is completed, a use that will allow public access to the water is preferable as part of maintaining a water dependent use.

2. Recreation

The City's asset management system is not yet used for the public properties maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department.

- School properties are counted as parks and theoretically available for public recreation. Because school activities always get priority, school recreation areas are often not available for the public. In addition, the schools charge for use of their facilities.
- Demand for athletic fields is high and some are being changed to artificial turf.
- Adult sports include men's and coed softball and winter volleyball; there are independent leagues
- Swimming: The recreation department uses the pool at Norwalk High School and also provides free swimming lessons at the beach in the summer, funded by Stew Leonard's. A private swimming pool went bankrupt.
- There are many programs for children and youth including baseball, volleyball, swimming, tennis, gymnastics, karate, skate camp, U.S. Sports Institute, children's theater, engineering summer camp, guitar, mad science, paint/draw & more, summer play and learn.
- Adult programs and classes include fitness, such as yoga, gymnastics, karate, tai chi, tennis, swimming, and Zumba; other classes include guitar, chess, and culinary arts.
- Event spaces on park properties, such as the Gallaher Mansion and the Fodor Farm barn, can be rented for functions.
- The department charges fees for programs which average a total of about $1.3M annually. This money goes back to the General Fund and does not pay for recreation department improvements.
- A resident pass is required for access to the beaches, Cranbury Park, Taylor Farm, Veteran's Park, the Transfer Station, the Yard Debris Site, and to park at the Marvin School.

Races are held throughout the city, including public parks

Open Space Planning

The most recent Open Space Plan is a draft prepared in 2007 – "Conservation Opportunities: Norwalk's Open Space Plan". The document stated that the purpose was to identify open space functions, identify goals for the City's open space network, and provide a proactive framework to facilitate future open space conservation opportunities. The plan established a Register of Open Space Properties divided into Protected Open Space and Transitory Open Space (contributing to open space character but not permanently protected). This register does not seem to have been maintained and updated since 2007. This plan included goals and strategies relevant both to environmental policy and open space, parks, and trails:

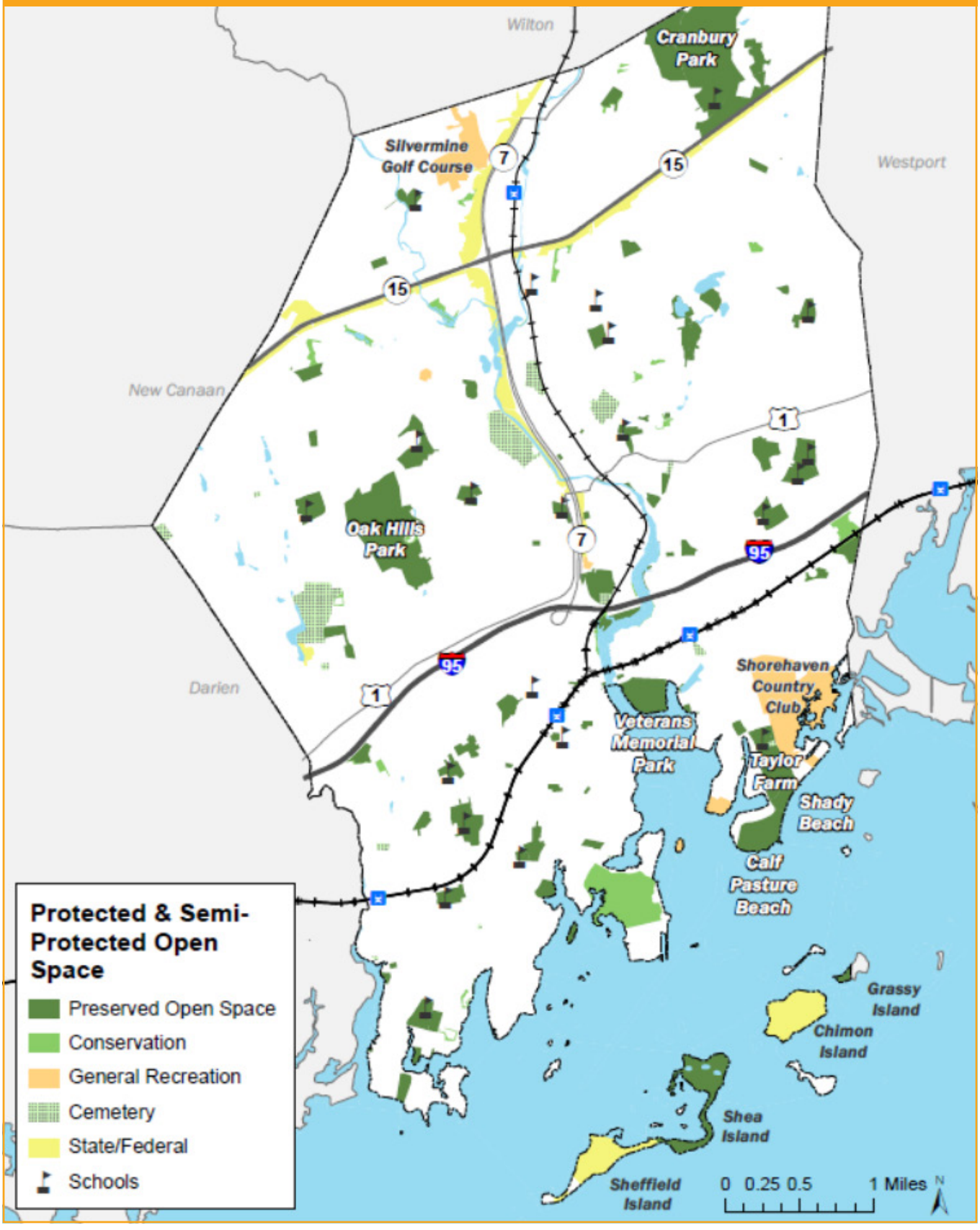
- Preserve Open Space for Natural Resource Protection and Management
    - Protect habitats of diverse plant and animal species, including wildlife corridors
    - Protect unique and irreplaceable ecosystems
    - Maintain the critical natural resource-based industries of commercial fishing and tourism
    - Preserve already-protected open space and encourage the protection of existing "transitory" open space
- Provide Diverse Landscapes that Offer Outdoor Recreation
    - Provide public access to waterfronts
    - Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation, accessible to all Norwalk residents
    - Provide places for education and research on ecological, environmental, and cultural resources
- Protect Public Health and Safety
    - Protect water quality, including the quality of surface and underground drinking water supplies
    - Protect the quality of watercourses, wetlands, and coastal waters
    - Protect air quality

The Plan also included a section about incorporating open space plan policies into citywide policies, including the Plan of Conservation and Development, and making land use regulations consistent with the goals of the Open Space Plan.

Key Findings & Challenges

- Open spaces with visual and physical access to the water are among the most beloved and desired in Norwalk.
- Participants in the planning process placed more importance on maintenance and support for existing open space properties than acquisition of new open space.
- Norwalk has taken advantage of opportunities to create new parks within this built-out city, such as Oyster Shell Park.
- The Norwalk River Valley Trail, when completed, will be a major amenity in Norwalk.
- If school recreational areas are subtracted from park acreage, there are approximately 700 acres of public passive or active recreation acreage in Norwalk, including Oak Hills and the taxing district parks. This results in a ratio of 8 acres per 1,000 persons. According to the most recent metrics from the National Recreation and Park Association, the typical park and recreation agency oversees 10.1 acres of park land for every 1,000 residents. The Trust for Public Land ParkServe metric indicates that there are some parts of Norwalk where residents are not within walking distance of a park.
- The recreation department needs better and more efficient systems to fulfill its responsibilities.

Figure 7.3 Parks and Open Space



Visioning Workshop

Norwalk residents highly value the city's open space, parks, and trails, with nearly half of all assets listed relating to parks, beaches, and trails. Protecting and enhancing open space and environmental resources was also the top priority category.

Neighborhood-based District Workshops

Neighborhood workshop participants consistently valued their natural and open space assets very highly and, in some cases, noted the need for more open space in neighborhoods like Hospital Hill/Spring Hill. In addition, upkeep and availability of sports fields was also stated as a concern.

Topic Workshop: Green, Sustainable & Resilient Norwalk

Open space and parks priorities identified by participants focused on maintenance of existing parks and open space; completion of the Norwalk River Valley Trail; protection of remaining open space; and improving and increasing trails for walking, biking, and running. In an exercise where participants were asked to allocate funding for open space, parks, and recreation, the top four categories were:

- Focus on open spaces with access to the water—protection, maintenance, improvement, and, when feasible, acquisition: 23%
- Focus on maintaining and improving the large parks that serve the whole city such as Calf Pasture Beach, Cranbury Park, and Oak Hills: 20%
- Create safe walking and biking routes to neighborhood parks: 13%
- Maintain and improve existing smaller neighborhood parks and athletic fields: 10%

GOAL 1

Norwalk aims to have the best city park and recreation system in Connecticut.

Policies:

- Support a systematic and integrated approach to open space, park, and recreation planning and management
- Support development of a connected green and blue network of parks, open space, and trails.
- Avoid development, encroachments or other activities that would affect opportunities for beneficial use and enjoyment of existing city parks and open space.

Strategy

A. Develop a parks, open space, and recreation system plan, including a management plan, that emphasizes connectivity and promotes healthy lifestyles.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Organize a committee led by the Conservation Commission to create a Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation system plan.** While led by the Conservation Commission, the committee should have strong representation from the Recreation Department and also include members from the Planning Commission, Historical Commission and representatives of environmental and conservation nonprofits, sports leagues, and park and recreation users.	2019	Conservation Commission; Recreation, Parks & Cultural Affairs Commission; Conservation and Recreation staff; Planning Commission/ staff; Historical Commission; environmental, conservation, and recreation representatives	Staff time
ii. **Survey the public about open space, park and recreation use, satisfaction, and desires for the future.**	2019	Conservation Commission; system plan committee	Staff time

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iii. Create a ten-year plan, with public participation, to include the following elements: • An analysis of environmental conditions and cultural resources within parks; an inventory of lands of conservation and recreation interest along with their level of protection; an inventory of recreation resources; an analysis of open space and recreation needs and priorities; and goals, strategies, and actions. • As part of the needs analysis, review demographic characteristics and trends, and survey residents about their open space, park, trail and recreation preferences • Preserve already-protected open space and encourage the protection of existing "transitory" open space (land that functions as open space but is not formally protected from development) within environmentally sensitive areas. • Include a management plan for efficient stewardship of open space, park, trail, and recreation lands, using a life-cycle model, as well as provision of recreation services for all Norwalk residents, identifying maintenance needs. • Include a recreation programming and investment plan that identifies how to fund programs and set fees. Consideration of which programs should be free or with reduced fees because of their importance to the community as a whole (such as the current learn to swim programs) should be part of the recommendations.	2022–2023	Conservation Commission; Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation System Plan Committee	Staff time; consultant
iv. Implement an asset management system for the Parks and Recreation Department as part of a citywide system.	2022–2025	Mayor; DPW	Staff time; cost of asset management system and training
v. Identify priority walking and biking routes for access to open space and recreation destinations. Program these routes for pedestrian and street tree improvements.	2020–2021	Bike/Walk Commission; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Department of Public Works	Staff time; capital funds for future implementation

Actions	When	Who	Resources
vi. **Give priority to completion of the Norwalk River Valley Trail.**	2019–2029	Mayor, Council; Bike/Walk Commission; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Department of Public Works	Staff time; capital funds
vii. **As part of a zoning rewrite, create an "Open Space" zoning category and rezone all park and conservation land that is permanently protected.** This category can provide for the existence of small structures that support the open space or recreation values of the site.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning; Council	Staff time; consultant

Strategy

B. Identify opportunities to provide more public access to water, including streams as well as the Norwalk River and coastline.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Seek open space protection along Long Island Sound.** Protection does not necessarily mean acquisition by the City. Regulations and agreements with nonprofits and private property owners can also provide protection.	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development; Conservation Commission; Harbor Management Commission; Norwalk Land Trust	Staff time; possible capital funds; possible nonprofit and private funds
ii. **Pursue planning and funding for public access to Long Island Sound on Manresa Island,** for example, remediation that allows for a coastal walking trail. Work with the owners, environmental organizations, and other stakeholders to preserve the maximum area possible on Manresa Island as natural open space with some public access and maintain a water dependent use.	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council; Economic and Community Development; Harbor Management Commission	Staff time; possible capital funding, grants, private funding
iii. **Identify small, neighborhood-scale water access to ponds and streams.** Neighborhood associations could help identify potential areas for access in public open space or through easements.	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning; Department of Public Works	Staff time; volunteer time; possible capital funding

GOAL 2

Norwalk's park and recreation system serves residents throughout the city while protecting and managing natural resources.

Policies:

- Enhance recreational programming to serve the changing needs of all types of households and individuals.

Strategy

A. Seek park opportunities in underserved areas of the city to work towards providing walking access to a park for every resident (within half-mile).

Park use promotes public health, and studies have shown that people use parks more when they are within walking distance. Recreational sites and programs should serve people across all neighborhoods and income levels.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **As part of the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan, identify underserved areas in the city and potential park opportunities so that all residents can walk or bike to a park.**	2022–2023	Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Plan Committee	Staff time; consultant
ii. **Expand the NorWALKER program.**	2019 and ongoing	Board of Health; Bike/Walk Commission; Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Plan Committee	Staff time
iii. **Survey residents regularly to make sure recreation and park opportunities reflect changing demographics and needs.** The survey should include post-program surveys of participants as well as a more general survey of residents as a whole.	2019 and ongoing	Recreation Department	Staff time
iv. **Develop a reduced-fee or scholarship program to support fee-based park and recreation activities for lower-income children and youth.**	2020 and ongoing	Recreation Department	Staff time; operational or grant funding
v. **As part of the Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Plan, analyze and consider setting aside all or some of recreation fees to fund recreation department capital needs.**	2022–2023	Mayor and Council; Finance; Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Department	Staff time

G. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Early Actions	Who
Organize a committee, led by the Conservation Commission, to develop an Open Space and Recreation Plan.	Mayor; Conservation Commission
Survey residents on their use of the park and recreation system, their needs, and begin preparation of the Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation System plan.	Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Plan Committee; Conservation Commission
Identify priority walking and biking routes to park and recreation resources.	Bike/Walk Commission
Continue completion of the Norwalk segments of the NRVT.	Recreation Department; Public Works

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CHAPTER EIGHT

Sustainability & The Norwalk Environment

A. SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

This chapter of the plan focuses on sustainability in terms of protection and enhancement of environmental resources, and energy- and resource-efficiency. Norwalk's environmental health is closely linked to the city's waterways and the watershed plans provide the most detailed look at the city's natural environment and resources. Enhanced stormwater management is central to controlling pollution and improving water quality in the Norwalk River, Norwalk Harbor, other streams and ponds, and Long Island Sound. Norwalk's management of its stormwater drainage system is regulated by the EPA through a permit issued by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. This permit requires the City to manage its system for decreasing levels of stormwater runoff. Similarly, the State of Connecticut is strongly committed to reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. To do its part, Norwalk—as a community and as a city government—needs to understand its baseline emissions, make a plan for mitigation, and then monitor progress. During the ten years of this citywide plan, city government can become a model of energy-efficiency, greenhouse gas reduction, and efficient use of all resources.

B. OPEN SPACE, PARK, TRAIL & RECREATION IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision

- Norwalk **protects and enhances** the natural environment and land, water, and air resources for the benefit of future generations.
- We are committed to **energy- and resource-efficiency ,** as well as pursuing solutions and adaptations to the expected impacts of climate change and sea-level rise--coastal and inland flooding, extreme storms, extreme temperatures, and drought.
- The City's infrastructure, public facilities, and public services are resource-efficient, well-maintained, cost-effective, **sustainable, and resilient**.

From the Principles

- **Practice sustainability and resilience**. Make Norwalk a model green and clean community through energy- and resource-efficiency, preservation of open space and habitat networks, and adapting to climate change.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
Norwalk City government is a model of sustainability.	• City government actions are guided by sustainability principles.
Norwalk reduces greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state goals.	• Incorporate energy-efficiency as a way of life in Norwalk.
Protect and manage Norwalk's sensitive environmental resources and its inland and coastal waters to enhance water quality, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, public health, and enrichment of community character.	• Use city decision making to enhance environmental protection.

D. CURRENT CONDITIONS, KEY FINDINGS & CHALLENGES

What is Sustainability?

Sustainability means meeting the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It means conserving resources, so they are available in the future, promoting healthy environmental systems and habitats, and supporting conditions for continued ecosystem services. These ecosystem services provided by the natural environment include food and water; conditions that help regulate floods, drought, land degradation, and disease control; and the nutrient cycling system that maintains the conditions for life on earth.

Environmental Resources

Norwalk is in a highly urbanized part of the Long Island Sound Coastal Lowland ecoregion. The natural area is characterized by a low-elevation rolling coastal plain, tidal marshes, estuaries, sandy beaches, and rocky headlands. The highest elevation is a hill 282 feet above sea level in West Norwalk. The most notable feature is the Norwalk River. An archipelago of 25 islands, the Norwalk Islands, lie one to two miles offshore and includes a unit of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge on Sheffield Island. The islands and waters are part of the Atlantic Flyway for migrating birds and the refuge provides habitat for many birds, including the endangered roseate tern. The islands are protected by municipal ordinances, the Coastal Barrier Resources Act, the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, and the Endangered Species Act.

Some of the most detailed environmental studies of Norwalk were done for the watershed plans completed for the Norwalk River Watershed (updated 2011) and the Five Mile River (2012), which cover most of Norwalk. In addition, the Saugatuck River Watershed Plan (2012) covers the Stony Brook watershed in the northeastern corner of Norwalk.[1] Nearly half (46%) of Norwalk is in the Norwalk River Watershed, including the Silvermine River. Because of the importance of waterways for environmental resources, the analysis and recommendations of these plans can serve as a foundation for Norwalk's environmental policy.

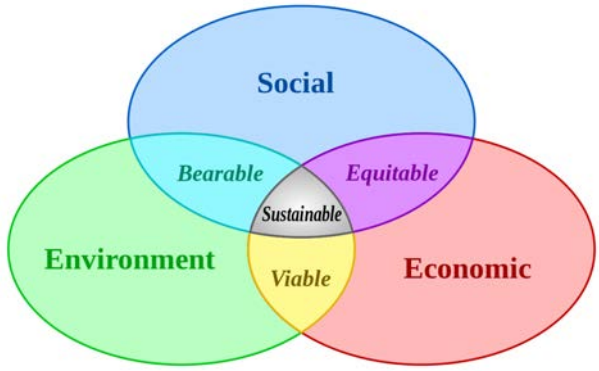
Watershed Plans' Goals and Strategies

The two watershed plans have similar goals and strategies. A major focus is reducing "nonpoint source" pollution, which is caused when storm water from rain or snowmelt picks up pollutants and eventually deposits them in streams, wetlands, coastal waters, and ground water. The plans recommend both structural and non-structural solutions (such as zoning and development standards) to reduce the impacts of non-point source pollution.

Overall management goals for these plans include:

- Enhance stormwater management to reduce nonpoint source runoff

Figure 8.1 The "Triple Bottom Line"



Source: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sustainable_development.svg

- Improve water quality to restore and protect surface and ground water quality
- Protect, enhance, and restore wildlife habitat
- Increase awareness and stewardship
- Promote balanced growth through land use, flood protection, open space patterns, and development standards

Relevant recommendations include:

- Eliminate illicit discharges, which are undocumented discharges into waterways, such as car washes, laundries, leaking septic systems, and so on.
- Manage septic systems. Some parts of Norwalk are not connected to public sewer and depend on septic systems, such as parts of West Norwalk and Cranbury. Septic systems need regular maintenance and pump out to avoid septic failure and pollution.
- Implement Low Impact Development (LID).
- Promote smart growth development patterns.
- Disconnect downspouts and increase permeable surfaces. Disconnecting downspouts and implementing rain gardens, bioswales, and similar "green infrastructure," as well as permeable paving, reduces pollution.
- Protect and establish riparian buffers. Vegetated buffers along rivers and streams reduce pollution. Riparian habitats are the areas immediately

1 www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/water/watershed_management/wm_plans/norwalk_watershedplan_final.pdf; http://ct-norwalk2.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/3591/FiveMileRiver-Final-WBP; www.norwalkct.org/1269/Saugatuck-River-Watershed

adjacent to the stream channel and provide important wildlife habitat. Municipal properties along the River have retained buffered areas, helping to stabilize the bank and filter stormwater runoff.

- Manage pollution from waterfowl (e.g., Canada Geese) and domestic animals.
- Implement large-scale Best Management Practices (BMPs) in urban conditions. Structural BMPs may include rain gardens, constructed wetlands, green roofs, and other techniques for capturing, filtering, and infiltrating urban stormwater runoff.
- Treat runoff from transportation corridors. Highways and major corridors produce significant pollution. Highway and roadway runoff can be treated with grass swales, wet ponds, constructed wetlands, bioretention cells and buffer strips.
- Enhance public education and outreach. Property owners can contribute by implementing landscape practices that reduce fertilizer and herbicide use and pollution from runoff.

The Norwalk River watershed plan identified opportunities to retrofit city-owned properties (including City Hall and the adjacent athletic field, Irwin Freese Park, Wolfpit Elementary School, and the Allen Road facility) with green infrastructure Best Management Practices that would reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Improving Habitat Through Dam Removal

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, New Englanders built dams on local rivers and streams to create water power for early industries. There are 16 dams on the Norwalk River and its tributaries in Norwalk alone, and eight dams on the Silvermine River. Major dams impede fish migration and contribute to a degraded river system, including excess algae, unhealthy water temperatures, and loss of habitat connectivity for wildlife. In 2018, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, in collaboration with the City of Norwalk and other partners began removal of the Flock Process Dam, the first and largest dam on the Norwalk River. Removal of the dam eliminates the risk of failure and catastrophic flooding that threatens roads and buildings downstream and reduces the danger of upstream flooding and damage to buildings and roads. This project, restoring 3.5 miles of stream and river, also promotes ecosystem health and increases habitat for migratory fish, supporting recreational and commercial fishing in Long Island Sound and bird nesting colonies in the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

City of Norwalk Storm Water Management Programs

Norwalk's stormwater management programs are regulated by the MS4 permitting program. "MS4" means "Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System," the system that collects and conveys stormwater—such as storm drains, pipes, or ditches, to water bodies. It does not include combined sewers or sewage treatment plants. MS4s require permits under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), which is administered by the federal Environmental Protection Agency through statewide permits. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection administers the permits to Connecticut MS4s. Permittees are required to develop and implement a comprehensive storm water management program including public outreach and education, pollution prevention measures, treatment or removal techniques, monitoring, use of legal authority, and other appropriate measures to control the quality of storm water discharged through the system to local streams and coastal waters.

The City of Norwalk MS4 permit became effective July 1, 2017 and expires on June 30, 2022, within the time horizon of this citywide plan. During this period, the City must meet certain requirements of the permit and provide annual reports on progress. The 2017 annual report, approved in March 2018, covers the City's storm water management activities underway and identifies programs and activities that the City must implement by June 2022. These activities are organized under eight categories, many of which are aligned with the recommendations of the watershed plans.

- **Public Education & Outreach**
  The City's storm water management web page (www.norwalkct.org/1734/Stormwater-Management) provides educational materials about storm water pollution and management.

City departments work with the Five Mile River Action Group, a community group in West Norwalk that educates residents about best management practices to implement the Five Mile River Watershed Plan (www.westnorwalk.org/five-mile-river). In addition, the City supports the work of East Norwalk Blue, Inc., which was formed to manage pumpout programs in lower Fairfield County to avoid pollution of Long Island Sound (pumpout.eastnorwalkblue.org/pumpout.asp).

- **Public Participation**
  The City complies with requirements to provide public notice and the opportunity for public comment on storm water management plans and documents.
- **Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination (IDDE)**
  The City works with Harbor Watch, an environmental organization, to identify, locate, and eliminate illegal discharges. Norwalk does consistent monitoring of a set of storm water drainage outfalls. The 2017 report indicates few IDDEs in Norwalk that year and that most are related to leaks or breaks in water and sewer infrastructure. There are approximately 4,000 on-site sewage disposal systems (septic systems) in Norwalk, which are regulated by the Health Department, with four failures found and remedied in 2017. Deadlines for actions include:
    - **June 2019:** Complete assessment, priority ranking, mapping, and listing of illicit discharges.
    - **June 2022:** Complete mapping of the entire city, investigations of all problem catchments and 40% of all catchments. The City maintains regular mapping updates for the drainage system.
- **Construction Site Runoff Control**
  Storm water runoff from construction sites of new development or redevelopment is managed by the land use regulatory system. Erosion and sediment control plans are required for all special permits, site plan reviews, coastal area management reviews, and subdivision applications. Land use staff from the Building, Public Works, Water Pollution Control Agency, Planning and Zoning, Conservation, and Health Departments meet as the Code Enforcement Administration Committee to review projects. City of Norwalk regulations at Ch. 118, Article 113 are required to specifically include the MS4 regulations. Deadlines for actions include:
    - **June 2019:** Complete and enforce any needed upgrades to regulations related to land disturbance and development.
- **Post-Construction Storm Water Management**
  This category focuses on long-term maintenance of stormwater treatment structures and facilitating Low Impact Development (LID) practices by reviewing regulations to reduce and eliminate barriers to LID. The City adopted an updated Drainage Manual in 2017. Deadlines for actions include:
    - **June 2019:** Implement long-term maintenance plans for any retention/detention basins and stormwater treatment structures.
    - **June 2021:** Establish regulations and guidelines to require consideration of LID and runoff reduction in site planning.
- **Directly Connected Impervious Area Mapping**[2]
  DCIAs are impervious surfaces, such as pavement, gutters, drain pipes, and other structures that convey stormwater without reducing volume. Stormwater from impervious surfaces contains pollutants that degrade water quality in streams, ponds, and coastal waters. The MS4 permit includes a "retrofit program" to disconnect impervious areas in redevelopment projects. Deadlines include:
    - **June 2020:** Complete calculation of the DCIA that contributes to each outfall
- **Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping**
  The City of Norwalk deploys a broad array of pollution prevention activities: IPM (Integrated Pest Management) in maintenance of City properties; programs to reduce pet and goose waste impacts; regular street sweeping; cleaning and inspection of storm drain pipes and catch basins; critical waterway inlet and outlet cleaning; large storm drain pipe cleaning and maintenance; snow removal; litter removal; collection programs for household hazardous waste, yard waste, and bulky waste; and recycling at the transfer station. Deadlines include:

2 More information on the reasons for impervious surface mapping and methods is available at: www3.epa.gov/region1/npdes/stormwater/ma/MADCIA.pdf

- **June 2020:** Complete catch basin inspection in priority areas. Identify and prioritize retrofit projects to disconnect DCIA to meet stormwater reduction goals. The goals in the permit vary depending on whether sites have 40% or more DCIA or if they are new development sites or sites with less than 40% DCIA. In the first case the goal is to retain at least 50% of water quality volume on site, and in the second case the goal is to retain 100% of water quality on volume. If there are obstacles to meeting these goals, the permit allows for payment of fees for offsite retrofits of DCIAs.
- **June 2021:** Begin implementing a program to disconnect 1% of DCIA annually.
- **June 2023:** Complete inspection of all catch basins.

- **Monitoring**
  The permit requires monitoring of outfalls, which Norwalk continues to do through its partnership with Harbor Watch. Deadlines include:
  - **June 2019:** Complete inventory and mapping of discharges to impaired waters; begin follow-up investigations of drainage areas; include progress in the Annual report.
  - **June 2020:** Complete screening of 50% of outfalls.
  - **January 2021:** Begin annual monitoring of 6 priority outfalls.
  - **June 2022:** Screen 100% of outfalls.

Green Infrastructure & Low Impact Development (LID)

The MS4 permit, the City's 2017 Drainage Manual, and the watershed plans all promote green infrastructure and LID as a way to reduce runoff and facilitate on-site infiltration of stormwater. These measures not only reduce pollution of inland and coastal waters, they can play an important role in reducing flooding from the expected increase in extreme storms resulting from climate change.

- **Green Infrastructure**
  Green infrastructure uses natural systems to manage stormwater. As a nearly built-out, historic city, with many densely-built areas, Norwalk will always need some "gray infrastructure," the human-engineered pipes and pumps in traditional drainage infrastructure. However, under the MS4 permit, Norwalk must develop a program for green infrastructure in public areas as well as promoting it for private development projects.

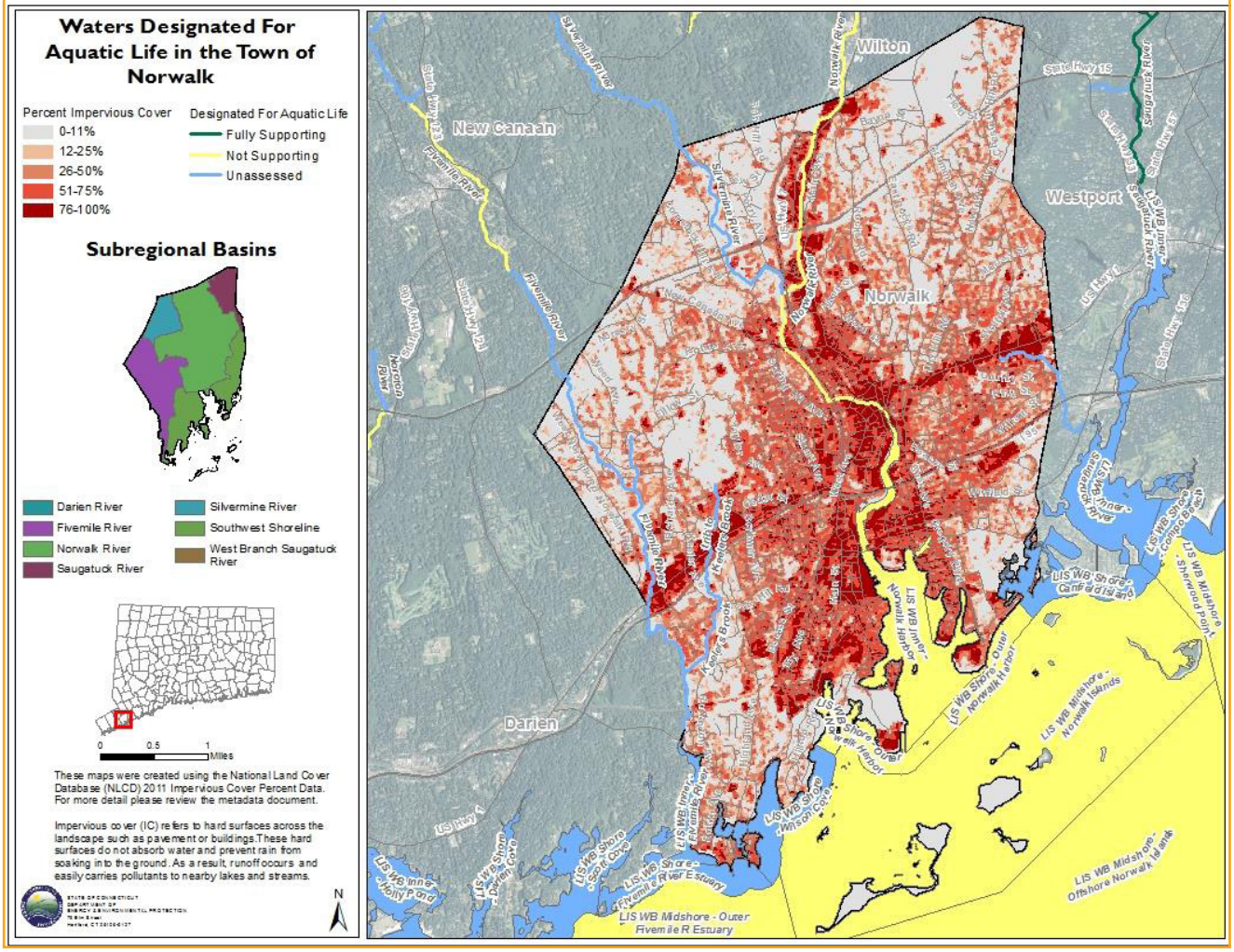
  There is sometimes an assumption that in urban conditions it is very difficult to implement green infrastructure. However, cities like Chicago, Baltimore, Portland, and Philadelphia have shown that green infrastructure works in older cities. For example, the Philadelphia Water Department's "Green City, Clean Waters" Initiative is Philadelphia's 25-year plan to protect and enhance the health of Philadelphia's waterways through investments in green stormwater infrastructure on a block-by-block scale. This program is the largest such program ever envisioned in the U.S. The Green City, Clean Waters Initiative has three elements: restoration and stabilization of streams; green infrastructure stormwater management practices such as vegetated bump-outs, rain gardens, infiltration basins, tree trenches, and swales to filter pollutants and reduce stormwater discharges; and improvement to traditional gray infrastructure when needed.

  Green infrastructure also helps mitigate flood risk from climate change and sea level rise. In New Haven, the City is installing over 300 bioswales to avoid a potential $60 million investment in a new pumping station. [Footnote citation: ctpost.com/politics/article/Connecticut-s-vanishing-shoreline-Towns-trying-13427996.php]

  Green infrastructure protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle. Benefits of green infrastructure include:
  - Reduced flooding
  - Replenished groundwater resources
  - Less use of energy managing water (less rain and stormwater goes into the sewer system)
  - Reduced pollution of streams and coastal resources
  - Reduced urban heat island effect
  - Lower building energy use

  Figure 8.2 below illustrates a variety of urban green infrastructure options used in Philadelphia: porous pavement; rain barrel; stormwater

Figure 8.1 Percent Impervious Surfaces in Norwalk



bumpout; downspout planter; stormwater tree; stormwater planter; stormwater inlet; stormwater tree trench; rain garden; green roof.

- **Low Impact Development (LID)**[3]
  Traditional site design treats stormwater as a waste product that must be taken off site as soon as possible by pipes, downspouts, and impervious surfaces. In contrast, LID is intended to ensure protection of ecological integrity and maintain the hydrology of the site. LID tools include:
  - Reduce/minimize impervious surfaces.
  - Disconnect unavoidable impervious surfaces (for example, roof downspouts).
  - Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive site features.
  - Mitigate for impervious surfaces with Integrated Management Practices (IMPs) (such as bioretention facilities, rain gardens, grassed swales, filter strips, rain barrels, and so on).
- A Norwalk example of green infrastructure and sustainable building strategies is the Stepping Stones Museum for Children which deployed:
  - Low Impact Drainage strategies
  - Rain gardens
  - Green roof
  - Pervious pavement
  - Native plant design
  - Solar energy design

3 2017 City of Norwalk Drainage Manual

Figure 8.2 Green Infrastructure Manages Stormwater in Urban Conditions

Source: Philadelphia Water Commission

Stormwater Management on the Yankee Doodle I-95 Bridge

The Norwalk Harbor Management Commission worked with Connecticut DOT to identify pollutants in the Norwalk River that are generated by the 146,000 cars that pass over the Yankee Doodle Bridge daily. CT DOT redesigned improvement plans for the bridge to incorporate stormwater best management practices, which will improve water quality.

Figure 8.3 Green Roof on Stepping Stones Museum

Source: Aris Land Studio

Urban Forestry in Norwalk

Urban trees, shrubs and plants improve air and water quality, reduce stormwater runoff, conserve energy, and protect public health. An increasing number of U.S. cities are undertaking an urban forestry or tree canopy-based program to enhance Low Impact Development opportunities. In Norwalk, as might be expected, the suburban-style residential neighborhoods

at the edges of the city have a denser tree canopy than the more urbanized core neighborhoods. Norwalk has programs to maintain and preserve the urban forest (both public and private trees):

- Tree City USA designation
- 2005-2017 planting of 669 trees by the Norwalk Tree Planting Program
- 2009 Tree Management Plan
- Tree Advisory Committee
- Urban Forest Improvement Program for public trees which is implemented by the Recreation and Parks Dept and Public Works
- Fodor Tree Farm, a municipal tree farm operated by the Norwalk Tree Alliance, a nonprofit organization that advocates and partners for preserving and improving the urban forest
- Inclusion of public trees in GIS
- Participation of neighborhood associations and adjacent property owners in tree selection
- Tree liaisons, who are trained volunteers

In 2018 WestCOG prepared a tree canopy plan for Norwalk, "Growing Shade & Enhancing the Urban Canopy, A Tree Canopy Improvement Strategy for the City of Norwalk."[4] According to this study, in an average year, the Tree Advisory Committee plants 61 trees, costing $46,918.85, and for every dollar spent on tree care in Norwalk, the city receives $3.59 in benefits. The study recommended focusing tree planting in six strategic areas: West Main, Norwalk Center, East Norwalk Center, South Main, Springwood, and Golden Hill. The plan also reported that the Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee has a long-term vision for planting of 250 trees a year until Norwalk's 400th anniversary in 2051. This city program would ideally partner with homeowners and private groups, who would also plant 250 trees a year. This would total 16,500 trees over 33 years.

Aquifers & Aquifer Protection

The Norwalk First District Water Department owns and operates drinking water wells that draw from a shallow sand and gravel aquifer. The surrounding area of land that contributes water to these wells has been defined as the Aquifer Protection Area for these drinking water wells. In addition, about 22% of residents have private drinking water wells that draw mainly from bedrock aquifers.

Figure 8.4 Aquifer Protection Area

Source: City of Norwalk

- **Norwalk Aquifer Protection Agency**
  Norwalk established an aquifer protection area and the Norwalk Aquifer Protection Agency in 2009 to be consistent with state aquifer protection regulations. The Zoning Commission acts as the Aquifer Protection Agency. The state has identified 28 high-risk activities for regulation and businesses that conduct these activities must register with the Norwalk Aquifer Protection Agency. There are approximately 33 regulated sites.
- **The Kellogg-Deering Wellfield Superfund Site**
  This site is located in the Aquifer Protection Area and has been subject to remedial actions and ongoing groundwater treatment and monitoring. Site remediation is regulated by federal and state agencies, and the water district takes appropriate actions to ensure the water is potable and safe.

4 www.westcog.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Norwalk-Tree-Canopy-Analysis.pdf

Wetlands Protection

The Norwalk Conservation Commission and Inland Wetlands Agency enforces the State and City's Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations. Inland wetlands are defined by soil type in Connecticut and watercourses may include intermittent and man-made waterways. Activities 50 feet from a wetland boundary and 100 feet from the top of the bank of any watercourse are also regulated. Three levels of wetland permits—minor, intermediate, and significant—are decided based on the proximity of the activity to the water resource and the scope of the activity. The Commission has a compliance officer who reviews building permits for wetlands issues. Coastal wetlands and Long Island Sound are under the jurisdiction of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP). The Norwalk Conservation Commission could provide support and advocacy for preservation of saltwater resources, similar to the commissions in Greenwich, Fairfield, and Westport, which include these resources as part of their responsibility.

Air Pollution in Norwalk

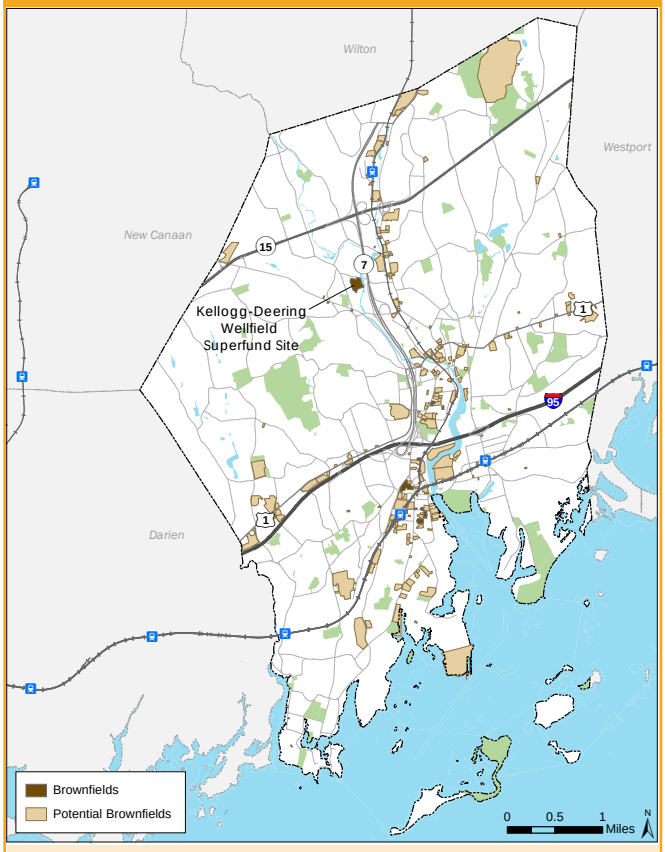
As noted in the chapter on housing and health, Fairfield County has high levels of ozone pollution (smog), which is dangerous to human health. Vehicle traffic on the major highways and high-traffic corridors in Norwalk is the source of ozone pollution. In addition, the city suffers from other kinds of air pollution, such as particulate pollution from silica/sand and odors from the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Brownfields

Brownfields are sites, typically industrial or commercial, where redevelopment is affected by real or perceived environmental contamination. The City of Norwalk lists 229 properties covering approximately 650 acres (including 133 acres in Cranbury Park). U.S. EPA identifies 13 sites in SoNo and Downtown. The city has received EPA site assessment funding. While some brownfield sites can be cleaned up with one-time remediation, "Superfund" sites require a long-term response to hazardous material contamination. Norwalk has one Superfund Site, the 10-acre Kellogg-Deering Wellfield site. Long-term remedial actions include wellhead treatment, source control, and aquifer management. Groundwater treatment and monitoring are ongoing and regularly reviewed by the EPA.

New state legislation in 2017 provided more options for municipalities to become involved in remediation and revitalization of brownfields through brownfields land banks and funding for revitalization. An existing non-profit land bank in Connecticut has worked on projects with towns such as Waterbury and Southbridge.

Figure 8.5 Brownfields Sites

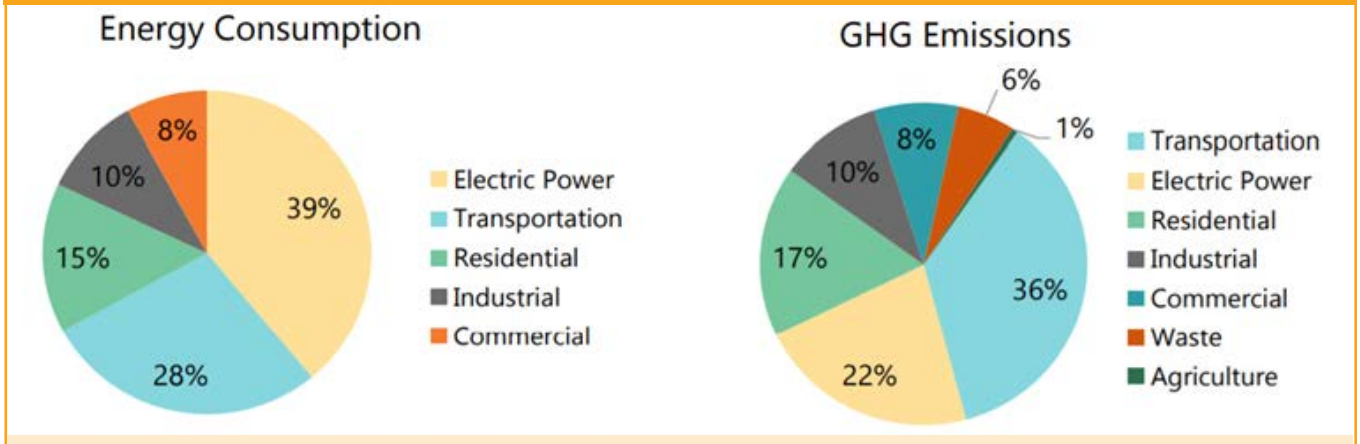


Source: Aris Land Studio

Energy Conservation & Renewable Energy

- The State of Connecticut is committed to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and moving towards renewable energy.
- The Global Warming Solutions Act (CGS Sec 22a-200a) sets targets to reduce GHG emissions by 10% from 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% from 2001 levels by 2050.
- The state Renewable Portfolio Standard requires electricity providers to obtain a minimum percentage of power from renewable sources by certain dates. The current standard for 2050 is 40%.
- Transportation is the sector responsible for the largest percentage of GHG emissions in Connecticut, mostly from the use of fossil fuels in

Figure 8.6 Connecticut Energy Consumption & GHG Emissions by Sector



Source: United States Energy Administration

passenger cars and light-duty trucks, with a drop in emissions of less than 1% since 1990.

- The State's EVConnecticut program provides grants for charging and alternative fueling stations to make Connecticut a state where electric vehicle drivers can be confident about long-range driving, and to deploy point-of-sale vehicle rebates through the Connecticut Hydrogen and Electric Automobile Purchase Rebate (CHEAPR) program.

Connecticut Cities with a Climate Action Plan

Hartford, Stamford, New Haven and Bridgeport have created climate action plans that include a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory and reduction plan. New Haven and Bridgeport have joined the Global Covenant of Mayors program, which includes a commitment to monitoring and updating of data. (www.globalcovenantofmayors.org).

Sustainable CT

The Norwalk Common Council voted in 2018 to join Sustainable CT, with the Council's Planning Committee designated as the "Sustainability Team" for the program. Sustainable CT is a new, foundation-funded voluntary certification program founded by the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities and other partners (www.sustainablect.org). In the Sustainable CT program, municipalities can seek certification by completing actions in at least nine of ten categories. The categories are:

- Thriving local economies
- Well-stewarded land and natural resources
- Vibrant and creative cultural ecosystems
- Dynamic and resilient planning
- Clean and diverse transportation systems and choices
- Efficient physical infrastructure and operations
- Strategic and inclusive public services
- Healthy housing options
- Inclusive and equitable community impacts
- Innovation Action

The program is similar to the national STAR (Sustainability Tools for Assessing & Rating) Communities rating system (www.starcommunities.org). The STAR system includes a broad and integrated definition of sustainability using customizable quantitative and qualitative metrics. Seventy communities across the US are STAR-certified in a transparent system.

Sustainable CT
Local Actions. Statewide Impact.

Key Findings & Challenges

- Norwalk is making progress in establishing sustainable practices but does not have a systematic and integrated approach that brings a sustainability lens to all policies and actions.
- The City is working towards more sustainable stormwater management practices to improve water quality in inland and coastal waters but needs to focus more on green infrastructure and LID practices, including in public places.
- Like the "Health in All Policies" approach, Norwalk city government needs a "Sustainability in All Polices" approach that affects all City departments and activities.
- Norwalk currently does not have the data needed to understand its baseline greenhouse gas emissions and potential ways to reduce emissions.

E. WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

In the Visioning workshop, among the top priorities of participants were protection and preservation of natural resources and sustainability. At the Green, Sustainable, and Resilient Norwalk workshop, participants said that they would like to see Norwalk be a regional leader in sustainability and energy-efficiency. Proposed priority actions were more renewable energy projects, public education and incentives for sustainable and energy-efficient practices, a plastic bag ban and similar initiatives, and stronger enforcement of existing laws.

F. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

GOAL 1

Norwalk city government is a model of sustainability.

Policies:

- City government actions are guided by sustainability principles

Strategy

A. Expand sustainability policies and actions for city government and monitor and track progress.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Create an inter-departmental Sustainability Committee to develop a sustainability program for Norwalk City government consistent with the Sustainable CT certification program.** This group should obtain and review all available records and data on sustainability activities to date, including any benchmarking by the city or other entities.	2019	Mayor	Staff time
ii. **Designate a Sustainability Officer to coordinate city government actions to pursue certification by Sustainable CT.**	2019	Mayor and Council	Staff time
iii. **Join the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to commit to development of a Climate Action Plan.**	2019	Mayor and Council	Staff time
iv. **Replace city vehicles incrementally with electric or hybrid vehicles.**	2019 and ongoing	Purchasing; Public Works; Mayor and Council	Staff time; capital funding
v. **Establish vehicle charging stations at City facilities.**	2019 and ongoing	Public Works	Staff time; capital funding
vi. **Incorporate energy-efficient practices in City-owned buildings and structures, such as replacement of lighting with LED lights.**	2019 and ongoing	Sustainability Committee; Public Works	Staff time; capital funding, possible grants
vii. **Establish a clear policy that all City building repairs, retrofits, and new construction will incorporate LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver standards, equivalent or successor standards, at a minimum.**	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council; Board of Education; Sustainability Committee	Staff time
viii. **Buy 100% renewable energy for city government operations by 2029.**	2019–2029	Mayor and Council; Board of Education; Public Works; Sustainability Committee	Staff time

Actions	When	Who	Resources
ix. **Implement waste reduction practices in city government operations.**	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council; Board of Education; Sustainability Committee; City departments	Staff time
x. **Implement water conservation practices in city government operations.**	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council; Board of Education; Sustainability Committee; Public Works	Staff time
xi. **Continue using Integrated Pest Management, and use organic landscape practices and native plantings in maintaining City-owned property.**	2019 and ongoing	Parks and Recreation; Oak Hills Park Authority	Staff time
xii. **Use green infrastructure and Best Management Practices to manage stormwater on City property.** This initiative can be integrated into complying with the City's MS4 stormwater management permit.	2019 and ongoing	Parks and Recreation; Oak Hills Park Authority; Public Works; Conservation Commission, Shellfish and Harbor Commissions, Water Quality; Council DPW Committee	Staff time; capital funding
xiii. **Develop a set of environmental factors to be considered in procurement** such as: durable, reusable, or recyclable; non-toxic or least toxic; energy-efficient; minimum packaging; and so on. The National Association of State Procurement Officials has developed a green purchasing guide (www.naspo.org/green/index.html#top)	2019	Purchasing	Staff time
xiv. **Use the Envision rating system for sustainable infrastructure when planning new City facilities or improvements.** See chapter 13.	2019 and ongoing	Public Works	Staff time
xv. **Prepare an annual report on city sustainability actions and progress toward certification by Sustainable CT.** The report should be presented at a Common Council meeting and posted on the city website and open data warehouse.	2020 and ongoing	Sustainability Officer; Sustainability Committee	Staff time

Actions	When	Who	Resources
xvi. **As part of the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan, develop and maintain a Natural Resources Inventory map** that includes a comprehensive listing of noteworthy natural resources in the City.	2022-2023	Conservation; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
xvii. **Develop a program to ensure recycling of construction and demolition waste.** Information on options in Connecticut can be found on the CT DEEP website: www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2718&q=325402&deepNav_GID=1645	2022	Waste Programs Manager	Staff time

GOAL 2

Norwalk reduces greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state goals.

Policies:

- Incorporate energy-efficiency as a way of life in Norwalk.

Strategy

A. Establish and implement a plan and program to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and promote renewable energy.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Develop a local action plan to reduce GHG emissions by 10% from 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% from 2001 levels by 2050.** The plan should include an inventory of GHG emissions from all sources for the whole community and specifically for city government; public engagement; a mitigation plan to reduce emissions to meet or exceed state goals; and a reporting and monitoring program to measure progress.	2024-2025	Sustainability Officer; Economic and Community Development Department; Public Works;	Staff time; consultant
ii. **Require electric vehicle charging stations in new large private developments.**	2019 and ongoing	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission	Staff time

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iii. **Expand alternative transportation options (transit, shuttle, bicycle, pedestrian, and so on) for intra-Norwalk mobility in order to reduce the growth of GHG emissions from transportation.** See Chapter 10.	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department; Bike/Walk Commission; Public Works; Norwalk Transit	Staff time; capital funding
iv. **Encourage Norwalk electric utilities to exceed state requirements for renewable energy.**	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council	Staff time

GOAL 3

Protect and manage Norwalk's sensitive environmental resources and its inland and coastal waters to enhance water quality, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, public health, and enrichment of community character.

Policies:

- Use city decision making to enhance environmental protection

Strategy

A. Incorporate green infrastructure and non-structural solutions to manage stormwater to improve water quality and quantity

Under the City's MS4 stormwater management permit, Norwalk is required to promote and facilitate green infrastructure and Low Impact Development by taking specific steps through 2022. Norwalk's 2017 Drainage Manual requires that green infrastructure and Low Impact Development strategies be used first to manage stormwater before the use of engineered solutions. It promotes the use of green infrastructure "to help prevent increases in post-construction stormwater runoff rates, volumes, and pollutant loads," and stormwater best management practices (BMPs) which are "engineered facilities designed to intercept and manage post-construction stormwater runoff rates, volumes, and pollutant loads…. Stormwater management practices can be used whenever green infrastructure practices cannot, on their own, be used to completely satisfy the post-construction stormwater management criteria required per this Drainage Manual." The Drainage Manual also requires that Low Impact Development (LID) "must be used to the maximum extent practicable to reduce the generation of the water runoff volume for both new and redevelopment projects." Additional management strategies in the Manual include use of riparian vegetated buffers and prohibition of illicit discharges.

LID design is more cost-effective than conventional stormwater design. Resources for calculating costs and benefits are available at www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/green-infrastructure-cost-benefit-resources. In addition to life-cycle costs of green infrastructure, it is important to include consideration of the avoided costs of flooding, pollution, and so on. A full cost-benefit analysis for LID and green infrastructure should be based on a "Triple Bottom Line" analysis incorporating financial, social, and environmental benefits and costs. For an example see autocase.com/sites.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Prioritize and advocate for implementation of Watershed-Based Plans' action items.**	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission, Public Works, Planning and Zoning	Staff time and capital planning
ii. **Apply LID and green infrastructure requirements of the Drainage Manual to both new and retrofit of government and private property.** Consider requiring a Triple Bottom Line benefit-cost analysis for projects that meet size or potential impact thresholds. As the Norwalk River is a high priority, the City may wish to assist property owners along the Norwalk River to retrofit properties using LID principles	2019 and ongoing	Public Works and permitting bodies; Conservation Commission	Staff time; capital funding
iii. **Study and consider a stormwater utility to fund maintenance and improvements to the stormwater management system.** The City prepared a study about creating a stormwater utility in 2011 which concluded that it would not be worthwhile. However, this issue should be revisited since the requirements of the MS4 permit and changing flood risks and other conditions resulting from climate change may require different assumptions about future benefits and costs. The study could be effectively coordinated with the required plan under the MS4 permit to retrofit projects to disconnect impervious surfaces. A stormwater utility provides dedicated funding (like other utilities) for stormwater management costs by charging property owners in relation to their contribution to stormwater. Typically, nonresidential owners pay according to their impervious surfaces and residential owners pay fees related to property type and size. Since much of the stormwater runoff ends up in Norwalk Harbor, such a utility could help improve its water quality. New London is the first Connecticut municipality to establish a stormwater utility (effective January 1, 2019). There are almost 1,600 stormwater utilities in the United States, including in Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont.	2019–2021	Public Works; Norwalk Harbor Management Commission; Common Council	Staff time; consultant

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iv. **Encourage and allow alternatives to impervious surfaces in the zoning code and development standards.**	2019–2022	Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
v. **Advocate for improvements to reduce runoff pollution from state and interstate roads.**	2019 and ongoing	Planning and Zoning; Public Works; Norwalk Harbor Management Commission; Five Mile River	Staff time
vi. **Collaborate with environmental organizations to raise public awareness about the benefits of permeable pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, lawn buffers at stream shores, and other beneficial stormwater practices. Public education and outreach is required under the MS4 permit.** The current collaboration with the Five Mile River Action Group can serve as a model for expansion.	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
vii. **Adopt regulations or incentives to decrease runoff by reducing the clearing of woody vegetation especially along riverbank and wetland buffer zones.**	2021	Conservation Commission	Staff time
viii. **Work with contractors and landscape companies to promote environmentally-sensitive landscape practices for "high performance" landscapes.** Create a simple eco-landscaping practices list that residents can use to ask maintenance contractors for environmentally sensitive practices. Examples are widely available.	2021 and ongoing	Conservation Commission	Staff time
ix. **Promote proper management of septic systems and consider mandatory pumping for septic systems in proximity to environmentally-sensitive areas.** Conduct outreach and education on the importance of regular septic pumping.	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Common Council	Staff time
x. **Encourage property owners to establish backyard habitat through reducing lawn and invasive plants, avoiding pesticides and fertilizer, and connecting open space and private property in one stewardship plan.** The Pollinator Pathway framework is promoted by the Norwalk River Watershed Association. norwalkriver.org/pollinator-pathway/	2020 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Norwalk River Watershed Association	Staff time

B. Continue regulation by the Aquifer Protection Agency and the Conservation Commission.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. Coordinate with other permitting agencies to ensure that property owners are aware of wetland and watercourse regulations.	Ongoing	Conservation Commission	Staff time
ii. Support and strengthen the regulations of the Aquifer Protection Area and encourage protection of existing open space within the Kellogg-Deering site.	Ongoing	Aquifer Protection Agency; Zoning Commission	Staff time
iii. Establish a policy of no net loss of wetlands with mitigation/replacement measures and promote restoration of wetlands along the Norwalk River.	2020	Conservation Commission; Common Council	Staff time

C. Collaborate with nonprofits and others to further protect environmental resources.

Detailed information on management and regulation of development in the Coastal Management Area can be found in Chapter 9.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. Continue working with the Norwalk Land Trust and other nonprofits to protect wetlands, coastal resources and other environmentally sensitive resources.	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
ii. Continue working with the Manresa Association to establish open space on the Manresa peninsula and maintain a water dependent use.	2019 and ongoing	Common Council; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
iii. Encourage, support and collaborate with watershed organizations such as the Norwalk River Watershed Association.	2020 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
iv. Dedicate staff and funding to watershed planning and collaboration.	2020 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time

v. **Promote education in water conservation and other environmentally beneficial practices.** Resources can be found at 40gallonchallenge.org and pollinatorpathway.org.	2020 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; environmental nonprofits	Staff time

D. Continue to maintain and increase the shade tree canopy in Norwalk.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Continue the annual tree planting program and consult the WestCOG strategic tree canopy improvement plan developed for Norwalk by WestCOG.**	2020 and ongoing	Parks and Recreation Department; Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee; Planning and Zoning	Staff time; capital funding
ii. **Create a Green Streets network by identifying priority walking streets for tree planting.** Coordinate with the development of the Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Plan.	2022–2024	Planning and Zoning; Bike-Walk Commission; Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee	Staff time
iii. **Focus and coordinate public tree-planting efforts on high-pedestrian areas, major arterials, and public spaces in the urban core.**	2020 and ongoing	Planning and Zoning; Parks and Recreation Department; Norwalk Tree Alliance; Public Works	Staff time
iv. **As part of the rewrite of the zoning code, include requirements for tree protection, replacement, and planting in urban design requirements for new developments.**	2020–2024	Planning and Zoning	Staff time
v. **Develop programs to promote tree planting by homeowners and other private parties.** Many communities have programs to give away tree saplings, "Adopt-a-Tree" donation programs for public areas, and similar efforts. These programs could be related to the tree planting vision for Norwalk's 400th anniversary.	2020 and ongoing	Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee; Norwalk Tree Alliance	Staff time

E. Continue to remediate and redevelop brownfields sites.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Review and update the list of brownfield sites.**	2020–2021	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time
ii. **Continue to seek grants for assessments and remediation.**	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
iii. **Consider setting up a nonprofit brownfield land bank eligible for state assistance as allowed in 2017 state legislation,** An Act Concerning the Creation of Connecticut Brownfield Land Banks.	2020–2022	Economic and Community Development; Redevelopment Agency; Council	Staff time

F. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Early Actions	Who
Create an inter-departmental Sustainability Working Group.	Mayor
Designate a staff member to serve as Sustainability Officer and seek Sustainable CT certifications as feasible.	Mayor
Join the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to commit to development of a Climate Action Plan.	Mayor and Council
Begin using the Envision rating system to evaluate potential projects.	Planning and Zoning; Public Works
Identify and prioritize green infrastructure retrofit projects as required under the MS4 permit.	Public Works; Planning and Zoning

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Bell Island Flooding during Hurricane Irene

Source: David Popoff

CHAPTER NINE

Coastal Resources & Resilience

A. NORWALK'S COASTAL RESOURCES IN AN ERA OF CHANGE

Norwalk's identity continues to be deeply connected to its history and evolving relationship to Norwalk Harbor and Long Island Sound. Norwalkers benefit from the environmental, economic, recreational, and cultural benefits of this close relationship to the coast and harbor. Through its Municipal Coastal Program embodied in the POCD and Zoning Regulations and through its Harbor Management Plan, Norwalk manages the beneficial use and conservation of its coastal resources in accordance with the requirements of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act and other pertinent legislation. In the twenty-first century, we have entered an era of uncertainty because of the trajectory of projected climate change and its impacts on sea level rise. The City must plan to adapt to change while preserving the essential qualities of its coastal identity.

B. COASTAL RESOURCES & RESILIENCE IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision

- **Norwalk Harbor remains a major center of water-based activities on Long Island Sound,** providing opportunities for recreation and commerce: public access for recreation and education, recreational boating, commercial shell fishing, and other vital economic, environmental, and cultural values and opportunities.
- **We are committed to energy- and resource-efficiency, as well as to pursuing solutions and adaptations to the expected impacts of climate change and sea-level rise**–coastal and inland flooding, extreme storms, extreme temperatures, and drought

From the Principles

- **Practice sustainability and resilience.** Make Norwalk a model green and clean community through energy- and resource-efficiency, preservation of open space and habitat networks, and adapting to climate change.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
COASTAL MANAGEMENT	
Use of harbor and coastal resources is balanced with environmental resource protection.	• Continue to support implementation of Norwalk's Harbor Management Plan. • Ensure consistency between the Harbor Management Plan and this citywide plan/POCD so that changes to one are consistent with the other. • Continue to support implementation of Norwalk's Municipal Coastal Program and apply the Coastal Site Plan Review Process in the most informed and effective manner.
Environmental resources within and adjacent to the Coastal Management Area are protected and enhanced.	• Support resource protection and integration with protections upstream.
Water-dependent uses continue to operate and expand in Norwalk Harbor and on the coast.	• Support continued operation of shellfishing and recreational boating facilities and uses (including boat storage, berthing, repair, and maintenance facilities), other commercial and industrial water-dependent uses on suitable waterfront properties, as well as facilities and uses that support and provide opportunities for public access to the Harbor.
The public has access to the harbor and coast.	• Enhance public access to the water.
RESILIENCE	
Norwalk plans for and adapts to climate change.	• Support proactive measures to adapt to climate change.

Coastal Resources & Management[1]

The Norwalk coast is highly valued by residents and provides many environmental, economic, cultural benefits and opportunities.

- **Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA) and Norwalk**
  Passed in 1979 (CGS, Sections 22a-90 to 22a-112), the CCMA is administered by CT DEEP, the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. CCMA sets out state goals and policies for use and conservation of coastal resources, but local planning and zoning has most of the responsibility for implementation.
    - The CCMA sets a coastal management boundary that marks the area where coastal site plan review is required. The boundary is the most inland line of the following: 1,000 feet from the mean high-water line, 1,000 feet from the inland boundary of state-regulated tidal wetlands, or the inland boundary of the 100-year (0.1% probability) floodplain. The Coastal Management Area, therefore, extends further inland than the word "coastal" might imply.
    - Norwalk was permitted to modify the coastal management boundary to follow the nearest street, lot line or other boundary that would include the coastal management boundary. This line appears on the official Building Zone Map.
    - The Norwalk Coastal Management Area includes both the zone that appears in the zoning regulations and the navigable and intertidal waters of Norwalk Harbor. It comprises about 22 miles (not including island shorelines) and includes parts of Rowayton, South Norwalk, Norwalk Center, and East Norwalk. The Five Mile River Harbor is shared by Norwalk and Darien. The area within the City of Norwalk is part of the Norwalk Coastal Management Area and Norwalk Harbor, and is subject to the jurisdiction of the State of Connecticut Five Mile River Commission, established by Special Legislative Act.

1 Much of this discussion is supported by the information presented in the white paper, "Proposed Coastal Vision", dated February 2019 prepared by the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission, which also sets forth recommended coastal management goals and strategies, consistent with the provisions of the Norwalk Harbor Management Plan, for inclusion in the POCD.

The Norwalk River is a working waterfront, recreation amenity, and important part of Norwalk's character

Source: Geoffrey Steadman

- **Harbor Management & Norwalk**
  In 1984, the Harbor Management Act (CGS section22a-113k to sections 22a-113t) authorized the establishment of municipal Harbor Management Commissions to create plans for use of their harbors. In 1986, the City of Norwalk established the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission (NHMC) (Chapter 69, Article III of the Code of the City of Norwalk).
- The Harbor Management Plan was approved by the State, and the Common Council adopted it in 1990, with adoption of revisions in 2009. In February 2019, the NHMC created, as part of the POCD planning process, a Coastal Vision document. The Coastal Vision document is incorporated in this POCD update by reference.
- The Harbor Management Plan establishes goals and policies for beneficial use and conservation of the Norwalk Harbor Management Area, while the Coastal Vision document sets forth proposed goals and strategies for coastal management in the Coastal Area Management (CAM) Area covered by the POCD. (The Harbor Management Area delineates the jurisdiction of the NHMC and Harbor Management Plan, and includes all of Norwalk Harbor as defined in the City Charter with the exception of the Five Mile River Harbor which is subject to the authority of the Five Mile River Commission. The CAM Area is the area of municipal jurisdiction within which the provisions of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act apply, including Norwalk Harbor and the Norwalk Coastal Zone defined in the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations.)
- Guiding principles of the Norwalk Harbor Management Plan are:
  - Maintain public safety
  - Protect coastal resources and environmental quality
  - Support appropriate beneficial uses of the Harbor Management Area and waterfront, including water-dependent uses and public access to the Harbor.
- The goals listed in the 2019 Coastal Vision are:
  1. Recognition of coastal resources and values
  2. Active and coordinated management of coastal resources
  3. Viable water-dependent uses and facilities
  4. Conservation and enhancement of coastal resources
  5. Protection and enhancement of water quality
  6. Sustainable economic growth and development
  7. Public access to Norwalk Harbor
  8. Public health, safety, and security
  9. Coastal resiliency
  10. Preservation and enrichment of community character
  11. Public interest, support, and participation
  12. Effective response to changing conditions
- **Application Review by the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission (NHMC)**
  Pursuant to the CT General Statutes and Norwalk Code, the NHMC reviews, for consistency with the Norwalk Harbor Management Plan, development proposals affecting the real property on, in, or contiguous to the Harbor Management Area received by the Planning and Zoning commissions and other City agencies, including applications for coastal site plan review and proposals for new or amended City plans, regulations, or ordinances. In accordance with Sec. 22a-113p of the General Statutes and Sec. 69-21 of the Norwalk Code, a 2/3 vote of the referring City agency (including the Planning Commission and Zoning Commission), is required to approve a proposal that has not received a favorable recommendation from the NHMC. In addition, the NHMC reviews applications for projects subject to state and federal coastal regulatory programs, including structures, dredging, and fill proposals requiring approval from DEEP. Pursuant to Sec. 22a-113n of the General Statutes, a recommendation of the NHMC that is consistent with and adequately supported by the Harbor Management Plan with respect to a proposed project shall be binding on any official of the state when making regulatory decisions or undertaking or sponsoring development affecting the Harbor Management Area, unless such official shows cause why a different action should be taken.
- **Coastal Site Plan Review**
  Through the municipal process of Coastal Site

Plan Review (CSPR) mandated by the CCMA, the City reviews land-use plans and applications affecting property within the area bounded by the coastal boundary line shown on the Building Zone Map. Activities or projects subject to CSPR are defined in Sec. 22a-105(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes and the City's Coastal Zone regulations established in the Building Zone Regulations. The Zoning Commission, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals conduct coastal site plan reviews to ensure that the potential adverse impacts of the proposed activity on both coastal resources and future water-dependent development activities are acceptable, and to otherwise assure the consistency of a proposed project with the coastal management provisions set forth in the POCD and CCMA.

- **Coastal Environmental, Economic, & Recreational Resources**
  Norwalk's coastal land and water resources include tidal waters and embayments, intertidal flats, tidal wetlands, beaches, floodplains, marine animals and shellfish, and the Norwalk Islands. Upland coastal resources include "developed shorelands" and "urban waterfront" areas.
- **Wetlands & Intertidal Flats**
  Wetlands and intertidal flats provide food for crabs, shellfish, finfish, snails and worms in the wetlands, the Harbor, and Long Island Sound, as well as habitat for birds. Wetlands and intertidal flats also improve water quality by filtering and acting as a sink for pollutants.
- **Harbor Watch Monitoring**
  A nonprofit, educational organization, Harbor Watch, teaches students and adult volunteers to monitor indicators in the Norwalk River. There are 3 sites on the Norwalk River in the city that are monitored year-round. In addition, 8 continuously-flowing storm drain outfalls are monitored for indicator bacteria. Trawling trips study Norwalk Harbor for juvenile benthic (living at the bottom) fish abundance and species richness.
- **Shellfish Resources & the Shellfish Commission**
  The natural features of Norwalk Harbor, including its estuarine environment, tidal wetlands, extensive areas of intertidal flats, and the presence of the Norwalk Islands, which shelter much of the Harbor from waves generated in Long Island sound, provide shellfish habitat of especially high resource value. Norwalkers have harvested oysters, clams, and other shellfish for centuries. In the nineteenth century, Norwalk had the largest oyster fleet in the world. The shellfishing industry continues to be important. Norwalk Harbor's shellfish resources provide uncommonly high economic and recreational values in the State of Connecticut, supporting a viable interstate shellfishing industry that generates significant local and statewide economic benefits. The Norwalk Shellfish Commission is charged with enhancing shellfish resources and shellfishing opportunities. It has the principal authority and responsibility for managing Norwalk's shellfish resources, including shellfish populations and the habitat required for those populations to grow and thrive. There are designated shellfish grounds in the harbor for general public use and private shellfish grounds where commercial businesses have the exclusive rights to raise and harvest shellfish.
- **Norwalk Islands**
  As discussed in Chapter 8, the Norwalk Islands, variously owned by municipalities, the federal government, and private entities, provide exceptional habitat and are on the Atlantic Flyway for migratory birds. In the case of extreme storms, the Norwalk Islands can mitigate the impacts of storm surge.
- **Norwalk River Watershed**
  The Norwalk River flows into the harbor, Coastal Management Area, and Long Island Sound. Stormwater sends pollutants from the river's

Shellfishing is still an important part of Norwalk's identity

Source: Alex Von Kleydorff, The Hour

watershed (and that of the Five Mile River) into the estuary and Long Island Sound, making stormwater management in the watershed essential to a healthy environment and habitat in the harbor and the Sound.

The city has taken multiple steps to improve water quality, including upgrading catch basins and drainage piping, placing placards on catch basins to alert the public that what gets put into the catch basins ends up in the Sound and removing sediment from the street and catch basins. Further information on city efforts can be found in Chapter 11, *Public Facilities, Infrastructure & Services* and within the 2018 MS4 Annual Permit: https://www.norwalkct.org/1734/Stormwater-Management

- **Boating**
  Harbor facilities in 2018 included: 14 commercial marinas; 13 private clubs; and 1 port terminal. There are 1,800 berthing spaces and 500 mooring locations for recreational vessels, meeting demand for space. The marinas and clubs also have many boats in storage racks and the City's boat launch at Veteran's Memorial Park (David S. Dunavan Boating Center) serves more than 3,000 trailered boats annually.

  Considering the interest in developing around waterfront property and the potential future demand for boat and marina space, the City should evaluate the existing and potential economic impacts boating has on the community, from an employment, revenue and tourism standpoint.

- **Waterborne Commerce**
  Shellfishing and barge shipments of sand and gravel constitute the major commercial use of the harbor. Water dependent commercial uses are located in the South Norwalk Marine Commercial area along South Water Street, in the Upper Harbor near Wall Street and along the East Norwalk channel. Norwalk's harbor and private Harbor Harvest project are included in the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Marine Highway System and the Harbor Harvest Project supported by the Connecticut Port Authority.

- **Federal Navigation Project**
  The Federal Navigation Project was originally authorized in the late nineteenth century and subsequently modified several times by Congress. The project consists of congressionally-authorized navigation channels and anchorage basins. The most recent three-phase dredging project, by the Army Corps of Engineers during 2005-2014, was funded by $12 million from Congress, and $1 million from the State of Connecticut. Maintaining navigable waterways in Norwalk Harbor is vital to ensuring the viability of water-dependent uses, safe and efficient navigation, and public access to and from Long Island Sound, as well as the present integrity of the river boundaries.

- **Public Access, Tourism, & Education**
  Public access points include waterfront parks (Veteran's Memorial, Calf Pasture Park, Shady Beach, Oyster Shell Park, Heritage Park Riverwalk) and the City Marina. The Heritage Park Riverwalk links the Maritime Aquarium and Oyster Shell Park in South Norwalk to the Lockwood Mathews Park and Stepping Stones Museum attractions. The Norwalk Seaport Association offers ferry access to Sheffield Island Lighthouse park, and private boat owners can access certain island locations for recreation and camping. The Maritime Aquarium is one of the most important tourist attractions in Connecticut and the only aquarium devoted to the study of Long Island Sound. Its research vessel provides year-round educational cruises of the Harbor and the Sound.

- **Manresa Island**
  Manresa Island is a 138-acre brownfield site on a peninsula at the southwest edge of Norwalk Harbor. It contains a decommissioned power generation plant and an operating electric substation on the more-disturbed southern 46 acres. Most of the remaining acreage is a natural area with unique and sensitive coastal habitat and rare species. The City of Norwalk and the Manresa Association have funded a study of the site, contamination and remediation issues, and potential future uses. The study is in final preparation at the time of writing this citywide plan. There are many complex issues surrounding the future for this site including:
    - Environmental assessments and costs of remediation
    - Fiscal status–potential major loss of tax revenue
    - Transportation– one way in and one way out
    - Resilience – most of the site was underwater

Manresa Island is a vulnerable coastal site subject to an ongoing reuse study

Source: Google Earth

during Hurricane Sandy and contaminated soils could migrate off-site during extreme storms and sea level rise

- Need for state regulations to facilitate potential renewable energy use (solar field) of the brownfield site

The study recommended a mix of potential reuses of the site. The northern 92 acres are recommended for conservation with a remediation strategy of "natural attenuation." This means the property would be fenced off with no public access except for roadways. There could be the potential for a pathway along the shore, but remediation would be needed. The property could be transferred to the City and/or a land trust. The southern area would require demolition and remediation of the site, which would likely range from $8 million to $30 million in cost. Potential uses in different combinations presented in the study include:

- Solar energy production and storage
- Marina and Boat Launch
- Education Facility
- Medium Density Residential Development

The study found that the cost of demolition and site remediation is likely to cost more than $20 million above the financial viability of redevelopment.

- **Current & Future Issues & Opportunities in the Coastal Management Area**
  Because of the importance of the harbor and coast to Norwalk, the concentration of a mixture of land uses in the city's historic centers, revitalization and transportation initiatives, and the attractiveness of activities near the water, the next ten years will see many projects within or adjacent to the Coastal Management Area.

  Recent City zoning initiatives have resulted in comprehensive rezoning in and near the South Norwalk Railroad Station and in the West Avenue/Wall Street area. The rezoning was the result of two recently completed redevelopment plans. The rezoning will lead to more density in proximity to transit and increased business development in these two vital areas of the urban core. As part of these changes the City is incentivizing and requiring more greenspace and green infrastructure, which will hopefully reduce the large amount of existing impervious surface within these areas. A reduction in impervious surface will improve water quality in the Sound and reduce the impacts of climate change. Demand in these areas is evidenced by recently completed projects such as Head of the Harbor South, Waypointe, Maritime Village and the SoNo Collection.

  This demand for building development also leads to impacts on the City's infrastructure, from wastewater treatment to local roads and mass transit. The City has begun considering these impacts when planning and implementing infrastructure projects. A recent example is the raising of the intersection of Raymond and Day Streets as part of the Washington Village and Ryan Park improvements projects. In addition, the Harbor Management Commission continues to encourage best management practices to reduce stormwater discharges from highway infrastructure into the harbor, such as the recent drainage improvements on CT DOT's Yankee Doodle Bridge.

  Among the coastal area locations expected to generate significant development-related opportunities as well as planning issues in the next ten years are the South and East Norwalk TOD districts, Norwalk Center Redevelopment Area, Head of the Harbor area, Cove Marina area, areas affected by the Walk Bridge replacement project, and Manresa Island.

Resilience and Climate Change Adaptation

The risks of the future are not the risks of the past. Climate change is expected to bring more extreme storm events and precipitation in winter and spring; higher temperatures and more and longer heat waves; summer droughts; and sea level rise. The potential impacts on Norwalk would be more and more damaging floods and winter storms, health impacts of heat, water shortages, regular tidal flooding and long term inundation of coastal areas. In addition to impacts on property, climate change can also affect the economy, for example, the habitat effects of warming waters.

Climate change resilience is the ability of a community to adapt and thrive in the face of extreme events and stresses. This means anticipating risks, planning to limit impacts, implementing adaptation strategies, and planning to limit impacts. Resilience is not the same thing as sustainability, although communities that are more sustainable are also likely to be more resilient.

- **Urban Heat Island**
  Although Norwalk is most at risk from flooding, increasing heat can have insidious effects. Extreme heat causes more deaths every year in the United States than hurricanes or floods. Urbanized areas have higher average temperatures than rural areas because of more impervious surfaces, more dark surfaces that absorb more solar radiation, less vegetation and evapotranspiration, and more energy use. This is the "urban heat island" effect.

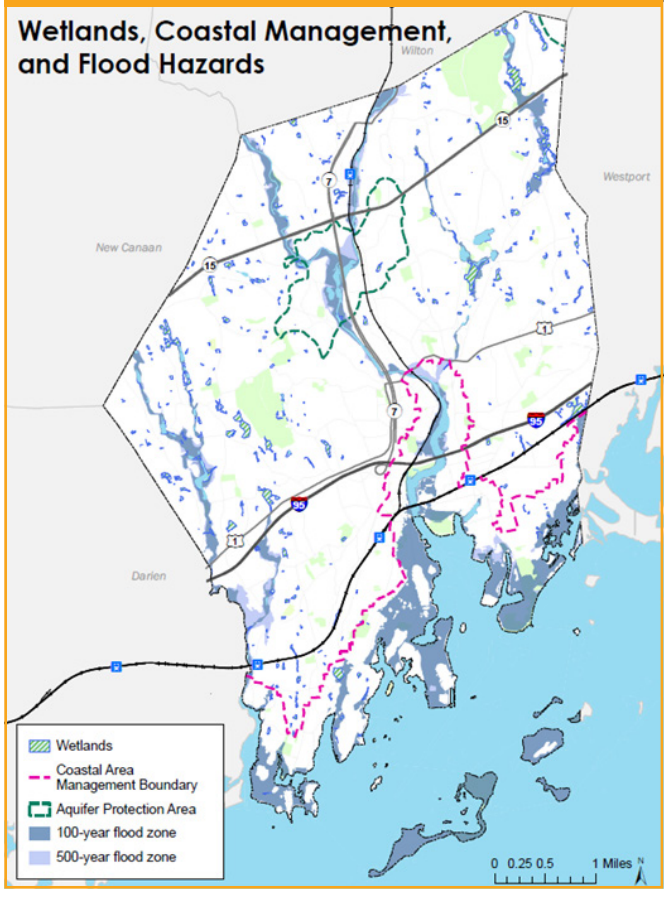
  By reducing the amount of impervious surface and implementing green infrastructure requirements, the City can improve water quality in the Norwalk River and Sound by reducing the overall temperature of the water and decreasing the amount of pollutants that enter the waterway. Further information on this can be found in Chapter 8, *Sustainability & the Norwalk Environment.*

- **City Actions to Address Coastal Area Issues, FEMA Flood Zone and Sea Level Rise**
  The City of Norwalk has expended over $61 million in capital budget funding for the repair, reconstruction and redevelopment of flood prone areas. These investments were made to protect the City from flooding and rising sea levels and to ensure that rebuilding complies with the latest Federal and State flood hazard zone regulations. Among the largest expenditures are the following:

  - $41 million in capital budget funds for upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Plant and pump stations; along with enhanced enforcement of sanitary sewer system connection permits
  - $10 million in capital budget funds for road reconstruction to raise the elevation of Raymond/Day Streets in South Norwalk
  - $3.5 million in capital budget funding to resolve chronic drainage problems and to implement stormwater management best practices
  - $3.2 million for improvements and repairs to Calf Pasture Beach and Veterans Park.

  Since the adoption of the 2008 Plan of Conservation & Development, the Planning & Zoning staff have issued over 500 zoning permits and reviewed more than 300 coastal site plan review applications for properties located in coastal areas; assisting property owners, architects and builders in understanding and responding to changing flood zone elevations and FEMA regulations intended to protect structures from being damaged during flooding events. The

Figure 9.1 Wetlands, Coastal Management, & Flood Hazards



staff have advised hundreds of applicants on the importance of proper stormwater management and the need to modify existing buildings to be flood compliant. In addition, the Department of Public Works adopted new stormwater regulations in 2017 and reviews all applications to determine compliance, with specific attention to improving stormwater quality and promoting on-site treatment and retention. The City continues to incorporate coastal management principles into its planning in and near the coastal area. This includes the recent adoption of the Wall Street/West Avenue Redevelopment Plan, the Manresa Power Economic Impact Analysis (2018), and the South Norwalk TOD Redevelopment Plan (2016).

- **Flood Vulnerability in Norwalk Will Increase** Updated FEMA flood risk maps were most recently issued in 2013 when sea level rise projections and climate change data were just beginning to affect flood risk information. FEMA maps flood vulnerability into zones which are commonly called "100-year" or "500-year" flood zones. This language gives people the idea that, for example, a 100-year flood only occurs once every 100 years. In fact, this zone means there is a 1% annual risk of flooding—which translates to a 26% likelihood of flooding during the 30 years of a typical mortgage. The "500-year" flood zone has a 0.2% annual risk. Chronic flooding is already an issue with normal storms. Sea level rise and extreme storms will increase flooding risk in coming decades.
- **Land Within Existing Flood Zones** Fourteen percent of Norwalk's land area is within the 100-year or 500-year flood zone.

Flooding caused by Hurricane Irene did significant damage

Source: CT Post

  - 100-year flood zone: 2,649 parcels in the zone, including 2,023 residential or mixed-use parcels (76% of total parcels affected).
  - 500-year flood zone: 1,162 additional parcels in the zone, including 851 residential or mixed-use parcels (73% of total).

Norwalk recognizes the vulnerability of coastal properties due to increased flooding. This will only be exacerbated by the seemingly increasing number and frequency of significant storm events. In 2014 the Zoning Commission enacted new standards for properties in the flood zone, requiring that all new construction or substantial improvements (defined as 50% or more of the market value of the structure) construct to one (1) foot above the base flood elevation. In addition, the City has allocated more than $61 million in capital spending since 2013 to mitigate the effects of flooding. Many roadways within the City, including the aptly named Water Street, are prone to frequent flooding. The City needs to prepare a comprehensive Resiliency and Sustainability Plan that provides the outline for measures needed to address these issues.

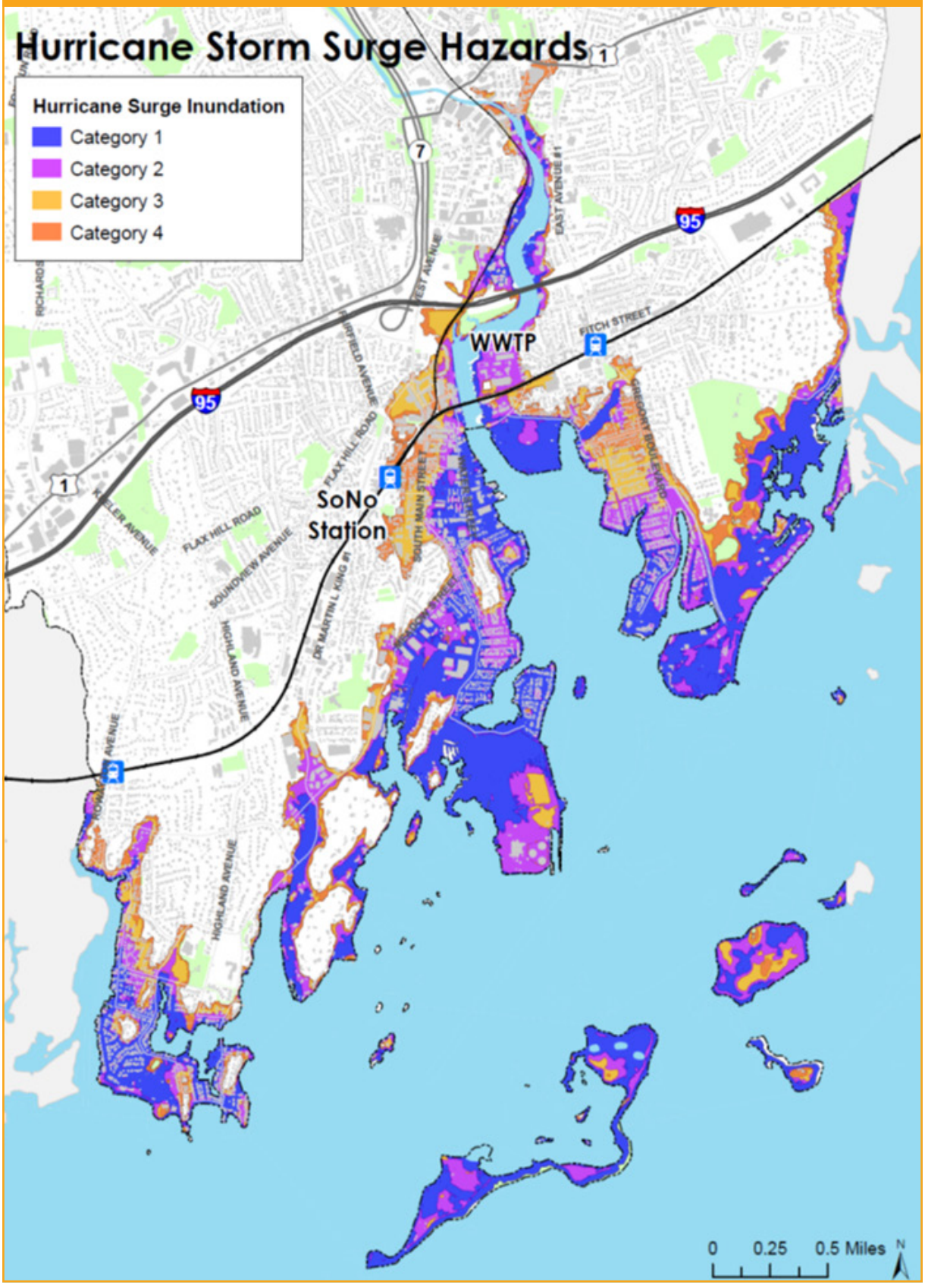
Figure 9.2 indicates storm surge impacts from hurricanes of differing severity based on current sea levels and floodplains. Impacts are most likely in South Norwalk, Harborview, East Norwalk, and Rowayton.

  - Category 1 and 2: 2,306 parcels, including 1,792 residential or mixed-use parcels (78% of total).
  - Category 3 and 4: 3,219 parcels, including 2,467 residential or mixed-use parcels (77% of total).

Critical Infrastructure Vulnerability

The City's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) at Liberty Point would be subject to storm surge from a Category 2 or more intense hurricane. In addition to the WWTP, several pump stations, electrical generation assets and several major access roads to coastal areas are subjects to impacts from storm surge. Further information on critical infrastructure identified in the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (https://westcog.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/HMP-2016-WestCOG-South-Plan.pdf) can be found in Chapter 11.

Figure 9.2 Projected Hurricane Storm Surge Areas



State Climate Adaptation Research & Activities

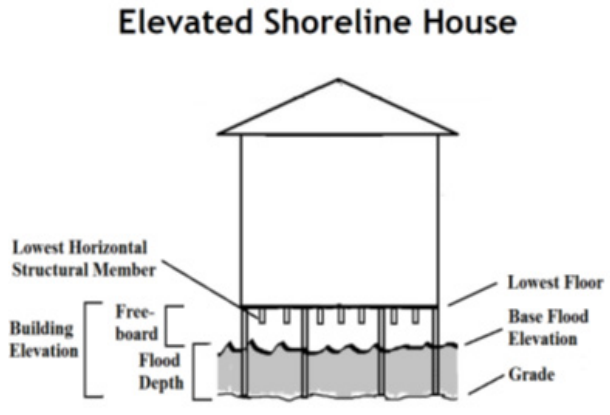
The Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA), a partnership of the University of Connecticut and CT DEEP, is the state-supported research and technical assistance organization focusing on climate change adaptation and sea level rise in Connecticut. It produces research on sea level rise scenarios and reports designed to help municipalities plan for sea level rise. A new report is expected to be issued soon that may be useful for Norwalk:

- **Municipal Resilience Planning Assistance for Sea Level Rise, Coastal Flooding, Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure, & Policy**
  Tools (methodologies and data) for municipalities in counties affected by Superstorm Sandy will include:
  - Sea level rise projections for Long Island Sound
  - Models and maps of the combined impacts of riverine flooding and storm surge
  - Models and maps of inland flooding under current and future climates
  - 20%, 10%, 5%, 2%, and 1% annual chance flood inundation from storms
  - Evaluation of extreme future climate storm scenarios (category 2 hurricane) against the current 1% (100-year) and 0.2% (500-year) flood inundation levels
  - Vulnerability assessment process for wastewater treatment plants
  - Policy and financing options for resilience projects that may be effective in Connecticut based on a survey of municipal needs
- **The Connecticut Climate Change Preparedness Plan: Adaptation Strategies for Agriculture, Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Public Health Climate Change Vulnerabilities**
  ("The Preparedness Plan") was published in 2011 and finalized in 2013.The 2013 Preparedness Plan includes a number of goals around developing sea level rise projections; preserving ecosystem services, and modeling inland migration of tidal marshes.
- **Green Infrastructure**
  DEEP is working with municipalities to encourage the use of green infrastructure and low impact development (LID) practices to facilitate groundwater recharge. Implementation of green infrastructure can reduce the water temperature and amount of pollutants entering the Sound, which reduces the demand on City infrastructure. Further information on this can be found in Chapter 8, *Sustainability & the Norwalk Environment.*
- **Water Conservation**
  The state has provided a model ordinance for water conservation. Less water consumption throughout the City means more natural flow into the Norwalk River and ultimately the Sound, which increases the dissolved oxygen content, improving aquatic habitat. The City should proactively participate with the water companies on long-term water planning for the City. Further information on this can be found in Chapter 11, *Public Facilities, Infrastructure and Services.*
- **Building Code Standards**
  New building code standards will include standards to protect against damage from extreme storms, such as flooding and high winds. In addition, the Building Code has been increasingly incorporating energy conservation standards into the Code, which should further benefit the environment, including the Norwalk River and the Sound.
- **Zoning Code Standards**
  While zoning codes cannot mandate "green" building practices, the City has begun to incentivize green building standards in development projects by offering bonuses such as increased density, increased building height, or reductions in setbacks or parking, if the developer implements green building standards into the development project.

Norwalk Climate Adaptation Actions

Norwalk has building elevation requirements, joined a regional program that helps residents get discounts on flood insurance, and is implementing commitments in the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

- Floodplain building elevation requirements in Norwalk require one foot above Base Flood Elevation (BFE) for new construction or construction worth 50% or more of appraised value. The cost is typically recouped in insurance savings. Elevated buildings can be seen along the coast in Rowayton village.
- Norwalk is now part of a regional Community Rating System (CRS) program for FEMA flood insurance discounts.
- Commitments in the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for Southwest Connecticut:
    - Norwalk has added generators in city buildings; created a phone notification system and evacuation plan; established an Emergency Operations Center; developed a public information program; provided City funding for drainage and flood mitigation; and upgraded dam spillways.
    - Priorities for 2016 to 2021 in the plan include: backup generators; sewer and stormwater pumps; establish shelter areas; raise vulnerable pumps; address the vulnerability of the Wastewater Treatment Plant; collaborate regionally on shelter and evacuation plans; and enhance public education on hazards, especially to the most vulnerable populations.
    - Further information on critical infrastructure identified in the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (https://westcog.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/HMP-2016-WestCOG-South-Plan.pdf) can be found in Chapter 11.



State Sea Level Rise Guideline for Planning Purposes

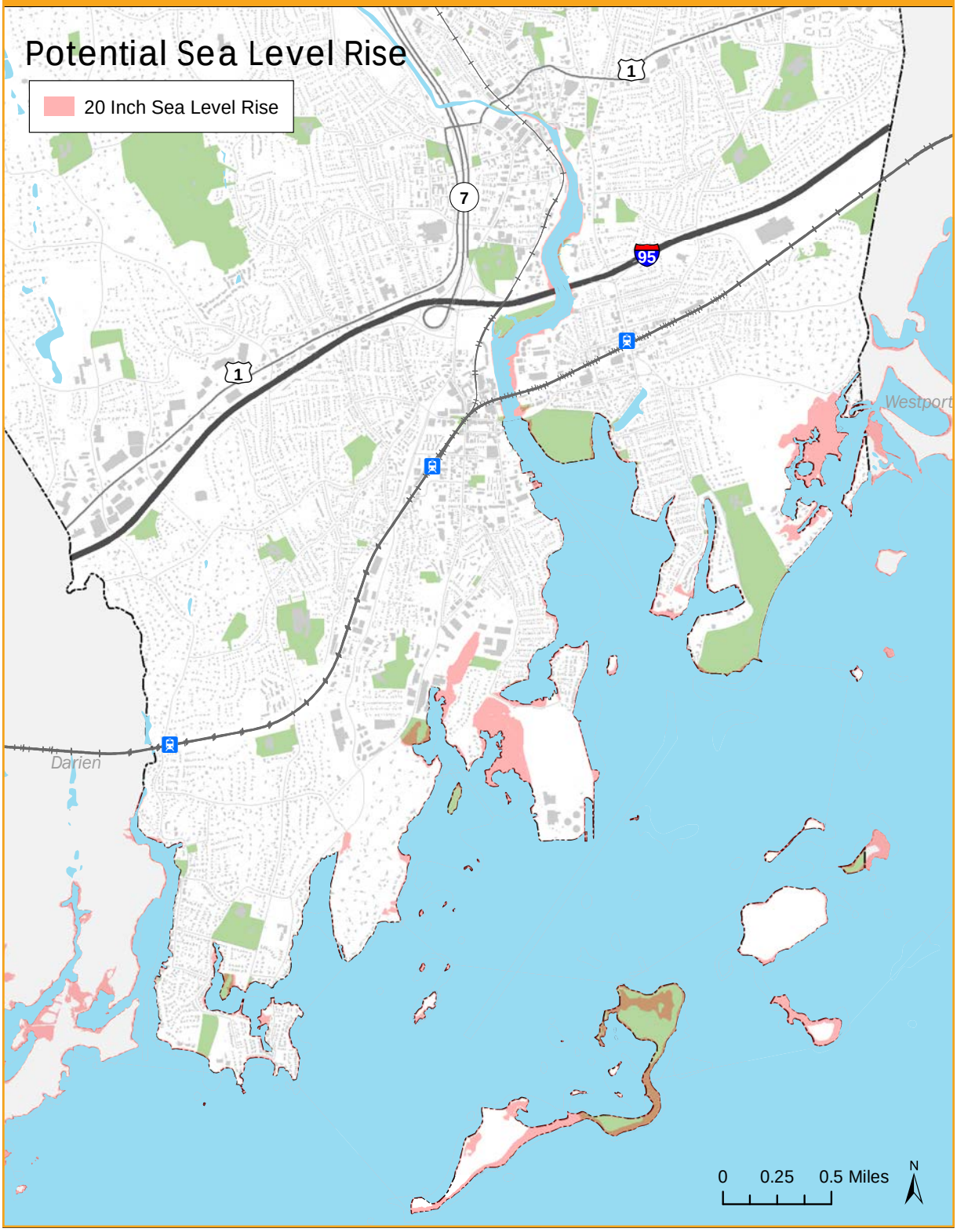
A March 2018 CIRCA research paper reviewed the evidence on sea level rise scenarios on Long Island Sound in Connecticut.[1] The paper recommended a 2050 projection of 20 inches of sea level rise as reasonable for planning purposes—and sea level rise will continue to increase after 2050. In October 2018, the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued a report, "Global Warming of 1.5 Degrees C," that discussed the possibility of conditions that might accelerate sea level rise and other impacts. The CIRCA report stated: "If future scientific discoveries require models to be updated then the projections will have to be revised. Similarly, on-going data collection programs may show that the data-based projections may also require adjustment. This also motivates a periodic reassessment of the planning threshold. Since science moves slowly, and it is likely that a decade of data will be required to detect changes to recent rates of change in mean sea level, updates at 10-year intervals would be wise."

Connecticut Senate Bill 7 Public Act No. 18-82: An Act Concerning Climate Change Planning & Resiliency

State legislators acted on the recommendation in the CIRCA report by passing this act in June 2018. It requires local governments and state agencies to consider the most recent sea-level rise projections in plans for local and state hazard mitigation/preparedness, and conservation and development, starting on October 1, 2019. The law also increases flood-proofing standards for development requiring a minimum of two feet of elevation above the 100-year base flood and any additional elevation needed to account for the most recent sea-level rise projections of the state. The Marine Sciences Division of the University of Connecticut is tasked with updating sea-level rise projections for the state every 10 years.

1 James O'Donnell, "Sea Level Rise in Connecticut", March 27, 2018, www.circa.uconn.edu/2018/03/27/sea-level-rise-projections-for-the-state-of-connecticut-webinar-recording-available

Figure 9.3 Potential Sea Level Rise Areas



Norwalk Sea Level Rise Scenario

As noted earlier, the current sea level rise projection by Connecticut DEEP and CIRCA is 20 inches by 2050. This is the scenario recommended by CIRCA for planning purposes. Figure 9.3 shows the potential impact of a 20-inch rise in sea level in Norwalk. Five hundred sixty-nine properties with a current assessed value of $1.4 billion would be affected. As currently mapped, the impact on most of these properties would be inundation of existing marshes, small islands and property edges (most currently green or sandy) rather than inundation of many buildings. General locations of inundations are shown below:

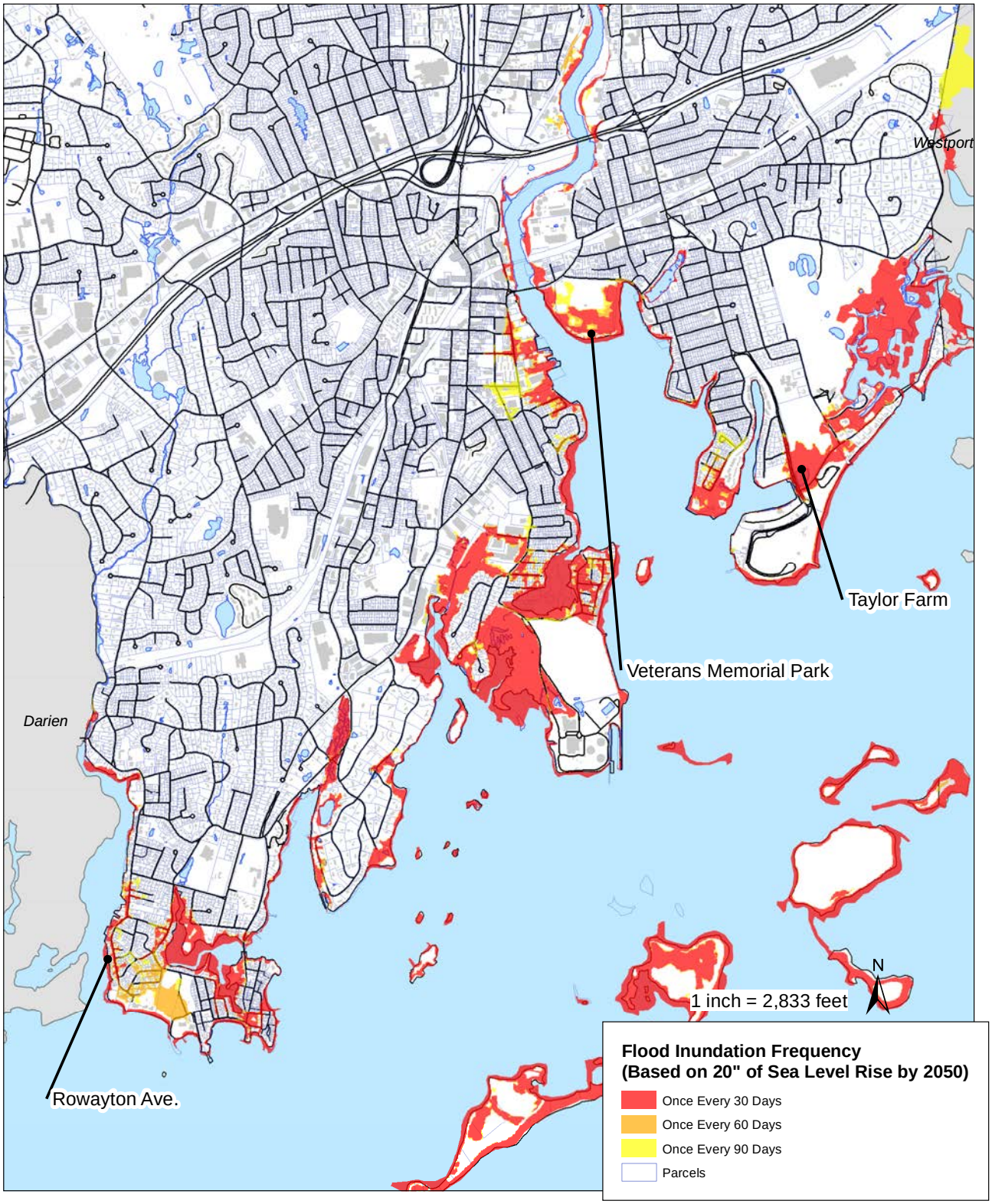
General Locations of 20-Inch Sea Level Rise Potential Impacts	
East Side of Norwalk Harbor	West Side of Norwalk Harbor
Marshes East side of Shorehaven Golf Club	***Marshes*** Village Creek Northwest side of Manresa Island Southwest of Wilson Avenue Wilson Cove Northeast edge of Wilson Point Farm Creek edges and existing nature preserve
Edges and small locations Gregory Point, Veteran's Park, A few properties south of the Walk Bridge, including the Liberty Square staging area Wastewater Treatment Plant edges Narrow river edges north of I-95	***Edges and small locations*** Edge south of the Walk Bridge A few small locations of water-dependent uses off Water Street Waterside edge of the Shorefront Drive neighborhood Waterside edges of properties on Rowayton Avenue
Islands: small islands such as Hoyt, Cedar Hammock, and Little Tavern would be inundated and portions of larger islands such as Sheffield, Shea, and Tavern Islands would be partially inundated.	

An important facility that is vulnerable to storms and climate change is the city's Wastewater Treatment Plant. The 20-inch sea level rise scenario shows water coming to the edges of the plant. The hurricane storm surge scenarios show impacts for categories 2 and above. A combination of sea level rise and storm surge would intensify the impacts. Resilience planning for the Wastewater Treatment Plant is a critical issue for the city.

Figure 9.4 indicates the frequency of flooding impacts every 30, 60 and 90 days by the year 2050, based on a projected 20" sea level rise by the year 2050. Appendix D contains Figures 9.4 a-c, which provides enlarged maps of the flooding frequency scenarios for East Norwalk, Rowayton and South Norwalk.

While, Figure 9.4 indicates flooding frequency by 2050 due to projected sea level rise and Figure 9.2 shows the potential impacts of storm surge from hurricanes of differing severity, there is no current mapping available that models a 20-inch sea level scenario coupled with storm surge events. Understanding these scenarios will help the city in long-term resilience planning.

Figure 9.4 Frequency of Future Flooding in Norwalk



Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

While the 20-inch sea level rise scenario in itself does not affect large numbers of structures, many of Norwalk's marshes and islands would be partially or fully inundated. Today, the marshes and islands play an important role in protecting upland areas by attenuating wave action and storm surge. Marshes are particularly important for water quality because they filter pollutants from stormwater and erosion and provide habitat for wildlife and fisheries. The 20-inch sea level rise scenario implies that some marshes may be converted to open water and/or that marshland will advance into upland areas. Figure 9.5 depicts the likelihood for areas that may become marshland by the year 2050. Based on these data, 238 properties are projected to have at least a 50% likelihood of becoming marshland by the year 2050. The total assessed value of these properties is approximately $660 million. The properties are predominantly single-family dwellings in areas such as Rowayton and East Norwalk, while impacted properties in South Norwalk are comprised of single-family and multi-family dwellings, as well as commercial and maritime uses. Appendix D contains Figures 9.5 a-c, which provide enlarged maps of future marsh scenarios for East Norwalk, Rowayton and South Norwalk.

The Nature Conservancy in 2014 published a study of potential advancement of salt marshes in Norwalk up to 2080—well beyond the 2050 date of the 20-inch sea level scenario. The purpose of the study was to evaluate and identify areas suitable for advancement of salt marshes, so that these resources can persist over time. Areas identified as suitable were existing open space parcels.[2]The climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan recommended in this plan should review this information and incorporate attention to potential impacts of changes to Norwalk's marshes and islands as a result of sea level rise.

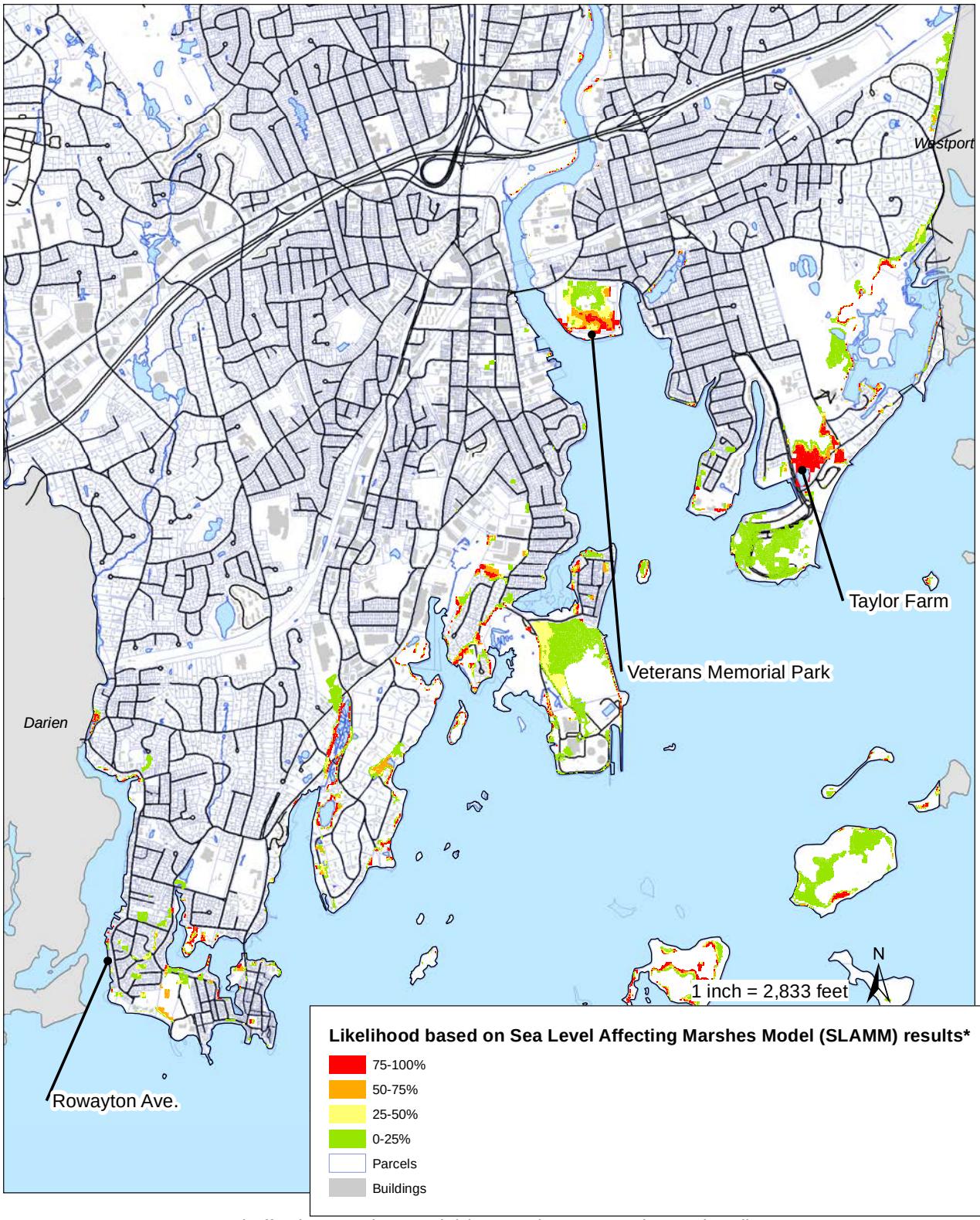
A 20'' sea level rise by 2050 could also significantly impact Norwalk's roadway system. Figure 9.6 depicts the frequency and likelihood that roadways will be flooded in the year 2050 by a 20" sea level rise. The modeling indicates that the impacts until the year 2040 are more manageable, while between 2040 and 2050 the impacts will be much more pronounced. Several significant access roadways that could be negatively impacted are:

- East Norwalk – Shorehaven Road and Gregory Boulevard
- Rowayton – Rowayton Avenue and the intersection of Crockett Street, Richmond Road and Roton Avenue
- South Norwalk – Dock Road to Outer Road, Longshore Avenue and Raymond Street

Should these scenarios come to fruition, several communities in Rowayton such as Bell Island as well as Harbor View in South Norwalk and Marvin Beach in East Norwalk could potentially be inaccessible during a major flooding event. This has significant impacts on evacuation of those inhabitants as well as planning for emergency aid during storm events. In addition, should the city look to improve the resilience of existing roadway infrastructure, this could result in a significant capital investment by the City. A further evaluation of these impacts and potential remedial actions should be conducted as part of a citywide Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Climate Adaptation Plan. Appendix D contains Figures 9.6 a-c, which provide enlarged maps of future roadway flooding scenarios for East Norwalk, Rowayton and South Norwalk.

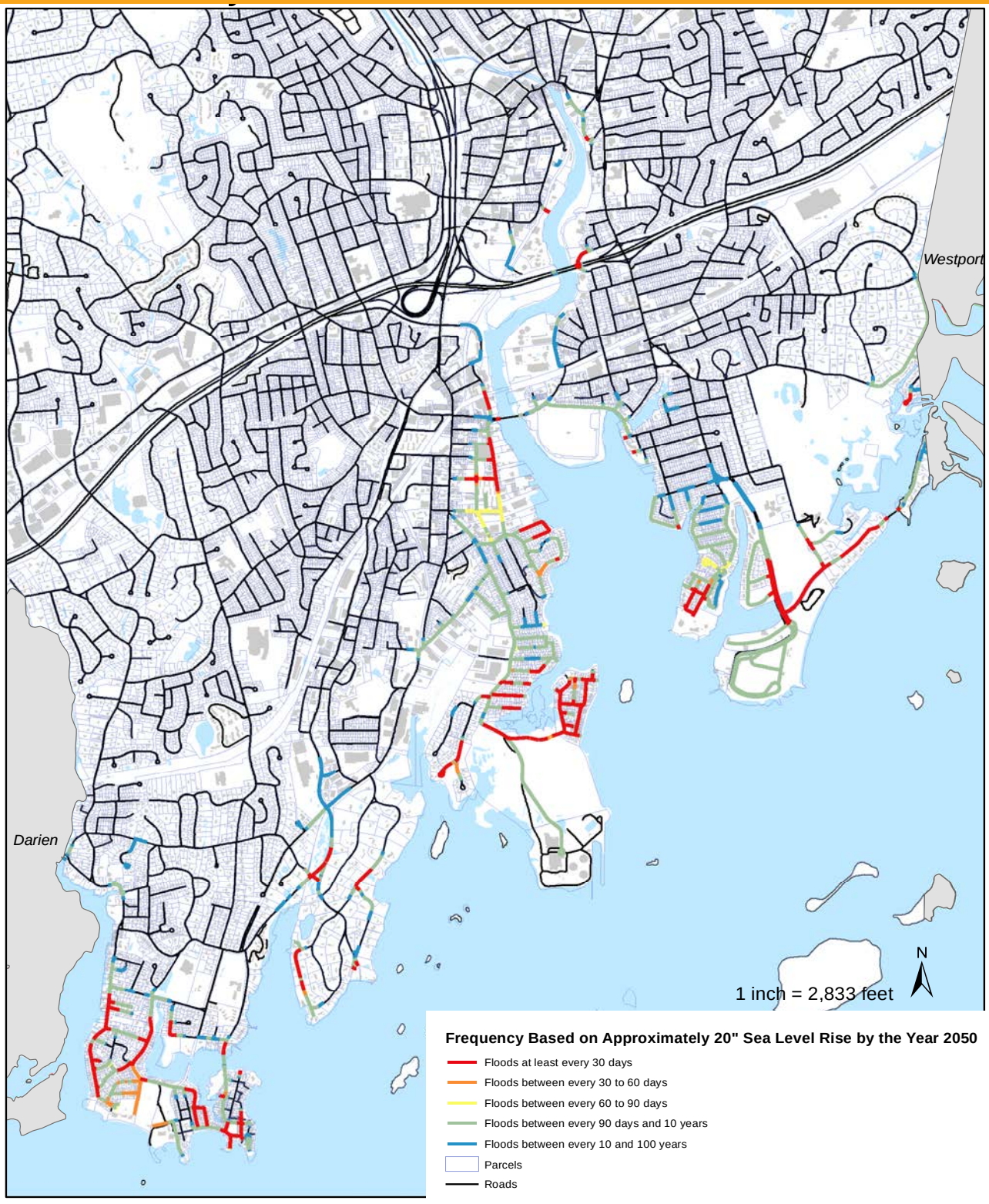
2 A. Ryan and A.W. Whelchel, "A Salt Marsh Advancement Zone Assessment of Norwalk, Connecticut," The Nature Conservancy Coastal Resilience program, Publication Series #1-L , New Haven: 2014. https://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/Marine/crr/library/Documents/Norwalk%20Salt%20Marsh%20Advancement%20Zone%20Assessment%202014_Small.pdf

Figure 9.5 Likelihood that Land in Norwalk Becomes Costal Marsh



Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

Figure 9.6 Predicted Frequency of Road Flooding in Norwalk by 2050



Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

Key Findings & Challenges

- Norwalk has a robust coastal management system.
- The City is vulnerable to the impact of sea level rise and storm surge, including critical infrastructure such as the wastewater treatment plant.
- The City has taken some steps to adapt to climate change.
- State government is providing research and guidance to help communities become more resilient to climate change, but more work is needed in both the short term and long term.

E. WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

Visioning Workshop:

Participants highly valued coastal places and identified locations on the coast and in the harbor as among the best places in the city.

Neighborhood-based District Workshops:

Coastal flooding was mentioned as a concern in South Norwalk (Water Street especially), Rowayton, and East Norwalk, which also mentioned sea level rise. The waterfront was among the top three assets in these same neighborhoods.

Green, Sustainable and Resilient Norwalk Workshop

Resilience priorities mentioned by participants focused on green infrastructure, stronger regulations and design requirements, green space in flood-prone areas, protection of the wastewater treatment plant, and more public education.

F. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

GOAL 1

Use of harbor and coastal resources is balanced with environmental resource protection.

Policies:

- Continue to support implementation of Norwalk's Harbor Management Plan. (This policy applies also to goals 2, 3, 4 and 5).
- Ensure consistency between the Harbor Management Plan and the citywide plan/POCD so that changes to one are consistent with those of the other.
- Continue to support implementation of Norwalk's Municipal coastal Program and apply the Coastal Site Plan Review Process in the most informed and effective manner. (This policy applies also to goals 2, 3, 4 and 5).

Strategy

A. Balance environmental resource protection with use of harbor and coastal resources

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Review the Harbor Management Plan regularly to see if amendments are needed.** In response to changing conditions that affect the harbor and the plan, the NHMC should continue to review the plan regularly and amend it proactively according to procedures specified in the General Statutes, Norwalk Code, and in the Plan.	2019 & ongoing	NHMC	Staff time
ii. **Apply the Harbor Management consistency Review Process in the most effective and transparent manner.** Proposals subject to this process should continue to be evaluated with respect to the Harbor Management Plan's goals, objectives, polices, and other written provisions according to the procedures and other requirements established in the General Statutes, Norwalk Code, state coastal regulatory programs, and the Harbor Management Plan.	2019 & ongoing	NHMC	Staff time
iii. **Apply the Coastal Site Plan Review Process in the most effective and transparent manner.** Proposals subject to this process should be evaluated with respect to the applicable principles, goals, policies, and strategies of the POCD.	2019 & ongoing	Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, ZBA	Staff time

GOAL 2

Environmental resources within and adjacent to the coastal management area are protected and enhanced

Policies:

- Support resource protection measures and integration with protections upstream.

STRATEGY

A. Promote protection of coastal environmental resources in planning and regulatory processes.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Advocate to preserve the northern section of Manresa Island (92 acres) as a conservation area.** Plan for the rest of the site to have uses that are consistent with the Harbor Management Plan principles.	2019–2029	NHMC; Planning and Zoning Commission; Conservation Commission; nonprofit groups	Staff time

ii. Advocate for reduced stormwater pollution impacts on the Norwalk River and adjacent areas.	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Norwalk Watershed Initiative; Conservation Commission	Staff time
iii. Promote the reduction of impervious surfaces and the use of green infrastructure and Low Impact Development practices within the Coastal Management Area to the maximum degree feasible along with maintaining a water dependent use.	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
iv. Protect coastal environmental resources to help defend against coastal flooding and storm surge.	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Conservation Commission	Staff time; possible capital funds
v. Collaborate with nonprofits and others to further protect coastal wetland resources.	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning	Staff time

GOAL 3

Water-dependent uses continue to operate and expand in Norwalk Harbor and on the coast

Policies:

- Support continued operation of shellfishing and recreational boating facilities and uses (including boat storage, berthing repair, and maintenance facilities), other commercial and industrial water-dependent uses on suitable waterfront properties, as well as facilities and uses that support and provide opportunities for public access to of the Harbor.

STRATEGY

A. Establish development patterns that continue to include space for water-dependent uses.

What is a water-dependent use? A 2013 study by the National Sea Grant Law Center identified three categories of uses relevant to the definition of water-dependent uses: water-dependent, water-related, and water-enhanced.[1] The federal Coastal Management Act does not define water-dependent uses, so the states have developed their own definitions within the context of the federal act. Connecticut gives priority to preservation of the "water-dependent" category. The Connecticut Coastal Management Act defines water-dependent uses as "those uses and facilities which require direct access to, or location in marine or tidal waters and which therefore cannot be located inland, including but not limited to: marinas, recreational and commercial fishing and boating facilities, finfish and shellfish processing plants, waterfront dock and port facilities, shipyards and boat building facilities, water-based recreational uses, navigation aids, basins and channels, industrial uses dependent upon water-borne transportation or requiring large volumes of cooling or process water which cannot reasonably be located or operated at an inland site and uses which provide general public access to marine or tidal waters." (Connecticut General Statute § 22a93(16)).

1 Terra Bowling, "Working Waterfronts and the CZMA: Defining Water-dependent Use" (2013), National Sea Grant Law Center (https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1055&context=seagrant_pub)

In addition, the act gives guidance on uses that can have adverse impacts on future water-dependent development or activities. These include but are not limited to (A) locating a non-water-dependent use at a site that (i) is physically suited for a water-dependent use for which there is a reasonable demand or (ii) has been identified for a water-dependent use in the plan of development of the municipality or the zoning regulations; (B) replacement of a water-dependent use with a non-water-dependent use, and (C) siting of a non-water-dependent use which would substantially reduce or inhibit existing public access to marine or tidal waters. (Connecticut General Statute § 22a-93(17)).

The Connecticut definition does not include residential uses, which may be economically enhanced by location on the water, but do not require a waterfront location. In a mixed-use context, commercial uses also have to demonstrate that water access is required, not simply beneficial to the business.

The Norwalk River waterfront is a sought-after location, especially in Norwalk Center and SoNo. Demand is high for property on the waterfront, or at least with a waterfront view, and combining water-dependent uses whose activities have commercial or industrial character with residential or mixed uses can be tricky if residents find the other uses noisy or noxious in some way. New land uses can also put upward pressure on land values and rents. On the other hand, in mixed-use areas, the ability to see waterfront activities can be interesting to residents or the broader public.

Because much of the Norwalk waterfront is already occupied, and there is a relatively small amount of land zoned for water-dependent commercial and industrial uses in particular, a stringent definition of what constitutes a water-dependent use is advisable. Retention and expansion of both new and traditional water-dependent uses requiring direct access to, or location in, marine or tidal waters should be encouraged and supported in accordance with the Connecticut Coastal Management Act.

Commercial or light industrial development on waterfront sites will provide for continuation of water-dependent and water-enhanced uses, maintain maritime themes and character, encourage mutually supportive businesses, encourage recreational uses and public access where appropriate, and should consider no net loss of existing water-dependent uses as defined in the Coastal Management Act and cited above. There are also water-dependent uses, such as public parks, that fit the "general public access" element of the state Coastal Management Act.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **As part of the zoning rewrite, establish zoning and urban design standards for areas with water dependent uses that enhance compatibility with adjacent uses.** Review zoning, adjacent uses, screening and site practices, and transportation.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning; Redevelopment Agency; NHMC	Staff time; consultant
ii. **Preserve the locations for water dependent uses on the waterfront.** SoNo and East Norwalk near the Walk Bridge, and the Water Street marine businesses cluster are particularly important locations for preservation of water dependent uses.	2019 and ongoing	Planning and Zoning; Redevelopment Agency; NHMC	Staff time
iii. **Explore expansion of water dependent economic development opportunities.**	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development; NHMC; Shellfish Commission	Staff time; possible consultant

GOAL 4

The public has access to the harbor and coast.

Policies:

- Enhance public access to the water.

STRATEGY

A. Promote public access to the harbor and coast where feasible, safe, and environmentally appropriate

Norwalk is fortunate to have many public places with direct access to the water or water views. Long Island Sound, the Norwalk River, the Five Mile River, and the Silvermine River all play a key role in Norwalk's sense of identity.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. Facilitate public direct or visual access to coastal, harbor and river waters when reviewing proposed projects.	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Planning and Zoning Department	Staff time
ii. Plan for Liberty Square to have a publicly-accessible use and a water dependent use when it is no longer used for staging for the Walk Bridge project.	2022-2023	Economic and Community Development Department; NHMC	Staff time
iii. Seek public access to the coast in disposition plans for Manresa Island.	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Economic and Community Development Department; Manresa Association	Staff time
iv. Continue to protect and enhance appropriate public access to the Norwalk islands.	2019 and ongoing	Norwalk Seaport Association; NHMC; Maritime Aquarium	Staff time

GOAL 5

Norwalk plans for and adapts to climate change.

Policies:

- Support proactive measures to adapt to climate change.

STRATEGY

A. Prepare a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and plan for future adaptation.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Prepare a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan.** The plan should analyze the city's exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity to climate change in terms of climate risks to social systems, infrastructure (such as the Wastewater Treatment Plant) and natural resources, and provide recommendations on how to improve resilience. The plan should include attention to all potential climate change impacts, including sea level rise, extreme weather events, drought, and heat--for example, with a drought action plan.	2020–2022	Economic and Community Development in collaboration with other departments and stakeholders	Staff time; consultant
ii. **As part of the climate change adaptation plan, establish a multiple-lines-of-defense approach to coastal flooding and storm surge.** Norwalk already has elements of this approach with the protective layers of the Norwalk Islands and the location of parks and open space in several waterfront locations. Sea level rise is expected to affect marshes and smaller islands. Planning to retain natural barriers will be an important aspect of climate change adaptation.	2020–2022	Economic and Community Development in collaboration with other departments and stakeholders	Staff time; consultant
iii. **Amend regulations for new construction and renovations valued at half or more of appraised value to be consistent with the 2018 State requirement for two feet of elevation above Base Flood Elevation.**	2019	Planning and Zoning Commissions; Common Council	Staff time
iv. **As part of a zoning rewrite and the vulnerability assessment, write and adopt zoning measures and standards that promote effective adaptation to coastal impacts of climate change.**	2019–2022	Planning and Zoning Commissions; Common Council	Staff time; consultant

v. **Collaborate with electric utilities to install below ground energy lines as poles need replacement to reduce outages as storms are expected to increase in number and intensity.**	2020 and ongoing	Utilities; Public Works	Capital investments by utilities

B. Implement commitments in the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan and take additional steps to enhance resilience.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Establish back-up generators at city-controlled facilities where needed.**	2019–2021	Emergency Management (Fire Department)	Staff time; capital funds
ii. **Continue to review impacts of climate change on critical infrastructure.** Because of its location on the harbor, the Wastewater Treatment Plant is vulnerable to storm surge and flooding related to sea level rise.	2020–2022	Water Pollution Control Agency	Staff time
iii. **Create and enhance plans for shelters during storm and hazard events, including regional collaboration on shelter and evacuation plans.**	2020–2024	Emergency Management	Staff time; operational or capital funds
iv. **Enhance public education on climate change hazards, engaging especially with the most vulnerable populations (such as elderly and disabled, low-income, limited English, etc.).**	2020 and ongoing	Emergency Management	Staff time
v. **Develop and promote strategies to mitigate increased heat.** Actions can include "cool roofs" programs to paint roofs white or other light colors to reflect sunlight and increase albedo; green roofs (vegetated roofs); tree planting; and green parking lots that use surfaces that reduce heat production.	2024–2029	Emergency Management; Economic and Community Development; Public Works	Staff time
vi. **Work with the water supply companies to ensure climate change adaptation.**	2020 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development	Staff time
vii. **Work to ensure Manresa Island is "hardened" against major storm events to prevent a breach and potential release of encapsulated contaminants into Long Island Sound.**	2020–2029	Mayor's Office; Common Council; Economic and Community Development	Staff time

G. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Early Actions	Who
Develop a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan.	Planning and Zoning; Public Works
Amend regulations to be consistent with the 2018 state regulations for 2 feet BFE in flood zones.	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission; Common Council
Implement resilience commitments in the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Emergency Management and other departments

4

City Systems

CHAPTER 10

Transportation & Mobility Networks

CHAPTER 11

Public Facilities, Services & Infrastructure

Summary Themes & Priorities

Enhancing Transportation Choice & Connectivity

Expand transportation choice and coordinate with land use by adopting a multi-modal approach that connects city neighborhoods and districts with opportunities for safe walking, biking, transit, and new technologies, as well as traffic improvements.

Providing Excellent Municipal Services

Establish systems and coordinated planning for data-driven facilities management and service delivery.

Source: City of Norwalk

CHAPTER TEN

Transportation & Mobility Networks

A. PROVIDING MULTIPLE WAYS TO GET AROUND & ACCESS OPPORTUNITY

This chapter discusses how people move around the city by transit, car, biking, and walking, and the relationship between these transportation networks and land use policy. Transportation and mobility relate to other aspects of this plan including health, land use, and economic development.

Norwalk benefits from a diverse multi-modal transportation network including commuter rail, buses, interstate highway and local streets, multi-use trails, and bicycle facilities. This network is strained however, by regional forces beyond Norwalk's control and by local bottlenecks caused by construction and peak hour congestion. Funding for new transportation projects is limited, meaning each project should be closely examined to determine its benefits and impacts on all users, not just drivers and cars. Technology and lifestyle changes are impacting transportation as well – rideshare services and car and bike sharing have exploded in popularity in the last ten years and many millennials are less likely to own a car than previous generations. Even bigger changes are on the horizon, most notably the unknown impact of autonomous vehicles entering the mainstream and the rapid growth of transportation network companies (TNC) and mobility service providers (MSP) like Uber and Lyft.

Transportation and land use policy must be considered together to effectively shape the future of cities like Norwalk. More and better options for transit, biking and walking can help take cars off the road, benefiting everyone including drivers. Encouraging development near transit stations can boost ridership and reduce driving, while letting development spread to further out locations will induce more people to drive. Norwalk will need to be responsive to changes in transportation technology to maximize benefits and minimize costs while ensuring that safe streets, walkable neighborhoods, and mobility options are maintained and improved.

B. COASTAL RESOURCES & RESILIENCE IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision

- We are a city of **transportation choice**: a connected, walking and biking city, well-served by **public transportation**, safe and convenient **pedestrian and bicycle routes** to city destinations, well-maintained and well-functioning **local streets**, and efficient **regional transportation links**.

From the Principles

- **Connect people and places.** Provide safe and efficient transportation choices, including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit opportunities, along with well-maintained streets, to connect people to each other, to city destinations and the region.
- **Make healthy lifestyles easy and fun.** Create opportunities for healthy choices and wellbeing through easy access to physical activity, healthy food, and medical care.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
Norwalk has a comprehensive and balanced transportation system, with safety and multimodal accessibility the top priority of citywide transportation planning.	• Support Complete Streets policies and multimodal level of service analysis to improve streets for all users and varying abilities. • Support investment in new bicycle and walking facilities equitably distributed throughout the city • Enact a Vision Zero Policy
The city has attractive and convenient parking facilities that fit the context and accommodate emerging technology.	• Promote shared parking strategies, transportation demand management (TDM) programs, and right-sized parking requirements to limit the amount of new parking needed. • Promote parking wayfinding and demand-based pricing to better use existing public parking. • Promote design standards to ensure parking blends into the urban environment and minimizes negative visual and physical impacts.
Neighborhood streets maintain a residential character and support a range of transportation options, as feasible.	• Preserve and maintain quiet residential streets in neighborhoods throughout the city. • Support biking and walking in neighborhoods with investment in sidewalks and bicycle facilities.
Norwalk advocates for improvement of regional transportation connections—including regional trails, traffic flow on regional routes, and commuter rail—to reduce traffic congestion, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions.	• Support regional coordination on transportation issues including transit and highways. • Support sustainable and resilient transportation policies and investment.

Rail

Norwalk is served by Metro-North commuter rail along two lines: the main New Haven Line with service between Grand Central Station in New York City and New Haven Union Station, and the Danbury branch which extends from the South Norwalk station to Danbury, CT. There are four rail stations in the city: the main South Norwalk station, East Norwalk and Rowayton along the New Haven line, and Merritt 7 along the Danbury branch. The New Haven Line set a new record for ridership in 2016, with 40.5 million annual rides.[1] The Danbury branch has a single track and is not electrified which limits service. While the 2016 Danbury Branch Study (Phase II Alternatives Analysis) determined that electrification of the diesel line is not justified at this time due to high cost and projected incremental ridership increase, it remains a long-term goal.

Bus

Norwalk is served by the Norwalk Transit District (NTD). It operates 12 weekday bus routes with limited weekend service and 5 commuter shuttles. The WHEELS transit hub on Burnell Boulevard is the main pulse point at which many routes arrive or depart. NTD recently introduced "Wheels2U," an app-based on-demand microtransit service operating on a loop between South Norwalk, West Avenue, Norwalk Green, and East Norwalk. During the six-month pilot period, service is offered Thursday through Saturday evenings (5pm to midnight) and Sunday afternoon and evening (noon to 9pm). The pilot program is being sponsored by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency and the SoNo Collection mall.

Roads

Norwalk is bisected by Interstate 95 which has three access points in the city. Rush-hour traffic often creates spillover impacts on nearby local streets. Route 15/ Merritt Parkway and Route 7 are limited-access regional highways. Route 1 also passes through Norwalk as a surface street primarily lined by suburban-style retail and other commercial uses. Currently, the City spends $6 million annually on local street repair and maintenance and $1 million on sidewalk projects.

1 www.mta.info/news/2017/01/23/metro-north-railroad-breaks-ridership-record

Danbury line commuter rail near Merritt 7

Source: Google

The transit hub on Burnell Blvd is a pulse point for many bus routes

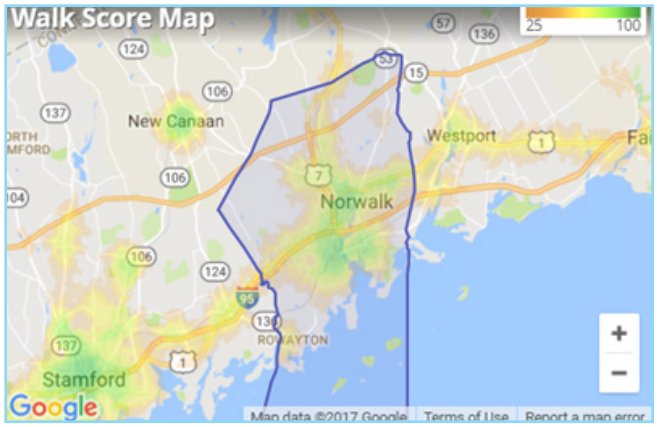
Source: Norwalk Transit District

Walking & Biking

Concrete sidewalks exist along most streets in the central core of Norwalk. In the further out neighborhoods, narrow asphalt paths can be found along some roads while many others lack any pedestrian accommodation. Few on-street bicycle facilities exist today, almost all of which are sharrow markings for shared use of travel lanes. The East Coast Greenway, a signed interstate bicycle route between Maine and Florida, also passes through Norwalk on surface streets. The Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) and the Harbor Loop are the two primary multi-use trails in the city. Both are currently incomplete and working to connect existing segments to create continuous off-road paths. When complete, the NRVT will be a 38-mile trail connecting Calf Pasture Beach to Rogers Park in Danbury.

- **Norwalk Bike/Walk Commission**
  The Bike/Walk Commission was created by an ordinance adopted by the Common Council in October 2017, three years after it was first organized as a task force. It "supports bicycling and walking as safe, accessible, and sustainable forms of transportation and recreation that increase the City's livability and economic vitality, and improve public and environmental health."[2] It is currently working on a five-year pedestrian plan, updating the City's bicycle and pedestrian plans, promoting Complete Streets programs, implementing Vision Zero initiative, and organizing public awareness campaigns. It led the effort to implement a bike-share program expected to begin in the Fall of 2020 and conducted a Pedestrian Infrastructure Audit in 2018 to gain a better understanding of current conditions along city roads.
- **NorWALKer Program**
  The Health Department has created 17 maps with walking routes from 0.5 to 3.5 miles in neighborhoods throughout the city. Many maps have been translated into Spanish and the remaining translations are underway. It organizes community walks to encourage physical activity while building social capital among residents.
- **Walk Score**
  Walk Score is a website that maps walkability in cities and neighborhoods. Norwalk has a Walk Score of 49 out of 100, ranking it car-dependent because most errands require a car. Four neighborhoods within the city have higher scores: central Norwalk (78/100), East Norwalk (59/100), Brookside (58/100), and Spring Hill (57/100).

2 Norwalk Bike/Walk Commission. www.norwalkct.org/1503/Norwalk-BikeWalk-Commission



Parking

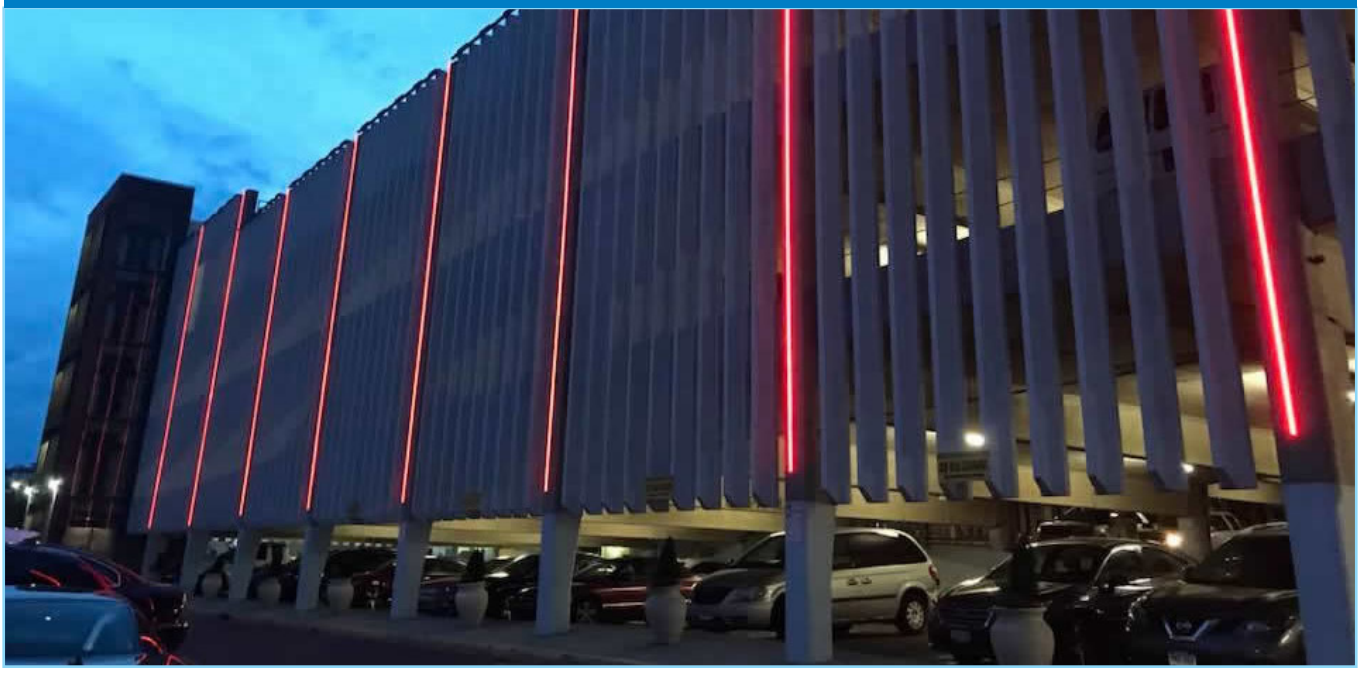
Parking is an asset that cities should carefully manage, affecting economic development and quality of life for residents and visitors. The location, amount, and pricing of parking are tools that can be used to efficiently manage it. The Norwalk Parking Authority (NPA) is responsible for over 4,000 on- and off-street parking spaces within the urban core and at railroad stations. In addition to on-street parking, 11 facilities are under the management of the NPA including two railroad stations (South Norwalk and East Norwalk), two garages, one deck, and six surface parking facilities, including the recent additions at the Main Public Library and Liberty Square. The NPA leverages parking facilities and revenues to advance downtown economic development. The NPA has an "Art in Parking Places" program, a permanent art installation at the South Norwalk railroad station, changing exhibits at the Maritime Garage, and an exterior lighting installation at the Yankee Doodle Garage. The NPA introduced the Parker smart parking app to help residents and visitors find available parking spaces, get directions, and pay directly from a smartphone through the Parkmobile app. The NPA is a self-sustaining organization that is not supported by taxpayer money.

During 2017-2018, simultaneous with the citywide plan/POCD update process, the NPA has been conducting a parking capacity study and strategic parking plan. The goal of the parking plan is to develop a common vision and approach for parking in Norwalk from a variety of user perspectives – residents, businesses, and visitors. It includes an evaluation of current parking supply and demand, an on-street parking regulation inventory, an understanding of community goals, an analysis of future parking needs, and a review of parking alternatives such as car and bike sharing, on-demand transportation like Uber and Lyft, and a circulator shuttle. Completion is anticipated in Spring 2019.

Existing Transportation Plans

- **Transportation Management Plan (2014)** The City of Norwalk and its Department of Public Works developed this comprehensive plan to assist in the evolution of the existing

Improvements at the Yankee Doodle garage included exterior and interior LED lighting, and improved security features.



automobile-oriented transportation system to a more sustainable multi-modal transportation system. Its recommended policies and strategies cover land use, transit, roadways, access management, and bicycles and pedestrians while acknowledging challenges like limited funding, concerns about growth, local politics, and geographic limitations.

- **Norwalk Pedestrian & Bikeway Transportation Plan (2012)**
  The City of Norwalk conducted this study to make strategic recommendations for biking and walking throughout the city. It ranked potential corridors for analysis and grouped results into three tiers of priority. Tier 1 consists of 18 corridors that meet one or more factors including multiple pedestrian or bicycle crashes and/or no sidewalks on either side of the road within a quarter-mile of a school or transit center.
- **Norwalk Connectivity Masterplan (2012)**
  The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency completed this plan in response to the growing scale and magnitude of redevelopment projects in the urban core. Recommendations addressed street, transit, bike, and pedestrian connectivity as well as wayfinding. Specific strategies include a West Avenue Complete Streets project, Cross Street-Belden Avenue safety improvements, pedestrian enhancements to Monroe Street and MLK Drive, creating a bicycle network of shared travel lanes (sharrows), providing bicycle accommodations at intersections, creating a transit circulator, and a unified comprehensive wayfinding system.

Major Projects

- **Walk Bridge Program**
  The Walk Bridge in South Norwalk is a critical rail link in the Northeast Corridor between Boston and New York City. The 122-year-old four-track swing bridge is listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places but is deteriorating and requires replacement to ensure reliable rail service and to improve resiliency against extreme weather events. The program is currently in the preliminary design phase, having identified the 240' Vertical Lift Bridge as the preferred alternative through the Environmental Assessment/ Environmental Impact Evaluation (EA/EIE) process. Advance construction projects began in 2017 and Walk Bridge replacement is anticipated to begin in Fall 2019 and continue for 4-5 years, impacting South Norwalk businesses, rail travelers, and water users on the Norwalk River. In addition to replacing the Walk Bridge, there are four other rail bridges scheduled to be replaced as part of this project including the Osborne Avenue and East Avenue bridges. Roadway and sidewalk improvements will be made in the vicinity of the East Avenue bridge and rail station. The East Norwalk Station will also be improved by extending the platforms to accommodate 10-car trains and providing more additional commuter parking, including handicapped spaces.
- **Route 7/15 Norwalk Project**
  The City supports this project which seeks to provide the missing connections between Route 7 and Route 15 (Merritt Parkway), and to improve mobility and safety at the Merritt Parkway's Main Avenue and Route 7 interchanges. It is currently in the alternatives development and environmental documentation phases, including considerations for the Parkway's historic landscapes. Preliminary design is currently anticipated to begin in 2020 with construction beginning in 2023. In addition to this project, there are several other pending projects in the area such as the realignment of Grist Mill Road and Glover Avenue, replacement of the Glover Avenue Bridge, and studies related to the Route 7 Connector as well as sidewalk and crosswalk improvements on Main Avenue.
- **Main Avenue Transportation Plan**
  A transportation plan sponsored by WestCOG is underway for Main Avenue from Route 123 to Grist Mill Road. The plan will include a traffic analysis, a Complete Streets plan, a driveway management plan, signal upgrades, and a transportation review checklist for use in evaluating development projects.

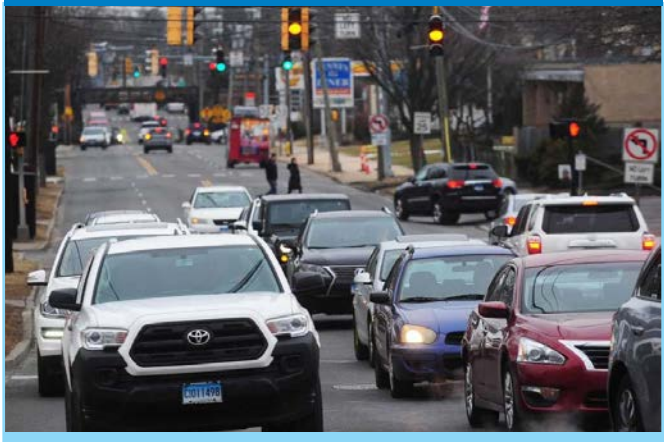
Key Findings & Challenges

- Norwalk is moving forward with a government reorganization plan that will create a new a Transportation, Mobility, and Parking Department (TMP) within an Economic and Community Development Division, and add a transportation planner to the Planning and Zoning Department, which will also be under Economic

and Community Development. TMP will be responsible for wayfinding, safe routes to school, crosswalks, signal systems, parking, curb management planning and design, connectivity, and collaborating with the Norwalk Transit District. These changes will greatly improve the integration of transportation and land use policy, facilitating a shared vision and coordinated approach to investment.

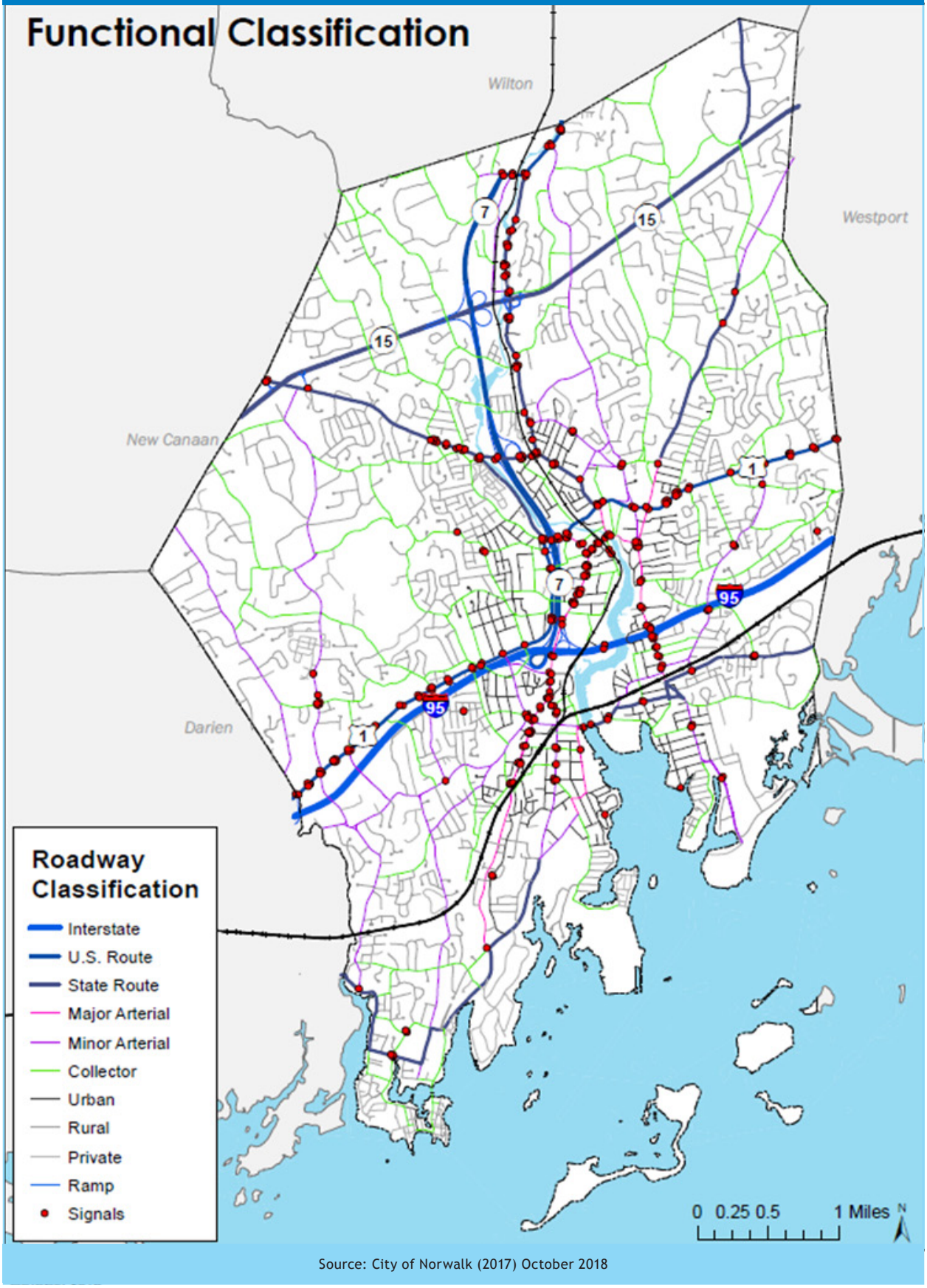
- Transportation funding from the state has been extremely limited, threatened by budget cuts and limited sources. Several WHEELS bus routes were modified or eliminated in 2018 due to state budget constraints.
- Major projects like the ongoing SoNo Collection mall construction and the upcoming Walk Bridge Program are impacting South Norwalk. Local businesses are concerned about traffic, detours, and other impacts. The SoNo Collection mall will change traffic patterns once it opens and has committed to paying for a shuttle between SoNo and Wall Street. The Walk Bridge Program, while a critical transportation project of national importance, will have local traffic impacts that will need to be considered.
- The Danbury branch rail line passes through the Wall Street/West Avenue area but does not have a downtown station. The State Bond Commission approved funds for a study of a potential Wall Street station in 2018. Connecticut DOT will coordinate with stakeholders, including the local business community which largely supports the idea. Limited funding, limited service on the Danbury branch, and the city's four existing train stations have been cited as reasons against it however. In the Merritt 7 area, there are plans to replace the existing rail platform with a new Merritt 7 train station, creating a pedestrian bridge over the tracks to connect the station on Glover Avenue to the offices along Main Avenue, improving accessibility for workers and residents.
- Traffic concerns were frequently heard during the public outreach process: spillover traffic due to congestion on I-95, cut-through traffic in neighborhoods (especially during school drop-off and pick-up periods), and perceptions of increased traffic due to new residential and mixed-use developments downtown. Analysis of average daily traffic (ADT) data published by Connecticut DOT indicates that South Norwalk has seen an average annual traffic growth of 1.4% between 2005 and 2014, followed by East Norwalk at 1.1% and Connecticut Avenue at 1.0%. Other parts of the city saw nominal increases or even decreases over that period, in part due to limited development in the suburban neighborhoods and fewer residents, as households grow smaller and older. Regional congestion trends have a significant impact in Norwalk due to I-95 and the Merritt Parkway, which limits the city's ability to make improvements in some areas.
- Concerns about street and sidewalk conditions were also frequently heard. Some neighborhoods want existing sidewalks to be repaired while others want new sidewalks or footpaths created. A long-term funding plan is needed to build, repair, and maintain sidewalks citywide to help create a more walkable city.

East Norwalk is one of several traffic hot spots in the city



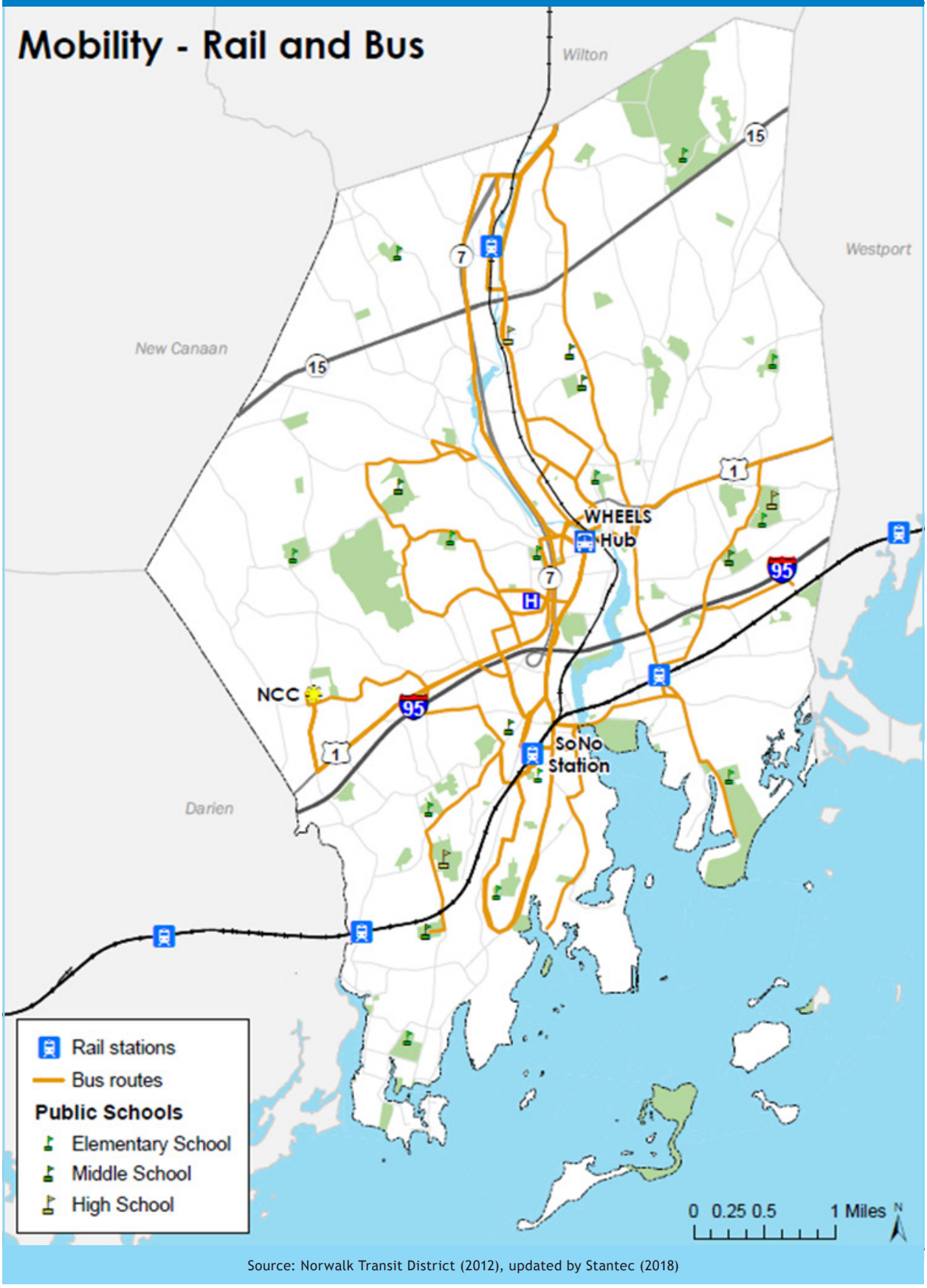
Source: Erik Trautmann, The Hour

Figure 10.1 Functional Classification of Roads



Source: City of Norwalk (2017) October 2018

Figure 10.2 Passenger Rail and Bus Routes



Source: Norwalk Transit District (2012), updated by Stantec (2018)

E. WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

When participants at the Visioning Forum were asked for their top five priorities for the city, "connections and mobility" and "bike/walking friendly" were among the top responses. "Connections and mobility" included comments about better connections, adequate parking, public transportation, and traffic reduction. Transportation was also a common theme when asked about challenges facing Norwalk. "Transportation," a broad category including public transit, sidewalks, and bike lanes, was the most common response. Parking issues, traffic, and road improvements were also frequently mentioned.

Participants at the Connected and Complete topic workshop had a number of suggestions for transportation priorities including implementing shared parking options and internal connections between businesses on major roads; better transit frequency and on-demand micro transit; establishing water taxis; biking and walking options suitable to an aging population and changes in weather; a circulator system among major activity areas; advocating for Wall Street and Merritt 7 train stations; and ensuring that sidewalks in high-use pedestrian areas are repaired and maintained, including snow shoveling. One participant suggested making multimodal improvements as a series of pilot projects, so that people can see the benefits and get used to changes. Another suggestion was to have a continuous promotional campaign about transportation choice to create a change in culture.

While some stakeholders support the idea of a train station in the Wall Street area, others recognize that since it is not on the main line for Metro-North, it might be more effective and less costly to use trolleys or other transportation solutions to connect the area. Waypointe runs a private shuttle to the SoNo train station but would happily support an effective, high-frequency trolley that would connect Wall Street to SoNo.

F. INTEGRATING TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE

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. Complete transportation networks connect community destinations via car, bus, train, bicycle, walking, and other modes.

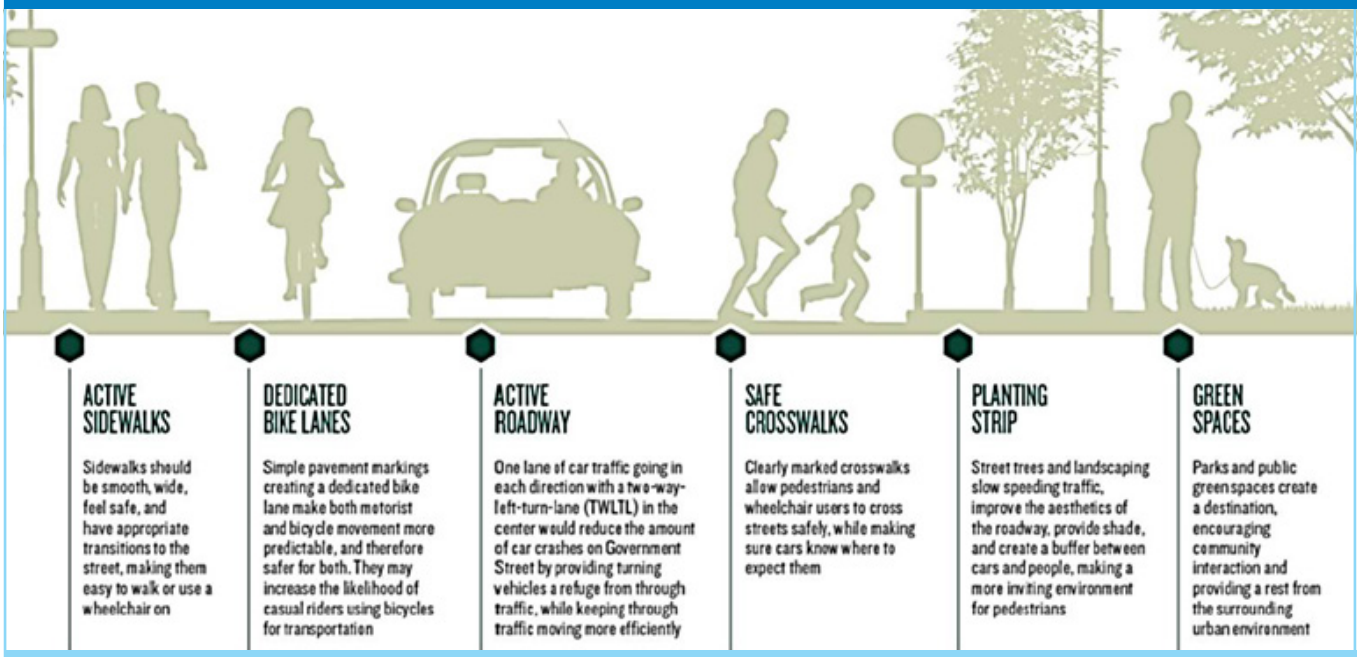
Residents make many short, local trips that are not job-commuting trips – to the grocery store, to restaurants, to meet with friends, to pick up kids from school or sporting events. Transportation choice, or multi-modal transportation, provides options for getting around the neighborhood and the city besides always being forced to drive a car. It supports housing diversity and economic development by providing more support for clusters of retail, dining, and business activity. Safe, convenient alternatives to driving such as taking the bus, walking or biking can take cars off the road, reducing congestion and improving air quality. These alternatives also increase freedom and access to opportunities for seniors, children, and disabled residents for whom driving a car is not an option.

Complete Streets are "streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities."[1] A citywide Complete Streets policy would require city transportation projects to closely evaluate impacts on all users, not just drivers, to increase safe transportation alternatives for all travelers. A network of continuous and accessible sidewalks with clearly marked crosswalks, curb ramps, adequate lighting and sidewalk width, and street trees for shade and buffering from traffic encourages greater pedestrian activity. A connected bicycle network designed for users of all skill levels may include bike boulevards, which are low- and slow-traffic streets marked for safe bicycling. Other Complete Streets design elements are described in Figure 10.3.

Vision Zero is a traffic safety strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, and an equitable mobility platform for all roadway users. A citywide implementation of the Vision Zero initiative means that roadway system designers and policymakers recognize that traffic deaths and serious injuries are preventable through proper engineering, enforcement, evaluation, community engagement, and

1 www.smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/publications/what-are-complete-streets

Figure 10.3 Complete Streets Elements



Source: nacto.org

education. Vision Zero requires a performance based platform with the use of detailed crash data in order to identify areas where safety improvements are needed the most.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) can reduce car trips by focusing mixed-use development near high-frequency transit stations, usually rail but sometimes frequent bus routes (especially bus rapid transit, known as BRT). Due to its proximity to convenient transit, more people are likely to use it and not need a car on a daily basis. TOD features higher densities closest to the station, reduced parking requirements, and an emphasis on creating an inviting public realm and pedestrian environment.

Mixed-use neighborhoods provide opportunities for even those without convenient transit access to also reduce car trips by making multiple destinations in one stop. By placing housing, jobs, shopping, dining, and entertainment in close proximity and connected by safe, attractive sidewalks and an engaging public realm, the number of short local car trips can be reduced. A visitor can complete multiple errands at different stores and stop for a coffee or dinner, all without getting back in their car. These neighborhoods can vary in size from larger activity centers along major corridors to intimate village districts tucked within residential areas.

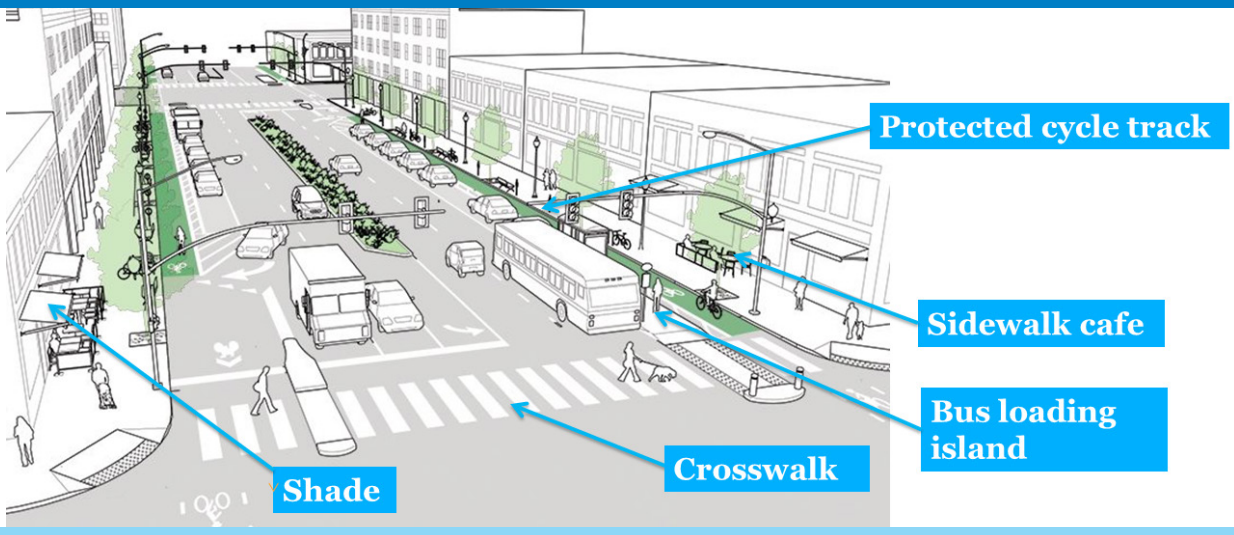
How we move around the city is likely to change greatly over the next ten years, in ways that are difficult to predict today. Such changes will be driven by technology advancements like app-based rideshare and electric-assist bicycles; new modes like shared autonomous vehicles and microtransit; new development patterns within the city; and the installation of more bicycle and pedestrian facilities. An aging demographic is likely to drive less often, and millennials may decide shared vehicles and on-demand rideshare fit their lifestyle more than owning a car. A flexible, responsive approach to transportation planning will be required to ensure the greatest benefits to the most people with the least costs to society.

One way to do this is to adopt multimodal level of service to evaluate transportation improvements and new projects. Traditional level of service (LOS) analysis focuses on cars and evaluates the impacts of bicycles and pedestrians on the efficient movement of cars. Multimodal level of service also evaluates the effects of vehicles on pedestrians and bicyclists. The Federal Highway Administration supports this broader perspective that incorporates how people move through streets, not just cars.

Village centers can be designed to connect residents by short pedestrian/bike trips

Source: www.nacto.org and Stantec

Mixed-use centers on corridors can provide transportation choice and access



Source: www.nacto.org and Stantec

Figure 10.6 Multimodal Level of Service Components

Components of Bicycle Level of Service	Components of Pedestrian Level of Service
Presence of a bike lane	Presence of a sidewalk or area of refuge
Bike lane width	Width or size of area
Vehicular traffic (volumes and travel speeds)	Vehicular traffic (volumes and travel speeds)
Presence of on-street parking	Presence of on-street parking
Access points (conflicts)	Difficulty of crossing at an intersection
Condition of pavement	Delays at intersections

Source: Stantec

G. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

GOAL 1

Norwalk has a comprehensive and balanced transportation system, with safety and multimodal accessibility the top priority of citywide transportation planning.

Policies:

- Support Complete Streets policies and multimodal level of service analysis to improve streets for all users and varying abilities.
- Support investment in new bicycle and walking facilities equitably distributed throughout the city
- Enact Vision Zero policy

Strategy

A. Develop a long-range multi-modal transportation planning strategy for Norwalk.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Hire an experienced transportation planner for the Planning Department.** This position will coordinate transportation planning with development, local improvements, neighboring jurisdictions, regional agencies, and state and federal transportation agencies.	2019	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time; funding for position
ii. **Develop and implement a long-range multi-modal transportation action plan.** The transportation planner will evaluate existing plans and create an action plan aligned with land use and the POCD. The plan will incorporate a funding strategy that maximizes the use of resources and prioritizes projects with multiple benefits. Conduct a bi-annual resident survey on transportation performance and needs.	2020-2029	Transportation Planner (Planning and Zoning); Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Bike/Walk Commission	Staff time
iii. **Implement the transportation recommendations in the East Norwalk Neighborhood TOD Plan.** The City will further evaluate, modify as necessary and implement the recommendations within the plan, including, but not limited to, sidewalk and pedestrian connection improvements, expanded bicycle lanes, the proposed pedestrian promenade, the residential parking program and other safety and access improvements.	2020-2029	Planning & Zoning; Transportation, Mobility and Parking; Public Works	Staff time, capital funds and grant funds

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iv. **Adopt a Complete Streets Policy and a Complete Streets ordinance.** The ordinance should include a definition of Complete Streets, such as the US Department of Transportation definition: "Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are traveling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders." The ordinance should require design and implementation of Complete Streets in land use planning, such as proposed corridor plans, by enforcing the reference in the updated Roadway Standards that "Complete Street policies shall be implemented where they can be reasonably implemented without undue hardship in accordance with all City Ordinances, State Statutes and Federal Laws."	2019-2020	Common Council; Transportation Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
v. **Adopt the Vision Zero Policy & a Vision Zero Ordinance**. Adopt a Vision Zero Policy in eliminating all traffic related deaths and serious injuries. According to the Vision Zero Network, the Vision Zero concept proposes that adopting communities recognize that traffic deaths and serious injuries are preventable through proper engineering, enforcement, evaluation, community engagement, and education. Thus, when communities adopt Vision Zero they are, in effect, rethinking traffic safety and setting programs and aggressive timelines to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries by a specific year.	2019–2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time
vi. **Create a Vision Zero Action Plan.** Adopt a Vision Zero Action Plan to create a set of Critical Actions in order to make it possible to achieve zero fatalities. Coordinate interdepartmental efforts and ideas to evaluate crash data and consider public issues that will reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero by a specific year.	2019–2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time

B. Provide roads that serve the needs of Norwalk residents and commerce, and that facilitate safe and convenient access to transit, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian facilities.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Make land use decisions that support walking, bicycling, and public transit use.** Incorporate multimodal considerations into comprehensive land use policies to guide decision-making.	2019–2029	Planning and Zoning	Staff time
ii. **Design road space for all users as feasible and appropriate for the context.** Implement Complete Streets policies to provide safe conditions for motor vehicles, buses, bicyclists, pedestrians, and mobility devices (such as senior scooters). This should include ensuring safe pedestrian access to bus and transit stops. Consider curbside management in busy urban locations to allocate space for pick-up/drop-off, vehicular and bicycle parking, and other uses.	2019–2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works; Planning and Zoning	Staff time; possible capital funds

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iii. **Seek state approval to designate and enforce truck routes.** Posting of "No Thru Trucks" and "No Trucks" restrictions require approval from the Office of State Traffic Administration (OSTA). Norwalk can identify routes that accommodate the efficient movement of trucks to benefit local businesses while minimizing negative impacts on residential and commercial areas and then seek approval for designation and enforcement. The Planning and Zoning Department must make requests to the Local Traffic Authority for state OSTA approval.	2019–2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time

C. Make multimodal transportation a high priority by promoting pedestrian access, bicycle use, and transit options within Norwalk and to surrounding communities.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Adopt Multimodal Level of Service as a measurement in the rating of street performance.** Balance provisions for bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and vehicle levels of service.	2019	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
ii. **Integrate Complete Streets principles into street design guidelines, standards, and other construction guides.** Create a safe, comfortable, and efficient transportation system that is sensitive to the context of the area it serves and incorporates the needs of all users.	2019–2020	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
iii. **Encourage the provision of rider amenities at bus stops and other transit stations.** Prioritize high-volume stops first, adding signage with route information, real-time arrival data, seating, weather protection, and lighting. For other stops, provide clear signage for the location and other amenities as possible.	2019–2024	Norwalk Transit District; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time; capital funds
iv. **Explore innovative ways to improve transit service within Norwalk.** Consider organizing a Transportation Management Association (TMA) to consolidate employee and other private shuttles or flexible-route service with smaller buses for the bus system. TMAs are non-profit membership organizations typically including employers, developers, property managers, and public agencies working together to address transportation, air quality, and commuter issues in a defined geographic area.	2019-2020	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Norwalk Transit District; private employers	Staff time
v. **Implement access-management techniques in commercial and mixed-use areas.** Working with property owners, study cross-easements for inter-parcel access, closing redundant driveways, and other strategies to allow for smooth traffic flow while creating a safe environment for non-motorized users. This is especially important in major corridors like Route 1 and Main Street/Main Avenue.	2020-2025	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant

Actions	When	Who	Resources
vi. **Optimize traffic flow by using coordinated and synchronized traffic signals.** Consider operational improvements for transit as well, such as signal priority and queue jumper lanes where feasible.	2019-2024	Public Works; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Norwalk Transit District	Staff time; capital funds
vii. **As part of the zoning rewrite and corridor plans, revise site plan review and mixed-use development standards and design guidelines to incorporate multi-modal transportation considerations.** Principles and strategies include: • Require safe and convenient off-street bicycle parking as part of the approval process for new mixed-use development. • Ensure that new development proposals on major arterials such as Route 1 include connections for pedestrians and bicycles within and between developments as an integral component of site design. • In new commercial or mixed-use development, provide for direct, clearly delineated, and landscaped pedestrian walkways from transit stops and parking areas to building entries, and avoid placement of uses (such as drive-through facilities) in locations that would obstruct pedestrian pathways.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant

D. Expand Norwalk's pedestrian and bicycle networks.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Identify priority routes from the existing bicycle master plan.** Develop pilot bicycle and pedestrian routes on a neighborhood basis to link residents to neighborhood and city destinations. See below for a map and more information.	2019–2022	Transportation planner; Transportation; Public Works; Bike/Walk Commission	Staff time
ii. **Maintain and enhance existing trails and footpaths.** Invest in sidewalk repairs and consider adding new sidewalks or walking paths in consultation with residents. Prioritize completing the Harbor Loop and Norwalk River Valley Trail.	2019–2029	Parks Department; trail organizations	Staff time; capital funds
iii. **Encourage pedestrian-friendly design features in street improvement projects.** Features include sidewalks with adequate width, street trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, clearly marked crosswalks, on-street parking with corner bulb-outs to reduce crossing distances, bollards, public spaces, gardens, outdoor furniture, art, and interesting architectural details.	2019–2029	Transportation; Public Works; Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant; capital funds

E. Integrate emerging mobility technology into transportation planning and preserve flexibility to respond to future changes.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Support car sharing services and the use of ride-hailing apps to reduce the need for households to own multiple vehicles.**	2019-2029	City of Norwalk; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time
ii. **Continue to pursue the use of emerging technologies to expand and enhance traditional fixed-route/fixed-schedule transit service.** Analyze the results of the on-demand micro-transit pilot project and make necessary adjustments to maximize benefits. Consider integrating existing ridesharing services for last-mile connections to/from transit stations.	2019-2029	Transportation Planner; Norwalk Transit District; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time; possible grants; capital funds
iii. **Pilot the development of autonomous vehicle systems in Norwalk.** Consider the state's fully autonomous vehicle testing pilot program, possibly between the SoNo Station, Wall Street and Merritt 7 to better connect these three important centers. If implemented, monitor the potential benefits and impacts on Norwalk.	2019-2021	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Redevelopment Agency; Norwalk Transit District	Staff time
iv. **Work with CT DOT on constructing a dedicated rail connection servicing SoNo Station and Merritt 7 to better connect these two important centers.**	2021-2029	Mayor's Office; Common Council; State and local leaders; Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Redevelopment Agency; Norwalk Transit District; anchor businesses	Staff time

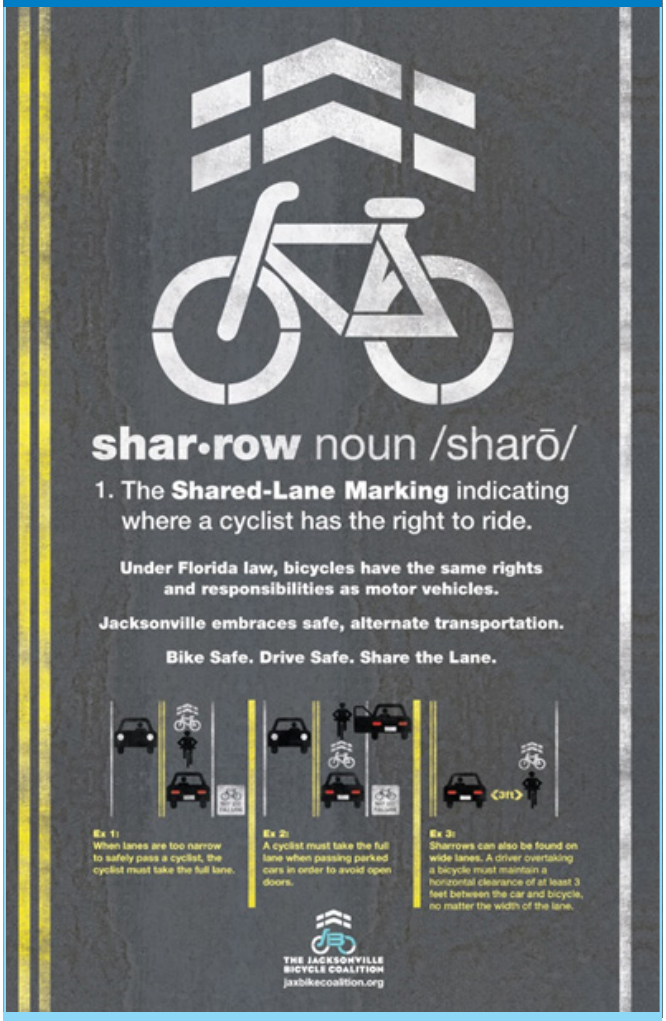
Priority Bike Routes

The Bike/Walk Commission updated its bike routes master plan in early 2018, proposing new sharrows and bike lanes to connect destinations throughout the city. It identifies a long-term vision for a connected network of bicycle sharrows and lanes that creates a safe, viable transportation alternative that extends throughout the city. This plan was reviewed during the POCD update process to recommend priority routes. These recommendations create loops through all parts of the city to increase accessibility and distribute investment equitably given limited funding opportunities. The priority network links destinations including the South Norwalk train station, schools, parks, and Norwalk Community College to residential and commercial areas. The additional routes identified by the Bike/Walk Commission should be secondary priorities for longer term implementation that will grow the bike network over time and as funding allows.

The recommended priority routes generally align with Bike/Walk Commission routes with two notable differences. Several short connections also differ between the recommended priority routes and the Bike/Walk Commission routes, but these differences are minor.

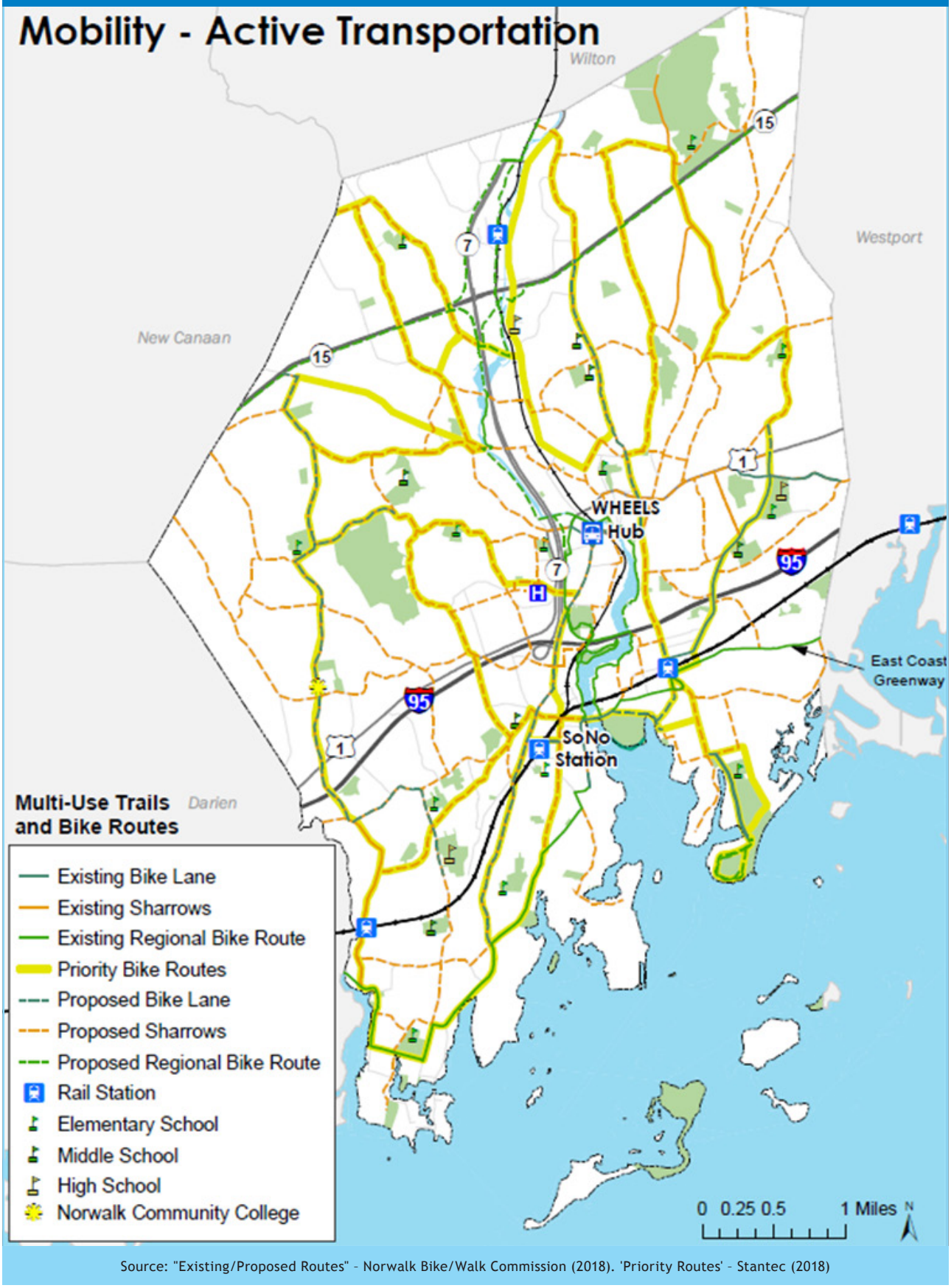
- **Main Avenue between West Rocks Road & Union Avenue**
  Main Avenue completes a loop with West Rocks Road and provides access to the Merritt 7 job center and commercial areas along Main Avenue/ Main Street. It is an important corridor because of the jobs and stores located along it – short vehicular trips could be avoided if it felt safer to bike there. Constrained roadway width, traffic speed, and the Merritt Parkway ramps are significant obstacles that will need to be safely addressed.
- **New Canaan Avenue between Nursery Street & Silvermine Avenue**
  New Canaan Avenue completes a loop with Ponus Avenue and provides access to the neighborhood commercial area between Bartlett and Silvermine Avenues. Much of New Canaan Avenue has a wide shoulder that could be marked for bicyclists throughout and slightly widened in locations. Improved bicycle access could reduce the number of short trips by car between the surrounding neighborhoods and the commercial area.

Definition of "Sharrows"



Public education campaigns raise awareness of the rights and responsibilities of drivers and bicyclists who share the road. Source: jaxbikecoalition.org

Figure 10.4 Priority Bicycle Routes



Source: "Existing/Proposed Routes" - Norwalk Bike/Walk Commission (2018). 'Priority Routes' - Stantec (2018)

GOAL 2

The city has attractive and convenient parking facilities that fit the context and accommodate emerging technologies.

Policies:

- Promote shared parking strategies, transportation demand management programs, and right-sized parking requirements to optimize the amount of new parking needed.
- Promote parking wayfinding and demand-based pricing to better utilize existing public parking.
- Promote design standards to ensure parking blends into the urban environment and minimizes negative visual and physical impacts.

Strategy

A. Provide the right amount of motor vehicle and bicycle parking in commercial and employment centers and at railroad stations to support vibrant economic activity but not more than necessary.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Right-size parking requirements and parking ratios for non-residential and multifamily land uses.** Adjust parking requirements to meet needs but avoid over-building parking and implement zoning changes in conjunction with parking policy updates. Point-in-time surveys of parking usage can help better understand real-time supply and demand. Consider parking maximums in walkable urban core areas where alternative transportation is available. Implement parking recommendations for the Wall Street area from the parking plan.	2019-2020	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
ii. **Discourage provision of parking above the minimum required.** Shared parking, transportation demand management, mixed-use development, and proximity to high-quality transit can all help lower the amount of parking needed.	2019-2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Norwalk Parking Authority	Staff time; consultant
iii. **Add attractive, secure bicycle parking, with signage, at both public and private facilities.** Conveniently located artistic bicycle racks, secure bike lockers in offices and multifamily buildings, and publicly available bike maintenance stations with shared tools can encourage bicycle use for commuting and recreation.	2019–2024	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Bike/Walk Commission; property owners	Staff time; capital funds; developer funds

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iv. **Design vehicle parking to have multiple benefits.** Promote design strategies that reduce stormwater runoff, increase compatibility with street trees, and add visual interest to streets. Increase the number of electric-vehicle charging stations in parking areas around the city.	2019–2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Norwalk Parking Authority	Staff time; consultant; capital funds
v. **Eliminate large expanses of parking as the principal feature of street frontage.** Require parking at the side or rear of new buildings. If frontage parking is necessary because of dimensional constraints, limit it to one aisle with ample landscaping.	2019–2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time; consultant
vi. **Promote and organize shared parking agreements where there are adjacent underutilized private parking areas and complementary land uses.** Shared parking agreements can optimize the use of existing parking during off-peak periods and reduce the need to build new parking.	2019–2029	Norwalk Parking Authority; property owners	Staff time
vii. **Consider residential permit parking, especially in mixed-use neighborhoods.** The parking study underway as this plan is being written is expected to recommend a residential permit system for on-street parking.	2020-2021	Common Council; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning	Staff time; moderate permit fee

GOAL 3

Neighborhood streets maintain a residential character and support a range of transportation options, as feasible.

Policies:

- Preserve and maintain quiet residential streets in neighborhoods throughout the city.
- Support biking and walking in neighborhoods with investment in sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

Strategy

A. Balance neighborhood traffic circulation needs with the goal of creating walkable and bike-friendly neighborhoods.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Develop and implement Best Practice street design standards.** Where possible, incorporate Complete Streets policies into repair and new construction projects on major streets, including bicycle markings and lanes. Invest in sidewalk repairs and connecting gaps in the sidewalk network.	2019–2020	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works	Staff time; capital funds
ii. **Implement traffic-calming measures to slow traffic when supported by affected residents.** Focus on school areas to create safer-feeling environments for students and parents, including Safe Routes to School programs. Balance local sentiment with broader citywide considerations when considering traffic-calming measures on local and collector streets in residential neighborhoods. Review and consider reducing speed limits.	2019–2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works	Staff time

GOAL 4

Norwalk advocates for improvement of regional transportation connections, including regional trails, traffic flow on regional routes, and commuter rail, to reduce traffic congestion, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Policies:

- Support regional coordination on transportation issues including transit and highways.
- Support sustainable and resilient transportation policies and investment.

Strategy

A. Develop a clear regional transportation agenda for the city to advocate with federal, state, and regional governments and agencies.

Building and maintaining cooperative relationships with state and federal agencies as well as surrounding municipalities and regional planning organizations is important to address bigger picture issues affecting Norwalk. Transit service, interstate highways, regional congestion, and managing environmental impacts will require regional coordination.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Advocate for increased service on the Danbury Line to support improvements to the Merritt 7 station and reopening of a Wall Street station.**	2019–2029	Mayor and Council; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time
ii. **Study the potential impacts on Norwalk of proposals for changes to I-95, including benefits and costs, and mitigation of adverse impacts.**	2024–2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; City of Norwalk	Staff time; possible consultant

G. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Early Actions	Who
Hire an experienced transportation planner	Planning and Zoning Department
Identify one full pedestrian/bicycle route for priority implementation that connects a neighborhood to SoNo	Bike/Walk Commission; TMP
Develop a program for art in public crosswalks.	TMP
Establish a working group to explore coordinating public and private transit in a potential transportation management association.	TMP
Incorporate multi-modal transportation approaches into the zoning rewrite	Planning and Zoning
Adopt a Vision Zero Policy	TMP, Planning and Zoning, Mayor
Create a Vision Zero Action Plan	TMP, Planning and Zoning, Mayor

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Public Facilities, Infrastructure & Services

A. CIVIC PRESENCE IN THE CITY

Norwalk's public facilities and infrastructure are an important part of its character and visual appeal, as well as one of the foundations of quality of life. Critical services like police and fire protect residents and property from harm. From City Hall, public schools, the Health Department, and the Main Library to the storm sewers, water treatment, and utility providers that keep the city running, civic infrastructure is important for the health and function of the city.

B. PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision

- The City's infrastructure, public facilities, and public services are **resource-efficient, well-maintained, cost-effective, sustainable and resilient.**

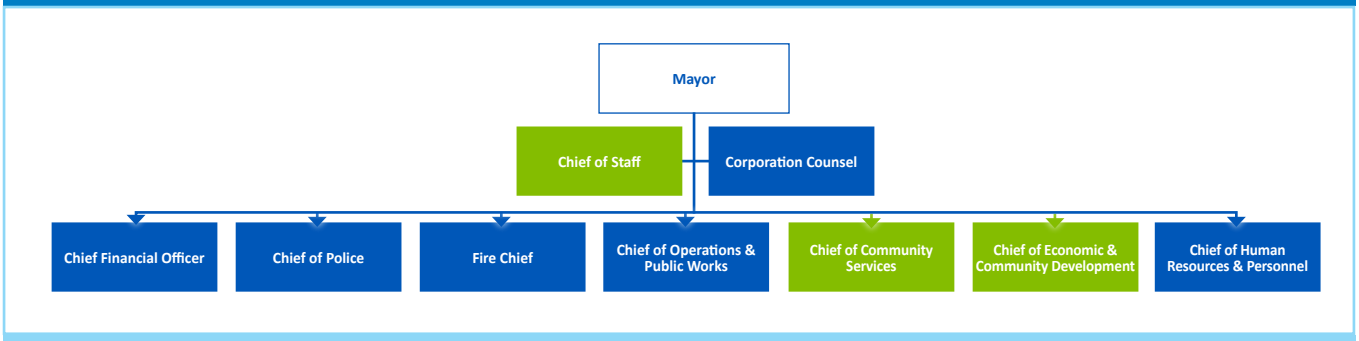
From the Principles

- **Be cost effective.** Establish cost-effective best practices and systems to support city services, infrastructure, and capital investments and make data-driven decisions using evidence-based solutions.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
Norwalk's infrastructure and public facilities are resource-efficient, well-maintained, cost-effective, sustainable, and resilient.	• Support resource-efficiency and cost-effectiveness through coordinated planning and maintenance. • Promote green infrastructure strategies to improve environmental quality and sustainability.

Figure 11.1 City Government Reorganization (2018)



Source: City of Norwalk

City Government Reorganization

In mid-2018, the Common Council approved a reorganization of City government that will consolidate departments into seven divisions. The purpose is to provide more efficient decision making, coordination and delivery of services; fuller utilization of city resources; clear accountability; and identify gaps in needed services.

The new divisions with the majority of responsibilities under this citywide plan/POCD will be:

- Economic and Community Development
  - Code Enforcement and Chief Building Official
  - Planning and Zoning
  - Business Development and Tourism
  - Transportation, Mobility, and Parking
- Operations and Public Works
  - Operations and Highways
  - Engineering
  - Buildings and Facilities
  - Recreation and Parks

Fire Department

- The City of Norwalk has five fire stations located on New Canaan Avenue, Connecticut Avenue, Van Zant Street, Westport Avenue, and Meadow Street. In addition, the Rowayton Fire Department is a volunteer fire department serving that neighborhood.
- The newest station is the fire headquarters on Connecticut Avenue, commissioned in October 2013. It is certified LEED-Gold and received the Connecticut Green Building Council Green Building Award of Honor for its sustainable design features.
- The Fire Chief oversees 128 personnel.
- The fire department responded to 43 working fires in 2018, the most serious fires that cause extensive smoke and heat damage and completely gut at least one room of a structure.
- In 2018 the fire department responded to 7,131 incidents overall, including working fires, alarms, accidents, and other rescue operations.
- The Fire Marshal's office works with the Health Department to investigate overcrowding complaints and conduct building inspections.

Police Department

- The police department had 179 sworn officers in 2017. Police Headquarters is located in South Norwalk.
- In general, crime has been decreasing while quality of life complaints like noise violations have been increasing. According to the 2017 Uniform Crime Report (UCR) released by the FBI, Norwalk had three murders, 11 reported rapes, 40 robberies, 201 aggravated assaults, 160 burglaries, 1,194 larcenies, and 156 motor vehicle thefts during 2017. Most figures were lower than 2016 except murders, larcenies, and motor vehicle thefts.

- The Community Policing Unit is responsible for coordinating neighborhood programs and working with local groups to improve the quality of life for residents. The South Norwalk Alliance is comprised of residents and business owners who work with this unit to improve the local community.
- The communications system will be upgraded over the next five years, a major priority for the Police Department.

Library

- The Norwalk Public Library (NPL) has two locations: the main library on Wall Street and a branch in South Norwalk. In addition, the East Norwalk Association Library maintains a small collection and is supported by the Third Taxing District, and Rowayton maintains its own library as well.
- NPL has over 214,000 books in its collection, including more than 90,000 for children.
- In FY2016-2017, NPL had 628,245 visitors to the two branches. More than 37,000 residents have library cards.
- NPL began updating its strategic plan in 2018 to improve services and facilities.
- The Library offers many community services, such as free exercise classes, passport services, an ESL program and programs in Spanish.
- The Library is involved in collaborative programs with Stepping Stones Museums' Foodshed Initiative; Healthy Minds/Healthy Bodies with the Health Department; Innovative Places initiative with the Redevelopment Agency.
- Small neighborhood libraries are maintained in East Norwalk and Rowayton by their respective taxing districts.

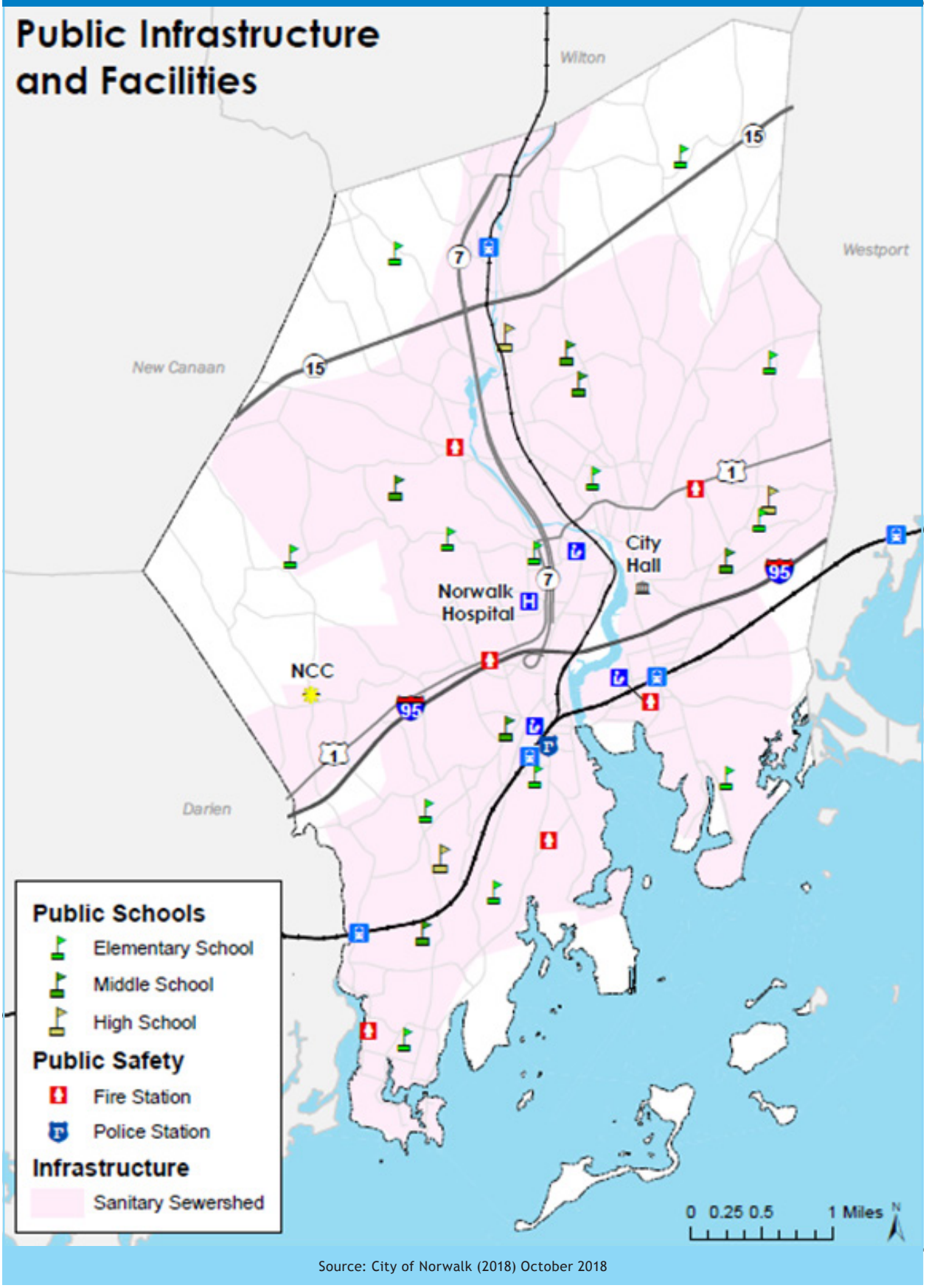
Public Works

- Norwalk has 625 curbside miles of roads. Annual spending averages $5-6 million for improvements to streets, sidewalks, and curbs.
- Public Works updated its roadway standards, drainage manual, and standard details in 2017, and is currently working to update its Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) systems and ordinances.
- Public Works is conducting a streetlight audit and considering replacing lights with LEDs, which is expected to have a $2.5 million, 4-year return on investment.

The main library on Wall Street

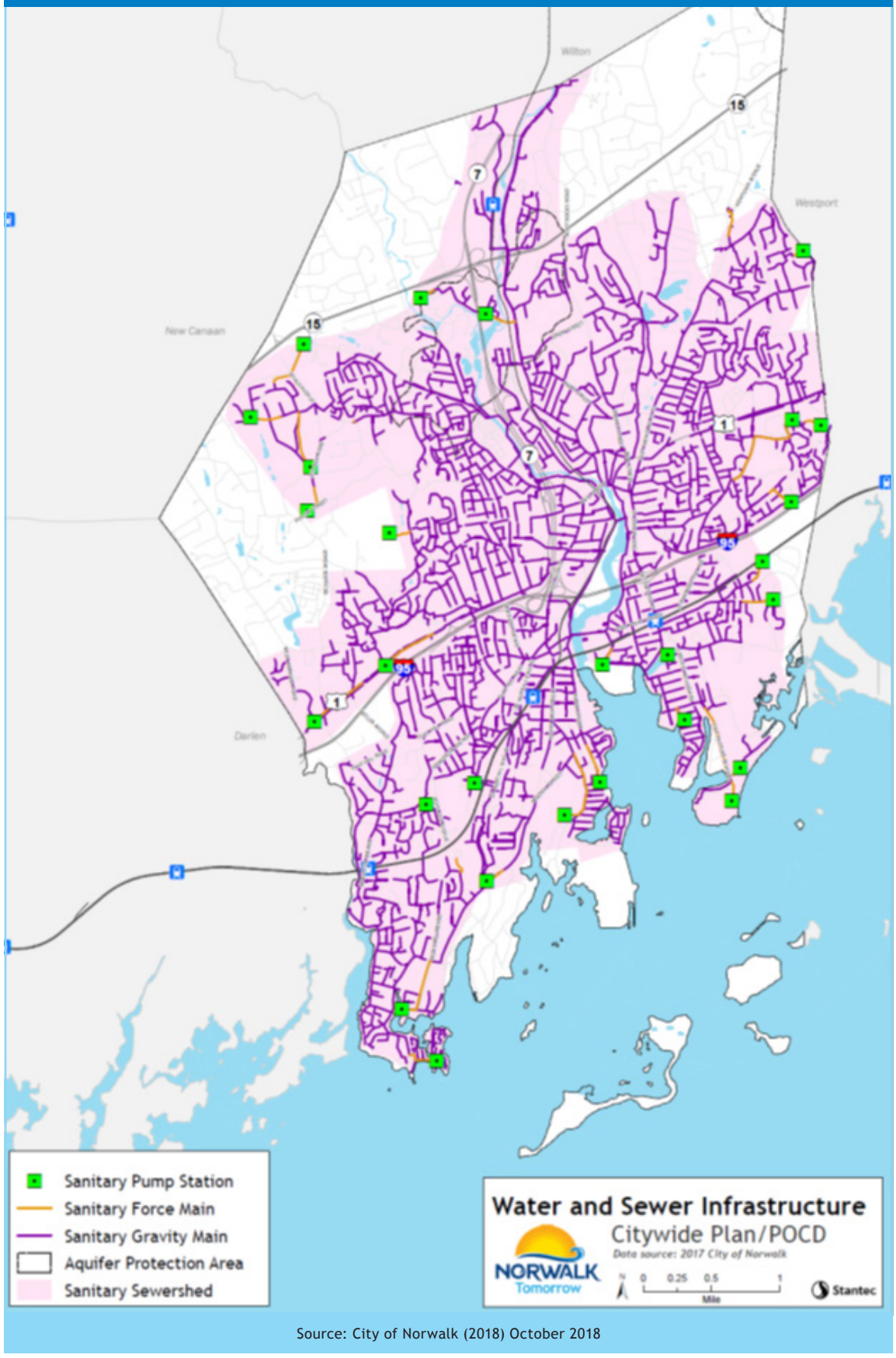
Source: City of Norwalk

Figure 11.2 Public Infrastructure & Facilities



Source: City of Norwalk (2018) October 2018

Figure 11.3 Water & Sewer Infrastructure



Source: City of Norwalk (2018) October 2018

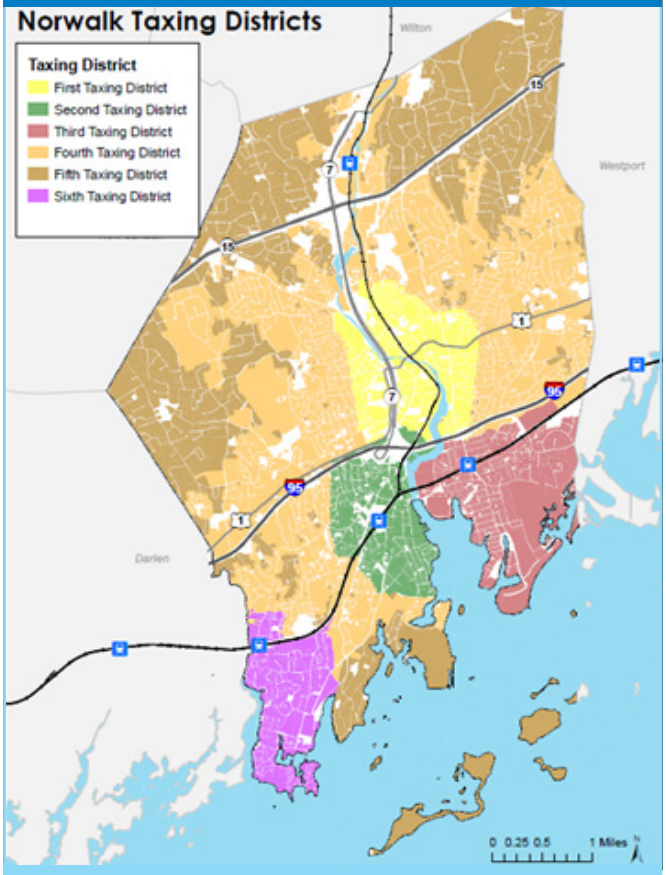
Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA)

- WPCA is an enterprise fund of the City for sanitary sewer provision. It controls 180 miles of pipeline and 22 pumping stations.
- Sanitary sewer coverage extends across most of the city, but not to western, northwestern, and northeastern areas zoned for larger lots where septic systems are used.
- The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) currently has an average plant flow of 13 million gallons per day (MGD) and is rated to treat an average daily flow of 18 MGD. It can treat 30 MGD through full treatment and over 95 MGD through preliminary treatment. It recently completed a project to replace/upgrade preliminary and combined sewer treatment equipment.
- The WPCA has an ongoing program to rehabilitate the collection system and upgrade pumps when needed.
- The WWTP is located along the Norwalk River where it is vulnerable to flooding and storm surge. The WPCA has put programs and improvements into effect to reduce vulnerability.
- Odors from the Sludge Management Building are a recurring problem.
- Norwalk has adequate sewer capacity to accommodate new development.

Stormwater & Green Infrastructure

Norwalk is a coastal city with a close relationship to the water, and stormwater management is a significant concern. Norwalk is working towards compliance with CT DEEP's General Permit for the Discharges of Stormwater from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) to protect waters of the state from contaminated urban stormwater runoff. The City updated its Drainage Manual in 2017 to incorporate green infrastructure and Low Impact Development principles. To comply with the MS4 permit and the Drainage Manual, the City will need to use more green infrastructure for stormwater management. Green infrastructure protects, restores, and/or mimics the natural water cycle to improve and maintain water quality. Examples include rain gardens, bioswales, porous paving, and residential rain barrels. See Chapter 8 for more information on stormwater management.

Figure 11.4 Taxing Districts



Source: City of Norwalk

Benefits include:

- Reduce flooding
- Replenish groundwater resources
- Use less energy managing water (less rain and stormwater goes into the sewer system)
- Protect coastal resources
- Reduce the urban heat island effect
- Lower building energy use

Taxing Districts

- Norwalk is divided into six taxing districts. The First, Second, Third, and Sixth are separate political entities while the Fourth and Fifth are City entities.
- The First, Second, and Third Taxing Districts operate several utilities, including water and electricity.
- Property tax rates vary depending on the mix of services provided by each district and the city.

Drinking Water Supply [1]

Three drinking water suppliers operate in Norwalk. The First Taxing District of the City of Norwalk Water Department also serves the northern and eastern parts of Norwalk (Third, Fourth, and Fifth Taxing Districts), and the Second Taxing District of Norwalk (South Norwalk Electric and Water) serves the southern and western parts (sections of south Norwalk, East Norwalk, West Norwalk, Rowayton, and Silvermine). The Aquarion Water Company – Main System serves small areas along Norwalk's borders. About 22% of residents have private drinking water wells.

- **First Taxing District of the City of Norwalk Water Department**
  The First District water system draws water from a 10 square-mile watershed from Lewisboro, NY to New Canaan, CT. The First Taxing District of the City of Norwalk Water Department is currently meeting average-day, maximum month average-day, and peak–day demands with a sufficient margin of safety based upon current sources, registrations, and permits. The Department has multiple back-up groundwater sources and availability from surface water. Future projections indicate that wellfield maintenance and improvements will be necessary to ensure that there is no decline in yield. The most recent Water Supply Plan was approved in 2012. The water system provides ongoing wellfield monitoring and treatment for historic solvent (TCE - trichloroethylene) contamination from ELINCO on Main Avenue discovered in the later 1970s and 1980s.

  Concerns about conditions in the water supply area include the impacts of septic systems, road salt, transportation–related spills, erosion and sedimentation, underground fuel storage, and pesticide/fertilizer use. The Water Department inspects its watershed by regular patrols and inspections, monitoring notices, and active opposition to unsuitable development. Reservoirs are fenced and marked with "no trespassing" signs and the watershed boundaries are well marked with street signs. The district has mapped the Aquifer Protection Area for its groundwater supply sources. The Department periodically monitors land uses in the aquifer protection area, which contains significant commercial development. The Water Department also coordinates with the City's fire and police departments on contaminant spills or suspicious activity. Public outreach includes mailings of informational pamphlets to customers about watersheds and source water protection.

  Improvements will include expansion of the system to fill gaps, identification of a new well location, water treatment upgrades, distribution system upgrades, tank replacement/maintenance, pump station upgrades, dam rehabilitation, fire protection upgrades, meter upgrades and pursuit of additional interconnections with other suppliers.

- **South Norwalk Electric & Water (SNEW - Second Taxing District)**
  The South Norwalk water utility currently maintains four active impoundment reservoirs and has seven available interconnections with the First Taxing District Water Department and Aquarion Water Company. A state-of-the-art water filtration plant was completed in 2008. The Water Supply Plan was updated in 2016 and a 2018 review concluded that SNEW has sufficient water supplies to meet demand for the next 20 years. SNEW's conservation program includes annual lead detection and repair, as well as prompt attention to water main breaks.

  Future plans for additional supplies may include contractual agreements with other water companies, improvements to existing reservoirs, or a new reservoir on land already owned by SNEW.

  Concerns about watershed conditions include septic systems, fuel oil tanks, pool backwash discharges, manure storage, residential hazardous material storage, lawn chemical applications, accidental highway spills, erosion and sedimentation, and road salting / sanding. Measures to protect the reservoir watersheds include patrolling of watershed lands, inspections, water quality sampling, active forestry management, ongoing involvement in local wetlands and planning and zoning proceedings, and implementation of a spill preparedness program. The reservoirs are fenced and watershed boundaries are posted. Land use plans for the City of Norwalk and the Towns of Wilton and New Canaan are consistent with protection of water supply sources.

1 Water supply information depends on: *Coordinated Water System Plan, Part I: Final Water Supply Assessment, Western Connecticut Public Water Supply Management Area,* December 12, 2016; South Norwalk Electric and Water, communication from Director Water Operations, January 26, 2019.

- **State Streamflow Regulations & the Norwalk Water Supply**
  The State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has established regulations to balance stream flow for habitat preservation with other uses of water that depend on the use of dams for reservoirs. Both the First and Second Taxing District water systems may experience reductions in reservoir safe yields when the streamflow regulations are fully implemented in 2026/7. If so, it will be necessary to expand water supply sources to offset reductions in safe yield. One option for utilities is to develop flow management plans with multiple parties to comply with the streamflow regulations
- **Drinking Water Vulnerability Assessment & Resiliency Plan**
  The Connecticut Department of Public Health and CIRCA (Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation) is developing a Drinking Water Vulnerability Assessment and Resiliency Plan, including Fairfield County, which is expected to be completed in 2019. The purpose of the plan is to evaluate the consequences for public water systems of climate change impacts such as flooding from extreme weather and drought. Water system interconnections may become more important as part of these efforts.

Electric Service

Norwalk is served by three electric utilities: South Norwalk Electric and Water (Second Taxing District); Third Taxing District; and Eversource (formerly Connecticut Light and Power). The Second Taxing District and Third Taxing District electric utilities are members of the Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative. The Second District (SNEW) electric utility serves approximately 5,000 customers in South Norwalk and the Third Taxing District serves customers in East Norwalk. None of the utilities own electric generating facilities; all are engaged in the purchase, delivery and sale of electric service. SNEW recently installed a new, highly reliable power substation that has significant additional capacity if ever needed. Connecticut has a Renewable Portfolio Standard that requires increasing percentages of electricity sold to retail customers be directly tied to renewable sources. Electric companies that are members of the municipal electric energy cooperative pool their energy purchases, which makes it easy to achieve renewable energy goals.

School Building Program

Norwalk Public Schools is launched on a significant, ten-year building and renovation program in two phases. A five-year capital budget of $130 million was approved to address crowding and repairs. The Phase I five-year program includes:

- Building a new K-8 school building (Columbus School) on the site of the Nathaniel Ely school.
- Fully renovating the current school building on Concord Street to create a modern, state-of-the-art K-5 school.
- Expanding Ponus Ridge into a K-8 campus with a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) focus, relieving over-enrollment at Jefferson Elementary.
- Providing $35 million in priority repairs and capital improvements for every other school in the district.

Phase II is expected to include:

- Renovating Jefferson Elementary “as new,” returning it to a neighborhood school, and removing portable classrooms that are nearing the end of their useful life
- Renovations at Roton Middle School
- Renovations at Norwalk High School

Capital Improvements

The FY 2018-19 capital plan of approved expenditures indicates the variety of capital improvement needs facing the city. Some of the approved projects include:

  - The total budget to be bonded is $83,793,000, of which 70% ($59,358,000) is for Board of Education projects. Ninety-six percent of that amount is for Jefferson School, Columbus School, and other Facilities Master Plan implementation. This is the second year of the five-year school facilities master plan implementation and provided forward funding for the two school projects.
  - The Water Pollution Control Authority and the Department of Public Works received the second and third most funding for projects including sewer system upgrades, road and sidewalk pavement, and other programs.

- Recreation and Parks received funding for athletic fields and courts, among other programs.
- The Historical Commission received funding for repairs to city-owned historic assets.

- **Opportunities & Priorities from the Budget**
  Budget decisions are always difficult, especially when there are large needed outlays for facility improvements, as is the case with Norwalk's school improvement program during the time horizon of this POCD Update. In light of priorities in this citywide plan, some of the funding approved for projects offers opportunities. For example, funds for the City's vehicle fleet could include electric or hybrid vehicles, as a way to reduce the City's greenhouse gas emissions. While some sidewalk investment was funded, other requests that would support connectivity and residents' desire for more and better alternative transportation options, were not accepted by the Council for this budget year. For example, the Norwalk Valley River Trail, Safe Routes to Schools, footpath replacement, and crosswalk improvements received no funding. Of course, some of these programs may receive funding in future budget years. As the City prepares future capital improvements plans, priorities from this citywide plan should be explicitly discussed.

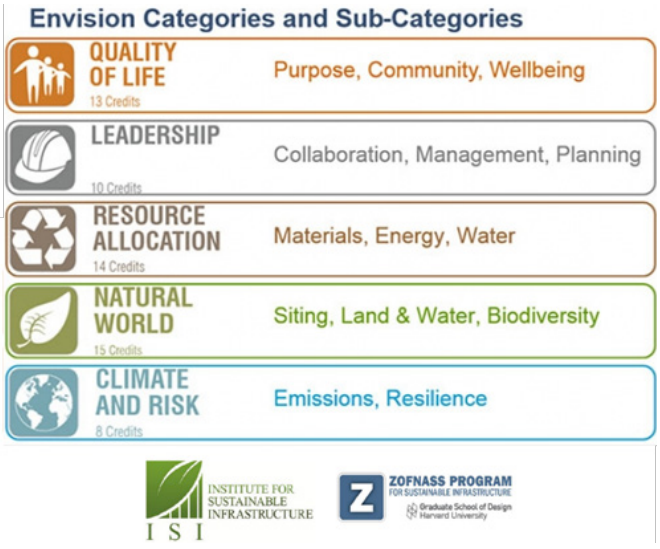
Systematic Approaches to Management & Evaluation of Facilities & Infrastructure

- **Asset Management**
  Since 2006, the Public Works Department and some other departments have been using an asset management system (CityWorks). Asset management systems for physical assets are based on an inventory, evaluation of the condition of the assets in relation to a target condition, and an assessment of the cost to maintain the asset at the targeted condition. A systematic record of individual assets is maintained in a Geographic Information System – acquisition cost, original service life, remaining useful life, physical condition, repair and maintenance consistency. An asset management system helps a city perform proactive maintenance that extends the life cycle of the asset. This results in more cost-efficient ownership, operation and maintenance while improving level of service.

- **The Envision Rating System**[2]
  Envision™ is an evaluation framework that provides the guidance needed to initiate systemic change in the planning, design and delivery of sustainable and resilient infrastructure. It is a decision-making guide, not a set of prescriptive measures. It was developed by the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI), which was founded by the American Public Works Association, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC). ISI collaborated with the Zofnass Program for Sustainable Infrastructure at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design to develop Envision.

  Envision provides for a systematic evaluation of community infrastructure projects. It aligns priorities with community, owner, and stakeholder values while satisfying capital financing requirements. It provides clear and transparent decision-making processes accompanied by business case analytic tools. The framework includes 64 sustainability and resilience indicators organized around five categories: Quality of Life, Leadership, Resource Allocation, Natural World, and Climate and Resilience. Envision has been adopted by other major jurisdictions and is free to use for project evaluation. The Norwalk Department of Public Works has an Envision Sustainability Professional (ENV SP) on staff.

2 www.sustainableinfrastructure.org/envision/



Permit Streamlining & Digital Permits

Since 2017, Norwalk has been implementing the use of digital, cloud-based permitting and inspection software throughout city government. It is currently being used by the Building and Code Enforcement Department, the Conservation Commission, and Planning and Zoning, with imminent expansion to the Public Works and the Health Departments. The database is another step in breaking down silos because it will show all the permits issued by property, inspections, and complaints. There is a public-facing website with real time permit, inspection, and complaint data, but it is not featured for the public on the City's website and is hard to find.

Key Findings & Challenges

- **City Government Reorganization**
  Implementation of the city government reorganization plan is expected to improve communication and coordination among city departments, make decision making and service delivery more efficient, and enhance accountability. Planning for the city will benefit from the grouping under one division of planning and zoning; business development and tourism; transportation, mobility, and parking; and building and code enforcement.
- **Performance Dashboard**
  The Mayor's Office is currently exploring options to create a dashboard of performance metrics that residents can access. On the current Norwalk website and associated agency websites, the amount of public information offered varies considerably. See Chapter 13 for further discussion of transparency and public access to information.
- **Shared standards for infrastructure and other projects** are lacking.
- **Both the Fire and Police departments maintain**

The Wastewater Treatment Plant at Liberty Point

Source: Google Earth

marine divisions. Consolidating these in one location could make more efficient use of resources.

- **The Main Library**
  The Main Library is preparing a strategic plan and pursuing options to potentially expand its building. It is currently working to provide more flexible innovation spaces to modernize its offerings.
- **The Wastewater Treatment Plant**
  The Wastewater Treatment Plant is susceptible to flooding during storm events, an increasing concern due to climate change and sea level rise.
- **The City Website**
  The City website is inconsistent in the level and type of information provided. It is organized to reflect the siloed character of city government rather than in terms of the needs of citizens, businesses, or others who need information.
- **Capital Funding Constraints**
  There are capital funding constraints during the time horizon of this POCD because of commitments made to upgrade Norwalk Public Schools facilities.

E. WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

Except for transportation, which is covered in Chapter 10, participants in the public process did not focus heavily on infrastructure or service provision issues. Residents in many neighborhoods identified sidewalks as an area for improvement, either repairing and maintaining existing ones or adding new sidewalks or walking paths along roads where none exist today. Litter was cited as an issue in several neighborhoods as well. There were differing opinions in West Norwalk and Cranbury about whether public water and sewer should be extended to parts of the neighborhood currently served by wells and septic systems. Some Cranbury residents pointed out that the lack of a fire station in their neighborhood was identified in the current POCD and should be carried forward to the updated POCD.

GOAL 1

Norwalk's infrastructure and public facilities are resource-efficient, well-maintained, cost-effective, sustainable, and resilient.

Policies:

- Support resource-efficiency and cost-effectiveness through coordinated planning and maintenance.
- Promote green infrastructure strategies to improve environmental quality and sustainability.

Strategy

A. Establish systems for municipal assets and capital improvements.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Expand the asset management system to cover all municipal assets, integrating any existing partial systems in individual departments.**	2019-2022	Departments and IT	Staff time; continuing cost of system
ii. **Use the Envision™ rating system to evaluate city facility and infrastructure projects from the beginning of planning.**	2020 and ongoing	Public Works; Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time
iii. **Develop a long-term Facilities Master Plan for all city-owned facilities (with the exception of the public schools).** While the City is investing in public school facilities, a long-term plan for other facilities should be developed and coordinated with relevant planning initiatives such as the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, Climate Action Plan, Library System Master Plan, and public safety plans.	2024-2029	Economic and Community Development; Public Works	Staff time; consultant

B. Continue to update, modernize, and maintain Norwalk's infrastructure and city facilities.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Plan to mitigate climate change impacts on the Wastewater Treatment Plant.** The first step is to evaluate critical infrastructure in a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment. See Chapter 9.	2019–2022	Public Works	Staff time; consultants; capital funds
ii. **Incorporate green infrastructure into public projects and establish a stormwater utility to fund drainage and green infrastructure projects.** See Chapter 10.	2019–2029	City of Norwalk; Public Works	Staff time; capital funds
iii. **Support long-term water supply planning and implementation by Norwalk's water utilities as they update their plans for state approval.**	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time
iv. **Work with the water and electric utilities to continue to promote renewable energy, water conservation, and environmental best practices.** Include attention to the sources and potability of private drinking water wells.	2019–2029	Sustainability Officer; Utilities; Conservation Commission; Health Department	Staff time
v. **Support facilities improvements and innovative programs in the Library system that contribute to community cohesion.**	2019 and ongoing	Library	Staff time; capital funds
vi. **Ensure Norwalk's emergency services departments are provided with appropriate funding for equipment and facilities to provide superior service and maintain a high level of public safety.**	2019 and ongoing	City of Norwalk	Capital funds
vii. **Consider consolidation of Fire and Police marine divisions in one location.**	2020–2021	Fire and Police Departments	Staff time; possible capital funds

G. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Early Actions	Who
Expand asset management to include all departments that manage physical assets.	IT; departments
Make the public-facing permit database more accessible to the public by highlighting the link to the database on the city website.	IT
Include the Wastewater Treatment Plant and other critical infrastructure in the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment	Public Works; Planning and Zoning

5

The Future City

CHAPTER 12

Future Land Use, Urban Design & Zoning

CHAPTER 13

Stewardship & Implementation

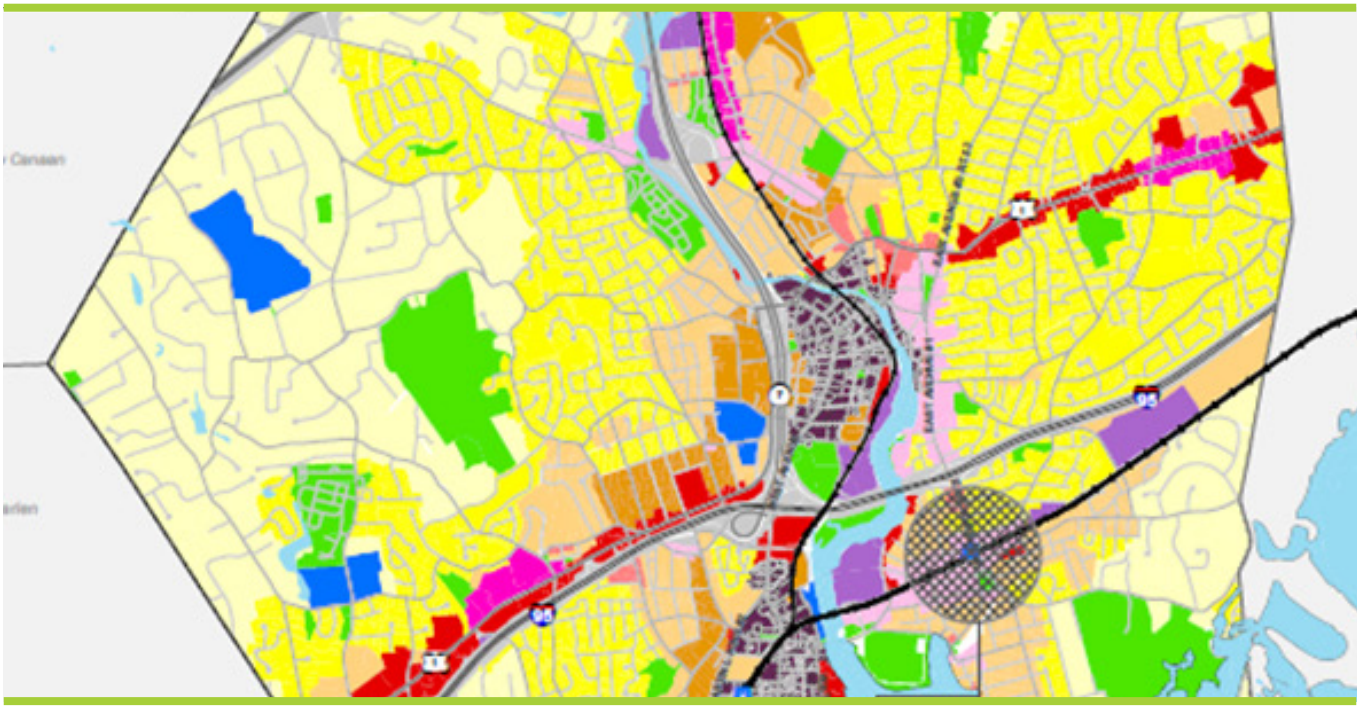
Summary Themes & Priorities

Revitalizing the Core & Corridors with Placemaking, Walkability & Sustainability.

Modernize and rewrite the Norwalk Zoning Code to reflect City policies and goals, the POCD, and to make it user-friendly.

Making the POCD a Living Plan.

Establish systems to use the POCD in decision making including an annual public hearing on progress and use of the plan in departmental work plans and capital budgeting.



CHAPTER TWELVE

Future Land Use, Zoning & Urban Design

A. PRESERVING AND ENHANCING NORWALK'S EVOLVING CHARACTER

Norwalk's identity is rooted in its coastal location, its diverse neighborhoods, and urban areas like SoNo and the Wall Street/ Norwalk Center downtown area. It is distinguished by the New England character found in many parts of the city. The buildings, street patterns, and public spaces that make up the built environment shape the city's identity.

Land use and zoning regulations are powerful but often overlooked elements of a city's character and identity. They influence what gets built where and affect the extent to which the resulting collection of buildings and uses functions as a cohesive whole. A third element is urban design – how buildings shape the public realm. This is what affects how people perceive a neighborhood or downtown district and their experience of the place.

All buildings, but especially those located in walkable areas like downtowns, near transit stations, and in neighborhood activity centers, should incorporate basic principles of good city and neighborhood design that consider people first. The essential characteristics can be codified in zoning requirements that every project should meet but are agnostic about architectural style. Other aspects can best be described in design guidelines that establish an overall vision for an area but allow for creativity and innovation on the part of property owners and developers to achieve that vision. This vision can relate to either the existing or desired community character and its architectural style.

Healthy, vibrant cities are constantly evolving in big and small ways to remain desirable by meeting changing demands. In healthy cities, new uses emerge, old buildings are renovated and repurposed, and new buildings are built. If a place always stays the same, it risks stagnation and slowly being left behind. The challenge is how to embrace change without abandoning the identity that makes a place special to people in the first place. Land use, zoning, and urban design all can play an important role in this balancing act.

B. PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES IN THE VISION & PRINCIPLES

From the Vision

- We combine the character of a **historic New England community on the coast** of Long Island Sound with **a thriving city** in the country's largest metropolitan area.
- Norwalk's excellent quality of life offers a **choice of housing options** in neighborhoods ranging from lively urban centers of varied densities and suburban–style areas, to quiet, tree-filled enclaves and coastal villages.

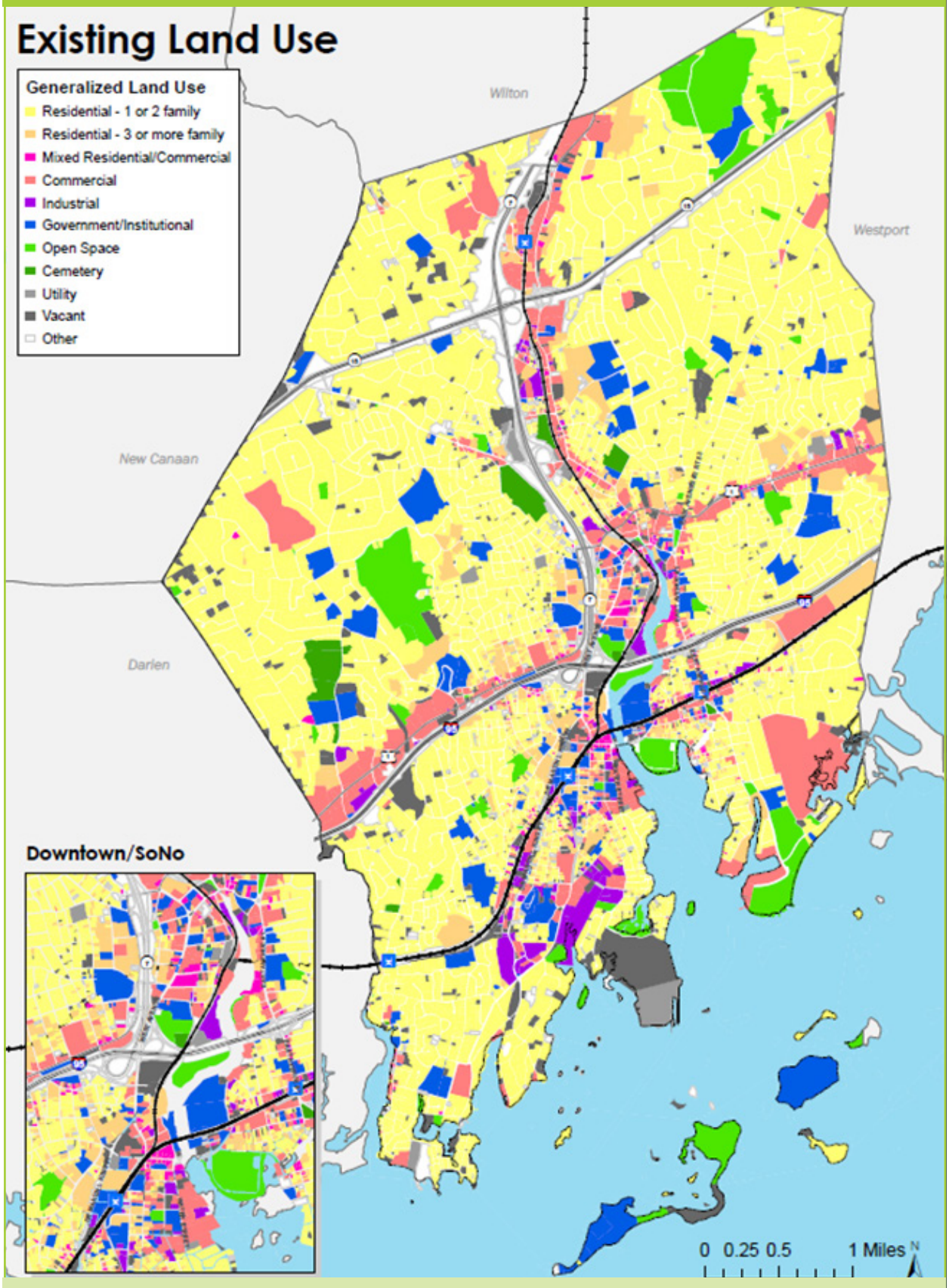
From the Principles

- **Pursue high-quality development.** Make public investments a model of excellent design and maintain high-quality design standards for new development.
- **Practice sustainability and resilience.** Make Norwalk a model green and clean community through energy-and resource-efficiency, preservation of open space and habitat networks, and adapting to climate change.
- **Make healthy lifestyles easy and fun.** Create opportunities for healthy choices and wellbeing through easy access to physical activity, healthy food, and medical care.
- **Act transparently.** Promote inclusive civic engagement and keep everyone informed about community conditions, options, and opportunities to participate in decision making.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
General principles guide land use decision making	• Refer to land use guidelines when making land use decisions by administrators and decision-making bodies. • Promote urban design guidelines for walkability for development in urbanized parts of Norwalk • Implement transit-oriented design (TOD) guidelines promoting density, walkability, and mix of uses for development near transit stations (rail and high-frequency bus) • Protect natural and environmental resources and overall neighborhood character for development in suburban areas of Norwalk
Neighborhood and corridor activity centers have urban design standards that promote walkability.	• Support greater walkability and improved design standards in village districts • Provide a mixed-use neighborhood activity center (i.e., village district, commercial corridor redevelopment, traditional downtown) within a safe, comfortable walking or bicycling distance of all residents. • Support mixed-use redevelopment along commercial corridors
The user-friendly zoning ordinance is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and achievement of the vision and goals of the POCD	• Support revision of the zoning ordinance to promote desired development and design patterns • Support permit streamlining for projects with desired characteristics

Figure 12.1 Existing Land Use



Source: City of Norwalk (2018) October 2018

Development Patterns

Norwalk's development patterns reflect its history and the availability of infrastructure.

- Before the mid-twentieth century, a mix of land uses was common in urban areas like South Norwalk, Wall Street/West Avenue, and around Norwalk Green. Walkable small block sizes, small individual lots, and a modified street grid are characteristic of early development patterns.
- Over time, expansion of suburban-style development extended from the urban core. These neighborhoods tend to have larger blocks and lots set on curvilinear roads with cul-de-sacs rather than connected traditional blocks.
- The advent of the automobile allowed separation of land uses to become the norm. Shopping centers and malls were built along Route 1 and Main Avenue. Large offices were grouped along Main Avenue north of the Merritt Parkway. Today, these corridors face new pressures from shifting market demand and changes in the retail and office environment.
- Coastal areas like Rowayton, South Norwalk, and East Norwalk developed with close relationships to the water. Today, these areas are increasingly threatened by climate change and require adaptation over time.

Urban Design and Community Character

As described in the Neighborhood Profiles in Appendix B, many Norwalkers have a strong affinity for their particular neighborhood and take pride in its distinguishing features. Some residents identify with bustling in-town neighborhoods while others identify with quiet, bucolic neighborhoods. This range of character is an important feature of Norwalk that should be preserved and enhanced through land use and zoning regulations.

Norwalk Green, Wall Street and West Avenue, and South Norwalk form the historic urban core of Norwalk. Most lots in the urban core areas are narrow and deep, with buildings that are typically brick masonry, one to four stories, and set at the back of the sidewalk with tall ground floors suited for retail or other active use. Housing, shops, offices, and civic uses are mixed together within buildings and across blocks. Public spaces are a mix of formal greens, small paved plazas, and wide sidewalks. Water-dependent uses are located along the Harbor and riverfront, many with an industrial character. Public access to the waterfront is provided in some areas but is discontinuous, especially in waterfront industrial areas.

Immediately adjacent to the urban core are older neighborhoods with small walkable blocks and a mix of multi and single-family properties. Blocks typically have sidewalks and many have street trees, although not on narrow streets. Corner stores and houses converted to office or retail use are common in these areas.

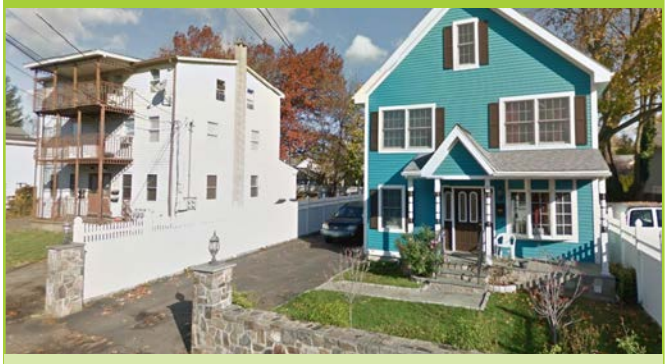
Mixed-use buildings in SoNo

Source: Stantec

Further out, lots and houses are larger, streets are wider and more curvilinear, and the natural landscape is more predominant, most evident in the wooded lots, streams, and ponds. Many streets do not have sidewalks although some have narrow asphalt walking paths. These neighborhoods have a mix of historic and more recent houses, from mid-twentieth century Cape Cods and ranches to much larger "McMansions". Other uses besides housing are rare in these neighborhoods.

Two significant commercial corridors run through Norwalk. Route 1 is an east-west connector, primarily a retail corridor with larger stores catering to local and regional markets. Large parking lots dominate the street frontage and while sidewalks are present, few people walk along the wide, busy road, which does not have street trees in most locations. Main Street/Main Avenue is a north-south connector comprised mostly of smaller stores and offices with poor pedestrian conditions characterized by narrow sidewalks and many curb cuts. The exception is north of the Merritt Parkway where large corporate office buildings exist.

Multi- and single-family housing in East Norwalk



Source: GoogleEarth

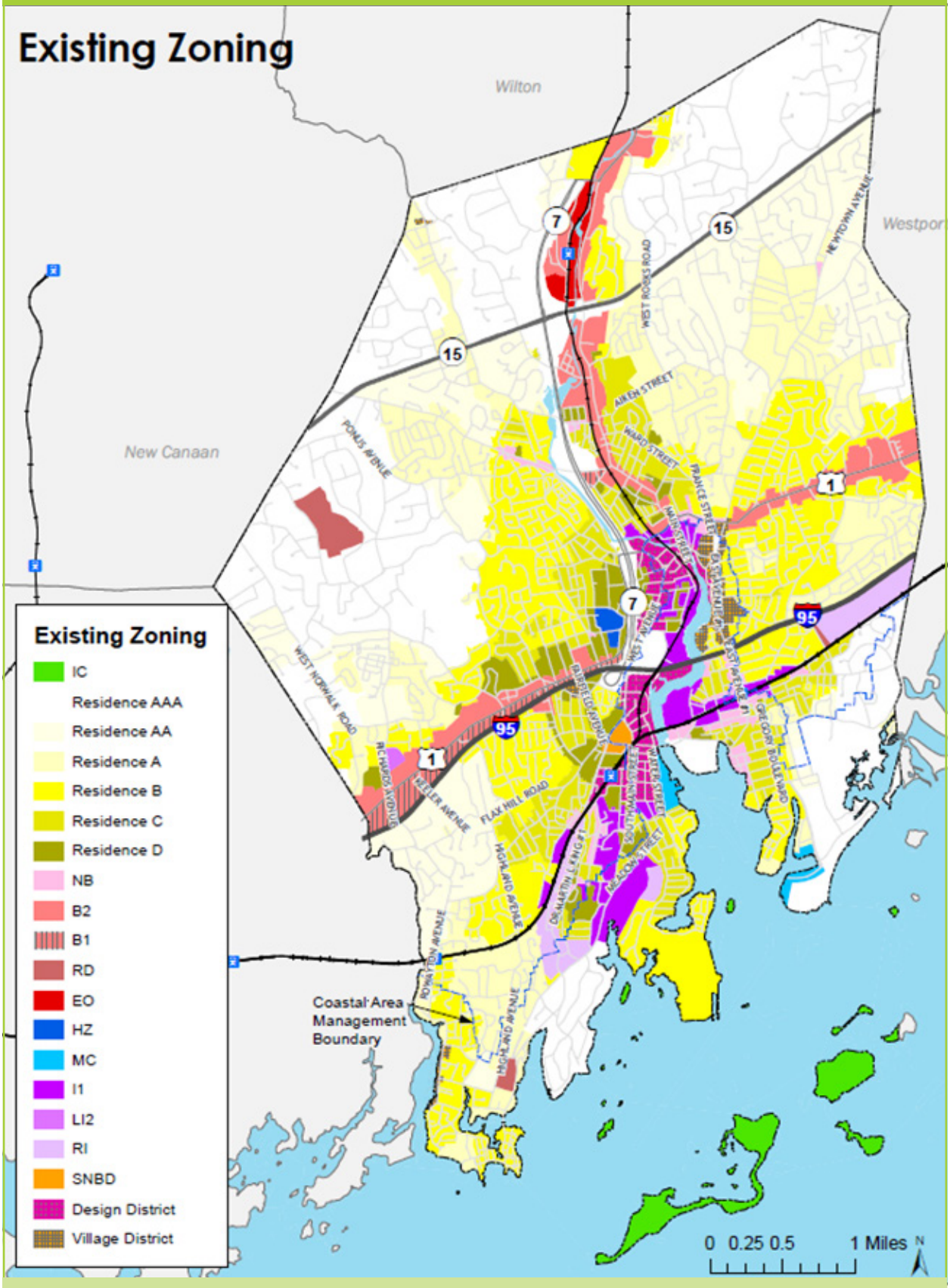
Curving streets and houses on large lots in West Norwalk

Source: Stantec

Norwalk's Zoning Ordinance

Norwalk's zoning ordinance contains 26 zoning categories: six residential, eight commercial, three industrial, four village districts, four design districts, and the island conservation district.

Figure 12.2 Existing Zoning



Source: City of Norwalk (2018) October 2018

Wide, busy Route 1 is lined with parking lots and big box retailers

Source: GoogleEarth

- **Residential zones:**
  - AAA, AA, A, B: These residence zones permit single-family detached dwellings with minimum lot sizes from one acre (AAA) to 0.15 acre/6,250 square feet (B).
  - C and D: C Residence Zone permits single- and two-family dwellings. D Residence Zone permits single-family, two-family, and multifamily dwellings. Both zones have minimum lot sizes from 5,000 to 6,000 square feet.
- **Commercial zones:**
  - Business-1 and Business-2: The primary commercial zones in Norwalk, both permit mixed-use development by right and require site plan review for most projects. Manufacturing is allowed by right in B-1 and both allow warehouse and distribution facilities by special permit. B-1 is only applied on the south side of Connecticut Avenue. B-2 is applied to the north side of Connecticut Avenue and most of Westport Avenue and Main Avenue.
  - Executive Office (EO): applied to the west side of Main Avenue north of the Merritt Parkway and parts of Glover Avenue.
  - Research and Development (RD): applied in only three areas – LaKota Oaks conference center and hotel in West Norwalk (formerly Dolce Norwalk), the Norden Systems site in East Norwalk, and the historic "Rock Ledge" site in Rowayton.
- **Industrial zones:**
  - Industrial-1 zone (I1) allows single- and two-family housing among the permitted uses
  - Restricted industrial zone (RI) allows artist workspace; single- and multi-family dwellings require a special permit.
  - Light Industrial-2 zone (LI2) lacks a purpose and intent statement in the zoning code and is only applied to two parcels on Richards Avenue (the TransLux property).

Administration of the zoning ordinance falls to three bodies:

- **Planning Commission**
  The Planning Commission consists of eight members. Responsibilities include preparing the POCD; reviewing the city's capital projects program; planning physical, social, and economic development according to the city charter and code; reviewing municipal improvements; and amending subdivision regulations.
- **Zoning Commission**
  The Zoning Commission consists of seven seated members and three alternates. Responsibilities include regulating the use of land within the city; preparing and amending the Building Zone Regulations and Building Zone Map to control use and development of property; and reviewing special permits, site plans, and coastal site plan applications. Final decisions on zoning are made by the Common Council.
- **Zoning Board of Appeals**
  The Zoning Board of Appeals consists of five seated members and three alternates. Responsibilities include hearing and deciding appeals from decisions of zoning inspector, as well as varying the zoning regulations where applicant is found to have an unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty.

The zoning ordinance has limited design standards:

- **Design Districts**
  The four design districts all refer to adopted design guidelines and/or neighborhood plans. Projects require site plan review and are reviewed by the Redevelopment Authority.
- **Village Districts**
  The four village districts have identical zoning

language that state broad standards like "harmoniously relate" and "consistent with" for building design and scale, streetscape standards and landscaping. There is nothing specific to each district that would help either the city's village review consultant or a property owner or developer understand the expectations and objective criteria.

- **Special Permits**
  Special permit approval is required for certain uses and for projects above a certain size or magnitude threshold, often total square footage. Special permits require public hearings and notification to abutting property owners. Applications are judged against more stringent criteria for traffic, lighting, impacts on neighbors, compatibility with the neighborhood, etc. Special permit standards tend to be more subjective, however, which can make decisions subject to more appeals.
- **Site Plan Review**
  Site plan review is a special procedure for projects in the design districts and most projects in B1 and B2, including mixed-use. The review considers basic characteristics including off-street parking and loading, landscape and screening, illumination, utilities, and impact on adjacent properties such as traffic and vehicular access. There are few specifics to inform reviewing bodies, property owners, or developers and nothing about design.
- **Peer Review**
  In an effort to improve design quality, the city instituted independent peer review for major projects (e.g., SoNo Collection). The peer reviewer issues recommendations to the reviewing body.

Findings & Challenges

- Planning initiatives should lead to and directly influence land use and zoning actions. This will establish "culture of planning" throughout the city. Longstanding conditions make the city responsive to immediate developer proposals rather than proactively guiding long-term change.
- The few broad design standards that exist within zoning do not provide enough guidance to be effective. City staff and reviewing bodies lack clear standards to help make objective decisions. Property owners, developers, and residents lack predictability about what is expected, sometimes leading to contentious review processes and wasted time and money re-designing projects.
- Industrial zoning requirements do not reflect modern tenant needs, industry trends, and economic development goals. For example, these zones allow conflicting uses like housing which often push out industrial uses; contemporary 'clean tech' or 'green' industries that have minimal external impacts are not explicitly allowed uses; storage/warehousing requires a special permit rather than being allowed by-right although there is increasing demand for this type of space; and the LI-2 district is mapped to only two parcels.
- Commercial zoning along Route 1 and Main Avenue/Street is insufficient to encourage high-quality, mixed-use redevelopment as property owners respond to the changing retail environment. A compelling vision that designates priority areas and clear design standards that promote walkability and vertical mixed-use are needed to help the City realize higher-value redevelopment when change happens in these single-use areas.
- Norwalk has separate Planning and Zoning Commissions which contributes to a disconnect between planning, land use policy, and zoning. Some cities and towns in Connecticut have a combined Planning and Zoning Commission to support more efficient and collaborative relationships between planning and zoning. Among peer cities, New Haven has a City Planning Commission with combined duties and responsibilities while Danbury and Stamford have separate bodies like Norwalk.

Commercial Corridor Revitalization Resources:

Building Healthy Corridors: Transforming Urban and Suburban Arterials into Thriving Places. Urban Land Institute (2016). www.americas.uli.org/research/centers-initiatives/building-healthy-places-initiative/healthy-corridors

Restructuring the Commercial Strip: A Practical Guide for Planning the Revitalization of Deteriorating Strip Corridors. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2010). www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/restructuring-commercial-strip

Implementing the Vision: First Steps. Practical Steps to Transform Commercial Strips into Mixed-Use Centers. GrowSmart Maine (2013).

E. WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

The importance of community character and design were common topics of responses from Norwalk stakeholders. At the initial visioning forum, the second-highest response to the question "How do you experience a sense of community in Norwalk?" was "my immediate neighborhood" (14%), indicative of people's attachment to their neighborhood. When asked "What places do you most associate with the identity of Norwalk?" the second-highest response was "Wall Street and/or SoNo" (29%), indicating the importance of these urban areas to the city's identity.

The online survey asked, "What do you like most about Norwalk?" Responses included "distinctive neighborhoods", "the look [and] feel of it – like a city", "urban feel with suburban comforts", and "the improvement of Washington Street". "Making commercial corridors more attractive" was identified as one of the things Norwalk should focus on. These comments further indicate the importance of the visual character of the city, both as an asset to protect in some areas and a challenge to address and improve in other areas.

A recurring comment at public meetings and workshops was a variation of either "inconsistent/weak zoning enforcement" or "spot zonings" in neighborhoods. These are indicative of the perceived reactive nature of planning and zoning and the lack of clear expectations about development character.

F. APPROACHES TO ZONING & URBAN DESIGN

Land use zoning first appeared in the United States in 1916. The zoning system that emerged in the early twentieth century is now called conventional or "Euclidean" zoning (after Euclid v. Ambler, the 1926 Supreme Court case that validated zoning as a proper exercise of municipal police power). As some of the disadvantages of conventional zoning became evident by the second half of the twentieth century, new zoning approaches emerged, including performance zoning and form-based zoning. Conventional zoning remains the basis of most zoning systems today, including Norwalk's, but many jurisdictions have added aspects of performance zoning and form-based zoning, particularly as communities have begun to see zoning as one of the tools of placemaking. "Placemaking" refers to the design, management, and programming of the public realm and adjacent areas to create environments that provide quality places and experiences for people. People experience quality places as welcoming, safe, connected, accessible, comfortable, sociable, and engaging.

Conventional Zoning

Conventional zoning was originally created to separate industrial and other noxious land uses from residential areas, and particularly to preserve quality of life

and property values in single-family neighborhoods. Conventional zoning regulates the uses and dimensions of development, for example:

- Type and mix of land uses
- Size and dimension of lots
- Type, size and height of buildings
- Distance of front, side and rear setbacks
- Width and length of streets and sidewalks
- Amount and size of off-street parking

Conventional zoning separates land uses deemed incompatible and is prescriptive, in that it specifies land uses and required maximum or minimum dimensions, parking, and so forth. It tends to focus on what is not allowed rather than on what is desired. This prescriptive character makes it easy to implement, both by governments and by property owners, because there are no judgment calls when the zoning requires, for example, that a building must be ten feet from the front lot line. The homogenizing and inflexible outcomes of conventional zoning have resulted in an array of strategies to get around that inflexibility, especially in older communities like Norwalk. Variances, conditional uses, special exceptions, bonuses and incentives, planned unit developments, and similar devices are intended to allow development to be more closely tailored to specific conditions and desired results.

Performance Zoning

Performance zoning has its origins in industrial performance standards that identify limits on measurable industrial impacts such as noise, vibration, light, dust, smells, and so on, and that are often incorporated into zoning codes for industrial land uses. This idea was expanded in performance zoning to regulation of the impacts of the built environment. Unlike conventional zoning, which assumes certain uses are incompatible and separates them, pure performance zoning assumes virtually any use can be made compatible if impacts are properly managed. Generally speaking, performance zoning requires highly-trained administrators who have the confidence of both residents and developers. Performance zoning emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. Few locales have a pure performance zoning system, but some aspects of performance zoning are incorporated into many communities' zoning codes.

Form-Based Zoning

Form-based zoning focuses more on building form than on land uses. These codes are a reaction to conventional zoning's separation of land uses, which made it impossible to build mixed-use neighborhoods and districts, and its neglect of the public realm, which can result in visually- and functionally-impoverished environments that are often ugly and functional only for one type of user. Full form-based codes are very detailed and prescriptive about certain aspects of design and use many graphics to give a positive vision of what is desired, rather than focusing on what should be excluded. They require a design-focused community process in advance of writing the zoning.

Hybrid Zoning

Conventional, performance, and form-based zoning codes all have advantages and disadvantages. Because of its familiarity and long institutional history, conventional zoning is likely to remain the foundation of most zoning codes. However, performance standards and form-based elements represent effective tools for increasing the flexibility of conventional zoning. For example, conventional zoning is organized in separate-use districts on a community-wide basis but is not effective in mediating impacts at the edges of districts—which is precisely the strong point of performance zoning. Form-based codes are organized around the street and the neighborhood and are particularly good at conveying what is desired in terms of the relationship between private buildings and the public street. In existing communities, form-based zoning is increasingly used for mixed-use districts and corridors, while conventional zoning remains in force for residential areas. Combining conventional zoning with some of the aspects of performance and form-based zoning can reduce the need for discretionary special permit processes by including design and performance standards as part of by-right zoning.

Urban Design

Urban design focuses on the physical character of spaces in three dimensions. It is not, as sometimes thought, simply about visual appearance or style. Urban design affects many aspects of how we experience places, including how the different elements of spaces, such as buildings, sidewalks, roads, parking lots, and parks, relate to one another; how spaces function in facilitating, directing or obstructing people's activities; and how spaces express aesthetic values. Although urban

design can be practiced both in publicly-owned and privately-owned places, the focus for this discussion is on the "public realm"—spaces owned and used by the public--and on private places that are commonly open to the public, such as retail developments.

The public realm should be designed primarily at a scale that is comfortable for people, rather than at a scale primarily focused on vehicles. This is true even for arterial roads lined with commercial uses. Over time, by focusing on how to make both the roads themselves and their commercial areas more functional and attractive for people, these districts will become more successful. Retail areas redevelop in more rapid cycles than other land uses because retailers need to keep consumers' interest with new formats, so establishing good urban design standards can have an effect relatively quickly. In many ways, Norwalk's historic core manifests good urban design principles that should be respected today. A few basic, interrelated urban design principles used in public projects, and development standards for private projects, can make a difference.

- **Focus on streets as three-dimensional shared spaces.** Streets are the most important public spaces in any city and are made up of the travel right-of-way (including sidewalks) and the land, landscaping, and buildings that line the travel way. Except for limited-access freeways and highways, the travel way in city and suburban environments should be shared and accessible to vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians. The vertical elements at the edge of the street—buildings and street trees—should create a sense of enclosure. Researchers have found that the optimum relationship of the vertical (height of buildings) to horizontal (width of street) dimensions in a street corridor should approximate no more than 1:4 (e.g., a street that is 80 feet wide should be lined with buildings at least 20 feet high). Street trees spaced no more than 35 feet can also create this sense of enclosure, even when the building height-to-street-width ratio cannot. The number and size of curb cuts should be controlled on business arterials, to improve traffic flow and function as well the pedestrian and aesthetic experience.
- **Create walkable environments.** Everyone is a pedestrian at some point during every day, at a minimum at the beginning and end of every vehicle trip. Walkable environments— connected, safe, comfortable, appealing—are important in both the public and semi-public realms and have been emphasized throughout this plan. In commercial areas, visual interest, safe crossings, shelter from sun and rain (trees, canopies, colonnades, galleries), human-scaled lighting, and other amenities can keep people walking.
- **Foster a multi-layered public realm.** A successful public realm offers a variety of experiences that appeal to a broad range of people. There are active and passive areas, parts designed for kids and parts designed for quiet sitting and observing, and safe spaces for interaction among different kinds of people, representing the diversity that is characteristic of cities.
- **Plant trees.** Planting native trees along streets and roads and in parking lots is one of the easiest ways to enhance the public realm, create comfortable environments, and reduce heat and stormwater impacts. Trees should be chosen for their suitability to the task, especially those adapted to harsh urban environments. For example, street trees along sidewalks should be chosen to have canopies sufficiently high and broad to provide shade to pedestrians. Parking lots should be

What contributes to quality city design?

broken into small parking fields shaded by trees.

- **Bring buildings to the street.** In the urban core, buildings should be located at the sidewalk or behind a small landscaped or hardscape setback. Along major arterials, buildings can also be located behind limited, single-loaded parking. Locate building entries to promote safe pedestrian movement across streets; to relate to crosswalks and pathways that lead to public transportation stops; and to encourage walking, biking and public transit use for employment and other travel around the city.
- **Put parking to the side, to the rear, in structures or even underground, with clear signage to direct motorists to it**. Parking is necessary but should not dominate street frontage. Rear parking should not, however, result in buildings that turn their backs on the street. Parking structures should ideally have active ground-floor uses on the street frontage, if possible, or design elements such as screens and vines to give the ground floor more aesthetic appeal. The City should also encourage shared parking and "park once" arrangements which allow for more flexible pedestrian-friendly places.
- **Use more pedestrian-friendly site design for retail centers along the major corridors (Main Street/Main Avenue and Route 1).** Designated pedestrian pathways along buildings and through parking lots toward building entrances, pedestrian precincts, and pedestrian connections from sidewalks directly to stores can make retail centers more attractive. In large centers, a common rule of thumb is to create designated pedestrian paths at least every 300 feet to connect with entrances.
- **Create visual interest in buildings by avoiding blank facades.** Articulated and modulated façades, windows and transparency attract interest by providing a sense of activity within. Screens and vertical plantings also improve on facades that otherwise offer little interest.
- **Preserve authenticity.** Find ways to integrate distinctive local features and design characteristics into new projects. This is not simply copying existing features but building an informed understanding of what makes Norwalk distinctive and loved and using that understanding to contribute in new and meaningful ways.

Standards versus Guidelines

Cities typically use both design standards and design guidelines to influence development. They are often organized into three categories: street and sidewalk design, site design, and building design.

- Design standards are fixed, quantitative measures of design attributes that are mandatory and result in a narrow range of outcomes. They use "shall" or "must" and are typically incorporated into zoning. The number of standards should be limited to the most critically important aspects of a place.
- Design guidelines are flexible, qualitative measures of design attributes that may or may not be mandatory but embrace a broad range of outcomes and encourage creativity. They use "should" and are typically illustrated in a separate document referred to in the zoning code. Guideline statements should be specific enough to be applied without much interpretation and should avoid vague statements like "compatible" and "appealing."

Tactical Urbanism

Tactical urbanism is a "lighter, quicker, cheaper" approach to temporary idea-testing in the public realm. It is designed to quickly and inexpensively install a temporary project to collect data and feedback that allows city officials and the public to adapt approaches and build momentum for long-term transformation. This is a useful approach because traditional public works projects are often expensive and time-consuming. City officials and/or members of the public may be hesitant to invest significant money into an untested idea, particularly one that has not been applied locally yet. A temporary trial project can give stakeholders the confidence to try an idea, observe how it works, and determine whether to modify their approach and/or invest in a more permanent solution.

Tactical urbanism projects include painting curb bulb-outs to shorten crosswalk distances and calm traffic, installing planters and movable seating to create temporary public plazas, or closing a street for a neighborhood festival. They can be led by either the City or a neighborhood or business organization in cooperation with the City. Often, they are the result of an extensive public outreach process and culminate in a celebratory event, helping to build social capital among neighbors, business owners, and city staff while testing new ideas.

Temporary paint, planters, and movable seating transform an oversized intersection into a comfortable place for people. (Memphis, TN)

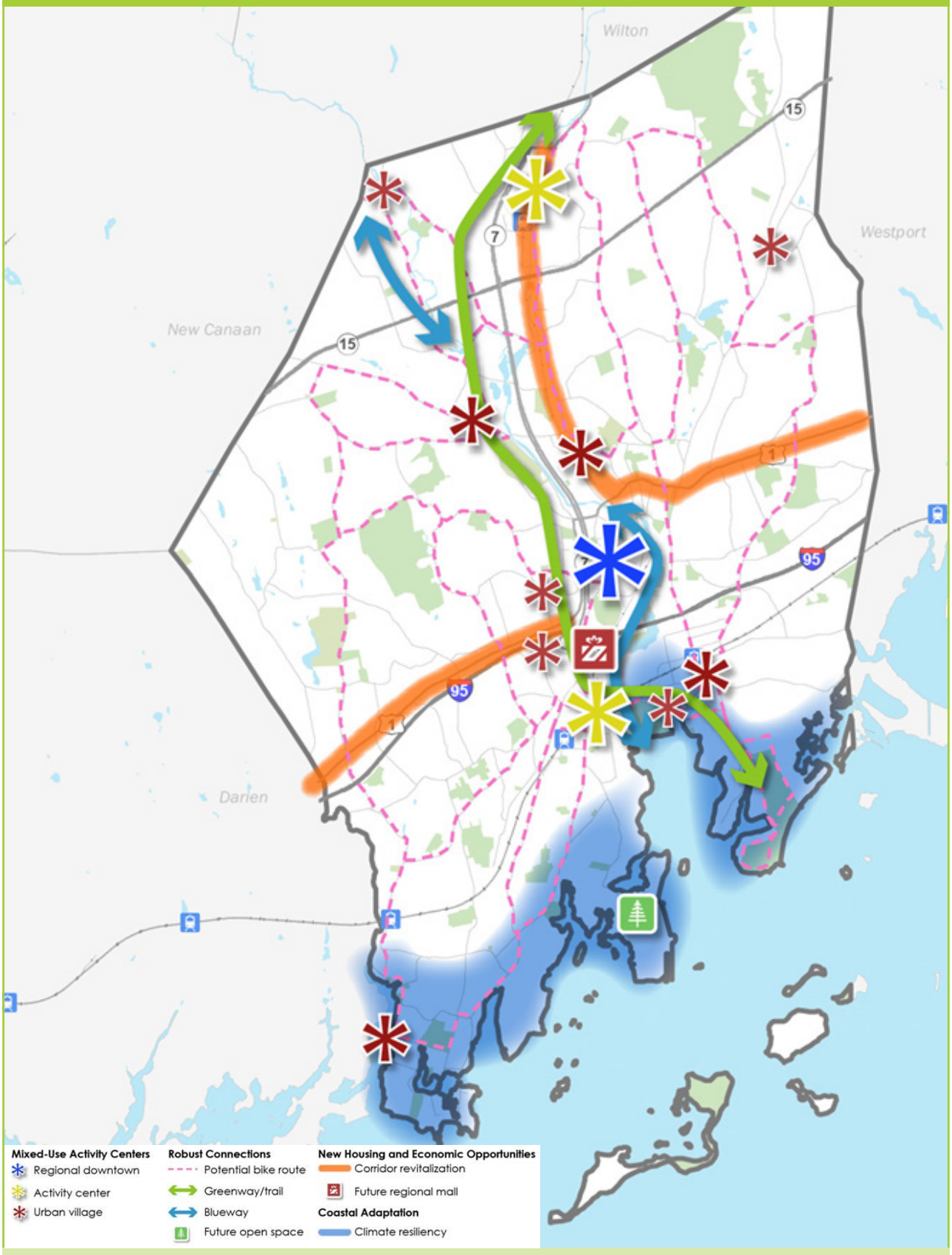
Source: John Paul Shaffer

G. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Policy Map provides a diagrammatic expression of the key land use issues and changes that emerged from the recommendations of other master plan elements:

- **Support for major walkable mixed-use centers** in Wall Street/West Avenue, SoNo, and Merritt 7 employment centers. These areas are transit-served and could support additional walkable mixed-use development with more residential growth and density.
- **Creation of new walkable "urban villages:"** smaller mixed-use areas to concentrate neighborhood-serving retail and services along with some residential development.
- **Transformation of underutilized industrial areas near transit** into walkable mixed-use neighborhoods that leverage existing assets.
- **Concentration of industrial uses** in a few major locations such as parts of South Norwalk separate from residential neighborhoods and along rail tracks (and further from stations), as well as clusters of water-dependent uses on the Norwalk River.
- **A robust green and blue network** to link community destinations and preserve environmentally sensitive areas.

Figure 12.3 Future Land Use Policy Diagram



Source: City of Norwalk, Stantec

The Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map. It is a map that shows the distribution of general land use categories within the city. The land use categories in the map may be represented in the zoning code by more than one zoning district if finer distinctions and nuances are needed to shape development.

The Future Land Use Map reflects the vision, goals and recommended actions in the chapters of this plan. However, any land use map for the future is inevitably based on the existing uses. Some land uses are less susceptible to change once they have been established. For example, single-family neighborhoods tend to stay in place over long periods, with limited change or encroachment from other uses. In contrast, light industrial land uses and retail are more likely to change, and to change in more rapid cycles. Multifamily development is less susceptible to change than retail uses, but more so than single-family neighborhoods. Condominiums and other ownership models are less likely to change than rental developments, which are particularly susceptible to change if they are small, older, or run down.

The Future Land Use Map balances respect for existing uses with designations for consolidated land uses and new future land use designations. The consolidated land uses on the map take two forms: a) consolidation under one category of land uses with similar impacts, for example, a "General Commercial" designation for areas where a mixture of retail, service and office uses already exists or where that mixture would be appropriate; or b) consolidation under a predominant use—for example, where an area is predominantly residential but also includes schools, churches, and a few scattered retail or office uses.

Existing development in Norwalk includes many areas that incorporate scattered instances of other land uses. In some cases, these uses coexist without much difficulty, such as churches and schools located in single-family neighborhoods. In others, different land uses or different intensities of the same land use are located in ways that lack functional logic. For example, parts of South Norwalk have streets lined with single-family houses or apartment buildings that are surrounded by a jumble of light-industrial uses. In these cases, the Future Land Use Map designates the area for the land use that would most appropriately predominate in the area. Most of the new future land use designations tend to expand the number of uses in an area rather than limit them.

Finally, this Future Land Use Plan is conceived with a ten-year/2029 time horizon in mind and an understanding that the amount of job growth and household growth that can be achieved over the 10-year time period will affect the outcome. From the land use point of view, a few key locations should have high priority because of the opportunity they create to leverage existing job numbers, transportation opportunities, and other benefits. Once there is success at these locations and sufficient growth, then subsequent Future Land Use Plans can identify additional locations for shaping change.

Future Land Use Categories

Norwalk is an older city which is substantially built-out under current zoning. There is a relatively small amount of vacant land for development, so change will tend to occur through redevelopment of existing buildings and sites. Moreover, many of Norwalk's residential areas (particularly those in denser areas) also contain some non-residential uses, such as corner stores and small apartment buildings. This is also typical of older cities and valued within neighborhoods – in contrast to extreme separation of land uses typical of development in the mid to late twentieth century. The Future Land Use Map therefore focuses on the predominant character of different areas of the city.

Residential

Residential areas are categorized based on their predominant character, from large-lot suburban-style neighborhoods to small-lot neighborhoods with a mix of single and multi-family uses near more urban areas. Compatible uses include churches and schools, as well as very small neighborhood-serving businesses such as corner stores.

- **Residential suburban low (single-family)**
    - Single-family houses on large suburban lots (half-acre minimum).
    - Schools, churches, and certain institutional uses by special permit.
- **Residential suburban medium (single-family)**
    - Single-family houses on small suburban lots (one-third acre mean lot size).
    - Schools, churches, and certain institutional uses by special permit.
- **Residential suburban high**
    - A mix of single-family and two-family houses, including townhouses, on small suburban lots.

- Schools, churches, and certain institutional uses by special permit.

- **Residential urban**
  - A mix of two-family and multi-unit buildings, including both apartments and condominiums.
  - Schools, churches, and certain institutional uses by special permit.

Mixed-Use

Mixed-use centers ranging from vibrant downtown areas to quiet village centers will encourage walkability and bikeability. Buildings should be oriented to the street, ideally with active ground floor uses that provide convenient pedestrian access. Parking should be located in the rear of the parcel or to the side where lots are shallow. Green infrastructure and low impact development (LID) strategies should be used to manage stormwater to enhance resilience and sustainability.

- **Village mixed-use**
  - Areas for neighborhood retail and services that meet the day-to-day needs of residents and workers of surrounding neighborhoods. Housing above ground-floor retail or office is encouraged.
  - Areas are accessible by automobile and provide sufficient parking but are designed to encourage pedestrian and bicycle access as well.
  - Existing village districts and proposed new neighborhood centers.
- **Corridor mixed-use**
  - Compact, walkable residential and commercial areas with transit-supportive densities and public amenities. Walkability improvements should be integral to all redevelopment proposals, including consolidated curb cuts, inter-parcel access, and smaller block sizes.
  - Uses can be combined horizontally (side-by-side) or vertically (one above another) and include multifamily, retail and services, offices, hotels, townhouses, and live-work.
  - Redevelopment of single-use properties along major corridors (i.e., Main Street/ Avenue, Route 1).
- **Mixed-use center**
  - Medium- to high-density office, residential, retail, hotel, and entertainment areas that create vibrant 18-hour, 7-day-a-week live-work-play-learn environments. Small-scale boutique manufacturing, clean tech, and artisan space are also allowed uses provided they meet performance and design standards.
  - Accessible by transit (bus and train) as well as by pedestrians and bicyclists. Walkability improvements should be integral to all development proposals.
  - Wall Street/West Avenue, South Norwalk, and Merritt 7, and at a smaller scale, the East Norwalk TOD district to be delineated through a planning study in 2019.

Commercial

Inland areas are primarily automobile-accessible but should accommodate safe pedestrian and bicycle movement to and through them, so they do not become barriers to safe active transportation networks. Marine commercial areas consist of water-dependent uses that support Norwalk's maritime industry. Green infrastructure and low-impact development (LID) strategies should be used wherever possible to manage stormwater naturally and mitigate heat island impacts.

- **Neighborhood commercial**
  - Areas for small-scale neighborhood retail and services that meet the day-to-day needs of residents and workers of surrounding neighborhoods.
- **General commercial**
  - Commercial areas serving a citywide or regional trade area, including larger retail, office, and entertainment centers that offer a range of establishments.
- **Marine Commercial**
  - Water dependent uses as defined by the Connecticut Coastal Management Act: "those uses and facilities which require direct access to, or location in marine or tidal waters and which therefore cannot be located inland, including but not limited to: marinas, recreational and commercial fishing and boating facilities, finfish and shellfish

processing plants, waterfront dock and port facilities, shipyards and boat building facilities, water-based recreational uses, navigation aids, basins and channels, industrial uses dependent upon water-borne transportation or requiring large volumes of cooling or process water which cannot reasonably be located or operated at an inland site and uses which provide general public access to marine or tidal waters." (Connecticut General Statute § 22a93(16)).

Light Industrial

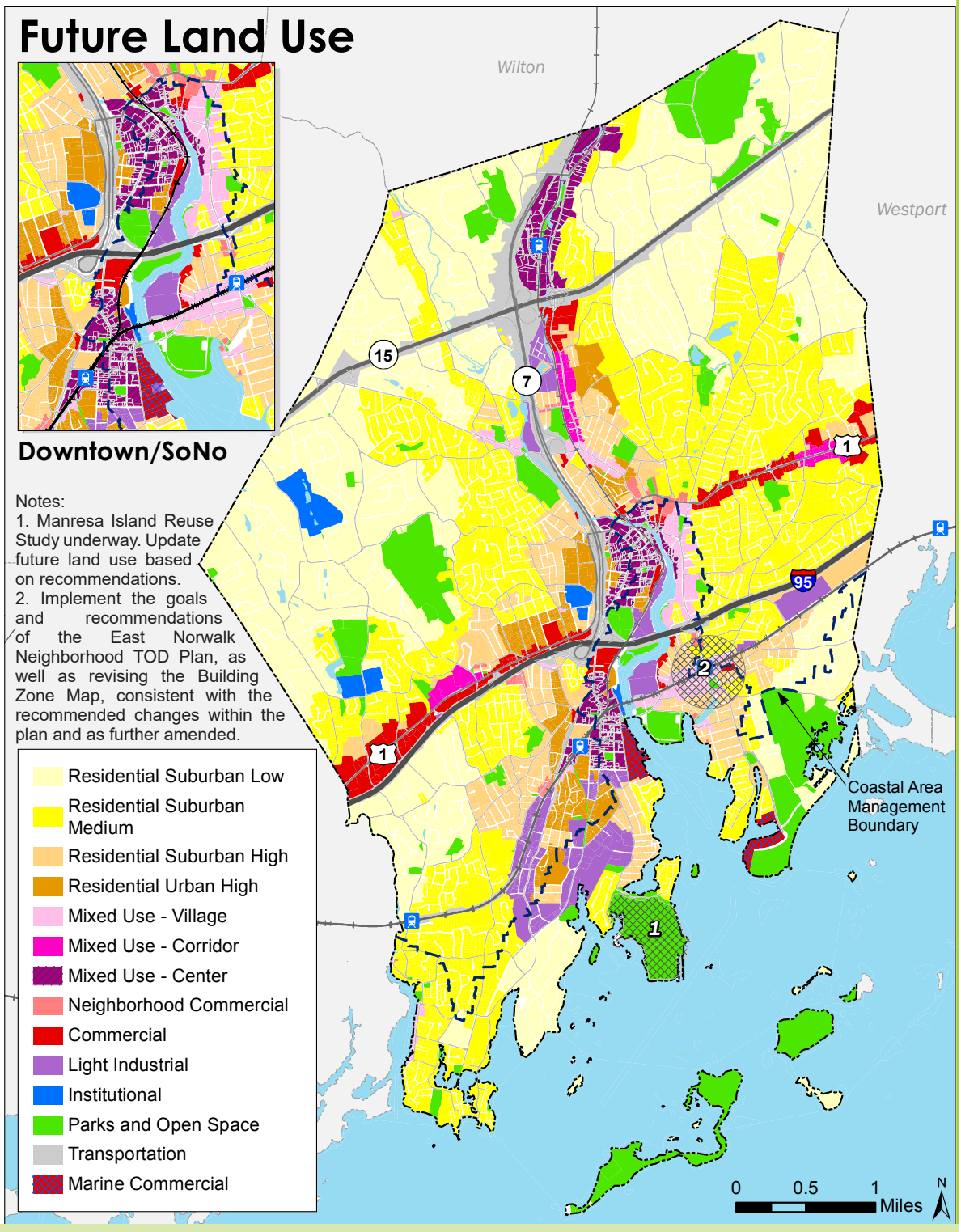
These areas are primarily automobile- and truck-accessible but should accommodate safe pedestrian and bicycle movement through them so they do not become barriers to safe active transportation networks. Green infrastructure and low-impact development (LID) strategies should be used wherever possible to manage stormwater naturally and mitigate heat island impacts.

- **Light Industrial**
  - Light industry, warehousing and distribution, boutique/artisan manufacturing, clean tech, and research and development, with supporting uses including accessory retail, services, and office.
  - Utilities, including water treatment and electrical transmission.
  - No heavy industry or residential uses.
  - Contractor yards for processing erodible material should be limited and held to strict performance standards if permitted.
  - Edges between light industrial and other uses, especially residential, should be attractively designed and well-maintained with fencing, landscaping, walls, and other elements to visually screen the industrial use.
  - Performance standards related to noise, odor, vibration, truck traffic, and other potential environmental impacts should be developed.
  - Further study of this land use is recommended.

Other Uses

- **Institutional**
  - Hospitals, colleges, and cultural institutions (e.g., Maritime Aquarium).
  - Public and private primary and secondary schools and churches are not included in this category. They are allowed within all residential and commercial areas.
- **Parks and Open Space**
  - Public parks and playgrounds, recreation fields and facilities, open space corridors and trails.
  - Potential additions to the green network in areas that are environmentally sensitive, unsuitable for development, and/or publicly owned (e.g., parts of Manresa Island).
  - The exact location of future public open space will depend on the recommended Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Plan and district- and neighborhood-level planning.
- **Transportation**
  - Interstate/highway and railroad rights-of-way.

Figure 12.4 Future Land Use



Source: City of Norwalk, Stantec

GOAL 1

General guidelines guide land use decision making

Policies:

- Refer to land use guidelines when making land use decisions by administrators and decision-making bodies.
- Promote urban design guidelines for walkability for development in urbanized parts of Norwalk.
- Implement transit-oriented design (TOD) guidelines promoting density, walkability, and mix of uses for development near transit stations (rail and high-frequency bus).
- Protect natural and environmental resources and neighborhood character for development in suburban areas of Norwalk.

Strategy

A. Adopt guidelines to guide land use decision making.

A concise set of clear guidelines should provide property owners, developers, city staff, public reviewing bodies, and residents with a shared understanding of land use decision making criteria. Doing so will provide property owners and developers with greater clarity about the city's expectations when proposing a project; provide city staff and public reviewing bodies with a set of criteria on which to base decision-making; and provide the general public with a better understanding of the city's goals.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Adopt guidelines and standards, with required findings, as part of the zoning ordinance, to guide decision making that will help achieve the vision and goals of the plan.** When making discretionary land use decisions, administrative bodies should refer to this land use guidance and the POCD Vision Statement when making findings to support the decision. Proposed guidelines: • Direct future development to Norwalk's urban core, village districts, and corridors through redevelopment and infill. • Promote land use configurations that increase connectivity and walkability in the urban core, village districts, and corridors. • Promote walkable mixed-use development in the established Wall St/West Ave, SoNo, and Merritt 7 areas, in the future East Norwalk TOD area, and in key activity centers along the Route 1 and Main Avenue/Main Street commercial corridors. • Promote transit-oriented development (TOD) near rail stations and high-frequency bus stops, emphasizing walkability and transit-supportive densities and uses. • Implement the goals and recommendations of the 2020 East Norwalk Neighborhood TOD Plan and as further amended. • Establish appropriate transitions from higher-density and higher-impact land uses to lower-density and lower-impact land uses. • Preserve existing open space, park lands, and coastal areas and connect them when possible. • Preserve and expand public access to coastal areas when redevelopment occurs.	2019 - 2020	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission; Council	Staff time
ii. **Create checklists and similar materials to inform residents, property owners, developers, and others about the land use guidance, regulatory system, and permitting process in Norwalk.** Develop these materials to accompany an updated zoning code and make them available in digital and printed form.	2019-2020	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; possibly consultant as part of zoning rewrite

GOAL 2

Neighborhood and corridor activity centers have urban design standards that promote walkability.

Policies:

- Support greater walkability and improved design standards in village districts.
- Provide a mixed-use neighborhood activity center (i.e., village district, commercial corridor redevelopment, traditional downtown) within a safe, comfortable walking or bicycling distance of all residents.
- Support mixed-use redevelopment along commercial corridors.

Strategy

A. Support local centers of activity in neighborhoods

Existing village districts and local neighborhood retail areas offer residents a choice of dining, shopping, and/or recreation close to home. Making these areas more accessible for pedestrians and bicyclists can encourage more frequent, lower traffic impact visits to local businesses. Design standards can protect and enhance the unique character of these often historic places, which in turn makes them more visually appealing while adding value for property owners.

Retail is a fast-changing sector influenced by online shopping and user experience among other factors. As property owners on major commercial corridors like Route 1 and Main Avenue respond to these changes, the city can encourage more walkable mixed-use development patterns through land use policy and zoning regulations. A public planning process to create a shared vision for these areas is an important first step to guide policy development.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Strengthen existing Village District design standards.** Clearly identify the unique elements or design features of each Village District that establish the context for renovations and new construction. Revise zoning to include basic urban design standards to ensure distinct, walkable villages such as: • Minimum sidewalk width of 6' (8'-10' preferred) in commercial areas. • Maximum front set-back between 0 and 5' (or matching existing buildings). • Main entry oriented to the street and sidewalk • Ground floor standards for commercial space: minimum façade transparency, awning/signage façade zone, minimum interior ceiling height. • Provision of convenient bicycle parking. • Vehicular parking located to the rear of buildings where possible, with clear path to front door. • Vehicular parking maximums, and/or the ability to request a waiver of some or all required parking on small lots.	2019-2021	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission	Staff time; consultant

Actions	When	Who	Resources
ii. **Study the potential for additional village districts or "neighborhood centers" with local commercial activity.** Further study and public engagement is needed to determine whether existing neighborhood commercial areas possess defining characteristics to be designated as village districts on the zoning map. Potential locations include: • Main Street at Center Avenue and Catherine Street (part of Westport-North-Main Corridor Study, 2006). • Ely Avenue at Lexington Avenue (part of South Norwalk TOD Redevelopment Plan, 2016). • Implement the East Norwalk TOD Village District recommendations, including the zoning regulations and design standards, as proposed within the East Norwalk TOD Village Plan, as further amended by the Zoning Commission • 1st Street at Cove Avenue (consider developing "Cove Village" identity/branding). • Stevens Street at Stuart Street (potential local center in Hospital Hill/Spring Hill neighborhood which lacks any public park/open space). • New Canaan Avenue between Silvermine Avenue and Bartlett Avenue (limited historic character but potential for walkable mixed-use redevelopment over time). If a study does not support village district designation, evaluate options for other zoning revisions or design overlays to strengthen walkability and urban design in these neighborhood retail clusters.	2019–2020	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; possibly consultant as part of zoning rewrite
iii. **Improve the public realm within village districts and activity centers with design standards for sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, bicycle racks, seating, signage and public art.** Physical improvements will enhance the visual appeal and functional safety of these places. Investments in the public realm should be coordinated with private projects when possible to maximize impact.	2024–2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works; property owners	Staff time; capital funds

Actions	When	Who	Resources
iv. **Create a façade improvement grant program for Wall Street/West Avenue, SoNo and East Norwalk.** Provide small business support for property owners by offering matching grants for façade improvements that meet basic design and quality criteria. Upgrades to the physical condition of buildings will positively influence the perception of the neighborhood. Storefronts, signage, windows, and façade restoration are critical elements to address.	2020–2029	Redevelopment Agency; Planning and Zoning; Economic Development; property owners	Staff time; possible grant or CDBG (block grant) funds; capital funds

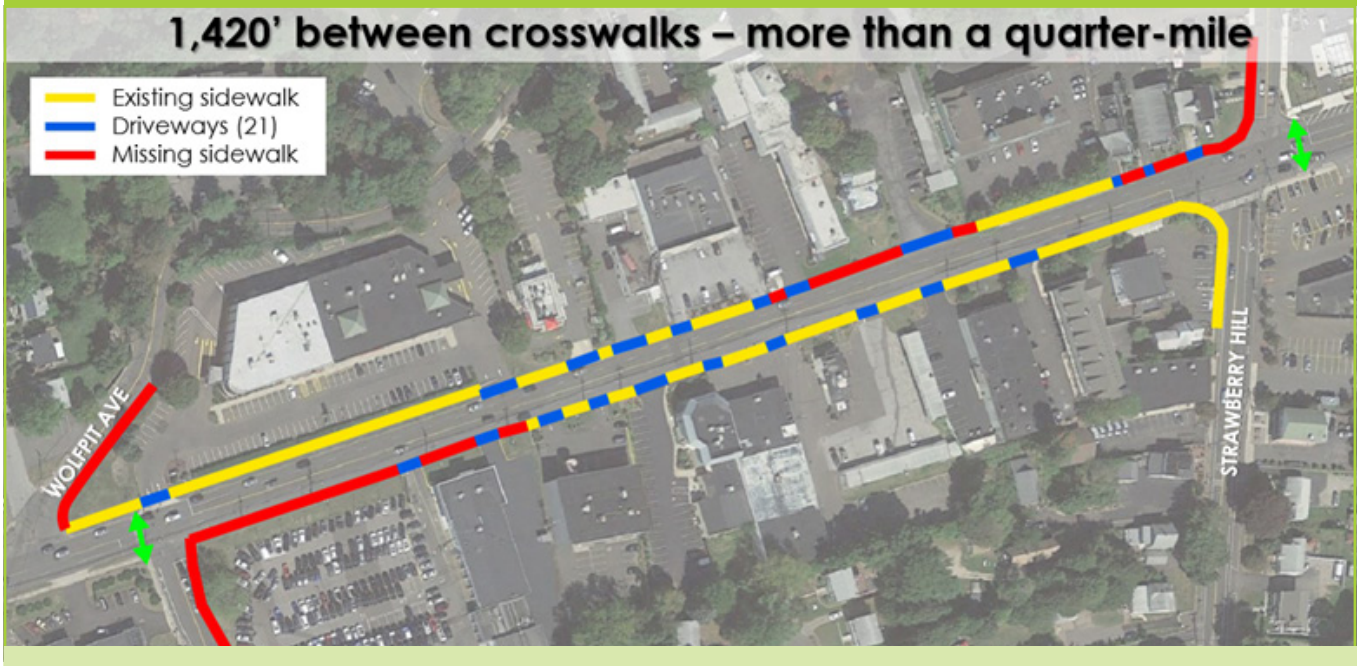
Strategy

B. Promote high-quality redevelopment along major corridors.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Study commercial corridors to identify priority activity centers for mixed-use zoning and clustered redevelopment.** Conduct planning studies for Norwalk's major commercial corridors: Main Street/Main Avenue, Connecticut Avenue, and Westport Avenue. The latter study would update the 2006 Westport-North-Main Corridor Study. The corridor studies should include market and transportation analyses; evaluate the commercial corridors to identify areas that meet potential redevelopment criteria like poor building condition, larger parcel sizes, common ownership and/or interested owners, transportation choice (transit, shuttles, bicycle, and walking access), and connections to adjacent neighborhoods; and recommend zoning, urban design, transportation, and economic development changes. Priority should be given to a limited number of these activity centers, perhaps one to two over the next ten years. Potential activity centers could be: • Westport Avenue near Strawberry Hill Avenue • Connecticut Avenue near Scribner Avenue	2020–2029	Planning and Zoning; Economic and Community Development	Staff time; consultant

Actions	When	Who	Resources
ii. **As part of the zoning code rewrite, create zoning with design standards to achieve desired outcomes for commercial and mixed-use projects as redevelopment occurs.** As part of the zoning code rewrite, develop design standards informed by the corridor studies described above for mixed-use redevelopment along commercial corridors. Potential standards include smaller block sizes, comfortable sidewalks, vertical mixed use, "build-to" lines or maximum front setbacks to create a walkable setting, active ground floor uses, parking located behind buildings, and scale transitions to adjacent areas.	2020–2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
iii. **Improve vehicular circulation through coordinated access management, including cross-parcel access, consolidation of driveways, and subdivision of large blocks with internal street networks.** The City should develop an access management plan for Route 1 and Main Avenue in coordination with property owners. For example, cross-easements for inter-parcel access can eliminate curb cuts to improve the pedestrian environment and reduce traffic circulating between adjacent sites.	2020–2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Public Works; private developers	Staff time; consultant; capital funds

Figure 12.5 Pedestrian-Unfriendly Segment of Route 1



Cross-parcel access can reduce the number of driveways in commercial corridors. Above, a quarter-mile stretch of Westport Avenue has 21 driveways, zero crosswalks, and large gaps in the sidewalk. Source: Stantec

Example Urban Design Policy Objectives

Project Review, Cambridge, MA (Article 19): "The intent of this Article 19.000 is to establish traffic and urban design standards for development projects [in the city's commercial and high density residential areas] likely to have significant impact on abutting properties and the surrounding urban environment.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives:

1. New projects should be responsive to the existing or *anticipated* [emphasis added] pattern of development.
2. Development should be pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, with a positive relationship to its surroundings.
3. The building and site design should mitigate adverse environmental impacts of a development upon its neighbors.
4. Projects should not overburden the City infrastructure services, including neighborhood roads, city water supply system, and sewer system.
5. New construction should reinforce and enhance the complex urban aspects of [the city] as it has developed historically.
6. Expansion of the inventory of housing is encouraged.
7. Enhancement and expansion of open space amenities in the city should be incorporated into new development in the city."

Each objective has two or more indicators that provide additional means to evaluate proposals.

GOAL 3

The user-friendly zoning ordinance is consistent with the future land use map and achievement of the vision and goals of the POCD.

Policies:

- Support revision of the zoning ordinance to promote desired development and design patterns.
- Support permit streamlining for projects with desired characteristics.

Strategy

A. Modernize the Zoning Ordinance and the development approval process to achieve the goals of the POCD.

Like many cities, Norwalk's zoning ordinance has been revised numerous times over the years, often in piecemeal fashion. It can be difficult to understand all the requirements for a specific parcel or what is intended for a district. The current zoning ordinance is an accumulation of these changes without a comprehensive review of how well the pieces work together to create a cohesive community aligned with a shared vision. A modernized zoning ordinance and development approval process will provide greater predictability for the city, property owners, developers, and the general public; improve the character of the built environment; and reduce the perception of individual zoning decisions lacking a broader viewpoint.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. Rewrite the Zoning Ordinance to reflect contemporary best practices in administration and user-friendliness and to be consistent with the POCD. The zoning rewrite should include several phases within the context of stakeholder involvement: Phase I – Technical analysis and evaluation of existing regulations including • Analysis of how well the zoning districts match existing land uses and future land use policies • Analysis of how well the regulations implement established City policy, and how well the regulations integrate with other ordinances and initiatives and meet public expectations • Sustainability audit of current development regulations • Summary of "best practices" for key issues • Analysis of structure, organization, clarity, and usability Phase II: Develop and approve the text and illustrations for a hybrid code that includes conventional zoning where continuity is desired and appropriate, and incorporate aspects of form-based zoning for mixed-use and non-residential areas. Potential revisions include: • Provide simple, clear diagrams that illustrate key concepts and requirements. • Strengthen design standards by making them direct, clear, and objective, and provide illustrations for key concepts. • Introduce form-based elements for mixed-use districts. • Eliminate referential language in which uses in one zone refer to uses in another zone, e.g., in the exiting code uses and structures permitted in the Industrial 1 Zone include "All uses, including special permit uses, permitted in the C Residence Zone" (70.118-700.B.1(l)). • Simplify the allowable use tables. Phase III: Create the zoning map to reflect the new regulations.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission; Common Council	Staff time; consultant

Actions	When	Who	Resources
ii. Review existing zoning districts to eliminate or replace zoning districts that do not contribute to achieve the plan vision. Potential revisions include: • Prepare a study to evaluate the industrial zoning districts against modern industrial requirements, market demand, future trends, and economic development goals. Create refined performance standards and update the use table (e.g., allow by-right warehouse and wholesale distribution facilities, boutique manufacturing, clean industry, etc.). Consider eliminating the LI-2 district. • Consider creating a new open space zoning district for permanently protected public parks and open spaces with building restricted to small-footprint recreation- or conservation-related structures. • Review the boutique/artisan manufacturing use requirements, especially the floor area restriction, to ensure that it allows for usable space to appeal to a variety of potential users. • Evaluate the B-1 and B2 zones to determine whether they can be combined or need basic design standards to promote walkability. • Evaluate the Research and Development zoning district to determine whether it can be consolidated with another district.	2019–2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
iii. Include place-making and functional design standards in the requirements for non-residential and mixed-use development. These standards should go beyond the basic requirements of "no adverse impact." Applicants should be required to show how they meet or contribute to city goals in the plan and land use principles. In addition, form-based standards graphically illustrate basic design parameters that promote a walkable mixed-use environment.	2019–2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
iv. Explore the pros and cons for the city and for applicants of requiring financial impact analysis on new special permit applications, regulations, zoning amendments, and zoning map changes.	2020-2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
v. Implement the recommendations of the Industrial Zones Study and the Norwalk Industrial Waterfront Land Use Plan. The City will further evaluate, modify as necessary and implement the recommendations within these studies.	2022-2029	Planning and Zoning	Staff time

Strategy

B. Delineate and use planning districts to advance planning throughout the city.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Formalize the nine districts identified in this plan (see Appendix B) or identify similar districts, using census tract boundaries to allow for ease of statistical analysis.** While Census tract boundaries may not exactly match perceived neighborhood boundaries, they increase data accuracy and simplify data collection.	2019-2020	Planning and Zoning	Staff time
ii. **Identify a person or persons in the planning department to serve as planning district liaisons.** This staff member will serve as the regular point of contact for each planning district, updating them on planning initiatives, development proposals, and other city initiatives.	2019-2020	Planning and Zoning	Staff time
iii. **Help organize neighborhood associations where they do not already exist.** Neighborhood associations provide an outlet for citizens to work together identifying their needs and cooperating with the city on planning efforts. They can build social capital among neighbors and increase a sense of community within the city.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning; Neighborhood Associations	Staff time
iv. **Create a neighborhood association registry.** A regularly updated registry will improve communication with local neighborhood groups and residents about planning initiatives and other important news.	2019	Planning and Zoning; Neighborhood Associations	Staff time

Planning Districts in Other Cities

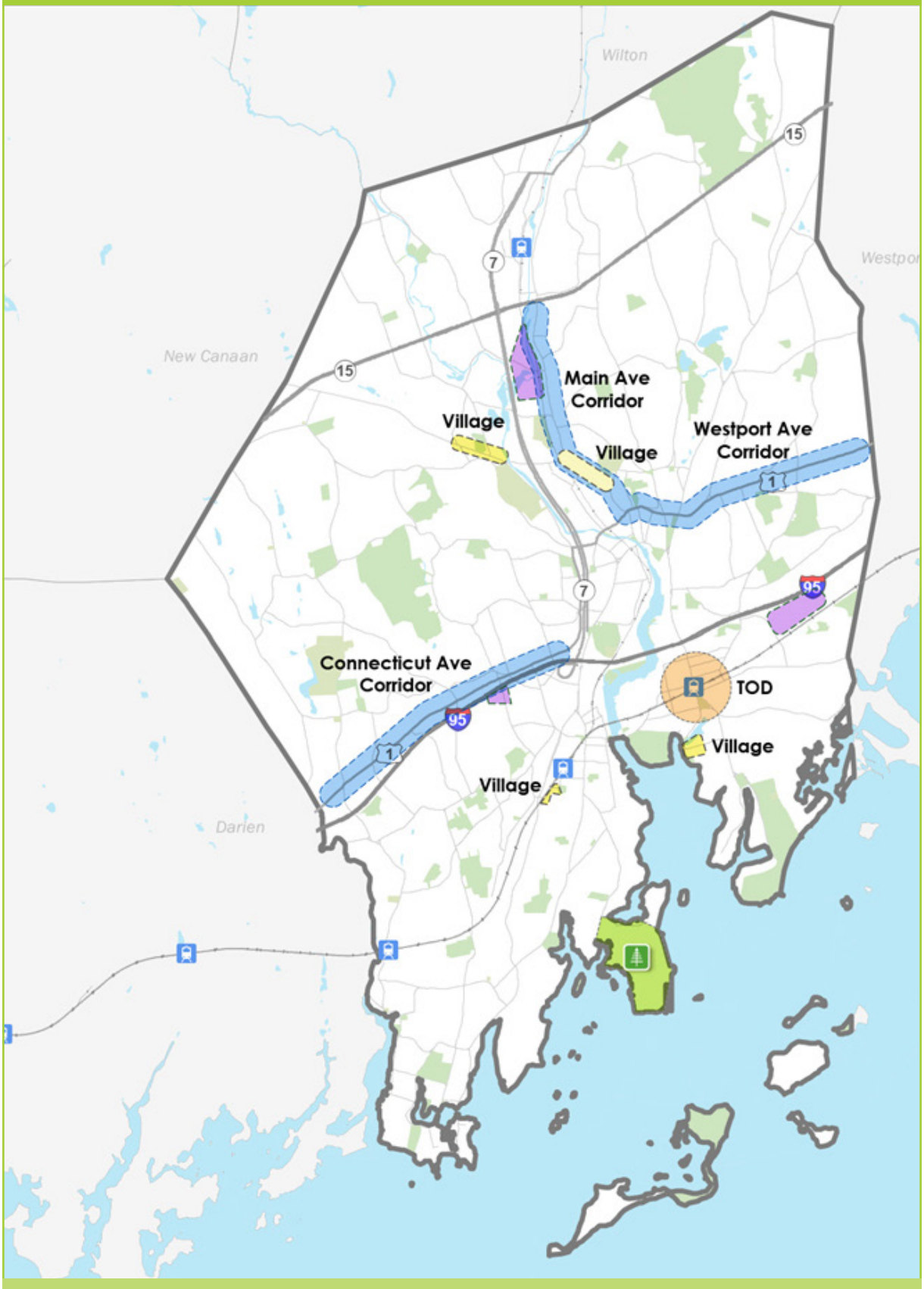
While both larger cities than Norwalk, these two examples illustrate the multiple benefits of planning districts:

Atlanta, Georgia "25 Neighborhood Planning Units or NPUs, which are citizen advisory councils that make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on zoning, land use, and other planning issues... It is also used as a way for citizens to receive information concerning all functions of city government" (www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/city-planning/office-of-zoning-development/neighborhood-planning-unit-npu)

Baltimore, Maryland Nine planning districts allow city planners to "work closely with other City agencies, private citizens, neighborhood and community based organization, and non-profits to ensure that sound planning principles are the basis for neighborhood planning efforts" (www.planning.baltimorecity.gov/planning-divisions/comprehensive)

Somerville, Massachusetts (population 81,000; comparable to Norwalk) "The ResiStat Program is Somerville's effort to bring data-driven discussions and decision-making to residents. It promotes civic engagement with online tools [...] and regular community meetings" (www.somervillema.gov/resistat)

Figure 12.6 Recommended Planning Studies



Source: City of Norwalk, Stantec

I. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Actions	Who
Hire a consultant or consultants to begin the process of rewriting the zoning code.	Planning and Zoning
Prepare the technical analysis and evaluation of existing zoning.	Planning and Zoning
Prepare an evaluation and study of Norwalk's industrial zones and consistency with city goals.	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission; Economic and Community Development

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Source: City of Norwalk

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Stewardship & Implementation

A. PUTTING THE PLAN TO WORK

This updated citywide plan/Plan of Conservation and Development for the City of Norwalk is neither a prediction nor a projection of the future. It is a plan based on what Norwalkers would like to protect and change over the next ten years and how they want to prepare for changing economic, social, and environmental conditions. The plan recognizes the existence of obstacles and unresolved practical questions and it provides strategies for overcoming the obstacles and answering the questions. But no plan is self-implementing. To implement the plan, City leaders, department staff, board and commission members, local institutions, residents, businesses and regional leaders must deepen and develop partnerships to achieve this plan's vision and program of action.

This chapter contains recommendations to enhance the City's capacity to implement the plan in partnership with others and an implementation matrix that summarizes the goals, strategies and actions found in the preceding chapters of the plan.

From the Principles

- **Act transparently.** Promote inclusive civic engagement and keep everyone informed about community conditions, options, and opportunities to participate in decision making.
- **Be cost-effective.** Establish cost-effective best practices and systems to support city services, infrastructure, and capital investments and make data-drive decisions using evidence-based solutions.
- **Pursue goals through partnerships.** Connect city government with local businesses and institutions, as well as neighboring towns and regional and metropolitan agencies to achieve the city's vision and goals.

C. GOALS & POLICIES

Goals	Policies
The Citywide Plan/POCD guides City of Norwalk decision making.	• City government activities are focused on achieving the goals of the POCD.
The POCD is incorporated into decision making in multiple ways.	• Use the plan in preparing and approving other planning and implementation activities by city agencies. • Use data to drive decision-making.
City government provides effective and meaningful access to information about government activities and performance.	• Support initiatives to make a wide array of user-friendly information, services, electronic forms, financial and project information easily available to residents, businesses, and others.

D. CURRENT CONDITIONS, KEY FINDINGS & CHALLENGES

The City of Norwalk as a place is a complex hybrid of historic and emerging urbanized centers with sub-urban-style neighborhoods that resemble towns. This hybrid character is part of its attractiveness and charm. The operations of City government reflect that hybrid character, combining a decentralized approach to government that is more characteristic of towns, while trying to meet the needs of urbanized areas that are rapidly changing. As discussed in previous chapters of the plan, Norwalk needs to create an effective culture of planning for the entire city and a more integrated city government that takes a systematic and data-driven approach to policy and decision making. The city also needs a more effective and sophisticated approach to communication and transparency that is inclusive and technologically savvy. As a city, Norwalk needs to increase its capacity for effective governance to maintain a competitive position as a place to live, work, play, and establish a business.

- Both government staff and citizens report that city government does not appear to have an integrated vision for the future, it operates in silos and internal communications on projects and programs is sometimes lacking. The new organizational structure of City government approved in 2018 promises to improve integration and communication among departments and staff.
- City government has lacked a culture of planning outside of the redevelopment areas so that there has been a tendency to be reactive to project proposals that appear on the doorstep, rather than actively pursuing an integrated program to achieve desired goals.
- Citizens report an inconsistent customer service orientation in government and a need for more effective enforcement.
- City data and information on implementation of plans and programs, as well as other government actions is sometimes difficult to find.

E. CONSISTENCY WITH THE STATE PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT.

Under CGS Ch. 126, sec. 8-23 and 8-35a, the Norwalk POCD must note any inconsistencies with the Six Growth Management Principles in the State POCD. The State POCD for 2018-2023, now in draft form, was not approved during the 2018 session of the General Assembly, so the 2013-2018 State POCD remains in force as this POCD is being written.. However, in both documents the Six Growth Management Principles are identical. This Norwalk 2019–2029 POCD Update is consistent with these principles.

- **Growth Management Principle 1: Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure.** Because Norwalk is nearly built-out under existing zoning, to reach the community's goals, the plan recommends a combination of preservation of existing land uses with redevelopment of underutilized areas.
- **Growth Management Principle 2: Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs.** The plan recommends development and implementation of an integrated housing policy for households of different types across the income range, market-rate and below market-rate (affordable), including additional mixed-use and mixed-income opportunities.
- **Growth Management Principle 3: Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options.** The plan recommends continuation of Norwalk's planning and implementation of transportation-oriented development and mixed-use clusters along major road corridors.
- **Growth Management Principle 4: Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands.** The plan recommends strategies to enhance protection of natural and historic resources, including open space and historic sites, as well as support of cultural resources and the arts.

- **Growth Management Principle 5: Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety.** The plan recommends strategies to improve inland and coastal water quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and plan for the impacts of climate change.
- **Growth Management Principle 6: Promote Integrated Planning Across all Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis.** The plan recommends strategies to reduce "silos" in city government, promote inter-departmental communication, use the POCD to guide operational and capital plans, and continue partnerships with regional and state agencies and institutions.

F. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

GOAL 1

The citywide plan/POCD guides City of Norwalk decision making.

Policies:

- City government activities are focused on achieving the goals of the POCD.

Strategy

A. Establish public review of progress in implementing the POCD.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Review implementation progress twice a year.** The purpose of these reviews is to evaluate how the plan is being used; the way that the plan vision, principles, and goals have shaped decision-making; successes and obstacles to implementation; and any new circumstances that may affect implementation. Staff should perform a preliminary first review in March/April of progress on goals and provide recommendations from departments relevant to the plan. The second review should be a joint public hearing between the Planning Commission, Mayor, and Common Council to assess progress on achieving the plan goals. This public review of progress would be appropriate in advance of annual decision making on the capital budget. Regular review will keep the plan current as officials and the public are reminded of its contents and can discuss any needed changes.	Biannually	Planning Commission; Zoning Commission; Mayor and Council	Staff time

GOAL 2

The POCD is incorporated into decision making in multiple ways.

Policies:

- Use the plan in preparing and approving other planning and implementation activities by city agencies.

Strategy

A. Deploy staff, resources, and training to support implementation of the POCD.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Use the plan annually in preparing and approving departmental work plans, operational budgets, and capital improvement plans.** Use the plan for capital improvement programming, and for developing departmental budgets and work plans. This helps to ensure a certain level of understanding throughout City departments of what is in the plan and how it is being implemented. A statement of how the budget or work plan reflects the priorities of the POCD should be required. The Finance Department began this for departmental budgets in 2017.	Annually	All departments	Staff time
ii. **Develop a user-friendly system of checklists for boards, commissions, and departments to use to compare proposals with the goals of the POCD.** This will assist in easy review of consistency with the plan and make it an integral part of day to day work.	2019	Planning and Zoning	Staff time
iii. **Use the plan in working with state and regional agencies.** The plan should be used to support requests for grant funding, regional transportation planning, and similar efforts.	2019	Grant writer; all relevant departments	Staff time
iv. **Use data to drive decision making.** Departments and boards and commissions should establish how success should be measured and establish indicators and quantifiable goals consistent with the POCD to track performance and progress towards the goals.	2019 and ongoing	All relevant departments, boards and commissions	Staff time
v. **Identify plan-related actions on agendas of the Common Council, the Zoning Commission, and the Planning Commission, and, as appropriate, other boards and commissions.** Sometimes residents and others are unaware of implementation actions and believe a plan is "gathering dust on the shelf" when, in fact, it is being implemented. An icon or note on agendas of decision-making bodies is a systematic way of showing that the plan is being implemented.	2019 and ongoing	Council; Planning Commission; Zoning Commission; Communications Manger; and relevant others	Staff time

vi. **Publicize actions and activities that implement the POCD.** Actions by the City and others that implement the POCD should be publicized as such, giving credibility to the planning process. Publicizing the connection between POCD recommendations and implementation actions will require information-sharing and communication.	2019 and ongoing	City information office	Staff time
vii. **Explore the feasibility and benefits for Norwalk of implementing a "Budgeting for Outcomes" (priority-based budgeting) system.** The Government Finance Officers Association has endorsed this approach as a best practice and made available a variety of resources and support, including technical assistance. Budgeting for Outcomes is a strategy to create better alignment between what the public wants and what government provides through greater transparency and accountability.	2022- 2025	Finance Department; Mayor and Common Council	Staff time; possible consultant

GOAL 3

City government provides effective and meaningful access to information about government activities and performance.

Policies:

- Support initiatives to make a wide array of user-friendly information, services, electronic forms, financial and project information easily available to residents, businesses, and others.

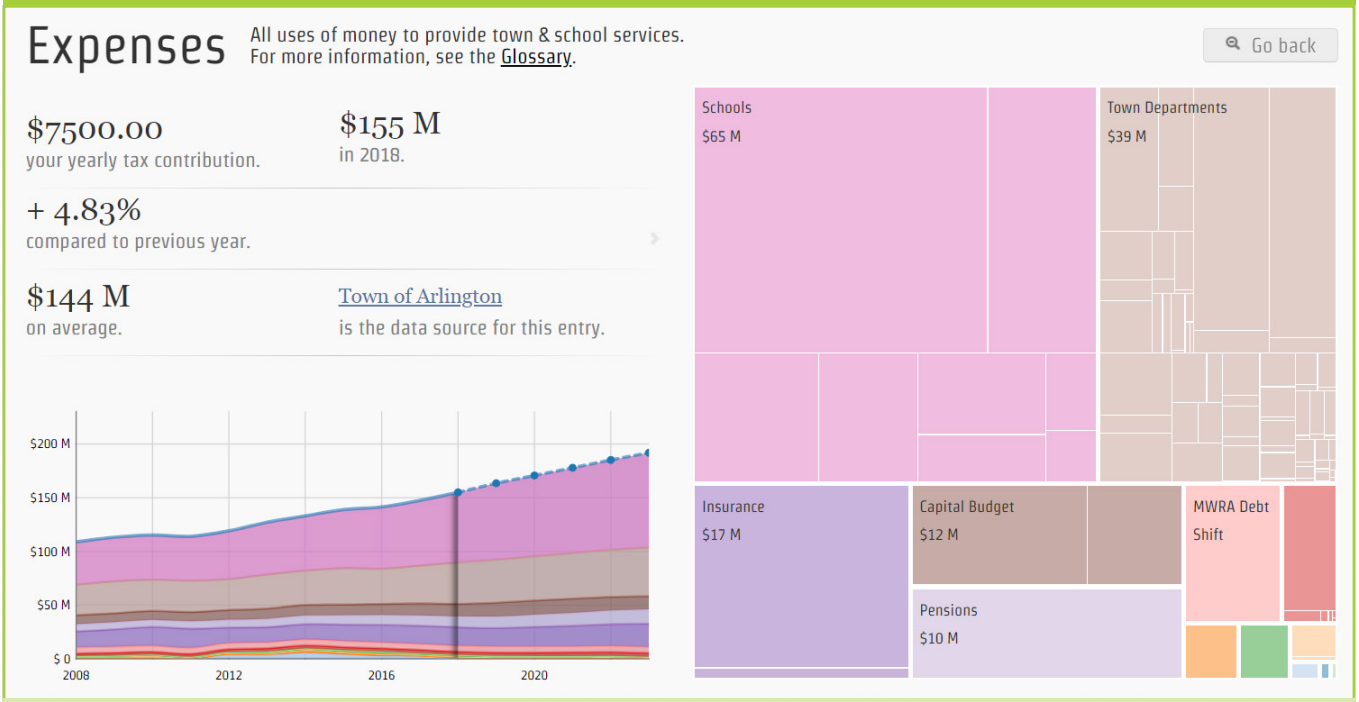
Strategy

A. Measure government performance and make information available to the public.

Actions	When	Who	Resources
i. **Designate a staff person to be responsible for consistency, accuracy, and timeliness of information on the city web site.** Depending on the department or agency, the City's website sometimes has limited or outdated information that is not user-friendly. It is often difficult for departments with limited staff to have the time or skill to make sure that there is timely posting of information. The existing documents list on the website sometimes has inscrutable titles that are not public-friendly.	2019	Mayor; Communications Manager; Information Technology Department	Staff time; possible consultant

Actions	When	Who	Resources
ii. **Create an online open data portal or information warehouse to make data and information available to the public and enhance the E-government capacity of Norwalk city government.** An example of a municipal data portal is the Somerville (MA) portal: data.somervillema.gov. Somerville, at 81,000 people, is similar in size to Norwalk.	2025	Mayor's office; IT	Staff time; funds for off the shelf template and consultant assistance
iii. **Publicize and take full advantage of online utilities and apps to aid city government.**	2019 and ongoing	Mayor's office	Staff time
iv. **Make it a high priority to put user-friendly information on city finances and projects online.** Many communities have adopted web-based systems, such as Visual Budget, that show budgets in various visual formats, map-based project information, and so on—providing simple and easy to access information for taxpayers. For an example of a Visual Budget see: www.arlingtonvisualbudget.org. The Town of Simsbury has implemented "Open Simsbury," a different kind of visual budget: www.simsbury.opengov.com	2021	Finance Department; IT	Staff time; funds for off the shelf template and possible consultant assistance
v. **Make the City's eGovernment strategy and permit streamlining efforts more public-friendly.** Norwalk already offers its residents and businesses a number of ways to transact business online. It is also expanding the use of an online system that shows permits and complaints by property. However, the public-facing site with this information is not well-publicized. The City should make the existence of this more obvious on the city website and identify any other services that it can offer online.	2019 and ongoing	Finance Department; IT	Staff time; possible consultant or additional system costs
vi. **Explore the capacity and merits of combining the Planning and Zoning Commissions into a single body.**	2020	Mayor; Common Council; Planning Commission; Zoning Commission; Planning and Zoning staff	Staff time

Figure 13.1 Example page from a municipal visual budget



Source: http://arlingtonvisualbudget.org/expenses

G. GETTING STARTED: EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Early action items can be completed in the first one to three years of the ten-year implementation period.

Actions	Who
Designate a staff member with responsibility for POCD implementation coordination.	Planning and Zoning
Use the plan in developing annual budgets and work plans.	Finance; Planning and Zoning; all departments
Establish annual public hearings on POCD progress.	Planning and Zoning; Planning Commission; Common Council

H. IMPLEMENTATION

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 3 – PROSPERITY AND OPPORTUNITY					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. Norwalk has the right policies, infrastructure, and leadership for business growth and development **Policies:** • Support dedicated professional and proactive economic development leadership in City government • Support establishment of efficient and transparent permitting processes • Support development of infrastructure and amenities attractive to businesses and workers	**A. Ensure that the new Department of Economic and Community Development has strong economic development leadership in close coordination with Planning and Zoning, the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, the Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce, and regional economic development groups.**	i. ***Hire a new senior economic development official to represent and lead Norwalk's economic development initiatives.***	2019	City of Norwalk; Mayor's Office	New staff: Department head; Business Development and Tourism staff
		ii. ***Develop high-quality economic development marketing materials and a website to promote Norwalk's economic assets and opportunities to external audiences (site selectors, state officials, trade associations, developers).***	2019-2022	Economic and Community Development staff; IT department	Staff time with consultant assistance
		iii. ***Implement a business outreach initiative to better understand and anticipate employer needs and opportunities (in coordination with the Chamber).***	2020-2029	Economic Development staff	Staff time
		iv. *Develop an action-oriented strategy to enhance the non-auto transportation (mobility) connections between SoNo, Norwalk Center, and the Merritt 7 areas.*	2020-2025	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Economic Development	Staff time; potential capital improvements
		v. *Enhance Norwalk's participation in the Fairfield Five and other regional economic development initiatives within Fairfield County, Connecticut, and the New York City Metropolitan Area.*	2019-2029	Economic Development	Staff time
		vi. *Improve and maintain Norwalk's attractiveness as a business location and as a place to live for employees: the public realm, parks, infrastructure, schools, and enhanced amenities.*	2019-2029	Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time; consultant assistance; operational and capital improvements
2. Norwalk has a diversified economy with a larger business tax base and more high-quality, good jobs for residents.	A. Create a multi-faceted strategy to support entrepreneurs, startups, and tourism, as well as regional target industries, to grow new and existing	i. ***Develop a small business / entrepreneurial initiative in Norwalk,*** *including City support for actions such as relocating the Fairfield County Makers' Guild to a higher visibility location, developing more co-working spaces (in addition to SoNo spaces), implementing small business incentives and financing, and creating conditions for a Norwalk entrepreneurial ecosystem.*	2019-2022	Mayor; Common Council; Economic Development; Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce	Staff time; possible consultant assistance
		ii. ***Convene a "blue ribbon panel" of local business***	2019-	City of	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 3 – PROSPERITY AND OPPORTUNITY					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
Policies: • Seek to retain, grow and attract a wide-range of businesses to increase Norwalk's competitiveness and the grand list • Seek businesses that provide local high-quality jobs with opportunities for growth and advancement	businesses.	***owners, including businesses at Merritt 7, SoNo, Norwalk Center and other areas to provide recommendations for Norwalk to attract businesses to the city.***	2020	Norwalk; Mayor's Office; Economic Development	
		iii. ***Study industrial zoning and update zoning and land use regulations to allow and encourage a wider set of uses in targeted industrial zones****, focused on market opportunities in warehouse/logistics, brewing/distilling, artist/artisan uses, and other light industrial uses that do not have detrimental externalities on nearby areas.*	2019-2020	Economic Development; Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission	Staff time and consultant assistance
		iv. *Focus on industry growth in regional target industries, partnering with the Fairfield Five to promote professional/technical services, finance, tourism/recreation, and niche industrial users.*	2019-2022	Economic Development and Regional Partners	Staff time
		v. *Re-brand and promote Wall St and SoNo areas for small to mid-size office users in the areas of technology, software, graphic design, and other creative economy activities priced out of other markets but wanting proximity to NYC, supported by business incentives with clear and consistent rules for transparency.*	2019-2022	Economic Development; Redevelopment Agency; Chamber of Commerce	Staff time; possible consultant assistance; partnership with NYC planning
		vi. *Develop a cohesive tourism strategy by optimizing Norwalk's historic, cultural and historic resources, coastal location, unique waterfront areas, Norwalk River and other natural assets for an enhanced set of recreation, tourism, economic, and transportation uses.*	2020-2029	Economic Development; contributions from the Historical Commission and the Arts Commission; Chamber of Commerce	Staff time; commission including Historical, Arts Harbor Management, etc.; possible consultant
		vii. *Expand workforce housing options, including conducting a citywide housing study and reviewing the existing workforce housing regulations, to allow more employees to live in Norwalk and avoid costly commutes from distant locations.*	2020-2029	Economic Development; Redevelopment Agency; Planning and Zoning; Housing Authority; Fair	Staff time; possible consultant

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 3 – PROSPERITY AND OPPORTUNITY					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
				Housing Commission	
3. Continue to strengthen Norwalk's urban core with a mix of uses to attract residents, visitors, and businesses. **Policies:** • Invest in the urban core to attract businesses and workers, especially millennials • Pursue a college or university center to locate downtown • Build on Norwalk's urban character, waterfront, and transit amenities.	**A. Enhance business attraction and expansion tools in urban core areas**.	i. ***Make tax incentive policies consistent and transparent.***	2019-2022	Mayor; Common Council; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
		ii. *Create and implement storefront activation programs to help provide vibrancy and near-term momentum for SoNo and Wall Street.*	2019-2022	Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
		iii. *Explore strengthening Norwalk Center's Main Street Program to manage programs and events for a portion of the Wall Street Area. https://ctmainstreet.org/*	2019-2022	Redevelopment Agency; Norwalk 2.0	Staff time
		iv. *Attract a higher education presence in Norwalk Center.*	2022-2029	Mayor; Economic Development; NCC	Staff time; possible consultant
		v. *Implement any parking improvements recommended in the parking study for SoNo and Norwalk Center with better signage, simpler payment options, and so on.*	2019-2022	Parking Authority; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
		vi. *Continue implementation of transit-oriented development (TOD) and concentrate a range of mixed-use opportunities for sustainable live/work/play communities in the City.*	2020-2029	Planning and Zoning; Economic Development; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
		vii. ***Track and evaluate development and business incentives, partnering with the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) to set clear criteria, and project scoring based on job creation, private investment, ROI, and so on.***	2020 and ongoing	Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
		viii. *Review and update if needed the Harbor Management Plan to evaluate maritime industries and uses and employment related opportunities.*	2021-2023	Harbor Management, Planning & Zoning	Staff time; possible consultant
		ix. *Conduct a study and needs assessment of the industrially zoned land to identify uses, locations and land areas needed to accommodate, "clean"*	2019-2021	Planning & Zoning; Economic	Staff time; consultant

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 3 – PROSPERITY AND OPPORTUNITY					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
		industrial growth.		Development	

CHAPTER 3 – PROSPERITY AND OPPORTUNITY	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Create a system of communications and coordination between departments and divisions and with business and other stakeholders*	Department of Economic and Community Development
ii. *Hire an experienced professional economic development staff person for Business Development and Tourism to market the city to business, visitors and residents*	Mayor; Department of Economic and Community Development
iii. *Establish a business retention program with regular visits and contacts.*	Business Development staff
iv. *Establish a city web page to market Norwalk to businesses.*	Business Development staff and IT
v. *Align incentive policies with economic goals and ensure they are consistent, transparent, and measurable.*	Department of Economic and Community Development; Redevelopment Agency; Mayor and Council
vi. *Pitch an article on Norwalk as a tourism destination in the New York Times and other regional media.*	Business Development/Tourism staff

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 4 – HOUSING CHOICE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. Norwalk has a neighborhood and housing strategy that maintains a variety of neighborhood types and housing choices through a variety of mechanisms. **Policies:** • Support housing policies that provide	**A. Create a housing policy and implementation infrastructure within City government.**	***i. Designate or hire a planner for the Planning Department who has expertise in housing.***	2019-2020	Mayor and Council; Director of Planning and Zoning	New staff or designate existing staff
		ii. Create a Housing Policy Advisory Committee to develop and advise on housing policies that support Norwalk's quality of life, economic development, and affordable housing goals.	2019-2020	Mayor and Council	Staff time
		iii. Move responsibility for the City's federal housing and community development block grant planning and funding from the Redevelopment Agency to the	2019-2021	Mayor and Council	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 4 – HOUSING CHOICE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
housing for Norwalk's households across a range of preferences and household incomes. • Preserve and maintain the character of traditional single-family neighborhoods. • Support housing policies that promote higher-density housing near existing and future employment centers.		*Planning Department and the housing planner.*			
		iv. Market the City of Norwalk as a place to live.	2020 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time; possible consultant
		v. Develop a Norwalk Housing Plan that establishes a set of housing data to monitor and analyze, a policy framework, and an implementation plan.	2019-2021	Housing Planner with consultant and supported by the Policy Advisory Committee	Staff time; Consultant
		vi. Encourage the establishment of neighborhood organizations where they do not exist today.	Ongoing	Planning Department	Staff time
	B. Maintain the predominantly single-family character of established single-family neighborhoods.	*i. Create a system to work with neighborhood residents to identify priority improvements to maintain their neighbor-hoods.*	2020-21	Planning Department; Finance Department; Public Works; other departments as relevant	Staff time
		ii. As part of a rewrite of the zoning code, establish transition design standards for commercial and mixed-use areas in corridors on the edges of traditional single-family neighborhoods.	2019-2022	Planning Department; Planning and Zoning Commissions	Staff time; consultant
	C. Promote diverse housing types, such as townhouses, condos, live-work units, and rental apartments in Norwalk's urban core, at transit-oriented locations and in mixed-use clusters on major corridors, in village districts when appropriate, and	*i. Continue to encourage the development of vibrant transit-oriented districts within walking distance of the South Norwalk, East Norwalk, and Merritt 7 train stations.*	Ongoing	Planning Department; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time; consultant as needed
		ii. Explore adding live-work units, artist/artisan housing, and townhouses as part of the residential mix in Norwalk Center, including use of underused historic buildings and storefronts.	2019-2029	Redevelopment Agency; Economic and Community Development Department; Planning and Zoning Commissions	Staff time; possible consultant
		iii. Encourage redevelopment in mixed-use clusters,	2019-2029	Economic and	Staff time;

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 4 – HOUSING CHOICE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
	through redevelopment.	*including housing, of suburban-style commercial land uses along major corridors such as Route 1.*		Community Development Department; Planning and Zoning Commissions	zoning and urban design consultants
		iv. Identify potential markets for downsizing by empty-nesters and aging seniors who want to stay in Norwalk and encourage housing for that market.	2019-2023	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time – housing planner
		v. As part of a zoning re-write, explore innovative housing types such as cottage communities, and create zoning and design standards.	2019-2022	Planning Department; Planning and Zoning Commissions; Common Council	Staff time; consultant
	D. Seek solutions to provide sufficient safe and affordable housing for low-income and very low-income residents.	***i. As part of the Housing Policy Plan, develop an integrated citywide strategy for affordable housing in Norwalk***	2019-2020	Housing Planner; Housing Authority; Housing Policy Advisory Committee members	Staff time; possible consultant
		ii. Continue to meet or exceed the state's 10% goal for affordable housing.	Ongoing	Mayor and Council; Housing Policy Advisory Committee; Planning & Zoning	Staff time
		iii. Continue the inclusionary zoning program.	Ongoing	Planning Department; Zoning Commission; Council	Staff time
		iv. Prepare the HUD-required "Assessment of Fair Housing," to replace the current "Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing" process and	2019-2020	Fair Housing Officer; Fair Housing	Staff time; possible consultant

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 4 – HOUSING CHOICE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
		incorporate it into the citywide Housing Strategy and the Consolidated Plan.		Advisory Commission; Housing Planner	
		v. Continue the Housing Authority's two-tier housing voucher (Section 8) program.	Ongoing	Housing Authority	Staff time
		vi. Protect existing affordable units by ensuring continued affordability of existing units whose affordability contracts may be expiring.	Ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time
		vii. Explore creating a rental security deposit guarantee program.	2019-2021	Housing Authority; Housing Planner; Mayor and Council	Staff time
		viii. Expand the South Norwalk Renovation program for 2- to 4-unit housing aimed at owner-occupants to include other parts of the city.	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time; acquisition and rehab costs (financing from state or other programs)
		ix. Expand credit-curing programs.	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time; nonprofit organizations
		x. Explore innovative affordable housing options such as creation of a Community Land Trust or Limited Equity Cooperatives.	2019-2029	Housing Planner; Housing Policy Advisory Committee; Fair Housing Advisory Commission	Staff time; nonprofit organizations
2. Incorporate healthy lifestyles in city design and improvements. **Policy:** • Include health	A. Incorporate health metrics into planning and project evaluation.	*i. Consider creating an advisory Health Impact Statement for use when adopting citywide, district, and system plans, and in the permitting process for projects meeting a defined project size.*	2019 – 2022	Health Department; Economic and Community Development Department; Zoning Commission	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 4 – HOUSING CHOICE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
impacts for residents of all ages when evaluating programs and projects.		*ii. Prepare an Aging in Norwalk report to identify future needs to provide a supportive city environment for seniors to help them age in place*	2022 – 2024	Planning Department; Senior Services; Health Department; Transportation, Mobility and Parking	Staff time
		iii. Support improvements and design standards that encourage walking and biking access to city and neighborhood destinations, such as village retail areas, parks, and schools.	2019 and ongoing	Planning Department; Bike/Walk Commission	Staff time
		iv. Expand the number of NorWALKer routes.	2019-2029	Health Department	Staff time

CHAPTER 4 – HOUSING CHOICE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Designate or hire a housing planner.*	Mayor; Department of Economic and Community Development
ii. *Establish a multi-stakeholder Housing Policy Advisory Committee for regular policy guidance on housing policy that includes both market-rate and affordable housing.*	Department of Economic and Community Development
iii. *Prepare a housing policy white paper as the foundation for a Housing Policy Plan—identifying the elements for the plan in terms of data, policy options, types of housing solutions, administration of housing functions, and so on.*	Department of Economic and Community Development

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 5 – A COMMUNITY COMMITTED TO LIFE-LONG EDUCATION					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. The Norwalk public school system is the most successful city school system in Connecticut, with	**A. Continue implementation of the NPS Strategic Plan and publicize NPS performance,**	*i. Continue implementation of the NPS Strategic Plan and develop subsequent plans.*	Ongoing	Board of Education; Superintendent	Staff time; funding
		ii. Make the State of the Schools report issued in 2018 an annual report to parents and the community.	Ongoing	Superintendent	Staff time; funding

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 5 – A COMMUNITY COMMITTED TO LIFE-LONG EDUCATION					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
students exceeding state average achievement and high-need students having the smallest achievement gap. **Policies:** • Continue to support the NPS Strategic Plan to improve system performance.	**improvements, and benefits of diversity**	*iii. Create a plan to market the Norwalk Public Schools to residents, employers, realtors, and others.*	2019 and ongoing	Board of Education; Housing Planner; Chamber of Commerce; Mayor's Office, Economic and Community Development; Planning	Staff time; funding
		iv. Explore creation of new educational programs.	2019-2020	Board of Education; Superintendent	Staff time; funding
2. The Modern Schools for a Growing City plan provides new and renovated schools to alleviate overcrowding and better serve students. **Policies:** • Support the facilities improvement plan for the school system.	**A. Implement the facilities improvement plan over time.**	*i. Implement Phase 1 of the plan and prepare for Phase 2.*	2019-2021	Board of Education	Staff time; capital funding.
		ii. Implement Phase 2 of the plan.	2021-2025	Board of Education	Staff time; capital funding.
		iii. Prepare a demographic study based on the 2020 census to analyze enrollments and project the next ten years of enrollments.	2025-2029	Board of Education	Staff time; consultant
		iv. Support sustained maintenance and renovation of all schools. Implement the plan to air condition all schools.	2019-2029	Board of Education	Staff time; capital funding
3. Norwalk Community College (NCC) continues innovative	A. Expand communication between NCC and	*i. Schedule an annual presentation on NCC's impact on the City at a joint meeting of the Common Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Commission.*	2019 and ongoing	NCC; Council and Commissions	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 5 – A COMMUNITY COMMITTED TO LIFE-LONG EDUCATION					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
programs to serve Norwalk and the region. **Policies:** • Continue to work closely with NCC to benefit the Norwalk community.	the City.	*ii. Work with NCC to create a downtown presence. NCC could have the most impact on Norwalk's revitalization areas by bringing a program or activity space to Norwalk Center, especially in an arts and culture district.*	2019-2024	Economic and Community Development; Planning Department; Arts Commission; NCC	Staff Time; possible capital funding
4. Norwalk is a Center of Education, Research and Innovation. **Policies:** • Coordinate closely with NCC, local and state leaders, and anchor institutions to realize the goal.	**A. Attract a higher education presence to downtown Norwalk.**	*i. Work collaboratively to promote the city and actively recruit a higher education institution looking to establish a presence in Fairfield County.*	2019 and ongoing	NCC; Mayor; Economic & Community Development	Staff time; possible capital funding
	B. Continue NPS and NCC public-private partnerships, working with private industry as well as educational institutions and community groups.	*i. Continue to work with Norwalk ACTS in supporting the school system for "cradle to career" success.*	2019 and ongoing	NPS; Norwalk ACTS	Staff time
		ii. Work with all stakeholders in the community to build strong, sustainable public-private partnerships.	2019 and ongoing	NPS; NCC; Economic & Community Development; nonprofit and for-profit organizations	Staff time

CHAPTER 5 – A COMMUNITY COMMITTED TO LIFE-LONG EDUCATION	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Implement Phase I of the Facilities Master Plan*	Board of Education

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 6 – PRESERVING AND PROMOTING OUR HISTORIC HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. Norwalk protects its most important historic resources and encourages adaptive reuse of historic sites to	A. Preserve the integrity and character of historic structures, historic landscapes, and cultural resources sites within	*i. Continue the successful maintenance and management of city-owned historic properties.*	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Common Council	Capital funding as needed
		ii. Designate a staff person from the Planning and Zoning Department to act as staff and liaison to the	2020 and ongoing	Planning Department;	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 6 – PRESERVING AND PROMOTING OUR HISTORIC HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
maintain and enrich the city's character. **Policy:** • Support a systematic approach to historic resources planning, protection and heritage tourism.	the City of Norwalk.	*Historical Commission.*		Historical Commission	
		iii. Develop a Historic Preservation Plan to establish policies, practices, and criteria for preservation of buildings and sites important to the history of Norwalk.	2022-2025	Historical Commission; Historic Society; Norwalk Preservation Trust; Planning Department	Staff time; consultant
		iv. Continue to identify and document significant historic resources with state-funded surveys – buildings, structures, and sites 50 years old or older.	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historic Society; Norwalk Preservation Trust	Staff time; possible consultant or volunteers
		v. Prepare and submit buildings and districts for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and State Register of Historic Places as part of the Historic Preservation Plan.	2022 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historic Society; Norwalk Preservation Trust	Staff time; consultant
		vi. Become a Certified Local Government (CLG).	2024-2029	Historical Commission; Planning Department	Staff time
		vii. Consider using PastPerfect Online to make selected items in historic collections available to the public.	2024-2029	Historical Society; Historical Commission	Staff time
	B. Establish one or more local historic districts.	*i. Identify potential local historic districts and work with property owners to explain the advantages and responsibilities of being in a local historic district.*	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historic Society; Norwalk Preservation Trust	
		ii. Review and amend the existing ordinance on local historic districts (Norwalk Code Chapter 56) to give the existing Historical Commission (Norwalk Code Chapter 57A) the role of granting Certificates of Appropriateness in local historic districts.	2019	Planning Department; Historical Commission; Common	

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 6 – PRESERVING AND PROMOTING OUR HISTORIC HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
				Council	
	C. Improve Village District historic design standards and consider creating additional Village Districts	*i. Strengthen existing Village District design standards to clearly identify the unique design elements or historic features that establish the context for renovations and new construction.*	2022-2025	Planning and Zoning Department; Historical Commission	Staff time; consultant
		ii. Study the potential for additional village districts. See Chapter 14, Goal 2, Strategy A for potential locations.	2025-2029	Planning and Zoning Department; Historical Commission;	Staff time; possible consultant
	D. Revise zoning and development regulations to promote preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures.	*i. Develop a preservation checklist for City boards and commissions when they are reviewing development proposals that might affect buildings that are over 50 or years old, regardless of whether they are officially designated as historic.*	2022-2025	Historical Commission; Planning Department	Staff time
		ii. As part of the Historic Preservation Plan, develop priority categories or criteria for historic properties outside of local historic districts to be used in preservation efforts and demolition delay cases.	2022-2025	Historical Commission	
	E. Seek grants and funding for historic preservation projects.	*i. Apply for historic preservation grants from the State Historic Preservation Office and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, as well as other funding sources.*	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission	Staff time
		ii. Promote the use of preservation tools including Federal and State tax credits and preservation easements.	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historical Society; Preservation Trust	Staff time
	F. Expand public awareness of Norwalk's historic heritage, character, and resources.	*i. Enhance the presence of the Historical Commission on the City web site with links to other historical and preservation organizations.*	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; IT Department	Staff time
		ii. Make all Historic Resource Inventory documents available on the City website, ideally in a City Data Warehouse or Open Data Portal (see Chapter 15).	2020 and ongoing	Historical Commission; IT	Staff time
		iii. Promote the Historical Society's historic building plaque program to encourage property owners to identify their historic buildings.	2019 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Historical Society	Staff time; Historical Society

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 6 – PRESERVING AND PROMOTING OUR HISTORIC HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
		iv. Send notices once a year to property owners in National Register listed districts or individual properties to raise awareness about the historic value of their properties and encouraging voluntary consultation with the Historical Commission when making renovations.	2021 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Planning and Zoning Department	Staff time; printing and mailing expenses
		v. Revive an award program for historic preservation by private property owners.	2019 and ongoing	Preservation Trust	Preservation Trust
	G. Promote heritage and arts tourism in Norwalk.	*i. Develop a heritage tourism plan as part of a Tourism Plan with leadership from the City's economic development staff and the Historical Commission, and collaboration from the Chamber of Commerce, the Arts Commission, the Historical Society, and other stakeholders.*	2022-2023	Economic and Community Development Department; Historical Commission; Arts Commission	Staff time; possible consultant
		ii. Expand public activities such as historic walks, building visits, and so on.	2019 and ongoing	Preservation Trust	Preservation Trust
2. Norwalk has a thriving arts and culture community. **Policy:** • Provide a framework to connect and support arts and culture activities.	**A. Create a Norwalk Arts and Culture Plan.**	*i. Designate a City staff member to serve as staff to the Arts Commission and act as liaison with City departments and with non-profit groups to organize and promote arts and culture projects and programs.*	2019	Economic and Community Development Department; Arts Commission	Staff time
		ii. Consider creating a City Office of Arts and Culture to coordinate planning and implementation of arts and culture policies. The Arts Commission would be the policy-making group for this office.	2020	Economic and Community Development Department; Arts Commission; Common Council	Staff time; operational funding
		iii. Inventory the arts and culture community in Norwalk, including individual artists, musicians, and performers, galleries and venues, related businesses, festivals, zoning and other ordinances that affect the arts, and so on.	2019 and ongoing	Arts Commission	Staff and volunteer time
		iv. Develop a strategic plan for arts and culture that is focused on enhancing Norwalk's identity as destination for arts and culture.	2025-2029	Economic and Community Development	Staff time; consultant

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 6 – PRESERVING AND PROMOTING OUR HISTORIC HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
				Department; Arts Commission	
	B. Designate an Arts and Culture District in Norwalk Center.	*i. Work with stakeholders, including property owners, to identify and zone an appropriate area in Norwalk Center to provide incentives for artists' studios, live-work options, gallery spaces, performance spaces, and so on.*	2020-2021	Economic and Community Development Department; Arts Commission; Planning Commission	Staff time
		ii. As part of the zoning rewrite, amend zoning to allow for incubator and fabrication space, as well as live/work.	2020-2021	Zoning Commission; Economic and Community Development; Arts Commission	Staff time; consultant
		iii. Assist the Fairfield Makers Group and/or similar makers' organizations, artisan operations, and so on, to move to Norwalk Center.	2020 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time
		iv. Organize an arts program for empty shop windows and related events, such as "window gallery" walks and/or performances in empty shop fronts, to attract people to Norwalk Center.	2019 and ongoing	Arts Commission; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
		v. Promote arts, entertainment and cultural activities and venues to cities and towns outside of Norwalk.	2019 and ongoing	Arts Commission; Economic and Community Development	Staff time
3. Norwalk is known for its public art and public arts programming. **Policy:** • Commit city resources to public	A. Create consistent funding for public art and public arts programming.	*i. Create a 1% for Art program as part of City infrastructure projects or by designating a percentage of Parking Authority receipts for public art or public art programming.*	2020	Common Council; Arts Commission; Transportation, Mobility and Parking	Part of capital funding or Parking Authority revenue
		ii. As part of the zoning rewrite, include provision of public art among elements for which developers of commercial and mixed-use buildings can receive	2019-2021	Economic and Community Development	Staff time; consultant

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 6 – PRESERVING AND PROMOTING OUR HISTORIC HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
arts.		*incentives.*		Department; Zoning Commission; Common Council	

CHAPTER 6 – PRESERVING AND PROMOTING OUR HISTORIC HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Designate a staff person from the Planning and Zoning Department to support the Historical Commission.*	Planning and Zoning
ii. *Develop a structure for a Historic Preservation Plan.*	Historical Commission
iii. *Designate a staff person from the Planning and Zoning Department to support the Arts Commission.*	Planning and zoning
iv. *Inventory and survey the arts and culture community in Norwalk.*	Arts Commission

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 7 – ENHANCING OPEN SPACE, PARK, TRAIL AND RECREATION SYSTEMS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. Norwalk aims to have the best city park and recreation system in Connecticut. **Policy:** • Support a systematic and integrated approach to open space, park, and recreation planning and management • Support development of a connected green and blue network of	**A. Develop a parks, open space, and recreation system plan, including a management plan, that emphasizes connectivity and promotes healthy lifestyles.**	***i. Organize a committee led by the Conservation Commission to create a Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation system plan.***	2019	Conservation Commission; Recreation, Parks & Cultural Affairs Commission; Conservation and Recreation staff; Planning Commission/staff; Historical Commission; environmental, conservation, and recreation representatives	Staff time
		ii. Survey the public about open space, park and	2019	Conservation	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 7 – ENHANCING OPEN SPACE, PARK, TRAIL AND RECREATION SYSTEMS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
parks, open space, and trails. • Avoid development, encroachments or other activities that would affect opportunities for beneficial use and enjoyment of existing city parks and open space.		*recreation use, satisfaction, and desires for the future.*		Commission; Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation System Plan Committee	
		iii. Create a ten-year plan, with public participation.	2022-2023	Conservation Commission; Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation System Plan Committee	Staff time; consultant
		iv. Implement an asset management system for the Parks and Recreation Department as part of a citywide system.	2022-25	Mayor; DPW	Staff time; cost of asset management system and training
		v. Identify priority walking and biking routes for access to open space and recreation destinations.	2020-21	Bike/Walk Commission; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Department of Public Works	Staff time; capital funds for future implementation
		vi. Give priority to completion of the Norwalk River Valley Trail.	2019 - 2029	Mayor, Council; Bike/Walk Commission; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Department of Public Works	Staff time; capital funds
		vii. As part of a zoning rewrite, create an "Open Space" zoning category and rezone all park and conservation land that is permanently protected.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning; Council	Staff time; consultant

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 7 – ENHANCING OPEN SPACE, PARK, TRAIL AND RECREATION SYSTEMS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
	B. Identify opportunities to provide more public access to water, including streams as well as the Norwalk River and coastline.	*i. Seek open space protection along Long Island Sound.*	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development; Harbor Management Commission; Norwalk Land Trust	Staff time; possible capital funds; possible nonprofit and private funds
		ii. Pursue planning and funding for public access to Long Island Sound on Manresa Island, for example, remediation that allows for a coastal walking trail.	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council; Economic and Community Development; Harbor Management Commission	Staff time; possible capital funding, grants, private funding
		iii. Identify small, neighborhood-scale water access to ponds and streams.	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning; Department of Public Works	Staff time; volunteer time; possible capital funding
2. Norwalk's park and recreation system serves residents throughout the city while protecting and managing natural resources. **Policy:** • Enhance recreational programming to serve the changing needs of all types of households and individuals.	A. Seek park opportunities in underserved areas of the city to work towards providing walking access to a park for every resident (within half-mile).	*i. As part of the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan, identify underserved areas in the city and potential park opportunities so that all residents can walk or bike to a park.*	2022-23	Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Committee	Staff time; consultant
		ii. Expand the NorWALKER program.	2019 and ongoing	Board of Health; Bike/Walk Commission; Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Committee	Staff time
		iii. Survey residents regularly to make sure recreation and park opportunities reflect changing demographics and needs.	2019 and ongoing	Recreation Department	Staff time
		iv. Develop a reduced-fee or scholarship program to support fee-based park and recreation activities for lower-income children and youth.	2020 and ongoing	Recreation Department	Staff time; operational or grant funding
		v. As part of the Parks, Open Space, and Recreation	2022-23	Mayor and	Staff time;

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 7 – ENHANCING OPEN SPACE, PARK, TRAIL AND RECREATION SYSTEMS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
		Plan, analyze and consider setting aside all or some of recreation fees to fund recreation department capital needs.		Council; Finance; Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Committee; Recreation Department	

CHAPTER 7 – ENHANCING OPEN SPACE, PARK, TRAIL AND RECREATION SYSTEMS	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Organize a committee, led by the Conservation Commission, to develop an Open Space and Recreation Plan.*	Mayor
ii. *Survey residents on their use of the park and recreation system, their needs, and begin preparation of the Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation System plan.*	Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Committee
iii. *Identify priority walking and biking routes to park and recreation resources.*	Bike/Walk Commission
iv. *Continue completion of the Norwalk segments of the NRVT.*	Recreation Department; Public Works

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 8 – SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NORWALK ENVIRONMENT					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. Norwalk city government is a model of sustainability. **Policy:** • City government actions are guided by sustainability principles	A. Expand sustainability policies and actions for city government and monitor and track progress.	**i. *Create an inter-departmental Sustainability Committee to develop a sustainability program for Norwalk City government consistent with the Sustainable CT certification program.***	2019	Mayor	Staff time
		ii. Designate a Sustainability Officer to coordinate city government actions to pursue certification by Sustainable CT.	2019	Mayor and council	Staff time
		iii. Join the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to commit to development of a Climate Action Plan.	2019	Mayor and Council	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 8 – SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NORWALK ENVIRONMENT					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
		iv. Replace city vehicles incrementally with electric or hybrid vehicles.	2019 and ongoing	Purchasing; Public Works; Mayor and Council	Staff time; capital funding
		v. Establish vehicle charging stations at City facilities.	2019 and ongoing	Public Works	Staff time; capital funding
		vi. Incorporate energy-efficient practices in City-owned buildings and structures, such as replacement of lighting with LED lights.	2019 and ongoing	Sustainability Committee; Public Works	Staff time; capital funding, possible grants
		vii. Establish a clear policy that all City building repairs, retrofits, and new construction will incorporate LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver standards, equivalent or successor standards, at a minimum.	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council; Board of Education; Sustainability Committee	Staff time
		viii. Buy 100% renewable energy for city government operations by 2029.	2019-2029	Mayor and Council; Board of Education; Public Works; Sustainability Committee	Staff time;
		ix. Implement waste reduction practices in city government operations.	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council; Board of Education; Sustainability Committee; City departments	Staff time
		x. Implement water conservation practices in city government operations	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council; Board of Education; Sustainability Committee; Public Works	Staff time
		xi. Continue using Integrated Pest Management, and use organic landscape practices, and native plantings in maintaining city-owned property.	2019 and ongoing	Parks and Recreation; Oak Hills Park Authority	Staff time
		xii. Use green infrastructure and Best Management Practices to manage stormwater on city property.	2019 and ongoing	Parks and Recreation; Oak Hills Park Authority;	Staff time; capital funding

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 8 – SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NORWALK ENVIRONMENT					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
				Public Works	
		xiii. Develop a set of environmental factors to be considered in procurement such as: durable, reusable, or recyclable; non-toxic or least toxic; energy-efficient; minimum packaging; and so on.	2019	Purchasing	Staff time
		xiv. Use the Envision rating system for sustainable infrastructure when planning new City facilities or improvements. See chapter 13.	2019 and ongoing	Public Works	Staff time
		xv. Prepare an annual report on city sustainability actions and progress toward certification by Sustainable CT.	2020 and ongoing	Sustainability Officer; Sustainability Committee	Staff time
		xvi. As part of the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan, develop and maintain a Natural Resources Inventory map that includes a comprehensive listing of noteworthy natural resources in the City.	2022-2023	Conservation; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
		xvii. Develop a program to ensure recycling of construction and demolition waste.	2022	Waste Programs Manager	Staff time
2. Norwalk reduces greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state goals. **Policy:** • Incorporate energy-efficiency as a way of life in Norwalk.	A. Establish and implement a plan and program to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and promote renewable energy.	***i. Develop a local action plan to reduce GHG emissions by 10% from 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% from 2001 levels by 2050.***	2024-2025	Sustainability Officer; Economic and Community Development Department; Public Works;	Staff time; consultant
		ii. Require electric vehicle charging stations in new large private developments.	2019 and ongoing	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission	Staff time
		iii. Expand alternative transportation options (transit, shuttle, bicycle, pedestrian, and so on) for intra-Norwalk mobility in order to reduce the growth of GHG emissions from transportation.	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department; Bike/Walk Commission; Public Works; Norwalk Transit	Staff time; capital funding
		iv. Encourage Norwalk electric utilities to exceed state requirements for renewable energy.	2019 and ongoing	Mayor and Council	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 8 – SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NORWALK ENVIRONMENT					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
3. Protect and manage Norwalk's sensitive environmental resources and its inland and coastal waters to enhance water quality, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, public health, and enrichment of community character. **Policy:** • Use city decision making to enhance environmental protection	**A. Incorporate green infrastructure and non-structural solutions to manage stormwater to improve water quality and quantity**	***i. Prioritize and advocate for implementation of Watershed-Based Plans' action items.***	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission, Public Works, Planning and Zoning	Staff time and capital planning
		ii. Apply LID and green infrastructure requirements of the Drainage Manual to both new and retrofit of government and private property.	2019 and ongoing	Public Works and permitting bodies; Conservation Commission	Staff time; capital funding
		iii. Study and create a stormwater utility to fund maintenance and improvements to the stormwater management system.	2019-2021	Public Works; Norwalk Harbor Management Commission; Common Council	Staff time; consultant
		iv. Encourage and allow alternatives to impervious surfaces in the zoning code and development standards.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
		v. Advocate for improvements to reduce runoff pollution from state and interstate roads.	2019 and ongoing	Planning and Zoning; Public Works; Norwalk Harbor Management Commission; Five Mile River	Staff time
		vi. Collaborate with environmental organizations to raise public awareness about the benefits of permeable pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, lawn buffers at stream shores, and other beneficial stormwater practices.	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
		vii. Adopt regulations or incentives to decrease runoff by reducing the clearing of woody vegetation especially along riverbank and wetland buffer zones.	2021	Conservation Commission	Staff time
		viii. Work with contractors and landscape companies to promote environmentally-sensitive landscape practices for "high performance" landscapes.	2021 and ongoing	Conservation Commission	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 8 – SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NORWALK ENVIRONMENT					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
		ix. Promote proper management of septic systems and consider mandatory pumping for septic systems in proximity to environmentally-sensitive areas.	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Common Council	Staff time
		x. Encourage property owners to establish backyard habitat through reducing lawn and invasive plants, avoiding pesticides and fertilizer, and connecting open space and private property in one stewardship plan.	2020 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Norwalk River Watershed Association	Staff time
	B. Continue regulation by the Aquifer Protection Agency and the Conservation Commission.	*i. Coordinate with other permitting agencies to ensure that property owners are aware of wetland and watercourse regulations.*	Ongoing	Conservation Commission	Staff time
		ii. Support and strengthen the regulations of the Aquifer Protection Area and encourage protection of existing open space within the Kellogg-Deering site.	Ongoing	Aquifer Protection Agency; Zoning Commission	Staff time
		iii. Establish a policy of no net loss of wetlands with mitigation/replacement measures and promote restoration of wetlands along the Norwalk River.	2020	Conservation Commission; Common Council	Staff time
	C. Collaborate with nonprofits and others to further protect environmental resources.	*i. Continue working with the Norwalk Land Trust and other nonprofits to protect wetlands, coastal resources and other environmentally sensitive resources.*	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
		ii. Continue working with the Manresa Association to establish open space on the Manresa peninsula and maintain a water dependent use.	2019 and ongoing	Common Council; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
		iii. Encourage, support and collaborate with watershed organizations such as the Norwalk River Watershed Association.	2020 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
		iv. Dedicate staff and funding to watershed planning and collaboration.	2020 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 8 - SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NORWALK ENVIRONMENT					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
		v. Promote education in water conservation and other environmentally beneficial practices. Resources can be found at 40gallonchallenge.org and pollinatorpathway.org.	2020 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; environmental nonprofits	Staff time
	D. Continue to maintain and increase the shade tree canopy in Norwalk.	*i. Continue the annual tree planting program and consult the WestCOG strategic tree canopy improvement plan developed for Norwalk by WestCOG.*	2020 and ongoing	Parks and Recreation Department; Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee; Planning and Zoning	Staff time; capital funding
		ii. Create a Green Streets network by identifying priority walking streets for tree planting.	2022-2024	Planning and Zoning; Bike-Walk Commission; Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee	Staff time
		iii. Focus and coordinate public tree-planting efforts on high-pedestrian areas, major arterials, and public spaces in the urban core.	2020 and ongoing	Planning and Zoning; Parks and Recreation Department; Norwalk Tree Alliance; Public Works	Staff time
		iv. As part of the rewrite of the zoning code, include requirements for tree protection, replacement, and planting in urban design requirements for new developments.	2020-2024	Planning and Zoning	Staff time
		v. Develop programs to promote tree planting by homeowners and other private parties	2020 and ongoing	Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee; Norwalk Tree Alliance	Staff time
	E. Continue to remediate and redevelop	*i. Review and update the list of brownfield sites.*	2020-2021	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 8 – SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NORWALK ENVIRONMENT					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
	brownfields sites.	*ii. Continue to seek grants for assessments and remediation.*	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department; Redevelopment Agency	Staff time
		iii. Consider setting up a nonprofit brownfield land bank eligible for state assistance as allowed in 2017 state legislation, An Act Concerning the Creation of Connecticut Brownfield Land Banks.	2020-2022	Economic and Community Development; Redevelopment Agency; Council	Staff time

CHAPTER 8 – SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NORWALK ENVIRONMENT	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Create an inter-departmental Sustainability Working Group.*	Mayor
ii. *Designate a staff member to serve as Sustainability Officer and seek Sustainable CT certifications as feasible.*	Mayor
iii. *Join the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to commit to development of a Climate Action Plan.*	Mayor and Council
iv. *Begin using the Envision rating system to evaluate potential projects.*	Planning and Zoning; Public Works
v. *Identify and prioritize green infrastructure retrofit projects as required under the MS4 permit.*	Public Works; Planning and Zoning

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE					
CHAPTER 9 – COASTAL RESOURCES AND RESILIENCE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. Use of harbor and coastal resources is balanced with environmental resource protection. **Policy:**	**A. Balance environmental resource protection with use of harbor and coastal resources**	*i. Review the Harbor Management Plan regularly to see if amendments are needed.*	2019 & ongoing	NHMC	Staff time
		ii. Apply the Harbor Management consistency Review Process in the most effective and transparent manner.	2019 & ongoing	NHMC	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE					
CHAPTER 9 - COASTAL RESOURCES AND RESILIENCE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
• Continue to support implementation of Norwalk's Harbor Management Plan. (This policy applies also to goals 2, 3, 4 and 5). • Ensure consistency between the Harbor Management Plan and the citywide plan/POCD so that changes to one are consistent with those of the other. • Continue to support implementation of Norwalk's Municipal coastal Program and apply the Coastal Site Plan Review Process in the most informed and effective manner. (This policy applies also to goals 2, 3, 4 and 5).		*iii. Apply the Coastal Site Plan Review Process in the most effective and transparent manner.*	2019 & ongoing	Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, ZBA	Staff time
2. Environmental resources within and adjacent to the coastal management area are protected and enhanced. **Policy:** • Support resource protection measures and integration with	A. Promote protection of coastal environmental resources in planning and regulatory processes.	*i. Advocate to preserve the northern section of Manresa Island (92 acres) as a conservation area.*	2019-2029	NHMC; Planning and Zoning Commission; Conservation Commission; nonprofit groups	Staff time
		ii. Advocate for reduced stormwater pollution impacts on the Norwalk River and adjacent areas.	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Norwalk Watershed Initiative; Conservation	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE					
CHAPTER 9 – COASTAL RESOURCES AND RESILIENCE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
protections upstream.				Commission	
		iii. Promote the reduction of impervious surfaces and the use of green infrastructure and Low Impact Development practices within the Coastal Management Area to the maximum degree feasible along with maintaining a water dependent use.	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
		iv. Protect coastal environmental resources to help defend against coastal flooding and storm surge.	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Conservation Commission	Staff time; possible capital funds
		v. Collaborate with nonprofits and others to further protect coastal wetland resources.	2019 and ongoing	Conservation Commission; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
3. Water-dependent uses continue to operate and expand in Norwalk harbor and on the coast. **Policy:** • Support continued operation of shellfishing and recreational boating facilities and uses (including boat storage, berthing repair, and maintenance facilities), other commercial and industrial water-dependent uses on suitable waterfront properties, as well as facilities and uses that support and provide opportunities for public access to	**A. Establish development patterns that continue to include space for water-dependent uses.**	*i. As part of the zoning rewrite, establish zoning and urban design standards for areas with water dependent uses that enhance compatibility with adjacent uses.*	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning; Redevelopment Agency; NHMC	Staff time; consultant
		ii. Preserve the locations for water dependent uses on the waterfront.	2019 and ongoing	Planning and Zoning; Redevelopment Agency; NHMC	Staff time
		iii. Explore expansion of water dependent economic development opportunities.	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development; NHMC; Shellfish Commission	Staff time; possible consultant

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE					
CHAPTER 9 – COASTAL RESOURCES AND RESILIENCE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
of the Harbor.					
4. The public has access to the harbor and coast. **Policy:** • Enhance public access to the water.	A. Promote public access to the harbor and coast where feasible, safe, and environmentally appropriate	*i. Facilitate public direct or visual access to coastal, harbor and river waters when reviewing proposed projects.*	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Planning and Zoning Department	Staff time
		ii. Plan for Liberty Square to have a publicly-accessible use and a water dependent use when it is no longer used for staging for the Walk Bridge project.	2022-2023	Economic and Community Development Department; NHMC	Staff time
		iii. Seek public access to the coast in disposition plans for Manresa Island.	2019 and ongoing	NHMC; Economic and Community Development Department; Manresa Association	Staff time
		iv. Continue to protect and enhance appropriate public access to the Norwalk islands.	2019 and ongoing	Norwalk Seaport Association; NHMC; Maritime Aquarium	Staff time
5. Norwalk plans for and adapts to climate change. **Policy:** • Support proactive measures to adapt to climate change.	**A. Prepare a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and plan for future adaptation.**	*i. Prepare a climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan.*	2020-2022	Economic and Community Development in collaboration with other departments and stakeholders	Staff time; consultant
		ii. As part of the climate change adaptation plan, establish a multiple-lines-of-defense approach to coastal flooding and storm surge.	2020-2022	Economic and Community Development in collaboration with other departments and stakeholders	Staff time; consultant
		iii. Amend regulations for new construction and renovations valued at half or more of appraised value to be consistent with the 2018 State requirement for	2019	Planning and Zoning Commissions;	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE					
CHAPTER 9 – COASTAL RESOURCES AND RESILIENCE					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
		two feet of elevation above Base Flood Elevation.		Common Council	
		iv. As part of a zoning rewrite and the vulnerability assessment, write and adopt zoning measures and standards that promote effective adaptation to coastal impacts of climate change.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning Commissions; Common Council	Staff time; consultant
		v. Collaborate with electric utilities to install below ground energy lines as poles need replacement to reduce outages as storms are expected to increase in number and intensity.	2020 and ongoing	Utilities; Public Works	Capital investments by utilities
	B. Implement commitments in the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan and take additional steps to enhance resilience.	*i. Establish back-up generators at city-controlled facilities where needed.*	2019-2021	Emergency Management (Fire Department)	Staff time; capital funds
		ii. Continue to review impacts of climate change on critical infrastructure.	2019-2021	Water Pollution Control Agency	Staff time
		iii. Create and enhance plans for shelters during storm and hazard events, including regional collaboration on shelter and evacuation plans.	2020-2024	Emergency Management	Staff time; operational or capital funds
		iv. Enhance public education on climate change hazards, engaging especially with the most vulnerable populations (such as elderly and disabled, low-income, limited English, etc.).	2020 and ongoing	Emergency Management	Staff time
		v. Develop and promote strategies to mitigate increased heat.	2024-2029	Emergency Management; Economic and Community Development; Public Works	Staff time
		vi. Work with the water supply companies to ensure climate change adaptation.	2020 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development	Staff time
		vii. Work to ensure Manresa Island is "hardened" against major storm events to prevent a breach and potential release of encapsulated contaminants into Long Island Sound.	2020-2029	Mayor's Office; Common Council; Economic and Community Development	Staff time

CHAPTER 9 – COASTAL RESOURCES AND RESILIENCE	
EARLY ACTIONS	**EARLY**
i. *Develop a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan.*	Planning and Zoning; Public Works
ii. *Amend regulations to be consistent with the 2018 state regulations for 2 feet BFE in flood zones.*	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission; Common Council
iii. *Implement resilience commitments in the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan*	Emergency Management and other departments

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY NETWORKS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. Norwalk has a comprehensive and balanced transportation system, with safety and multimodal accessibility the top priority of citywide transportation planning. **Policies:** • Support Complete Streets policies and multimodal level of service analysis to improve streets for all users and varying abilities. • Support investment in new bicycle and walking facilities equitably distributed throughout the city. • Enact Vision Zero policy	A. Develop a long-range multi-modal transportation planning strategy for Norwalk.	***i. Hire an experienced transportation planner for the Planning Department.***	2019	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time; funding for position
		ii. Develop and implement a long-range multi-modal transportation action plan.	2020-2029	Transportation Planner (Planning and Zoning); Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Bike/Walk Commission	Staff time
		iii. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy and a Complete Streets ordinance.	2019-2020	Common Council; Transportation Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Public Works	Staff time
		iv. Adopt the Vision Zero Policy & a Vision Zero Ordinance.	2019-2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time
		v. Create a Vision Zero Action Plan.	2019-2029	Planning and Zoning;	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 10 - TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY NETWORKS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
				Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	
	B. Provide roads that serve the needs of Norwalk residents and commerce, and that facilitate safe and convenient access to transit, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian facilities.	*i. Make land use decisions that support walking, bicycling, and public transit use.*	2019-2029	Planning and Zoning	Staff time
		ii. Design road space for all users as feasible and appropriate for the context.	2019-2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works; Planning and Zoning	Staff time; possible capital funds
		iii. Seek state approval to designate and enforce truck routes.	2019-2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time
	C. Make multimodal transportation a high priority by promoting pedestrian access, bicycle use, and transit options within Norwalk and to surrounding communities.	*i. Adopt Multimodal Level of Service as a measurement in the rating of street performance.*	2019	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
		ii. Integrate Complete Streets principles into street design guidelines, standards, and other construction guides.	2019-2020	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works; Planning and Zoning	Staff time
		iii. Encourage the provision of rider amenities at bus stops and other transit stations.	2019-2024	Norwalk Transit District; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time; capital funds
		iv. Explore innovative ways to improve transit service within Norwalk.	2019-2020	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Norwalk Transit District; private employers	Staff time
		v. Implement access-management techniques in commercial and mixed-use areas.	2020-2025	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and	Staff time; consultant

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 10 - TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY NETWORKS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
				Zoning	
		vi. Optimize traffic flow by using coordinated and synchronized traffic signals.	2019-2024	Public Works; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Norwalk Transit District	Staff time; capital funds
		vii. As part of the zoning rewrite and corridor plans, revise site plan review and mixed-use development standards and design guidelines to incorporate multi-modal transportation considerations	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
	D. Expand Norwalk's pedestrian and bicycle networks.	*i. Identify priority routes from the existing bicycle master plan.*	2019-2022	Transportation planner; Transportation; Public Works; Bike/Walk Commission	Staff time
		ii. Maintain and enhance existing trails and footpaths.	2019-2029	Parks Department; trail organizations	Staff time; capital funds
		iii. Encourage pedestrian-friendly design features in street improvement projects	2019-2029	Transportation; Public Works; Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant; capital funds
	E. Integrate emerging mobility technology into transportation planning and preserve flexibility to respond to future changes.	*i. Support car sharing services and the use of ride-hailing apps to reduce the need for households to own multiple vehicles.*	2019-2029	City of Norwalk; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time
		ii. Continue to pursue the use of emerging technologies to expand and enhance traditional fixed-route/fixed-schedule transit service.	2019-2029	Transportation Planner; Norwalk Transit District; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time; possible grants; capital funds
		iii. Pilot the development of autonomous vehicle systems in Norwalk.	2019-2021	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 10 - TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY NETWORKS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
				Parking; Redevelopment Agency; Norwalk Transit District	
		iv. Work with CT DOT on constructing a dedicated rail connection servicing SoNo Station and Merritt 7 to better connect these two important centers.	2021-2029	Mayor's Office; Common Council; State and local leaders; Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Redevelopment Agency; Norwalk Transit District; anchor businesses	Staff time
2. The city has attractive and convenient parking facilities that fit the context and accommodate emerging technologies. **Policies:** • Promote shared parking strategies, transportation demand management programs, and right-sized parking requirements to optimize the amount of new parking needed.	**A. Provide the right amount of motor vehicle and bicycle parking in commercial and employment centers and at railroad stations to support vibrant economic activity but not more than necessary.**	*i. Right-size parking requirements and parking ratios for non-residential and multifamily land uses.*	2019-2020	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
		ii. Discourage provision of parking above the minimum required.	2019-2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Norwalk Parking Authority	Staff time; consultant
		iii. Add attractive, secure bicycle parking, with signage, at both public and private facilities.	2019-2024	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Bike/Walk Commission; property owners	Staff time; capital funds; developer funds
		iv. Design vehicle parking to have multiple benefits.	2019-2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Norwalk	Staff time; consultant; capital funds

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 10 - TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY NETWORKS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
• Promote parking wayfinding and demand-based pricing to better utilize existing public parking. • Promote design standards to ensure parking blends into the urban environment and minimizes negative visual and physical impacts.				Parking Authority	
		v. Eliminate large expanses of parking as the principal feature of street frontage.	2019-2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	Staff time; consultant
		vi. Promote and organize shared parking agreements where there are adjacent underutilized private parking areas and complementary land uses.	2019-2029	Norwalk Parking Authority; property owners	Staff time
		vii. Consider residential permit parking, especially in mixed-use neighborhoods.	2020-2021	Common Council; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning	Staff time; moderate permit fee
3. Neighborhood streets maintain a residential character and support a range of transportation options, as feasible. **Policies:** • Preserve and maintain quiet residential streets in neighborhoods throughout the city. • Support biking and walking in neighborhoods with investment in sidewalks and bicycle facilities.	A. Balance neighborhood traffic circulation needs with the goal of creating walkable and bike-friendly neighborhoods.	***i. Develop and implement Best Practice street design standards.***	2019-2020	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works	Staff time; capital funds
		ii. Implement traffic-calming measures to slow traffic when supported by affected residents	2019-2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works	Staff time
4. Norwalk advocates for improvement of	A. Develop a clear regional	*i. Advocate for increased service on the Danbury Line to support improvements to the Merritt 7 station and*	2019-2029	Mayor and Council;	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY NETWORKS					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
regional transportation connections, including regional trails, traffic flow on regional routes, and commuter rail, to reduce traffic congestion, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. **Policies:** • Support regional coordination on transportation issues including transit and highways. • Support sustainable and resilient transportation policies and investment.	transportation agenda for the city to advocate with federal, state, and regional governments and agencies.	*reopening of a Wall Street station.*		Transportation, Mobility, and Parking	
		ii. *Study the potential impacts on Norwalk of proposals for changes to I-95, including benefits and costs, and mitigation of adverse impacts.*	2024-2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; City of Norwalk	Staff time; possible consultant

CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY NETWORKS	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Hire an experienced transportation planner.*	Planning and Zoning Department
ii. *Identify one full pedestrian/bicycle route for priority implementation that connects a neighborhood to SoNo.*	Bike/Walk Commission; TMP
iii. *Develop a program for art in public crosswalks.*	TMP
iv. *Establish a working group to explore coordinating public and private transit in a potential transportation management association.*	TMP
v. *Incorporate multi-modal transportation approaches into the zoning rewrite.*	Planning and Zoning
vi. *Adopt a Vision Zero Policy*	TMP, Planning and Zoning,

CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY NETWORKS	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
	Mayor
vii. *Create a Vision Zero Action Plan*	TMP, Planning and Zoning, Mayor

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 11- PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND SERVICES					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. Norwalk's infrastructure and public facilities are resource-efficient, well-maintained, cost-effective, sustainable, and resilient. **Policies:** • Support resource-efficiency and cost-effectiveness through coordinated planning and maintenance. • Promote green infrastructure strategies to improve environmental quality and sustainability.	A. Establish systems for municipal assets and capital improvements.	*i. Expand the asset management system to cover all municipal assets, integrating any existing partial systems in individual departments.*	2019-2022	Departments and IT	Staff time; continuing cost of system
		ii. Use the Envision™ rating system to evaluate city facility and infrastructure projects from the beginning of planning.	2020 and ongoing	Public Works; Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time
		iii. Develop a long-term Facilities Master Plan for all city-owned facilities (with the exception of the public schools).	2024-2029	Economic and Community Development; Public Works	Staff time; consultant
	B. Continue to update, modernize, and maintain Norwalk's infrastructure and city facilities.	***i. Plan to mitigate climate change impacts on the Wastewater Treatment Plant.***	2019-2022	Public Works	Staff time; consultants; capital funds
		ii. Incorporate green infrastructure into public projects and establish a stormwater utility to fund drainage and green infrastructure projects. See Chapter 10.	2019 - 2029	City of Norwalk; Public Works	Staff time; capital funds
		iii. Support long-term water supply planning and implementation by Norwalk's water utilities as they update their plans for state approval.	2019 and ongoing	Economic and Community Development Department	Staff time
		iv. Work with the water and electric utilities to continue to promote renewable energy, water conservation, and environmental best practices.	2019-2029	Sustainability Officer; Utilities; Conservation Commission; Health Department	Staff time
		v. Support facilities improvements and innovative programs in the Library system that contribute to community cohesion.	2019 and ongoing	Library	Staff time; capital funds

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 11- PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND SERVICES					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
		vi. Ensure Norwalk's emergency services departments are provided with appropriate funding for equipment and facilities to provide superior service and maintain a high level of public safety.	2019 and ongoing	City of Norwalk	Capital funds
		vii. Consider consolidation of Fire and Police marine divisions in one location.	2020-2021	Fire and Police Departments	Staff time; possible capital funds

CHAPTER 11- PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND SERVICES	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Expand asset management to include all departments that manage physical assets.*	IT; departments
ii. *Make the public-facing permit database more accessible to the public by highlighting the link to the database on the city website.*	IT
iii. *Include the Wastewater Treatment Plant and other critical infrastructure in the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment*	Public Works; Planning and Zoning

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 12: FUTURE LAND USE, ZONING, AND URBAN DESIGN					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. General principles guide land use decision making. **Policies:** • Refer to land use guidelines when making land use decisions by administrators and decision-making bodies. • Promote urban design guidelines for	**A. Adopt guidelines to guide land use decision making.**	*i. Adopt guidelines and standards, with required findings, as part of the zoning ordinance, to guide decision making that will help achieve the vision and goals of the plan.*	2019-2020	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission; Council	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 12: FUTURE LAND USE, ZONING, AND URBAN DESIGN					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
walkability for development in urbanized parts of Norwalk. • Implement transit-oriented design (TOD) guidelines promoting density, walkability, and mix of uses for development near transit stations (rail and high-frequency bus). • Protect natural and environmental resources and neighborhood character for development in suburban areas of Norwalk.		*ii. Create checklists and similar materials to inform residents, property owners, developers, and others about the land use guidance, regulatory system, and permitting process in Norwalk.*	2019-2020	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; possibly consultant as part of zoning rewrite
2. Neighborhood and corridor activity centers have urban design standards that promote walkability. **Policies:** • Support greater walkability and improved design standards in village districts • Provide a mixed-use neighborhood activity center (i.e., village district, commercial corridor	A. Support local centers of activity in neighborhoods	*i. Strengthen existing Village District design standards.*	2019-2021	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission	Staff time; consultant
		ii. Study the potential for additional village districts or "neighborhood centers" with local commercial activity.	2020-2024	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
		iii. Improve the public realm within village districts and activity centers with design standards for sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, bicycle racks, seating, signage and public art.	2024-2029	Planning and Zoning; Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Public Works; property owners	Staff time; capital funds
		iv. Create a façade improvement grant program for Wall Street/West Avenue and SoNo.	2020-2029	Redevelopment Agency; Planning and Zoning;	Staff time; possible grant or CDBG (block grant) funds;

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 12: FUTURE LAND USE, ZONING, AND URBAN DESIGN					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
redevelopment, traditional downtown) within a safe, comfortable walking or bicycling distance of all residents. • Support mixed-use redevelopment along commercial corridors.				Economic Development; property owners	capital funds
	B. Promote high-quality redevelopment along major corridors.	iv. *Study commercial corridors to identify priority activity centers for mixed-use zoning and clustered redevelopment.*	2020-2029	Planning and Zoning; Economic and Community Development	Staff time; consultant
		v. *As part of the zoning code rewrite, create zoning with design standards to achieve desired outcomes for commercial and mixed-use projects as redevelopment occurs.*	2020-2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
		vi. *Improve vehicular circulation through coordinated access management, including cross-parcel access, consolidation of driveways, and subdivision of large blocks with internal street networks.*	2020-2029	Transportation, Mobility, and Parking; Planning and Zoning; Public Works; private developers	Staff time; consultant; capital funds
3. The user-friendly zoning ordinance is consistent with the future land use map and achievement of the vision and goals of the POCD. **Policies:** • Support revision of the zoning ordinance to promote desired development and design patterns • Support permit streamlining for projects with desired characteristics	**A. Modernize the Zoning Ordinance and the development approval process to achieve the goals of the POCD.**	***i. Rewrite the Zoning Ordinance to reflect contemporary best practices in administration and user-friendliness and to be consistent with the POCD.***	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission; Common Council	Staff time; consultant
		ii. Review existing zoning districts to eliminate or replace zoning districts that do not contribute to achieve the Norwalk Tomorrow vision.	2019 – 2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
		iii. Include place-making and functional design standards in the requirements for non-residential and mixed-use development.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
		iv. Explore the pros and cons for the city and for applicants of requiring financial impact analysis on new special permit applications, regulations, zoning amendments, and zoning map changes.	2020-2022	Planning and Zoning	Staff time; consultant
	B. Delineate and use planning districts to advance planning	*i. Formalize the nine districts identified in this POCD or identify similar districts, using census tract boundaries to allow for ease of statistical analysis.*	2019-2020	Planning and Zoning	Staff time
		ii. Identify a person or persons in the planning	2019-2020	Planning and	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 12: FUTURE LAND USE, ZONING, AND URBAN DESIGN					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
	throughout the city.	*department to serve as planning district liaisons.*		Zoning	
		iii. Help organize neighborhood associations where they do not already exist.	2019-2022	Planning and Zoning; Neighborhood Associations	Staff time
		iv. Create a neighborhood association registry.	2019	Planning and Zoning; Neighborhood Associations	Staff time

CHAPTER 12: FUTURE LAND USE, ZONING, AND URBAN DESIGN	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Hire a consultant or consultants to begin the process of rewriting the zoning code.*	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission
ii. *Prepare the technical analysis and evaluation of existing zoning*	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission
iii. *Prepare an evaluation and study of Norwalk's industrial zones and consistency with city goals*	Planning and Zoning; Zoning Commission; Economic and Community Development

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 13: STEWARDSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
1. The citywide plan/POCD guides city of Norwalk decision making. **Policy:** • City government activities are focused on achieving the goals of the POCD.	**A. Establish public review of progress in implementing the POCD.**	***i. Review implementation progress twice a year.***	Biannually	Planning Commission; Zoning Commission; Mayor and Council	Staff time
2. The POCD is incorporated into	**A. Deploy staff, resources, and training to support implementation of**	*i. Use the plan annually in preparing and approving departmental work plans, operational budgets, and capital improvement plans.*	Annually	All departments	Staff time
		ii. Develop a user-friendly system of checklists for	2019	Planning and	Staff time

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 13: STEWARDSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
decision making in multiple ways. **Policy:** • Use the plan in preparing and approving other planning and implementation activities by city agencies.	**the POCD.**	*boards, commissions, and departments to use to compare proposals with the goals of the POCD.*		Zoning	
		iii. Use the plan in working with state and regional agencies.	2019	Grant writer; all relevant departments	Staff time
		iv. Use data to drive decision making.	2019 and ongoing	All relevant departments, boards and commissions	Staff time
		v. Identify plan-related actions on agendas of the Common Council, the Zoning Commission, and the Planning Commission, and, as appropriate, other boards and commissions.	2019 and ongoing	Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, and relevant others	Staff time
		vi. Publicize actions and activities that implement the POCD. Actions by the City and others that implement the POCD should be publicized as such, giving credibility to the planning process.	2019 and ongoing	City information office	Staff time
		vii. Explore the feasibility and benefits for Norwalk of implementing a "Budgeting for Outcomes" (priority-based budgeting) system.	2022-2025	Finance Department; Mayor and Common Council	Staff time; possible consultant
3. City government provides effective and meaningful access to information about government activities and performance. **Policies** • Support initiatives to make a wide array of user-friendly information, services, electronic forms, financial and	**A. Measure government performance and make information available to the public.**	***i. Designate a staff person to be responsible for consistency, accuracy, and timeliness of information on the city web site.***	2019	Mayor	Staff time; possible consultant
		ii. Create an online open data portal or information warehouse to make data and information available to the public and enhance the E-government capacity of Norwalk city government.	2025	Mayor's office; IT	Staff time; funds for off the shelf template and consultant assistance
		iii. Publicize and take full advantage of online utilities and apps to aid city government.	2019 and ongoing	Mayor's office	Staff time
		iv. Make it a high priority to put user-friendly information on city finances and projects online.	2021	Finance Department; IT	Staff time; funds for off the shelf template and possible consultant

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ARE INDICATED BY BOLD TYPE.					
CHAPTER 13: STEWARDSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION					
GOALS	**STRATEGIES**	**ACTIONS**	**WHEN**	**WHO**	**RESOURCES**
project information easily available to residents, businesses, and others.					assistance
		v. *Make the City's eGovernment strategy and permit streamlining efforts more public-friendly.*	2019 and ongoing	Finance Department; IT	Staff time; possible consultant or additional system costs
		vi. *Explore the capacity and merits of combining the Planning and Zoning Commissions into a single body.*	2020	Mayor; Common Council; Planning Commission; Zoning Commission; Planning and Zoning staff	Staff time

CHAPTER 13: STEWARDSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION	
EARLY ACTIONS	**WHO**
i. *Designate a staff member with responsibility for POCD implementation coordination.*	Planning and Zoning
ii. *Use the plan in developing annual budgets and work plans.*	Finance; Planning and Zoning; all departments
iii. *Establish annual public hearings on POCD progress.*	Planning and Zoning; Planning Commission; Common Council

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Appendices

A. **The Community Speaks**
B. City of Neighborhoods - Neighborhood Profiles
C. Build-Out Analysis
D. Coastal Resilience Map Enlargements: Sea Level Rise Impacts

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APPENDIX A: THE COMMUNITY SPEAKS

A. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Effective citywide plans are rooted in an understanding of the values, aspirations, and concerns of the communities whose future they are intended to guide. The Norwalk plan update was based on public outreach and opportunities for residents and other stakeholders to share their hopes and aspirations for Norwalk's future. The public engagement process incorporated both face-to-face and digital opportunities to participate. Residents, business owners, and others provided feedback to the planning team by participating in interviews, digital surveys, attending a citywide visioning event, nine neighborhood-based workshops, four topic-based workshops, a draft plan presentation event, and commenting on the draft plan posted online. The planning team used the community's feedback and guidance to shape all aspects of the plan, from drafting a Vision and Principles for Norwalk that reflected the aspirations of the community, to the goals, strategies and actions needed to achieve that vision.

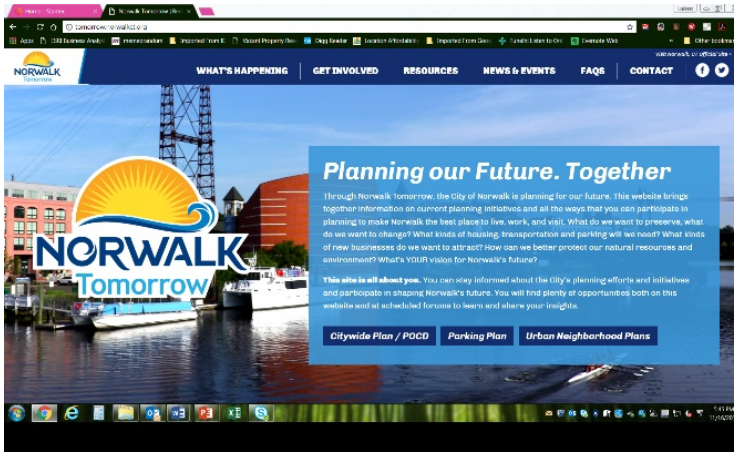
1. Oversight Committee

Mayor Henry Rilling appointed an Oversight Committee of 33 persons for the POCD update process to assist the City in developing the plan. The committee included members of the Planning Commission, citizen members of other City commissions, several elected officials, neighborhood association representatives, several at-large citizens, and ten City department staff members. There were a few changes in membership of the committee over the course of the planning process. A core group of approximately twenty Committee members consistently participated in committee meetings and attended public meetings throughout the planning process. The Committee provided assistance in community outreach and engagement and reviewed interim and draft documents. The Oversight Committee met X times over the course of the planning period.

2. Interviews

The consultant team conducted an initial group of 50 interviews in August 2017 with additional interviews and re-interviews, as needed, in 2018. The interviews included representatives of city departments and other staff, local and regional agencies, neighborhood organizations, elected officials, nonprofit organizations, developers, industrial property owners, and others.

3. Norwalk Tomorrow



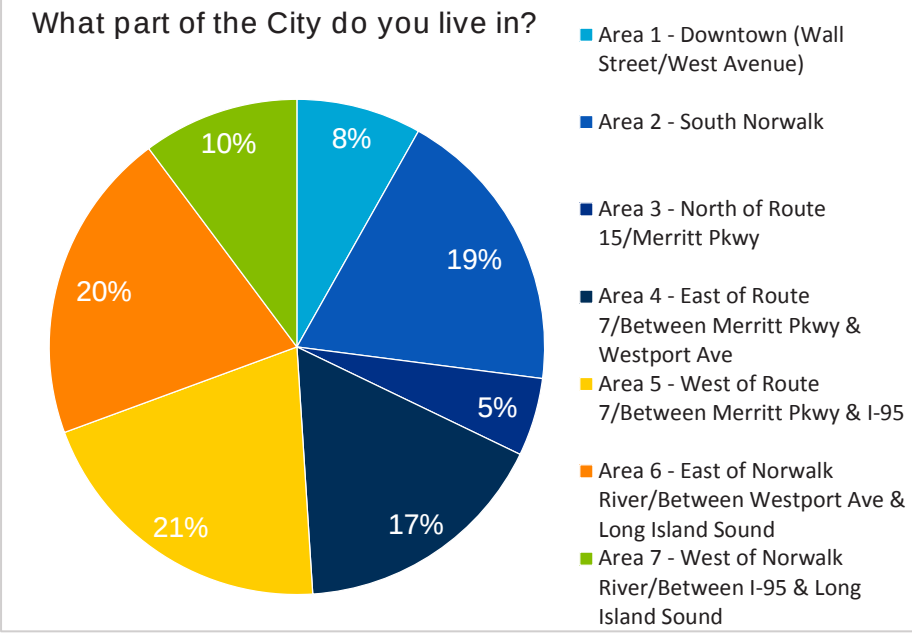
When the POCD update began in the late summer of 2017, the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency was also preparing an updated redevelopment plan for the Wall Street/West Avenue area and the Norwalk Parking Authority was about to begin a parking study. The City determined that a single outreach platform would be preferable to three different sets of messages and web sites for public information and engagement for all of these studies—and for future planning initiatives. This became the Norwalk Tomorrow planning initiative, which includes a website: http://tomorrow.norwalkct.org/, social media, surveying and resources. A section of this website was dedicated to the citywide/POCD plan update. Interim plan materials, such as

maps, PowerPoint presentations, surveys, blogs, and the draft plan, were made available to the public on the website.

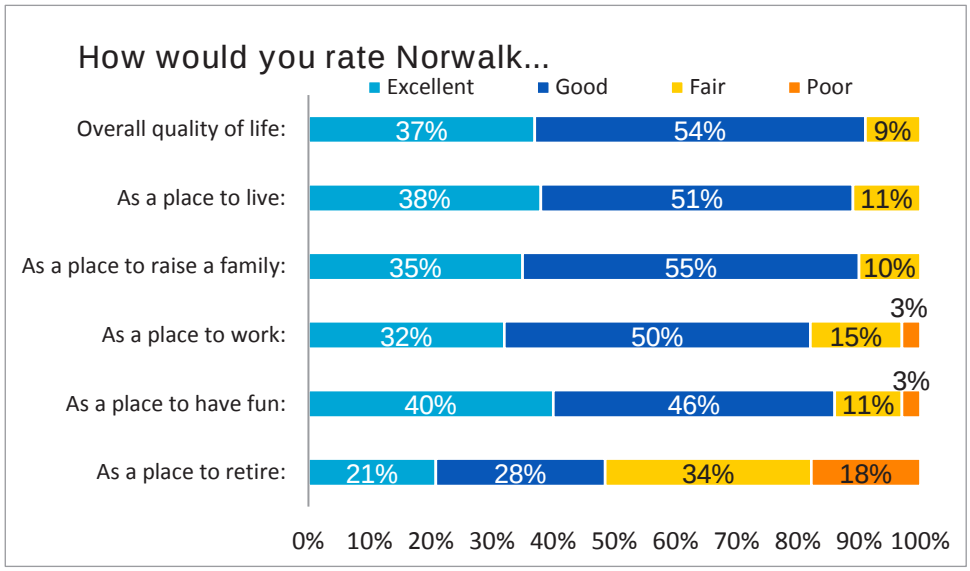
4. Early outreach efforts

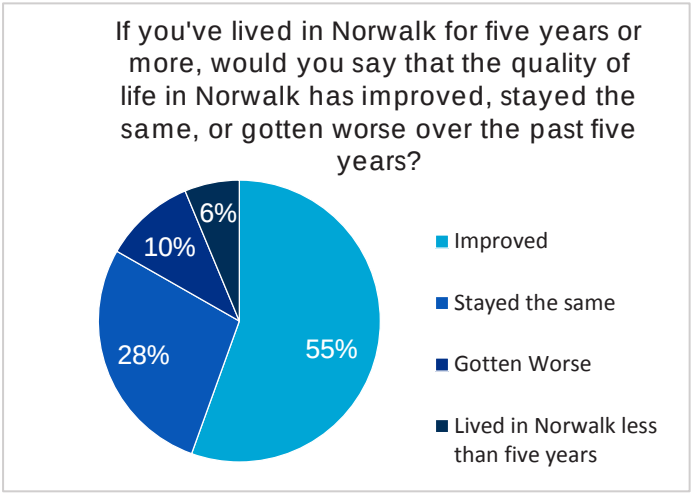
Several outreach efforts relevant to the POCD update occurred in the summer and early fall of 2017, when the planning process was just beginning.

- **Downtown residents meeting.** The Redevelopment Agency held a public meeting at the Waypointe residential development in the urban core on July 25, 2017 to find out what city improvements are of interest to residents. Approximately 25 residents participated. Although the group was small, their comments provide insight into the thinking of newer residents in Norwalk.
    - *Reasons for moving to Norwalk and Norwalk Center***.** In addition to moving because of jobs and a shorter commute, most of the other reasons were linked to "proximity to everything," access to Stamford, Manhattan, beaches, SoNo and its vibrant restaurant and nightlife, and affordability.
    - *Job locations of participants*. The majority of participants work in Fairfield County (including Norwalk), about 10% in New York City, and 30% in other locations (primarily from home).
    - *Length of residence in Norwalk*. The majority of the participants have lived in Norwalk for less than two years. The majority also expected to live in Norwalk for less than five years. However, almost one third saw themselves as living in Norwalk for the foreseeable future.
    - *Improvements they would like to see*. Participants would like to see more retail and restaurant activity in Norwalk center; a grocery store; all-day shuttle or transit to the train station, not just at the commute peak, and other city destinations like the beach; more bike facilities and a bike-sharing program; more open space and a community garden; a return of the YMCA; and more attention to preserving and celebrating the historic character of the neighborhood.



- **City Open House and digital survey.** In order to take advantage of the City's annual Department of Public Works Open House on October 7, 2017, a short survey on quality of life and parking issues was prepared for the open house that also was made available on the website. The survey had a total of 221 participants (93 paper surveys and 127 electronic responses) representing many different parts of the city.

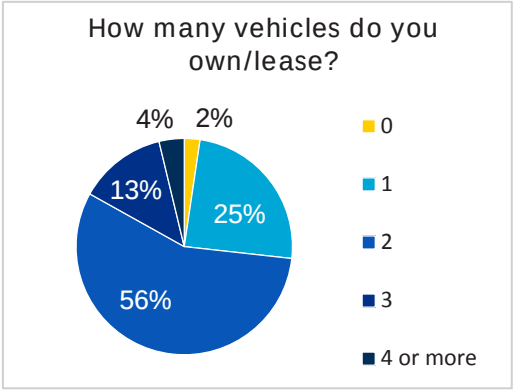


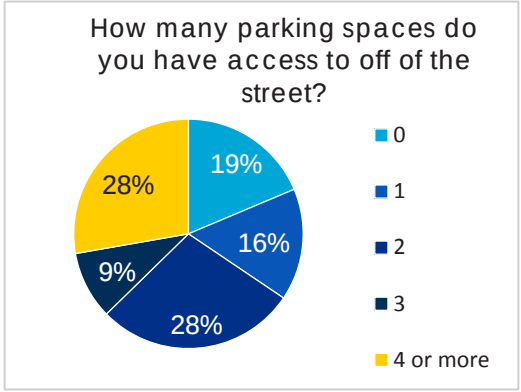


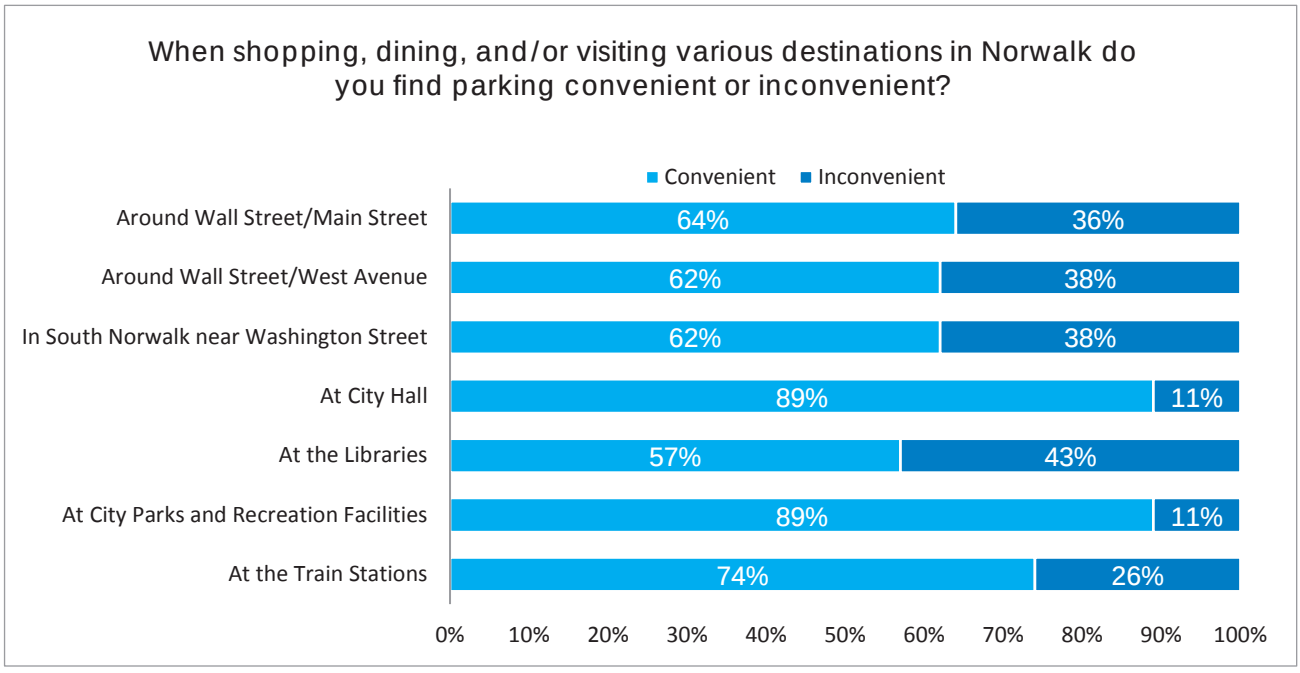
The overwhelming majority of respondents rated Norwalk "Good" or "Excellent" for overall quality of life and as a place to live, raise a family, work, and have fun. Slightly less than half would agree for Norwalk as a place to retire. However, 40% or less rated Norwalk as "Excellent" in all categories.

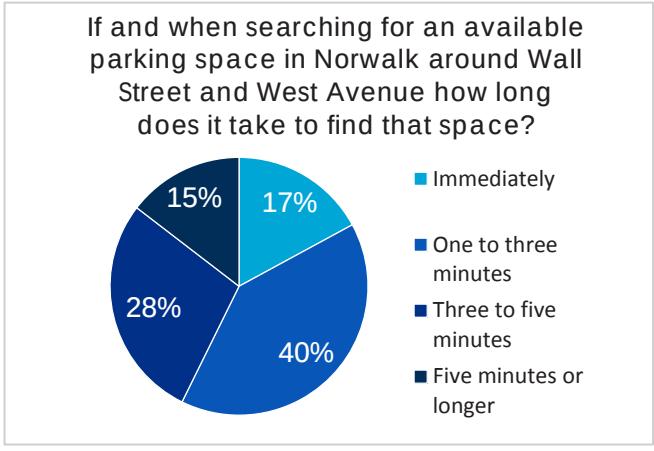
Fifty-five percent of the respondents said that quality of life has improved over the last five years, with an additional 28% saying it had stayed the same. Only 10% said it had gotten worse.

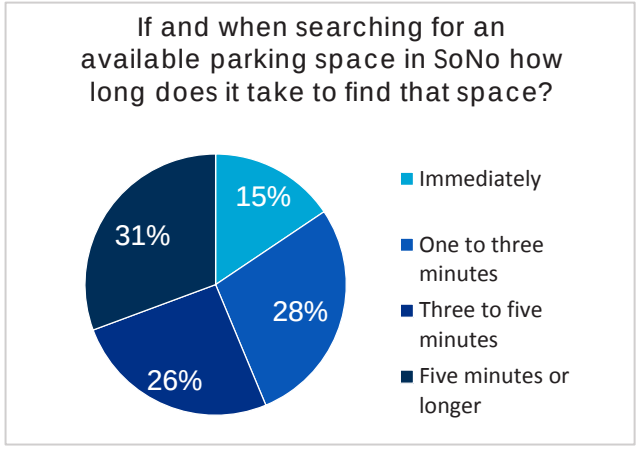
Responses to parking study issues indicated that 73% of respondents own or lease at least two cars and 81% have access to at least one off-street parking space. With the exception of parking at the libraries, two-thirds or more of respondents find parking to be convenient at major city destinations, including SoNo.







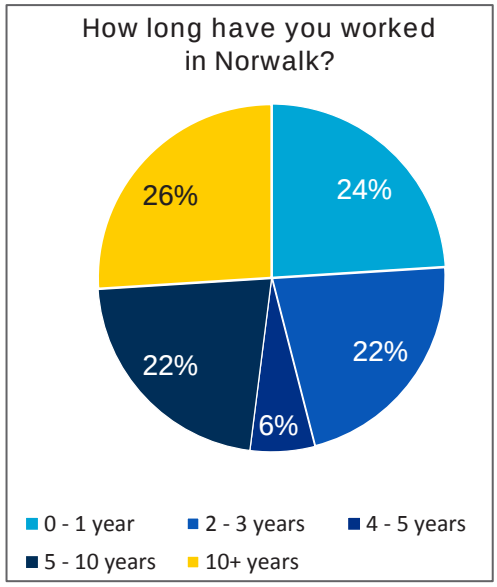




- **Merritt 7 survey**. Office workers at the Merritt 7 complex were surveyed in September 2017. Fifty people completed the survey which asked respondents how they commute to work, the difficulties of using Metro North commuter rail as a daily commute mode, how often they visit nearby businesses on Main Avenue, and what features would encourage them to spend more time in Norwalk. Most respondents do not currently use Metro North to commute, although a pedestrian bridge connecting the Merritt 7 station/Glover Ave to Main Avenue (under construction) or higher parking fees would encourage many of them to re-think that choice. About three-quarters of respondents visit businesses along Main Avenue at least a few times per year (primarily at lunch), and even more (93%) spend time in Norwalk outside of work visiting restaurants, bars, movie theaters, or for shopping.

    - *Age groups*. Respondents were fairly evenly distributed among age brackets, with 34% between 25 and 34 years old and 22% between 45 and 54. Just over one-third live in Norwalk, mostly in the 06851 ZIP code which represents the Cranbury, West Rocks, and neighborhoods north of I-95.

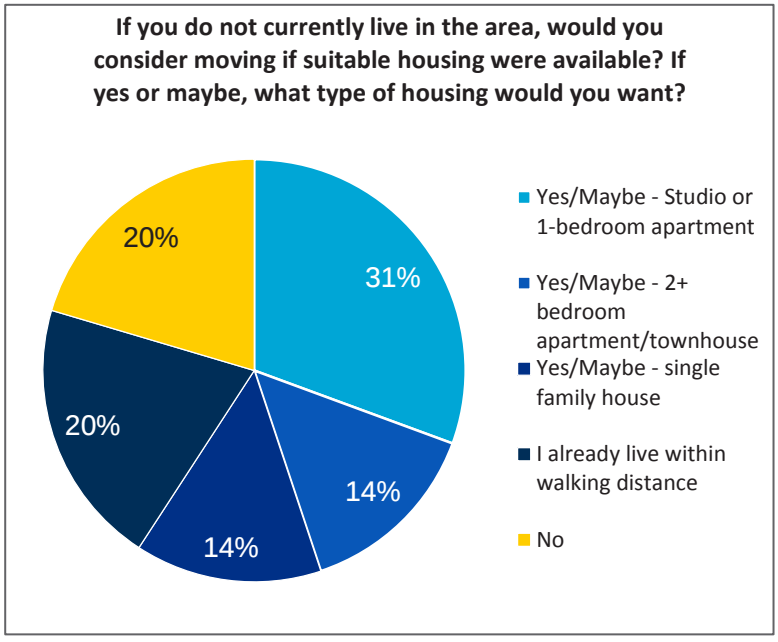
- Of those who live in Norwalk, 29% have lived here six or more years. Respondents were also fairly evenly distributed among length of time working in Norwalk, with 24% working here 0-1 year and 26% working here more than 10 years.

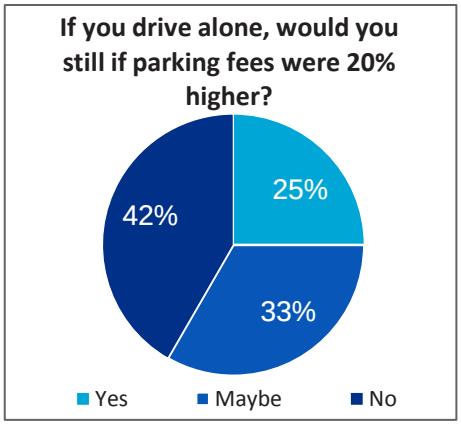


- Of those who do not currently live in Norwalk, 59% reported they would consider moving into the city if suitable housing were available and the majority of those would be looking for an apartment or townhouse.

- *Work commute.* Ninety percent drive alone to get to work and most of the remainder carpool. Among those who drive alone, almost half (42%) would commute another way if parking fees were 20% higher.

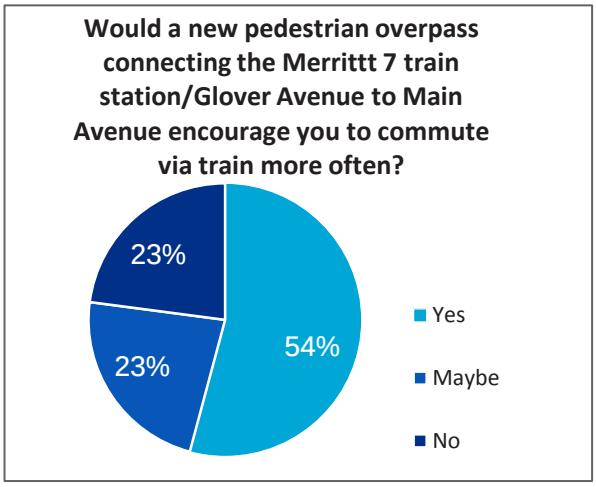
- *Taking the train.* The Metro North Danbury Branch services the Merritt 7 rail station. The line is a single track that is not electrified, limiting service. When asked about the biggest constraints to taking the train to Merritt 7 for work, limited train service/shuttle frequency and not living near a rail station were the two most common answers. Over half (54%) agreed that a new pedestrian overpass connecting the station and Glover Avenue to Main Avenue would encourage them to commute via train more often.

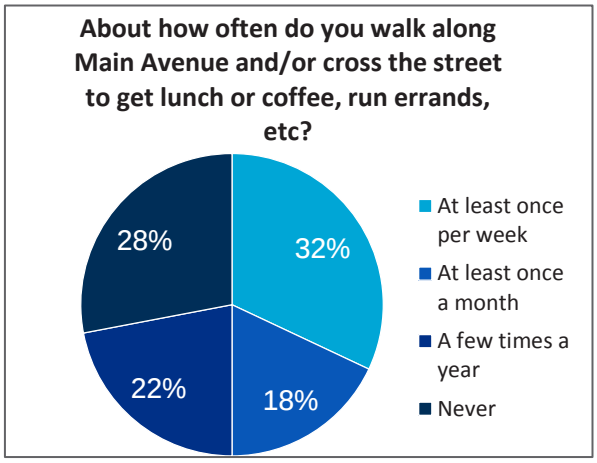


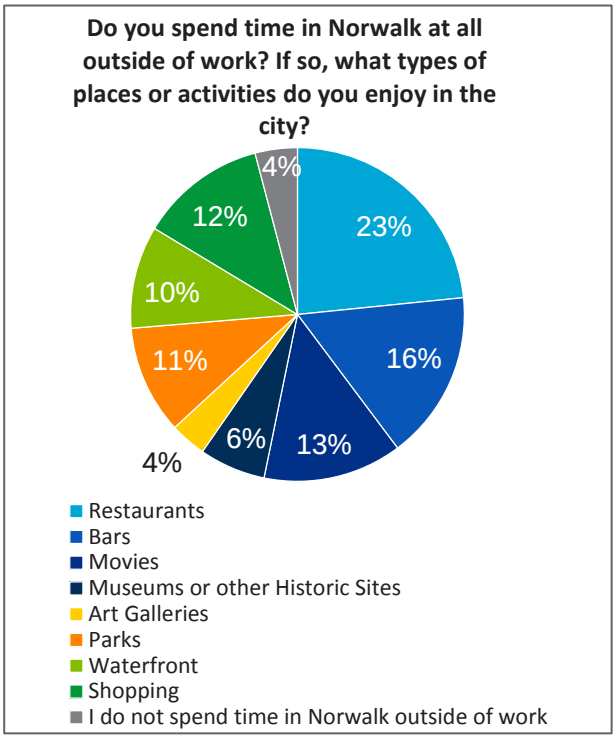


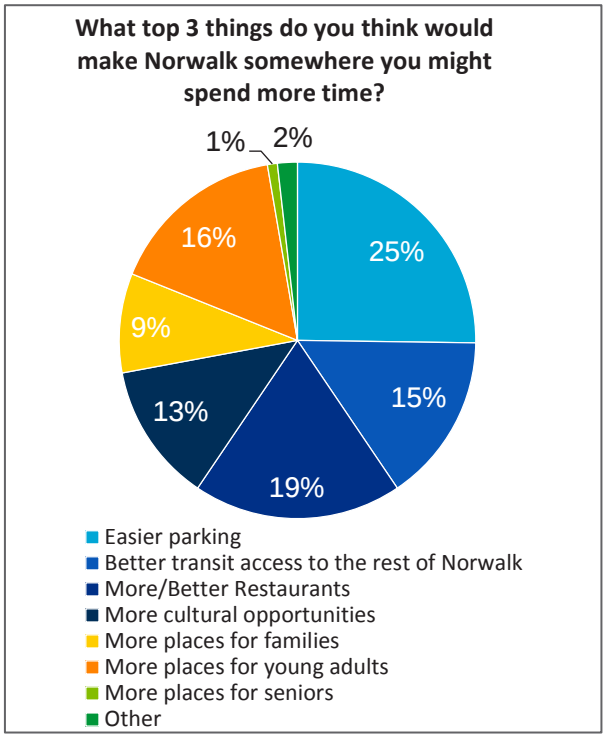
- *Use of Main Avenue*. Merritt 7 has many internal amenities for employees, such as coffee shops, cafes, dry cleaner, bank, and so on. About half of respondents walk along or cross Main Avenue at least once per month to get coffee, lunch, or to run errands, with a third of respondents going at least once per week. Most of this activity happens during lunch and only a small number walk to nearby businesses after work. One-quarter of respondents never walk along or cross Main Avenue.

- *Time in Norwalk outside work*. Ninety-three percent of respondents spend at least some time in Norwalk outside of work. Restaurants and bars are the most popular types of places, followed by movies, shopping, parks, and the waterfront. When asked to identify the top three things that would make Norwalk somewhere they might spend more time, easier parking, more/better restaurants, and more places for young adults were the top choices. Better transit access and more cultural opportunities were also highly rated.









5. COMMUNITY VISIONING FORUM

On Saturday, November 18, 2017, more than 185 Norwalk residents from a broad range of backgrounds and neighborhoods spent the morning in a forum at the Community Room in the Center for Global Studies at Brien McMahon High School. They came to share their hopes and aspirations for the future of the City of Norwalk as part of the Norwalk Tomorrow Citywide Plan process.

Participants received a folder with an information sheet about the Citywide Plan process, a summary of existing conditions information ("Norwalk At A Glance"), a set of worksheets to complete for a series of exercises, an evaluation sheet, and a short survey on issues relevant to ongoing redevelopment area planning and parking studies.

The room was ringed with a set of exhibit boards with a variety of analytical maps of Norwalk. Participants were randomly seated at tables to maximize the opportunity for people who did not know each other to talk to one another. Each table had a base map of the city, pens and post-its, a worksheet for priority setting, and an envelope to capture the worksheet materials.

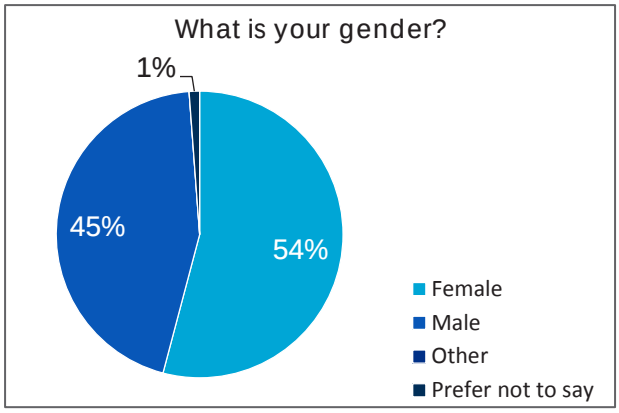
The workshop began with a welcome from Mayor Harry Rilling and Planning Director Steve Kleppin. The welcome remarks were followed by a brief presentation from the consultant on existing conditions and trends in Norwalk, including information on demographics, housing, economic development, transportation, open space, land use and zoning, and resilience.

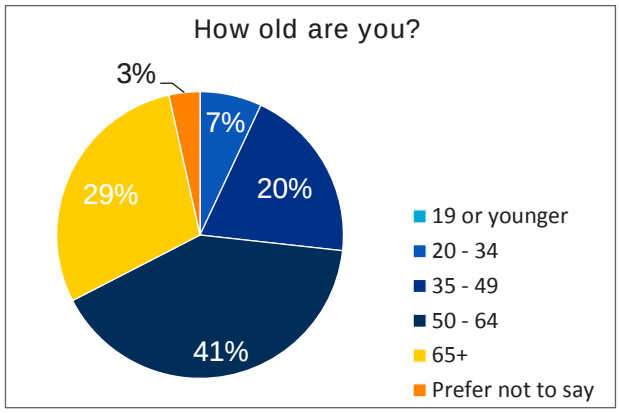
LIVE POLLING

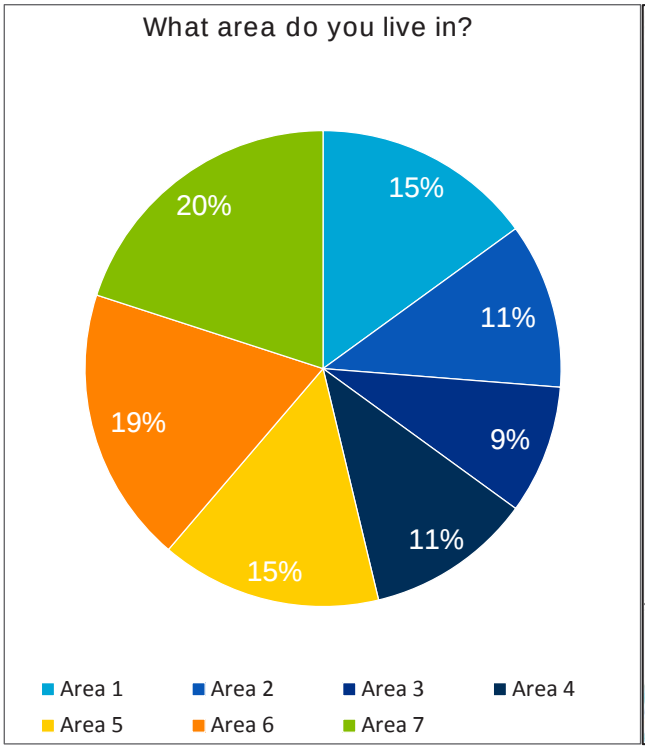
After the presentation, participants did a smartphone, "live" polling survey. Hard copies were provided for those who preferred to fill out the survey by hand. The survey included questions about the demographic characteristics of participants in the room, as well as some general questions about Norwalk.

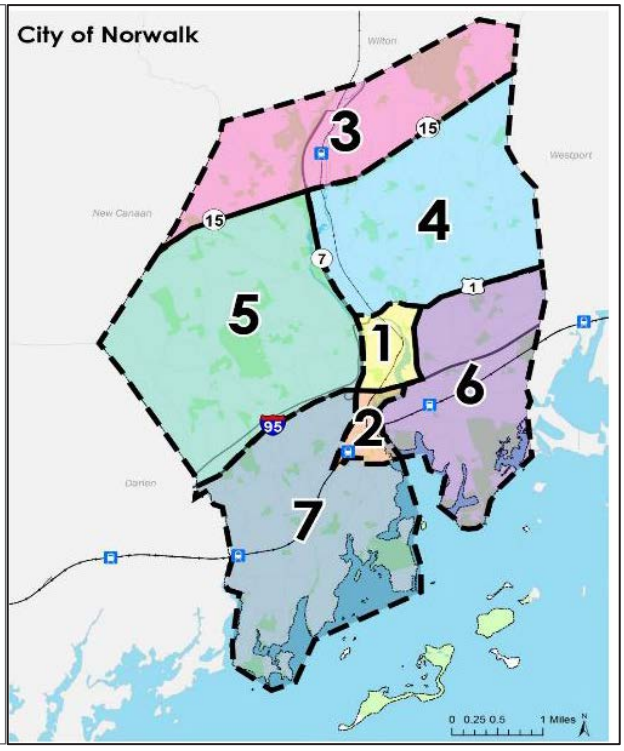
Of those who took the survey, 97% were residents of Norwalk, and just over half (54%) were female. There were people from many different age groups, and while the majority of attendees have lived in Norwalk for more than 20 years, there were also some newer residents. Residents attended from many different areas of the city.

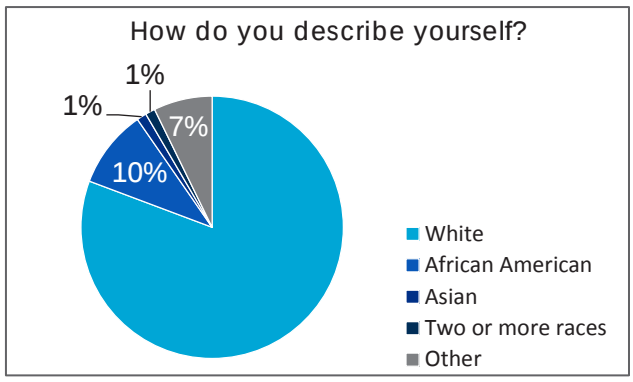
Compared to Norwalk's population, Hispanics/Latinos, African-Americans, Asians, and other non-white members of the community were under-represented. Long-time, older residents, and home owners were over-represented compared to their percentage of the overall population.

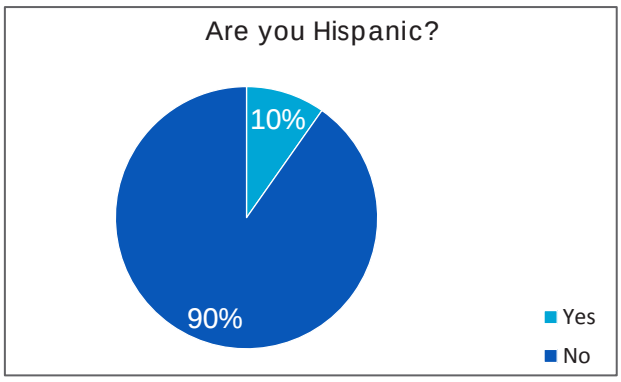


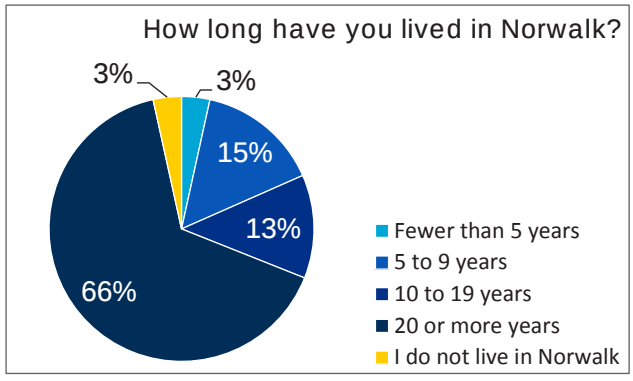


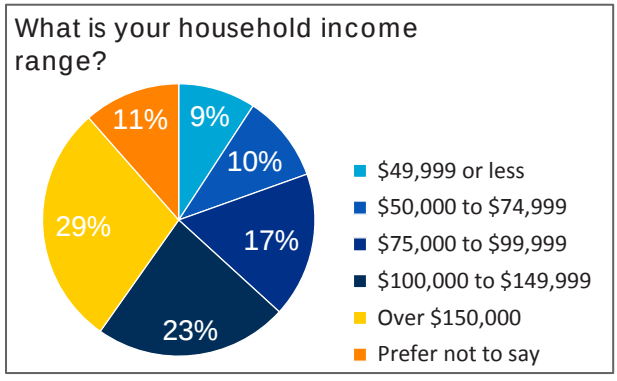


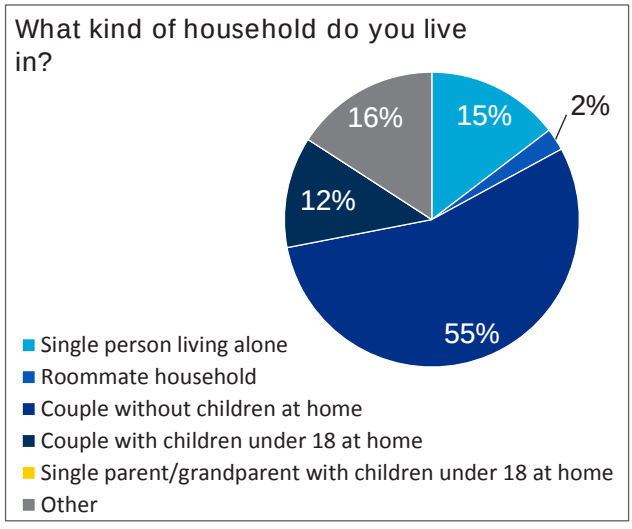


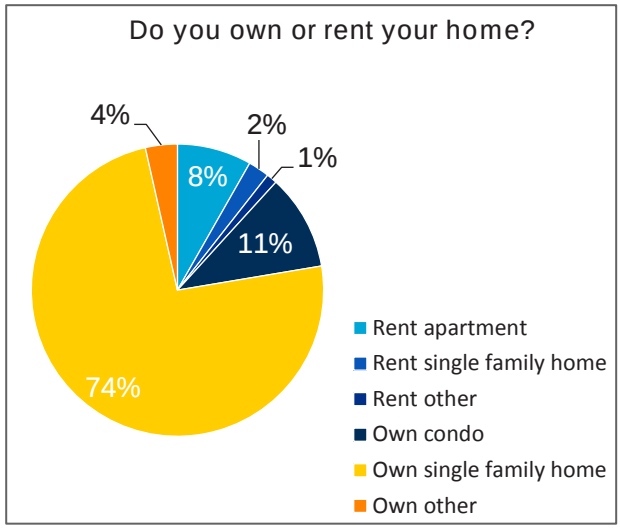

How do you describe yourself?
1%
1%
7%
10%
White
African American
Asian
Two or more races
Other

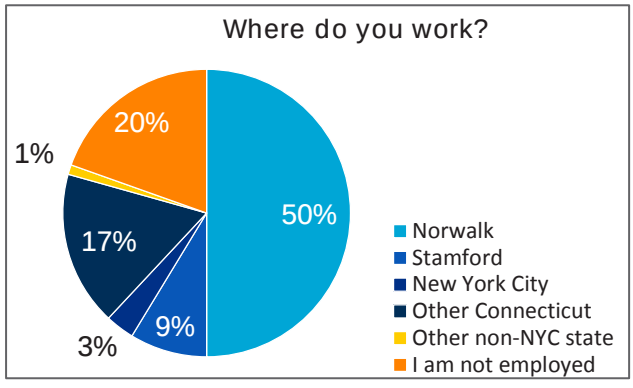

Are you Hispanic?
10%
90%
Yes
No

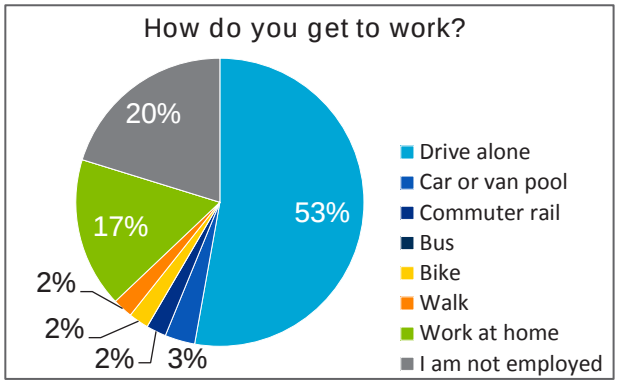

How long have you lived in Norwalk?
3%
3%
15%
13%
66%
Fewer than 5 years
5 to 9 years
10 to 19 years
20 or more years
I do not live in Norwalk


What is your household income range?
11%
9%
10%
29%
17%
23%
$49,999 or less
$50,000 to $74,999
$75,000 to $99,999
$100,000 to $149,999
Over $150,000
Prefer not to say


What kind of household do you live in?
16%
15%
2%
12%
55%
Single person living alone
Roommate household
Couple without children at home
Couple with children under 18 at home
Single parent/grandparent with children under 18 at home
Other

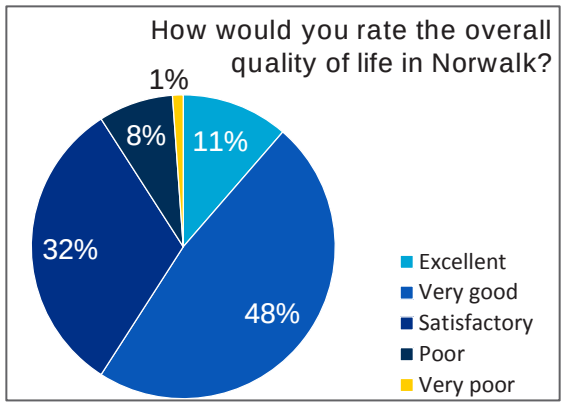

Do you own or rent your home?
4%
2%
1%
8%
11%
74%
Rent apartment
Rent single family home
Rent other
Own condo
Own single family home
Own other

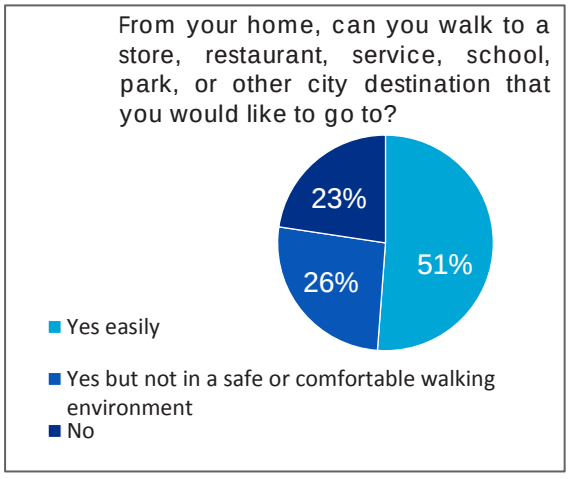

Where do you work?
20%
1%
50%
17%
9%
3%
Norwalk
Stamford
New York City
Other Connecticut
Other non-NYC state
I am not employed

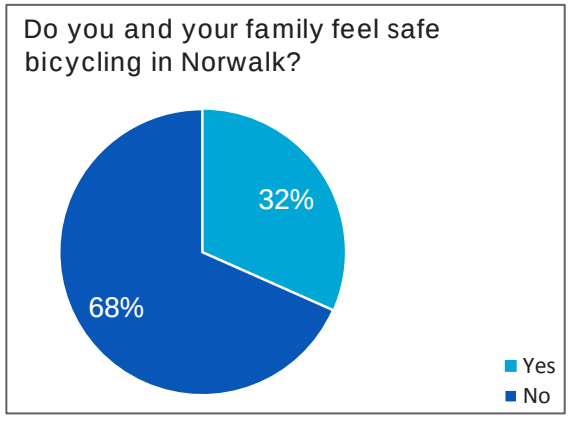

How do you get to work?
20%
53%
17%
2%
2%
2%
3%
Drive alone
Car or van pool
Commuter rail
Bus
Bike
Walk
Work at home
I am not employed

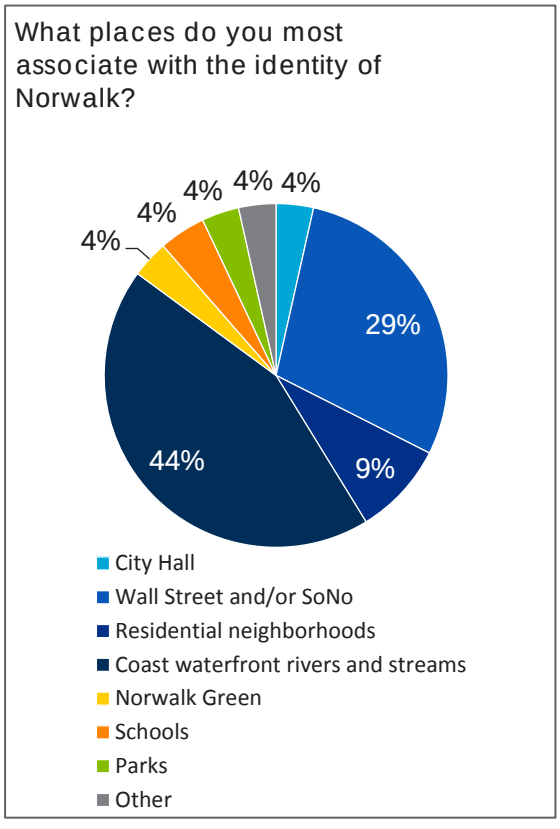
After the demographic questions, the poll explored a few questions about quality of life in Norwalk. A majority (59%) rated overall quality of life as "excellent" or "very good." About half can walk from their homes to a city destination but a significant majority do not feel safe bicycling in Norwalk.

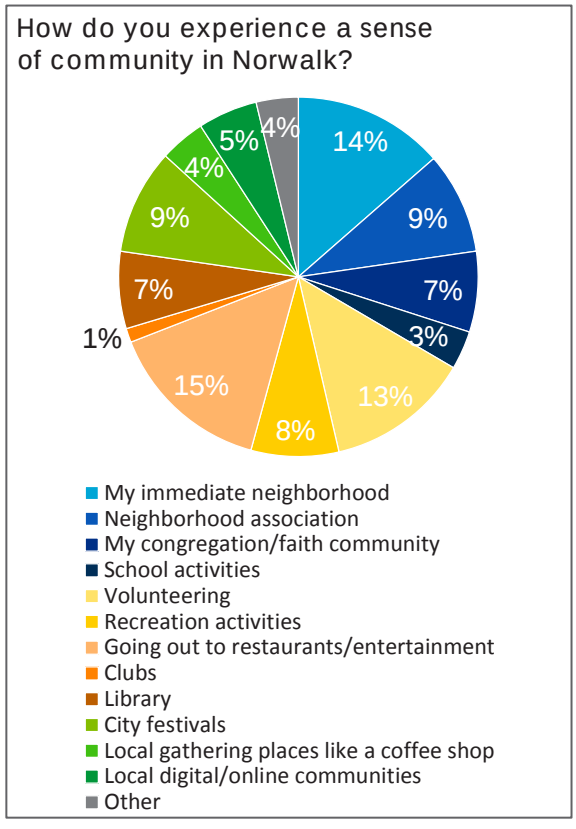
The City's coastal waterfront, rivers and streams along with Wall Street/SoNo overwhelmingly represent Norwalk's identity to the forum participants and they experience a sense of community through a broad variety of experiences.











In one or two words - if you could change one thing in Norwalk, what would it be?
This word cloud indicates, by the size of the words, what forum participants were most interested in changing for the future.

ACTIVE EXERCISES

During the remainder of the workshop, a series of exercises guided participants through discussions in which they wrote down their individual ideas about Norwalk and its future, then shared those ideas with others around the table, identified places of particular interest on the map, and finally identified a set of priorities for the whole table. At the end of the meeting, a volunteer table leader from each table reported back to the entire group on their priorities for Norwalk's future. Many rich and thoughtful conversations took place. Through their discussions, participants revealed their hopes for the city and the values that are important to them.

The exercises included:

Best of the city and the city's challenges: Each participant and then the group as a whole identified Norwalk's assets and the challenges that Norwalk faces, including identification on the table map of locations that fit those categories.

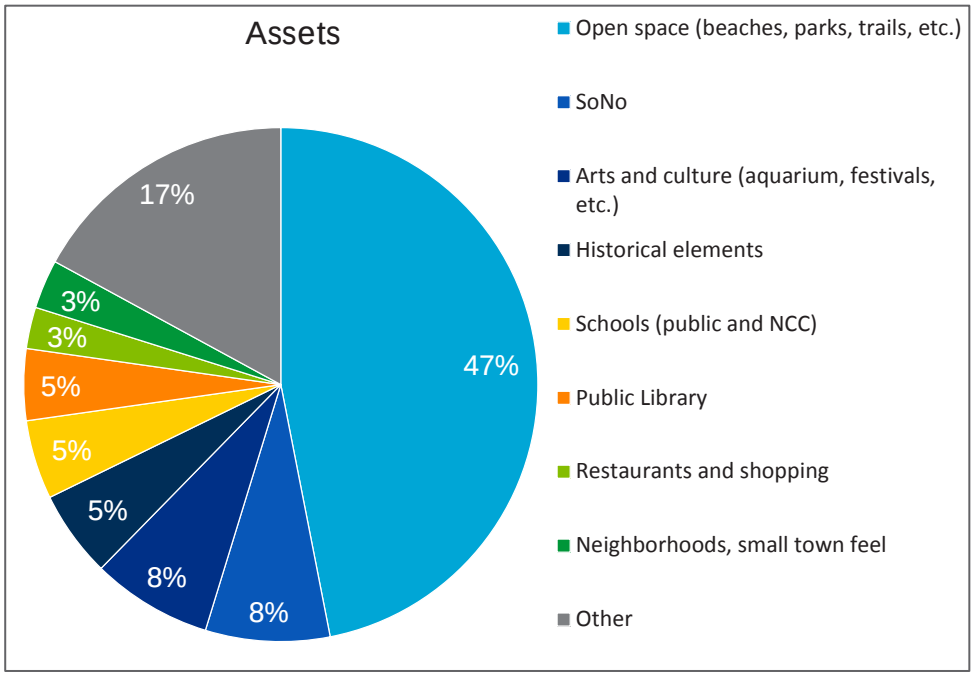
Personal vision statements: Each participant wrote a personal vision statement expressing his or her vision for Norwalk in 2038. Then they shared their visions around the table and discussed the common elements and values in the personal visions.

Table priorities: A volunteer table leader wrote down all the vision elements discussed at the table. Participants each had five dots to "vote" on the elements that they thought were most important, resulting in a list of five top elements at each table.

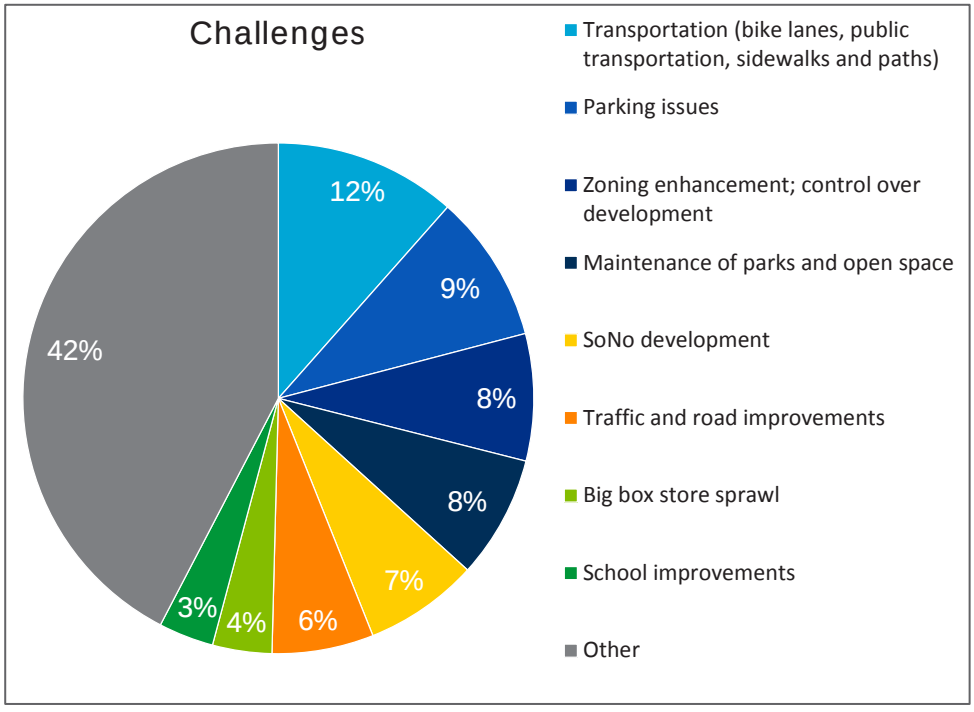
Reports from the tables. Each table leader reported to the whole group about their table's discussion and priorities.

THE BEST AND THE CHALLENGES

The Best:
Of the over 420 assets listed, nearly half related to Norwalk's parks, coastline, and beaches. The South Norwalk area, historical elements, arts and cultural opportunities, schools, and the library were also strongly valued by participants.



The Challenges:
Of the over 370 challenges listed, there was an emphasis on multi-modal transportation options, particularly bike lanes and parking issues, zoning and development enhancements, park maintenance, development in SoNo, traffic and road improvements, and big box store sprawl).



Best and Challenges Maps. Participants were asked to review a map of Norwalk as a group and circle or label their favorite places and City assets with a blue pen and circle or label their least favorite places and challenged areas with a red pen. In some cases, participants identified places as being assets to the city but also as places that face challenges and need improvements.

Figure 3.1 The Best of the City

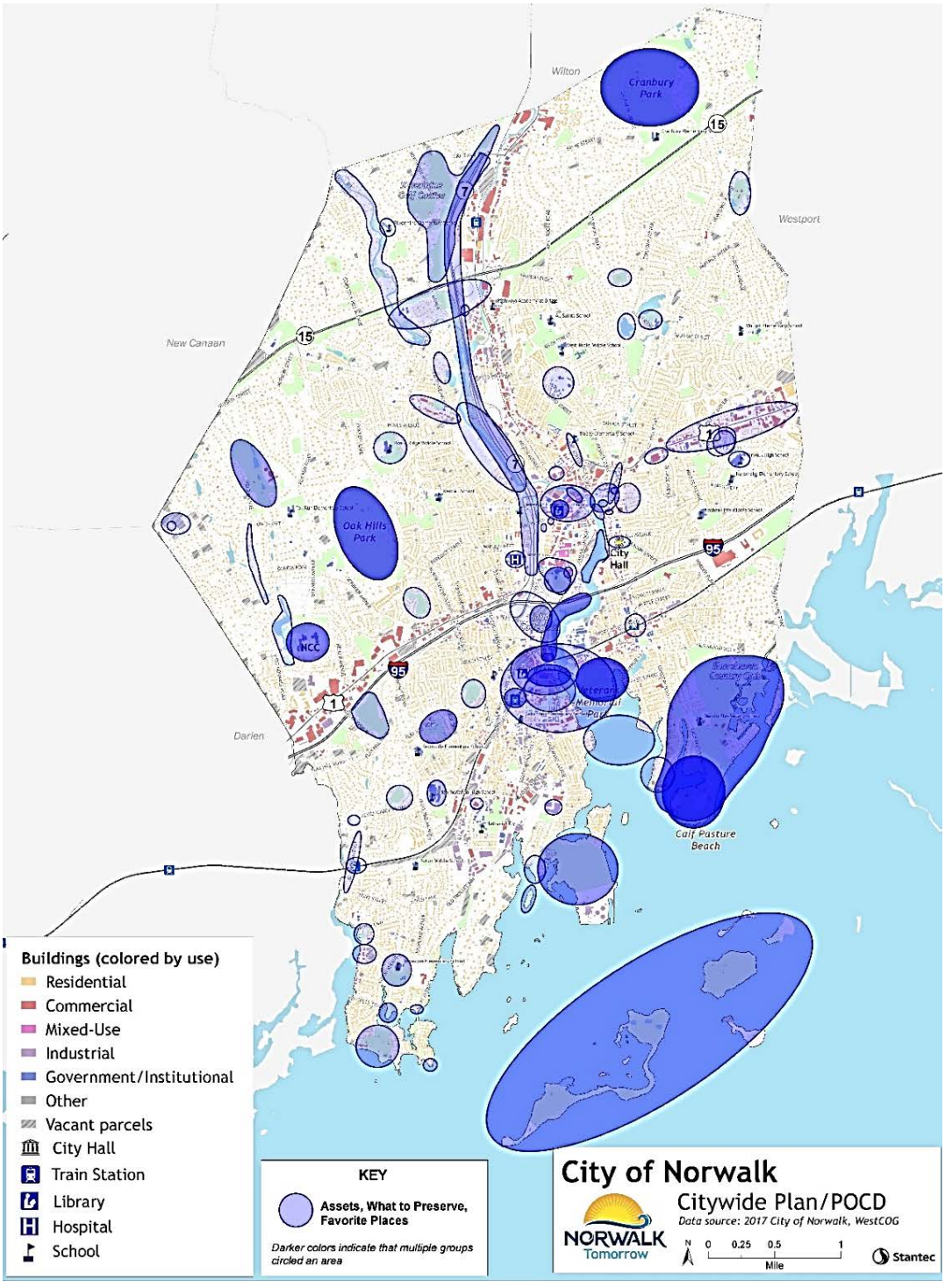


Figure 3.2 Challenges Facing the City

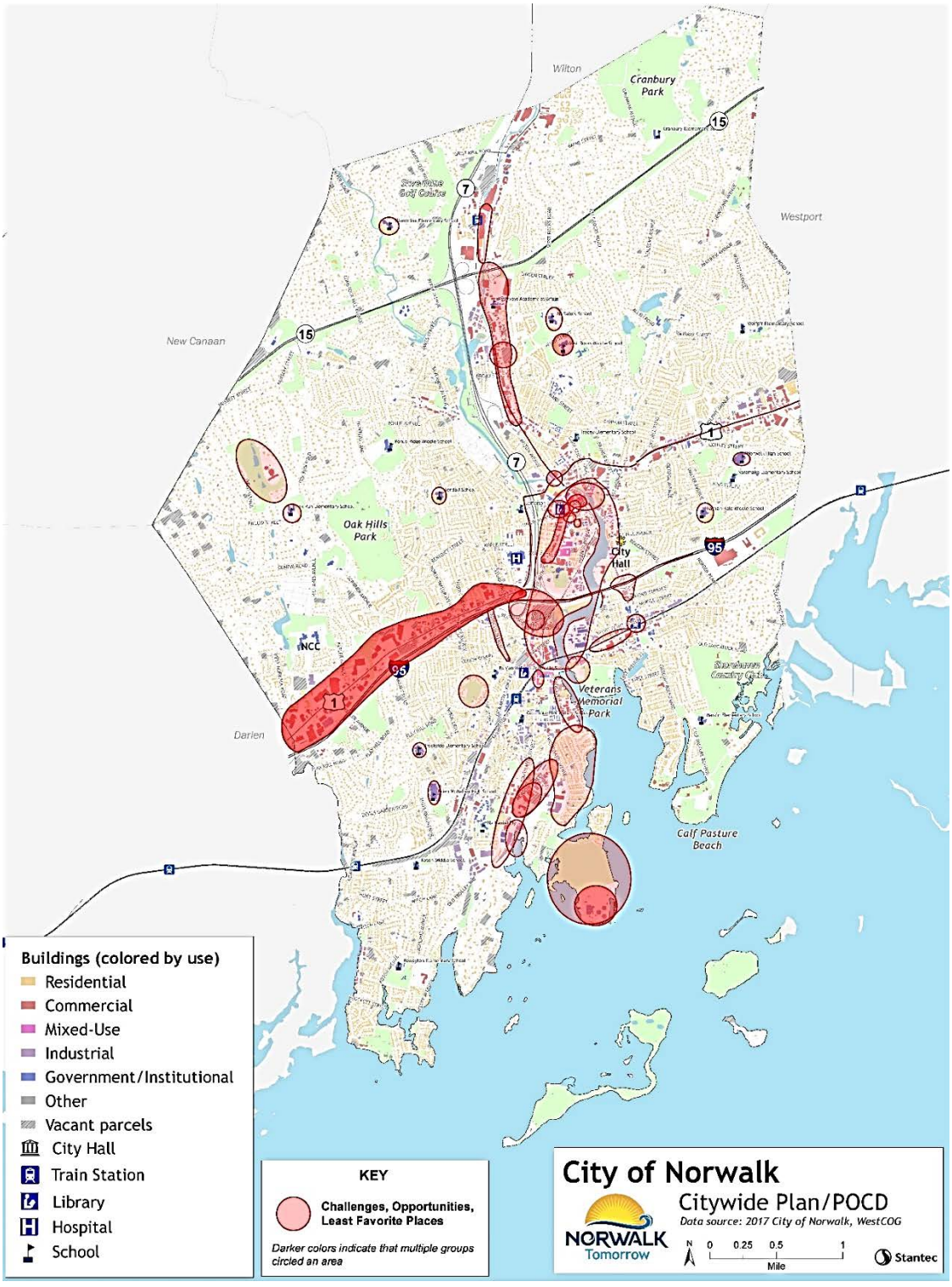


Figure 3.4 Best and Challenges of Central Norwalk

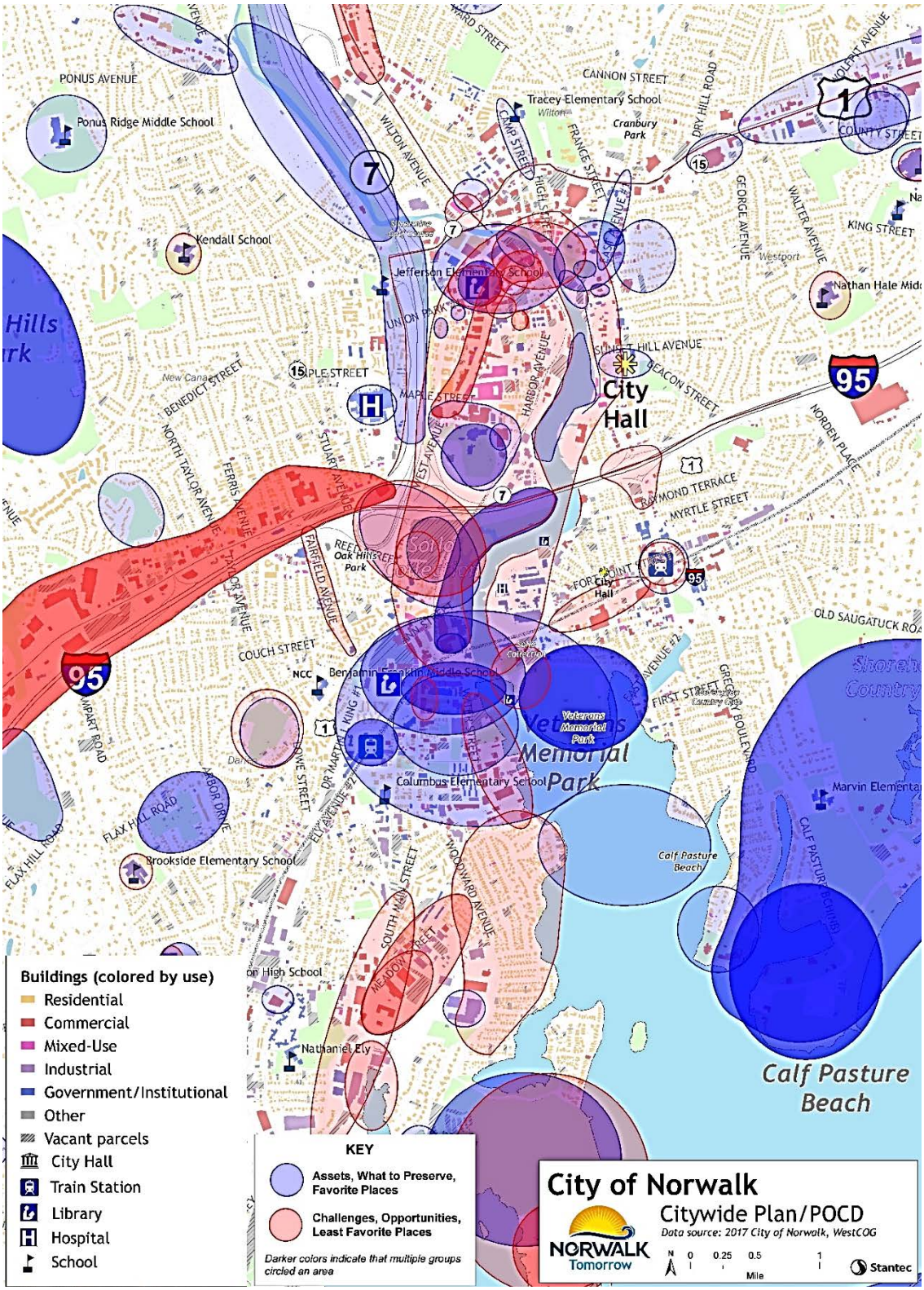
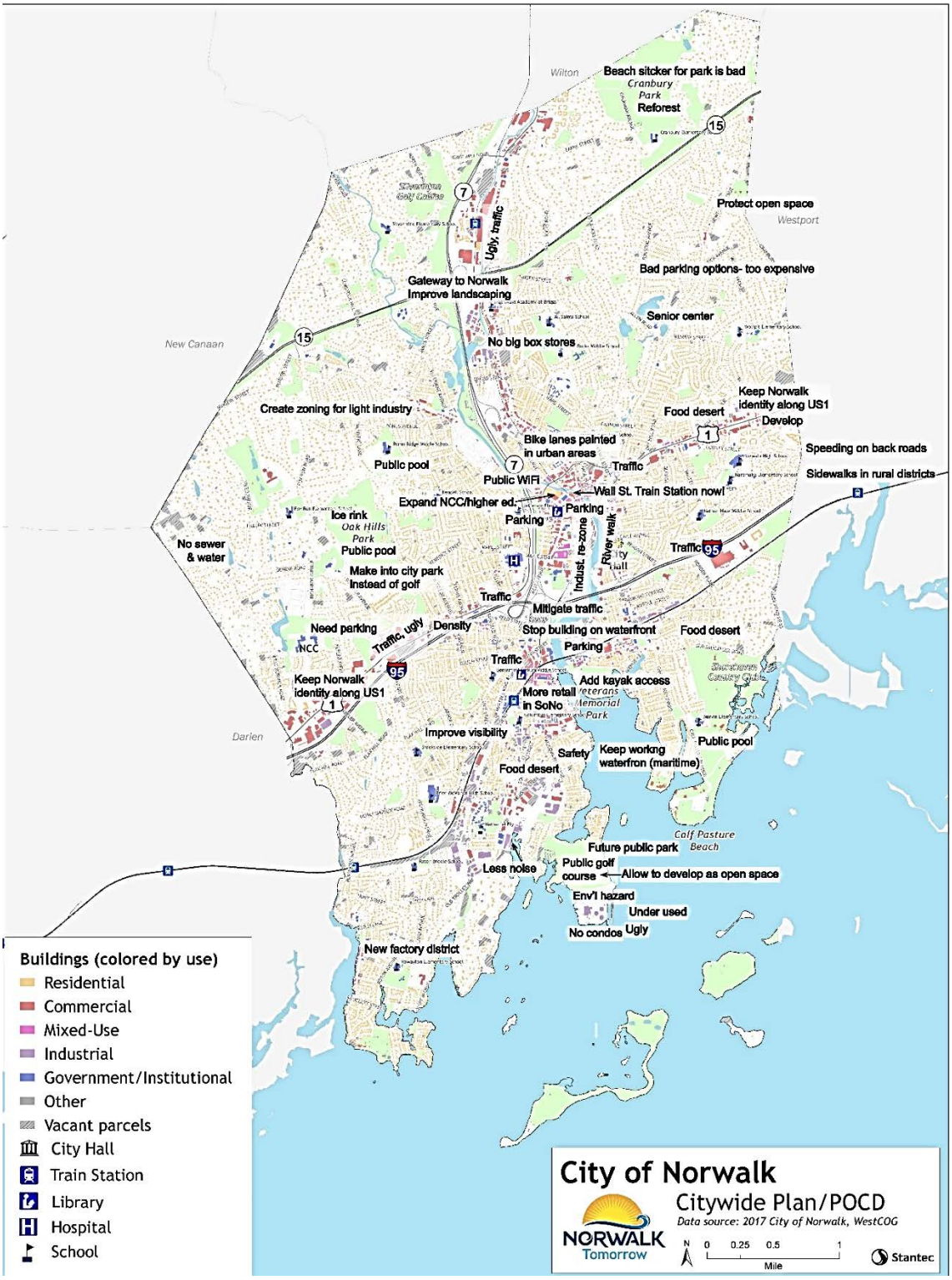


Figure 3.5 Additional Comments from Map Exercise



PERSONAL VISION STATEMENTS

The personal vision statements in many respects reflected the preferences and concerns expressed in the lists of the best things about Norwalk and the challenges facing the city. The most commonly mentioned desires were for economic growth downtown, employment, new restaurants, retail, and entertainment areas, park improvements, roadway improvements, and sustainability. All the personal vision statements were posted in the "Resources" section of the Norwalk Tomorrow website: www.tomorrow.norwalkct.org.

Select Personal Vision Statements

"I would like to see the city have more high pay jobs, a walkable city with food trucks, street festivals, concerts, activities for families. Better public transit system with a new and improved school system to get kids ready to succeed in life…"

"A city that will be easy to get around without a car. No blighted properties. Cultural, recreational opportunities accessible to all residents. Schools that prepare students for the world they will live in as adults."

"'Small' seaside New England town with excellent schools, preserved open spaces, and historical preservation of buildings. Cohesive development plan with uniformity of design. Ample parking, sidewalks, and bike paths. Excellent city services with parks, beaches, library, museum, transportation supported by affordable taxes."

"Controlled development to provide 'walkable' density to support local restaurants and businesses. Improved transportation to provide affordable and convenient access to business areas and recreational or historic sites and commuter trains (flexibility). School reputation to continue to improve."

"Efficient transportation to and from amenities and errands, well promoted activities. Planning and zoning that is driven by a cohesive vision. Budgeting and taxation that supports the implementation of the plan. Transparent decision making. Excellent communications, attractive, accessible neighborhoods that are safe with convenient local markets and services. More community gathering spaces. Police precincts throughout the city."

"I would like all areas of Norwalk to shine, both with historic character and newness where appropriate. Eliminate excess asphalt and ugly businesses. See people walking and biking around town. Work to make zoning serve the city better with a more "big vision" picture rather than "one project at a time" approach. Keep our taxes low. No more big box stores or cheap chains. Preserve and enhance the waterfront with only water dependent use."

"Celebrate Norwalk as a collection of villages and business types. Regulate to encourage this."

TOP PRIORITIES

After sharing their personal visions and discussing common elements, the participants around each table then focused on identifying their top five priorities for the city. The priorities generally fell into 11 different categories:

- **Open space and historical elements:** protect/preserve/maintain natural resources, open space, coastline (including Norwalk Harbor), history, and historic buildings

- **Community:** enhance civic pride; maintain communities and small-town feel; community engagement
- **Schools:** strong school system; incorporate vocational training in schools
- **Connections and mobility:** traffic reduction; public transportation; better connections; adequate parking
- **Affordable housing**
- **Jobs and training:** job and vocational training, high paying jobs
- **Bike/walking friendly:** bike lanes; well-maintained sidewalks; bike and walk-ability
- **Zoning and development**: enforcement; zoning revisions; smart development; controlled development; limit big box stores
- **Diversity:** of populations and businesses
- **Sustainability**: renewable energy incentives
- **Arts and culture**
- **Other:**
    - Strategic plan and input
    - Transparency/communication in City Hall/government
    - Continue Mayor's emergency contact
    - Economic strength- taxes, common sense

Evaluation. Participants were asked to evaluate the Visioning Forum before leaving. Ninety percent rated the overall program as either good or excellent, 84% rated the information and materials as good or excellent, and 96% rated the table discussions as good or excellent.

Comments:

- "I learned a lot about demographics, plans for future, and what is informing decisions."
- "It was great to get together with fellow Norwalkers from all parts for the City to plan Norwalk's future and direction."
- "A good meeting. Need more participation from community."
- "It was an informative presentation of City information with an exchange of ideas."
- "Very happy I came."
- "This was an excellent forum for residents to voice their opinions and learn what is important to others. Please continue the conversation."

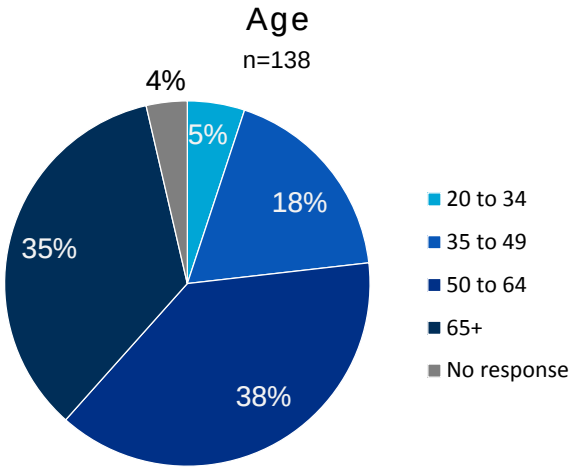
6. NEIGHBORHOOD/DISTRICT WORKSHOPS

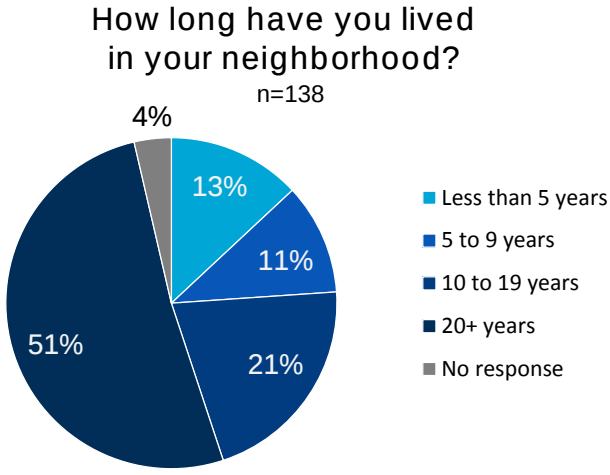
In March 2018 nine neighborhood-based workshops were held throughout the city. These workshops took place on weekday evenings and one Saturday morning in various locations, mostly within the neighborhoods being discussed. Winter storms impacted scheduling, causing the cancellation and rescheduling of three of the nine meetings. All meetings were advertised in *The Hour*, posted on the city website and Facebook, and flyers were distributed via emails from neighborhood associations and other civic groups like the Board of Education, the library, and the senior center.

The workshops were designed to invite residents to think about specific aspects of their neighborhood that they want to preserve and protect, those they want to change or improve, as well as how the neighborhood fits into the citywide context. Participants received an information sheet about the Citywide Plan process, a draft vision handout based on input from the November forum, a detailed agenda with a series of questions, and an individual worksheet to identify assets and challenges. They sat at tables that each had a base map of the neighborhood, markers and post-its, and a worksheet for group priority setting.

The workshops were facilitated by members of the consultant team. Each meeting started with a brief presentation from Stantec about the purpose of the citywide plan and the planning process, followed by a synopsis of existing conditions in the neighborhood, including information on demographics, character and land use, environment and open space, housing, economy, transportation, and infrastructure. Some neighborhood presentations also included information on historic resources, resiliency, or the waterfront.

Demographics. More than 240 people participated in these workshops, ranging from long-time neighborhood proponents to first-time participants in a city planning process. At one meeting, a Cub Scout and his parent came to pursue a civic participation badge and learn about the citywide plan. The individual assets and challenges worksheet included a demographics section to better understand who attended the workshops. Overall, just over half the participants completed the survey. These partial results indicate that respondents tended to be older white adults who have lived in their neighborhood for ten or more years. Almost two-thirds were female. Eighty percent were white, seven percent African American, and only two percent were Hispanic/Latino of any race. Five percent of the respondents were between 20 and 34 years old, and another 18 percent between 35 and 49 years old. Since not all the forms were completed or returned, however, the actual demographic profile is likely somewhat different.





Despite the outreach effort, and perhaps partly due to rescheduling issues due to weather, some groups remained hard to reach: the Hispanic community (though meeting flyers were available in Spanish to groups in the Spanish-speaking community), younger residents, and neighborhoods like Brookside and Hospital Hill that lack active associations or identified leaders. The Brookside/Flax Hill meeting on March 12 had no residents attend and the Hospital Hill/Spring Hill meeting only had about ten.

Interactive Exercises. After the presentation, a series of questions guided participants through discussions in which they wrote down their individual thoughts about the neighborhood and its future, then shared those with others around the table. Participants worked together to identify places of particular interest on the map, and finally identified a set of priorities for the whole table. At the end of the workshop, a volunteer table leader from each table reported back to the entire group on their priorities for the neighborhood's future. The table discussions were varied and engaging, with longtime residents and recent movers talking about their perception of the neighborhood, its assets, and its needs.

Best of the neighborhood and neighborhood challenges: Each participant and then the group as a whole identified the neighborhood's assets and the challenges that it faces, including identifying places on the table map that fit those categories.

Pedestrian and bicycle connections: The group then worked together to identify specific roads where sidewalk and/or bicycle connections are needed, or where crosswalks are missing.

Table priorities: A volunteer table leader wrote down the group's top three priorities for the neighborhood in the next ten years.

Reports from the tables. Each table leader reported to the whole group about their table's discussion and priorities.

SUMMARY OF NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING RESULTS

Silvermine/Broad River - *March 5, Silvermine School*
Approximately 40 people attended this workshop, a mix of long-time neighborhood proponents and people who were attending their first neighborhood meeting. The Silvermine River and other water bodies in the neighborhood, preservation of open spaces and parks, and the arts community were the top three assets listed by meeting participants. The sense of community and connectedness among residents and the historic nature of the area were among other assets described by participants. Traffic concerns were by far the most cited challenge. This topic included cut-through traffic from other areas, pedestrian safety along roads without sidewalks or walking paths, fast-moving traffic, and parking concerns. Other issues included environmental and zoning regulation and development concerns.

Rowayton - *March 5, Rowayton Library*
Fifteen to twenty people participated in this workshop. Beaches and the waterfront, parks, and sidewalks and bike routes were the most common assets described at the meeting. Bayley Beach, Pinkney Park, and Farm Creek in particular were frequently mentioned by participants. Challenges include zoning concerns, traffic and parking issues, and a desire for more sidewalks and safe bike routes. Specific zoning concerns mentioned by participants included the height and scale of new homes in the neighborhood and a feeling of too much density.

East Norwalk - *March 10, The Marvin School*
Approximately 30 people attended this Saturday morning workshop. Beaches and waterfront amenities were the most common asset described at the meeting. Parks and open spaces and the neighborhood feel/sense of community were the other top three assets. Participants identified parking/traffic issues and sidewalk/road conditions as the top two challenges in the neighborhood. Others included litter, flooding and other climate change impacts.

Brookside/Flax Hill - *March 12, Community Room at City Hall*
This meeting did not have any attendees, perhaps due in part to a lack of an active neighborhood association. One resident emailed comments to the City which emphasized historic features in the neighborhood and mentioned a desire for community meeting space at the Fodor Farmhouse.

Cranbury/West Rocks - *March 19, West Rocks School*
More than 40 people attended this workshop. Natural areas in the neighborhood, and especially Cranbury Park, were by far the most commonly cited asset. The function and role of the park was discussed. Other assets included local businesses and public amenities like the senior center and schools. Challenges in the area include traffic/parking issues, need for more sidewalks, and development-related issues. Several participants also mentioned the need for a fire station that had been identified in the previous POCD. There were also concerns that many of the roads are too narrow to safely add bike lanes.

Hospital Hill/Spring Hill - *March 26, Community Room at City Hall*
This meeting was attended by eight to ten people. They described Riverside Cemetery as an attractive space that residents enjoy. A need for parks and public open spaces was the primary challenge for the neighborhood. Parking conflicts around schools during pick-up and drop-off was also discussed, when illegally parked cars on the side of the road narrow the space for passing traffic and create unsafe conditions.

South Norwalk - *March 26, South Norwalk Library*
This was the largest of the neighborhood workshops, attracting more than 55 people to talk about their community. Parks and open space, historic character, and the waterfront were the top three assets described by meeting participants. Oyster Shell Park, Flax Hill Park, and the publicly-accessible islands

in the harbor were specifically mentioned. Other assets included neighborhood diversity, arts and culture, and jobs. Poor sidewalk conditions and other walkability issues was the most often cited challenge in the neighborhood. Others included traffic (including construction impacts and concerns about the amount of new development), the pace of new development, bicycle safety, flooding issues along Water Street, and the need for jobs for residents.

West Norwalk - *March 27, Fox Run School*
More than 30 people attended this workshop. The publicly accessible trails at Dolce Norwalk, Oak Hills Park, and other parks and river access were the top three neighborhood assets mentioned by meeting participants - preserving these is important to residents. The residential character and neighborhood feel of the area is another positive characteristic to people. Challenges include zoning concerns about potential violations and the future of large sites like Dolce and Translux, a need for sidewalks and bike lanes in certain areas, and traffic/speeding concerns. West Norwalk Road, Scribner Avenue, and Ponus Avenue were specifically identified. Several people also discussed the extension of public water and sewer to parts of the neighborhood that currently use wells and septic systems. The West Norwalk Association also held their own meeting in early February and conducted an online survey prior to the workshop. About 20 residents attended the meeting and the survey received 13 responses. AAA residential zoning, proximity to business districts along Route 1, Broad River, and North Main, and Norwalk Community College (NCC) were identified as neighborhood assets. Priority issues identified by participants included the quality of Five Mile River, parking issues at NCC, other traffic concerns, public school quality, and improved bike-friendliness in the neighborhood.

The Green/Downtown - *March 27, Norwalk Public Library*
More than 30 people attended this workshop, a mix of residents, business owners, and people who work in the area. Parks and trails were the most frequently identified asset, and in particular the Green and the Harbor Loop Trail. Other assets include the historic character and favorite places like the main library, Garden Cinema, and Wall Street Theater. Participants listed challenges including a need for better pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure (sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes), limited parking near Wall Street, and blight or vacancies in the downtown area. A potential Wall Street train station was mentioned by several participants, mostly supporting the idea. Stalled projects like POKO and the Duleep building were also discussed as blighting influences on Wall Street.

Neighborhood Maps. Participants were asked to review a map of their neighborhood as a group and circle or label their favorite places and assets with a blue pen, and circle or label their least favorite places and challenged areas with a red pen. In some cases, participants identified places as being both assets but also as places that faced challenges and need improvements. A set of neighborhood maps with compiled comments is available in the appendix.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections. Meeting participants used the table maps to draw potential pedestrian or bicycle routes for consideration.

Silvermine/Broad River

- "Fix all existing sidewalks throughout district for safety and encourage community health and interactions"
- Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT): Explore secondary linkages along Silvermine River
- North Seir Hill Road and Grist Mill Road: speeding issues
- James Street: through-traffic impacts

Rowayton

- Rowayton Avenue from train station south to Cudlipp Street: improve station access with safer walking access

- Hunt Street/Witch Lane: need sidewalk/footpath to get to Gilbert Hill access to Rowayton train station
- Highland Avenue: sidewalk improvements
- Wilson Avenue: need footpath to be rebuilt for safe school access

East Norwalk

- Fort Point Street: add sidewalks
- Coastal walkway repairs needed at Veterans Memorial Park
- East Avenue/Gregory Boulevard/Calf Pasture Beach Road: traffic congestion

Brookside/Flax Hill

- Highland Avenue/Flax Hill: Preserve graceful intersection
- Maintain traffic islands
- Highland Avenue: Replace metal guardrails with wooden ones (like Rampart Road)

Cranbury/West Rocks

- Potential sidewalks/bicycle lanes: East Rocks Road, West Rocks Road, Newtown Avenue
- Some concern about having adequate road width for bike lanes
- Aiken Street: too much foot traffic, too much road parking
- Speeding concerns: Newtown Avenue, West Rocks Road, Grumman Avenue, Bayne Street

Hospital Hill/Spring Hill

- Grandview Avenue: more connected sidewalks needed
- Van Buren Avenue: sidewalks and crosswalks needed
- Riverside Avenue: improved maintenance needed especially along Riverside Cemetery (trash pick-up and fence repair)
- Connecticut Avenue: more greenery, trees, and shrubs needed; number of fender bender accidents between Lowe's and the hospital

South Norwalk

- Safe, maintained walking routes to the train station needed; Hamilton Avenue walkway needs to be repaired; crosswalks need to be added or repaired
- Woodward Avenue: sidewalk, street repairs, and lighting improvements needed
- Quintard Avenue and Sheridan Street: sidewalk repairs needed
- South Main Street: dangerous conditions, especially from Concord to Meadow Street
- Bicycle access to Oyster Shell Park, possibly along Garner Street to Water Street

West Norwalk

- Need sidewalks and bike lanes in certain areas
- Traffic/speeding (West Norwalk Rd, Scribner Ave., Ponus Ave.)

Review of the Draft Citywide Vision Statement. The draft vision statement was drafted based on common themes from the personal vision statements and other activities at the visioning workshop, as well as interviews and research. The draft vision for the citywide plan was shared at each meeting for public review and comment. Most participants felt comfortable with the draft vision statement and there were only a few comments submitted, including to emphasize coastal assets and add "arts" and "sustainability" to it.

TOP PRIORITIES

After sharing their thoughts and discussing common elements, the participants around each table then identified their top three shared priorities for the neighborhood. The priorities generally fell into 10 different categories and aligned well with the top priorities expressed in the Visioning Workshop:

- **Open space and parks:** protect/preserve/maintain natural resources, open space, coastline,

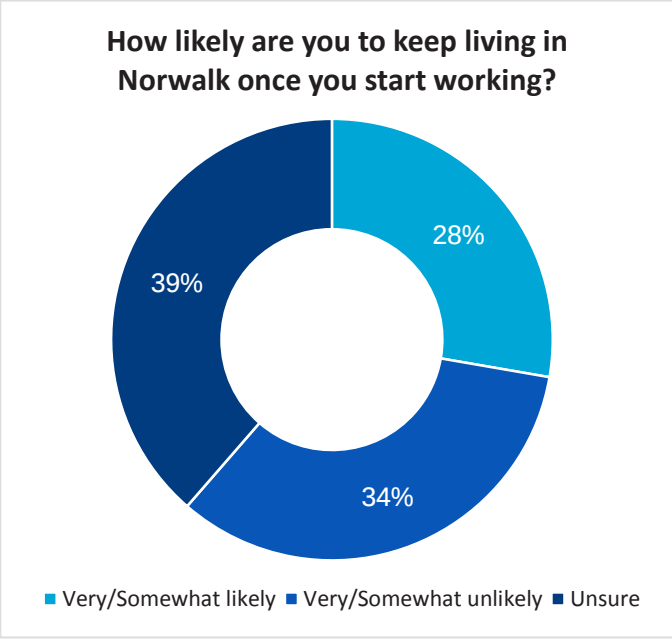
- **Historic resources:** protect/preserve/maintain historic buildings and districts
- **Community:** preserve and enhance neighborhood and community feel
- **Connections and mobility:** Traffic reduction; public transportation; better connections; adequate parking
- **Jobs and training:** Job and vocational training, high paying jobs
- **Bike/walking friendly:** Bike lanes; well-maintained sidewalks; bike and walk-ability
- **Zoning and development**: enforcement; zoning revisions; smart development; controlled development; limit big box stores
- **Diversity:** of populations and businesses
- **Sustainability**: renewable energy incentives
- **Arts and culture**
- Other:
    - Strategic plan and input
    - Transparency/communication in City Hall/government
    - Continue Mayor's emergency contact
    - Economic strength- taxes, common sense

7. YOUTH MEETING

On May 11, 2018, a diverse group of young Norwalkers met on a spring afternoon to learn about the Citywide Plan and discuss their own ideas for the city's future. Approximately 25 people, mostly high schoolers with a few Norwalk Community Colleges students and parents, talked with each other about their favorite places in Norwalk, what they would like to see change, and creative ideas for ways to make the city work better for teens and young adults. This input will be added to other resident comments collected at the Citywide Visioning Forum and the neighborhood meeting series.

Planning for the Future of Our Children. The City wanted to make a specific effort to engage young people, often a difficult group to reach in planning projects. This is particularly important since the Citywide Plan's ten-year horizon means that strategies recommended in the plan will be realized in their young adult life. The plan becomes an important part of the effort to retain and attract young people to live and work in Norwalk.

The teens and young adults at the meeting identified some of their favorite places in Norwalk, including parks, beaches, and festivals. They wrote down their personal vision for the future of Norwalk, some of which included:



- "In 20 years, I hope to see Norwalk's school system continue to thrive. Norwalk's expanding diversity is fueled by its increasingly diverse student population and I think that the voices of students are helping to move Norwalk's culture forward."
- "In 20 years there should also be more job opportunities because […] there is poverty in Norwalk and the people without jobs should be given the opportunity to work to survive."
- "I see Norwalk being a place for people all ages, young and old, to gather and enjoy the scenic views […] The future of Norwalk should not only have areas for city life, but also areas that are natural and preserved."
- "I would like Norwalk to be cleaner and greener […] I also would like to see Norwalk High School redone"

After discussions around each table, these young Norwalkers identified shared priorities for the future of Norwalk. These included more internships and jobs for teenagers, better nightlife/entertainment /recreation center options specifically for teens, more funding for after-school programs, a bigger focus on sustainability, better parks, and traffic improvements around the schools. Asked about what nightlife means to them, one student mentioned wanting a drive-in movie theater because existing theaters are too expensive. They also liked the idea of outdoor movies in the park or beach. They mentioned a mall with affordable stores for teens, music concerts for their age group, and seemed excited about the possibility of bike share. One participant described wanting a student center that taught life skills like saving, investing, job skills, and rhetoric.

Priorities:

- More jobs/internships for teens
- Better nightlife/entertainment /rec center options for teens
- More funding for after school programs
- Sustainability
- Better parks
- Traffic improvements around the schools.

- Vision elements:
- Diversity
- Job opportunities and training
- Sustainability
- Affordability
- Investments in school renovations (especially Norwalk High, feeling that its unequal to Brien McMahon).

8. TOPIC WORKSHOPS DISCUSS POTENTIAL GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR THE CITYWIDE PLAN/POCD

After hosting nine neighborhood-based workshops in March to find out what's on the minds of Norwalk residents in their neighborhoods, the Norwalk Tomorrow citywide plan team invited the public to four workshops in May to discuss and comment on potential recommendations for major topic areas of the plan:

a) Green, Sustainable, and Resilient Norwalk
b) City Design
c) Prosperous Norwalk
d) Connected and Complete Norwalk

At these workshops, members of the planning team presented background information and draft goals along with potential strategies to achieve the goals. The potential goals and strategies were based on the issues and opportunities that emerged in previous community meetings, stakeholder interviews, committee discussions, analysis of current conditions, and best practices. Attendees at the workshops had opportunities to discuss the ideas in small groups, complete short surveys, and provide written feedback. Those who were unable to attend the workshops were invited to view the four presentations and take four short surveys related to the topics that were available on tomorrow.norwalkct.org.

a) GREEN, SUSTAINABLE, AND RESILIENT NORWALK: May 21, 2018

Four related "green" themes were the focus of this workshop: parks, open space, and recreation; sustainability and green practices; climate change resilience; and coastal management. The presentation by Larissa Brown of Stantec included background information on these topics and potential goals and strategies. The approximately 26 participants asked questions and made comments during the presentation and were asked to complete several written exercises. Potential goals and strategies presented for discussion included:

GOALS	STRATEGIES
Parks, Open Space, and Recreation	
Norwalk has a connected green and blue network of parks, green streets, streams, and coastline.	• Give priority to completing the Norwalk River Valley Trail. • Seek open space protection along Long Island Sound. • Create a network of priority walking streets for tree planting.
Norwalk's park and recreation system serves residents throughout the city.	• Develop a Parks, Open Space, and Recreation System Plan, including a management plan. • Seek park opportunities in underserved areas of the city.
Sustainability and Green Practices	

GOALS	STRATEGIES
Make Norwalk City government a model of sustainability.	• Strengthen policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy.
Norwalk reduces greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state goals.	• Adopt and maintain systems to evaluate and monitor sustainability efforts.
Resilience	
Norwalk plans for and adapts to climate change.	• Prepare a climate change vulnerability assessment. • Develop a long-term green infrastructure plan for stormwater management. • Promote actions to mitigate increased heat.
Coastal Management	
Protect Norwalk's coastal environmental resources.	• Encourage the reduction of impervious surfaces and use green infrastructure for coastal water quality. • Advocate for reduction of runoff pollution from state and interstate roads. • Collaborate with nonprofits and others to further protect coastal wetland resources.
Protect resources for water-dependent uses.	• Update the Harbor Management Plan and develop clear criteria to use in project review.
Protect and enhance public access to the harbor and coast.	• Promote public access where feasible and safe. • Preserve the Liberty Square waterfront for public access after completion of the Walk Bridge.

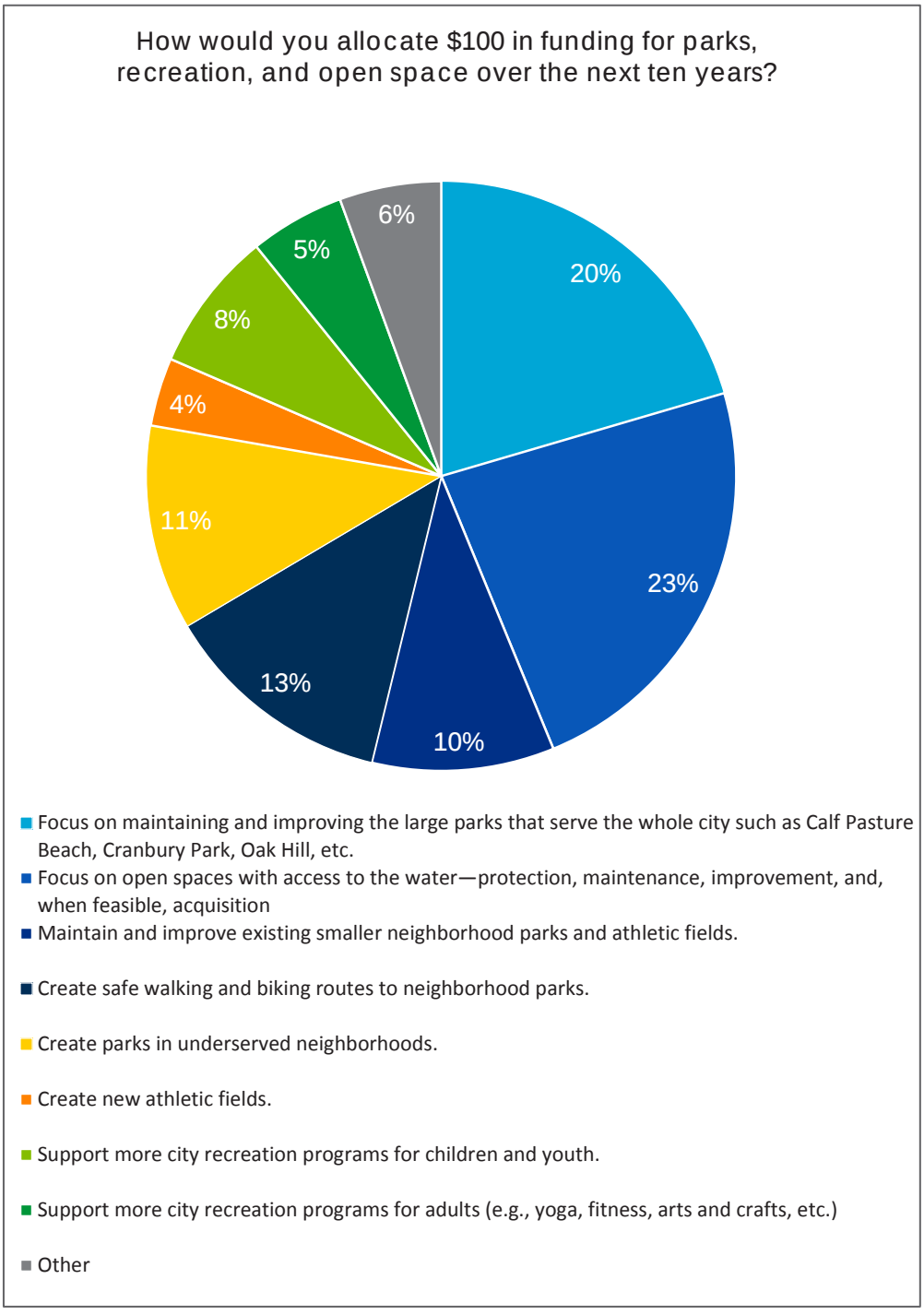
During the meeting, participants expressed general support for a new Parks and Recreation System Master Plan; giving priority to finishing the Norwalk River Valley Trail; and to investments in parks and public spaces that provide access to water. They also would like Norwalk to be a regional leader in sustainability and energy-efficiency and to develop a systematic approach to resilience and green infrastructure.

In the first written exercise, participants were asked to indicate how they would allocate $100 in funding for parks, open space, trails and recreation (see chart below). About half the allocation would go to focusing on the large parks that serve the entire city, open spaces with access to the water, and, to a lesser degree, smaller neighborhood parks and athletic fields. In the second written exercise, participants were asked to provide their priority actions for the four themes covered in the workshop.

Priority actions listed by participants included:

- For *Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation,* comments focused on maintenance of existing parks and open space, completion of the NRVT, protection of remaining open space, and improving and increasing trails for walking, biking, and running.
- *Sustainability* priorities included more renewable energy projects, public education and incentives for sustainable practices and energy-efficiency, a plastic bag ban and similar initiatives, and stronger enforcement of existing laws.
- *Resilience* priorities focused on green infrastructure, stronger regulations and design requirements, green space in flood-prone areas, protection of the wastewater treatment plant, and more public education.
- The *Coastal Management* priorities included initiatives and practices to reduce pollution, expansion of open space and public access, preservation of water dependent uses, and charging upstream wastewater treatment customers more to support expansion and protection of the wastewater treatment plant.

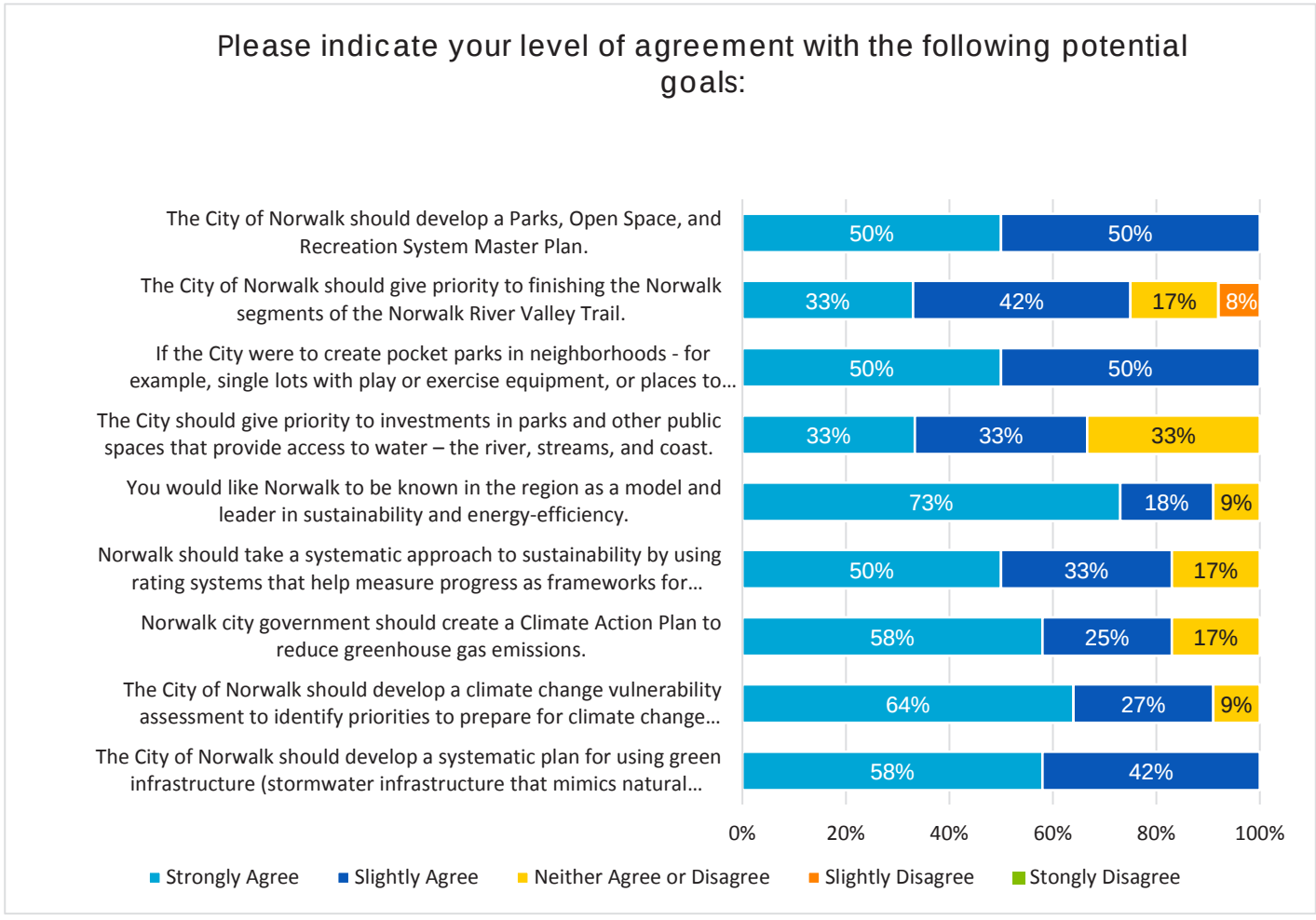
Digital Results for Green, Sustainable, and Resilient Norwalk



Twelve people completed the Green, Sustainable, and Resilient Norwalk survey which asked respondents to answer questions about the City's parks, open space, and recreation systems.

Respondents were all over the age of 35, with 58% between 35 and 49 years old and 42% between 50 and 65. Respondents were from various areas of the city, with the most- 25%- stating they were from East Norwalk. Every respondent stated they were white and non-Hispanic/Latinx.

Participants overwhelmingly responded that they strongly or slightly agreed that the City of Norwalk should develop a Parks, Open Space, and Recreation System Master Plan. They also agreed with the development of pocket parks, green infrastructure, and a climate change vulnerability assessment. One third of respondents were unsure if the City should give priority to investments in parks and other public spaces that provide access to water – the river, streams, and coast.



b) CITY DESIGN: May 22, 2018

This workshop, with approximately 32 attendees, focused on community and neighborhood character, design standards for commercial and mixed-use corridors, and historic preservation. To set the stage, Phil Schaeffing of Stantec gave a brief overview of the characteristics of high-quality city design. These include getting the "four D's" right: short *distances* between different uses, a *diversity* of uses in one place, enough *density* to make a place feel active and lively, and *design* quality. Participants were asked about other places or cities they thought could be good examples for Norwalk. Responses included Ridgefield, CT; Keene, NH; Burlington, VT; Northampton, MA; Portland and Camden, ME; Allentown, PA; Charleston, SC; and Royal Oak, MI.

Norwalk currently has urban design standards and review only in the redevelopment areas and, to a limited degree, four small areas designated as "Village Districts." A potential focus for the plan is to

promote design standards and enhanced city design along the Route 1 and Main Avenue corridors. These corridors reflect older suburban-style design characteristics and will have redevelopment potential over the next decade as changing retail trends and living preferences continue to influence customers, future residents, and property owners. Other potential areas that could benefit from urban design standards are Norwalk's small neighborhood-scale centers of activity, like Cranbury Market, New Canaan Avenue, or East Norwalk. Downtown and SoNo are also undergoing significant change and are primarily under the purview of the Redevelopment Agency. In addition, while Norwalk has recognized historic sites and districts, the City lacks some of the most effective historic preservation tools, such as local historic districts.

Four goals for city design were introduced:

- Support local centers of activity in neighborhoods.
- Promote high-quality redevelopment along major corridors.
- Strengthen Village District design standards in zoning.
- Preserve historic and cultural character.

Participants generally strongly or somewhat agreed with each goal when surveyed, and one resident suggested a new goal for green design standards. Each goal has one or more strategies to help implement it, and these also ranked generally favorably with participants. The final segment of the workshop was a short visual preference exercise. Participants were asked to indicate how much they liked or disliked photos of ten different places as a potential model for major corridors. These images evoked diverse responses based on road widths, building heights, design features, and other elements.

Most appealing places

88% really or somewhat like

88% really or somewhat like

81% really or somewhat like

Least appealing places

65% really or somewhat dislike

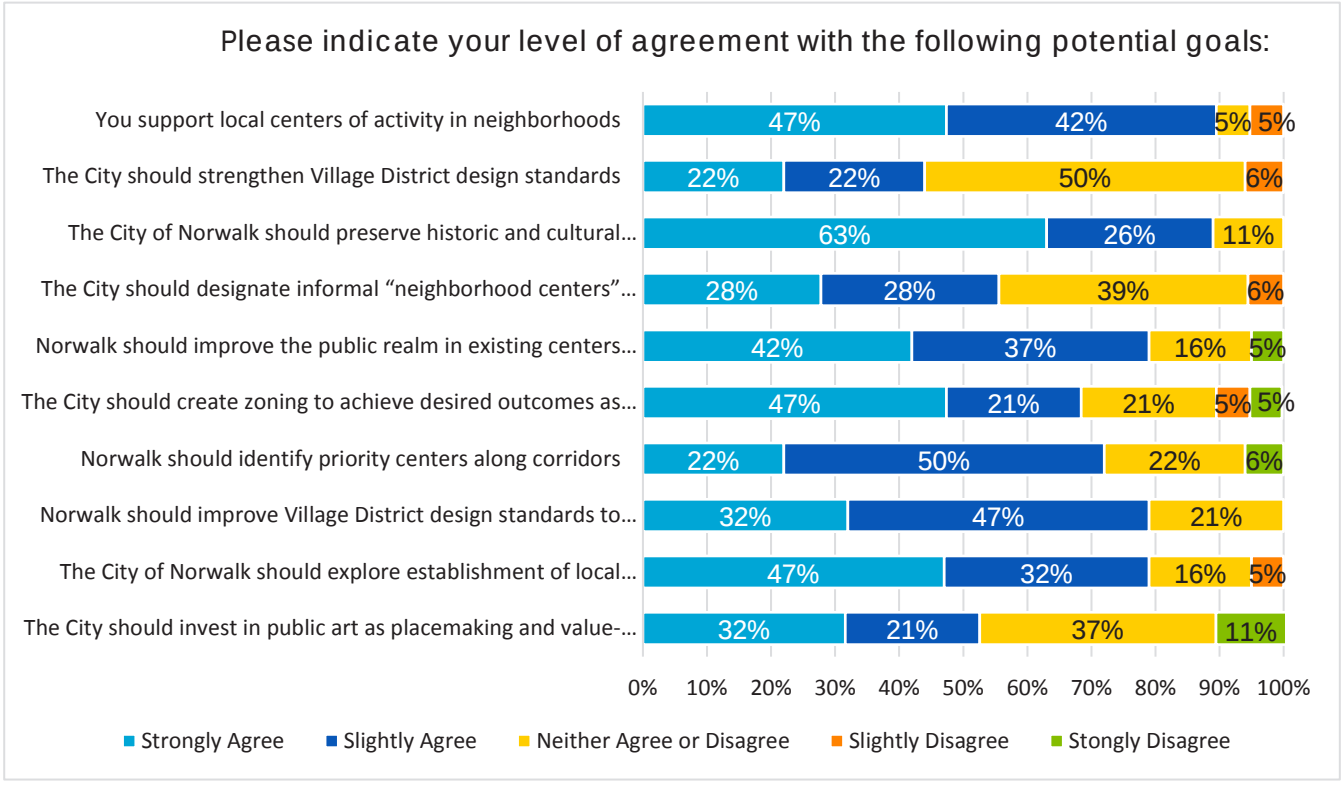
68% really or somewhat dislike

52% really or somewhat dislike

Digital Results for City Design

Nineteen people completed the City Design survey which asked respondents to answer questions about neighborhoods and the public realm. Respondents were mostly over the age of 35, with 47% between 35 and 49 years old and 48% over 50. Fiver percent or respondents stated they were in the 20 to 34 range. Respondents were from various areas of the city, with the most- 21%- stating they were from East Norwalk. Ninety-five percent of respondents stated they were white and non-Hispanic/Latinx.

Participants overwhelmingly (90%) supported local centers of activity in neighborhoods, and strongly or slightly agreed that Norwalk should preserve historic and cultural character. Forty-four percent of respondents thought the City should designate informal "neighborhood centers" and/or additional village districts.



c) PROSPEROUS NORWALK: May 30, 2018

At this workshop, attended by approximately 21 people, the focus was on strategies to achieve three overall goals: retain and attract high-quality businesses and jobs; grow Norwalk's non-residential tax base; maintain and enhance government and community conditions that support desired growth and development. In addition to a presentation on background data and potential goals and strategies by the planning team's economic development expert, Dan Hodge of Hodge Economic Consulting, the workshop included a panel discussion moderated by Brian Griffin, President of the Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce. The panelists were Thomas Madden, City of Stamford Director of Economic Development; Melissa Kaplan-Macey, Connecticut Director, Regional Plan Association; and Carolyn Grossman Meagher, Director of Regional Planning, New York City Department of City Planning.

Dan Hodge provided some background data and then presented three broad economic goals and accompanying potential strategies for Norwalk:

GOALS	STRATEGIES
Norwalk has a diversified economy with a larger business tax base and more high-quality, good jobs for residents.	• Update zoning and land use in targeted industrial zones • Focus on regional target industries: professional/tech services; finance; tourism, recreation, and culture; niche industries • Develop a small business and entrepreneurial initiative • Expand workforce housing availability • Promote Norwalk Center and SoNo for creative economy small office users • Optimize Norwalk's coastal location and waterfront areas for recreation, tourism, economic, and transportation uses
Norwalk continues to strengthen the urban core with a mix of uses to attract residents, visitors, and businesses.	• Enhance business attraction and expansion tools in urban core areas to be consistent and transparent • Track and evaluate development and business incentives • Recruit a higher education presence for Norwalk Center • Implement transit-oriented development for more live/work/play options
Norwalk has the right policies, infrastructure, and leadership for business growth and development.	• Establish strong citywide economic development leadership to develop and implement proactive strategies • Define strategic focus areas in Norwalk Center for multi-faceted public investment and programming • Pursue an action-oriented strategy to provide alternatives to the car in connecting the city's activity centers • Improve and maintain the public realm, parks, and infrastructure for enhanced quality of life

The panel then shared regional economic conditions and trends that affect Norwalk:

- New York City has 40% of all jobs in the NY-NJ-CT metro area but since the Great Recession (2008), NYC's share of job growth for the region increased to 80%, especially in technology and creative industries.

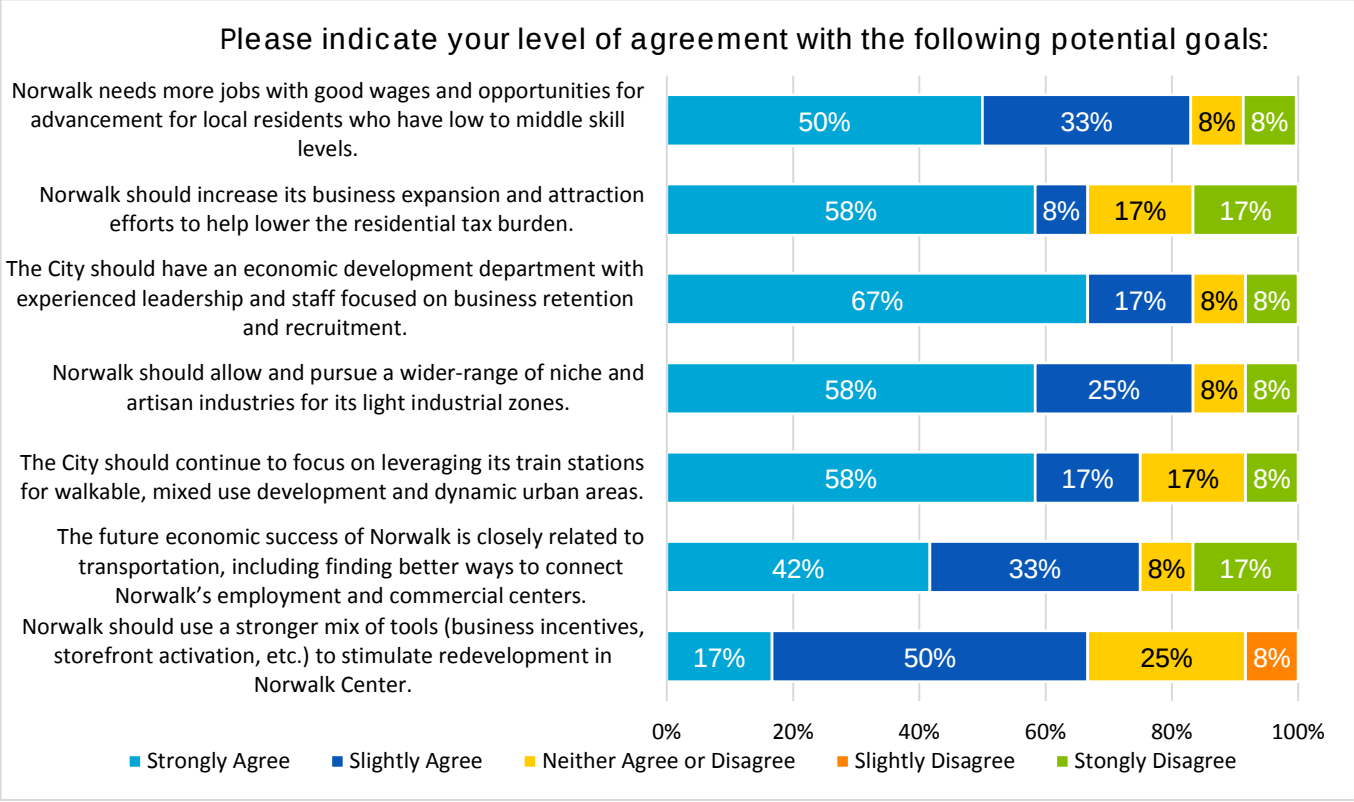
- Office job growth occurring outside of NYC is typically in areas that are well-served by rail transit with a strong local workforce.
- A strong rental housing market supports economic (business development) opportunities because people like to live where they work.
- New suburban office campuses are not being built: "No one wants suburban office locations anymore."
- The amount of office space per employee is lower than before: a new 200- employee company uses the amount of office space needed by a 75-employee company in the past.
- In order to survive, first-floor retail/restaurants in mixed-use residential buildings need a population of approximately 15,000 people within 1 mile, as well as daytime employee lunch customers. Stamford has a new program offering a density bonus in exchange for more affordable (lower cost) first floor retail space.
- Stamford experience: the city has been pursuing a growth model of development around downtown and the train station.
    - Residential growth has been crucial to attracting and growing businesses.
    - Key business sectors for Stamford are FIRE (finance, insurance, real estate), consumer products, professional services (accounting, consulting, etc.), digital media, and the XFL/WWE.
    - Proactive economic development activities include a professional, high-quality economic development web site (http://www.choosestamford.com/) that emphasizes live, work, play. They market/sell the region's assets when they sell Stamford.
    - They provide a tremendous amount of information on real estate opportunities to prospective developers.
    - They are actively partnering with the state of CT to be aware of business expansion opportunities and how to position Stamford for consideration.
    - They are helping lead the Fairfield Five (Greenwich, Stamford, Norwalk, and other communities) as a regional marketing/promotion effort to try to have more companies based in NYC, Boston and elsewhere consider the region when thinking of expansion/relocation. In September the group will host a meeting with technology companies to try to attract them to Fairfield County.

Participants asked questions and commented on the presentations and were asked to provide their views in two exercises. Asked about their level of agreement with statements on economic development, the greatest agreement was found for creating an economic development department with experienced leadership; increasing business expansion and attraction to help lower the residential tax burden; finding better ways to connect Norwalk's multiple employment and commercial centers; pursuing a wider range of niche and artisan industries; and continuing to focus on train station areas for walkable, mixed use development. The second exercise asked their ideas on the priority economic development activities for the next 10 years. Comments included the following: niche industry and manufacturing; co-working and work/live spaces; more walkable mixed-use areas; reduction of government silos; become a tourist-driven economy; limit on further development of large retail stores; develop a city market; house the people who work in Norwalk.

Digital Survey on Prosperous Norwalk

Twelve people completed the Prosperous Norwalk survey which asked respondents to answer economic based questions. Respondents were all over the age of 35, with 50% between 35 and 49 years old and 50% between 50 and 65. Respondents were from various areas of the city, with the most- 25%- stating they were from East Norwalk. Every respondent stated they were white and non-Hispanic/Latinx.

The majority of participants, 83%, responded that Norwalk needs more jobs with good wages and opportunities for advancement for local residents who have low to middle skill levels. Likewise, 84% felt



that City should have an economic development department with experienced leadership and staff focused on business retention and recruitment, and that the City should continue to focus on leveraging its train stations for walkable, mixed use development and dynamic urban areas (75%).

d) CONNECTED AND COMPLETE NORWALK: May 31, 2018

This workshop focused primarily on integrating land use and transportation, with an emphasis on housing and transportation choice. The approximately 15 attendees were asked to complete two written exercises to give their views on relevant issues and priorities for the next ten years.
The workshop's initial presentation by Stantec's Larissa Brown included information on broad issues facing Norwalk, such as regional transformations in retail, office development, transportation (autonomous vehicles), and the impending generational transition in housing from baby boomers to millennials. She also provided background on affordable housing issues and integrating transportation networks, including bicycle and pedestrian routes, with land use.

A number of possible options for affordable housing were discussed and participants were asked in a written exercise to give their reactions—from "strongly agree" to "neutral" to strongly disagree to these options. The options with the more "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" reactions included City government donation (instead of auction) of tax title properties appropriate for affordable housing to nonprofit affordable housing developers; consideration of a program for a security deposit guarantee for income-eligible renters (similar to a former State program); and exploring programs to assist income-eligible first time homebuyers. Participants were somewhat less supportive of creating an Affordable

Housing Trust to fund affordable housing, allowing more accessory units, and exploring a community land trust model.

Stantec's Chris Mojica discussed transportation issues and their relationship to land uses. He introduced ideas about multi-modal transportation, also known as transportation choice, that provides networks for walking, biking, and transit that are alternatives to the car. A fifteen-minute bike trip typically covers three miles, which would allow Norwalk residents to reach many city destinations. Although we often think of transportation issues primarily in terms of commuting, residents make many short, local trips in the city that could easily be made on foot or by bike if there were safe facilities for walking and biking. Innovations to make transit more responsive can also provide more transportation choice

Chris led participants through a quiz on transportation issues, such as whether widening streets reduces traffic congestion (the correct answer is no). Through the quiz, he revealed that review of ten years of daily traffic data on local streets for Norwalk indicates that the annual change in daily traffic is plus or minus 1% for the city as a whole. The neighborhoods north of Route 1 tended to have slight declines in daily traffic, while the neighborhoods south of Route 1 had slight increases in traffic.

The last segment of the presentation discussed the benefits of promoting Complete Streets and using multimodal level of service analysis (which adds bike, pedestrian, and transit to level of service for cars) for transportation improvements. Complete Streets is an approach to designing and operating streets for safe, comfortable, convenient access and travel for all users—pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists—to the maximum degree feasible. In addition, the group discussed the possibility of Norwalk applying to be one of four State-supported pilot sites for SAVs (Shared Autonomous Vehicles).

In addition to the first exercise on affordable housing options, participants were asked to suggest their top priorities for the next ten years in the categories of affordable housing, transportation, and other related issues.

Affordable housing. Among the priorities lists were locating affordable housing near transit and near employment centers; initiatives that encourage moving from renting to owning; maintaining existing affordability initiatives; and making affordable rental housing a priority to allow younger people and employees to live in Norwalk. A few participants noted that Norwalk now meets the State's goal for affordable housing and that towns like Darien and Westport should do more to take their share of affordable housing.

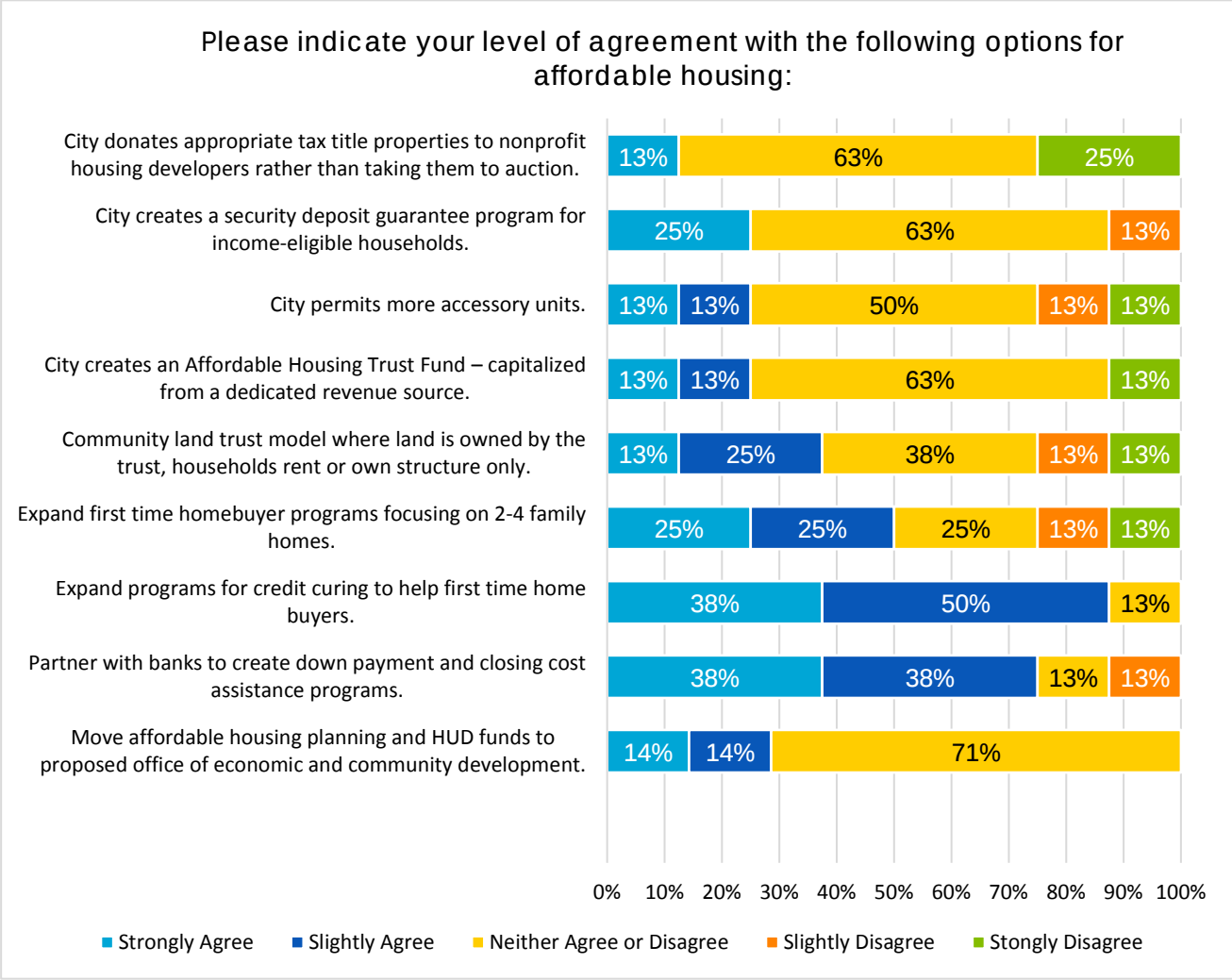
Transportation. Participants had a number of suggestions for transportation priorities including implementing shared parking options and internal connections between businesses on major roads; better transit frequency and on-demand micro transit; establishing water taxis; biking and walking options suitable to an aging population and changes in weather; a circulator system among major activity areas; advocating for Wall Street and Merritt 7 train stations; and ensuring that high-use pedestrian areas are repaired and maintained, including snow shoveling. One participant suggested making multimodal improvements as a series of pilot projects, so that people can see the benefits and get used to changes. Another suggestion was to have a continuous promotional campaign about transportation choice to create a change in culture.

Other priorities. Participants also proposed other priorities including zoning changes; building a river boardwalk from South Norwalk to the Wall Street area; considering allowing new types of housing, such as tiny homes, pocket/cottage neighborhoods, and two-family homes by special permit in single family neighborhoods.

Connected and Complete

Eight people completed the City Design survey which asked respondents to answer questions about affordable housing. Respondents were mostly over the age of 35, with 50% between 35 and 49 years old and 38% between 50 and 65. Respondents were from various areas of the city, with no two people indicating they were from the same neighborhood. Every respondent stated they were white and non-Hispanic/Latinx.

The majority of participants, 88%, responded that they were neutral or did not agree with the option to donate appropriate tax title properties to nonprofit housing developers rather than taking them to auction. About three quarters responded that they were neutral or did not agree with the idea to create a security deposit guarantee program for income-eligible households or permit more accessory units. Eighty-eight percent were in favor of expanding programs for credit curing to help first time come buyers.



9. SPANISH LANGUAGE OUTREACH

Because about 25% of Norwalk's population identifies as Hispanic/Latinx, the planning team worked with the planning department to provide the opportunity for people who preferred to speak Spanish to participate. Meeting flyers and other materials for the workshops were made available in Spanish as well as English and a special Spanish language workshop was scheduled. The team reached out to organizations, churches, Hispanic groceries, and persons who could potentially help bring limited-English, Spanish speakers to participate in the planning process. Of course, many of Norwalk's Hispanics

do speak and understand English well and were able to participate in the English-language events. Our attempts to reach the limited-English population also occurred during a period when many immigrants were concerned about the national political debate about immigration

11. PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT PLAN

The draft plan was put online for comment by the public in November 2018–January 2019

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APPENDIX B: CITY OF NEIGHBORHOODS – NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILES

A. NEIGHBORHOOD DIVERSITY IN NORWALK

What is now the City of Norwalk was once several different independent entities. In 1913, the cities of Norwalk and South Norwalk, the East Norwalk Fire District, and the remaining more rural parts of the Town of Norwalk consolidated to form a single City of Norwalk. The consolidation resulted in the creation of six taxing districts, of which four function as municipalities under Connecticut law. Three of these taxing districts provide water and/or electric utility service, and several own neighborhood facilities and parks. Norwalk residents often cite this history as one of the reasons for the strong sense of neighborhood identity within the 21st century city. The Coalition of Norwalk Neighborhood Associations (CNNA) lists 28 associations (of which five are listed as inactive and two areas have more than one association) as members.[1] However, there is no agreed upon number of neighborhoods in Norwalk and one can find listings ranging from ten to "hundreds" of neighborhoods.[2] Some neighborhoods do not have a neighborhood association.

B. NINE NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICTS

As described in Chapter 3, the public engagement process for this update to the citywide plan included nine neighborhood workshops with the purpose of identifying local issues and creating brief profiles of each district. The CNNA worked with the Planning Director and the consultant team to identify these neighborhood districts. They reflect census tract boundaries to facilitate data collection. CNNA members assisted in outreach and logistics for these meetings, and member groups provided varying levels of historic and other information for these neighborhood profiles. Many communities have designated planning districts which consolidate neighborhoods for planning, community engagement, and project implementation. Norwalk may wish to consider using the nine neighborhood-based districts identified for this planning process to create such a system. Over time, consistent use would help create a set of broader district-based identities and provide a vehicle for engagement and transparency for people who live in areas that do not have a specific neighborhood association.

Neighborhood and District Character. Within its 23 square miles of land, Norwalk contains a range of different urban forms including historic urban centers, coastal villages, suburban corridors, 20th century middle class subdivisions, and leafy suburban districts similar to the surrounding affluent towns. Building and street patterns vary across these areas, from small blocks and lots within a somewhat regular grid of streets to larger blocks and lots with curving roads and cul-de-sacs. These different physical forms contribute to the character of the neighborhood districts.

The profiles that follow are based on the nine neighborhood-based workshops held in March 2018. Some neighborhoods also have plans that resulted from neighborhood association workshops held in 2004 (except for one plan from 2006). These plans vary in the level of detail and many of the fundamental values and concepts remain valid today. The neighborhoods with 2004 plans are Broad River, Silvermine, Cranbury, East Norwalk, Golden Hill, South Norwalk Waterfront Communities (Shorefront Park, Harbor Shores, Harbor View, Village Creek, and Wilson Point), and West Norwalk. The 2004 plan is for Spring Hill Hospital Area.

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[1] http://www.norwalkneighborhoods.com/cnna/sub_category_list.asp?category=4&title=Neighborhoods

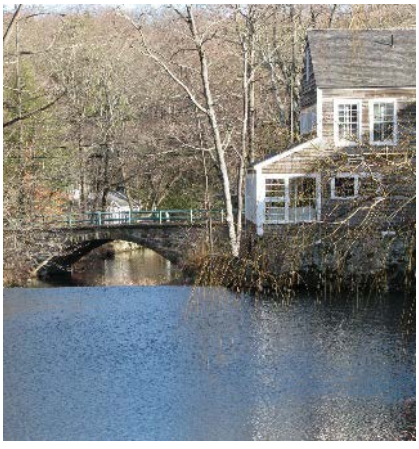
[2] For example: http://www.city-data.com/nbmaps/neigh-Norwalk-Connecticut.html ; http://discovernorwalk.com/norwalk-history/the-neighborhoods-of-norwalk/.; https://norwalkredevelopmentagency.com/our-city/neighborhoods/

Predominantly Suburban Residential Areas: Silvermine/Broad River; Cranbury/West Rocks/ West Norwalk

SILVERMINE/BROAD RIVER	

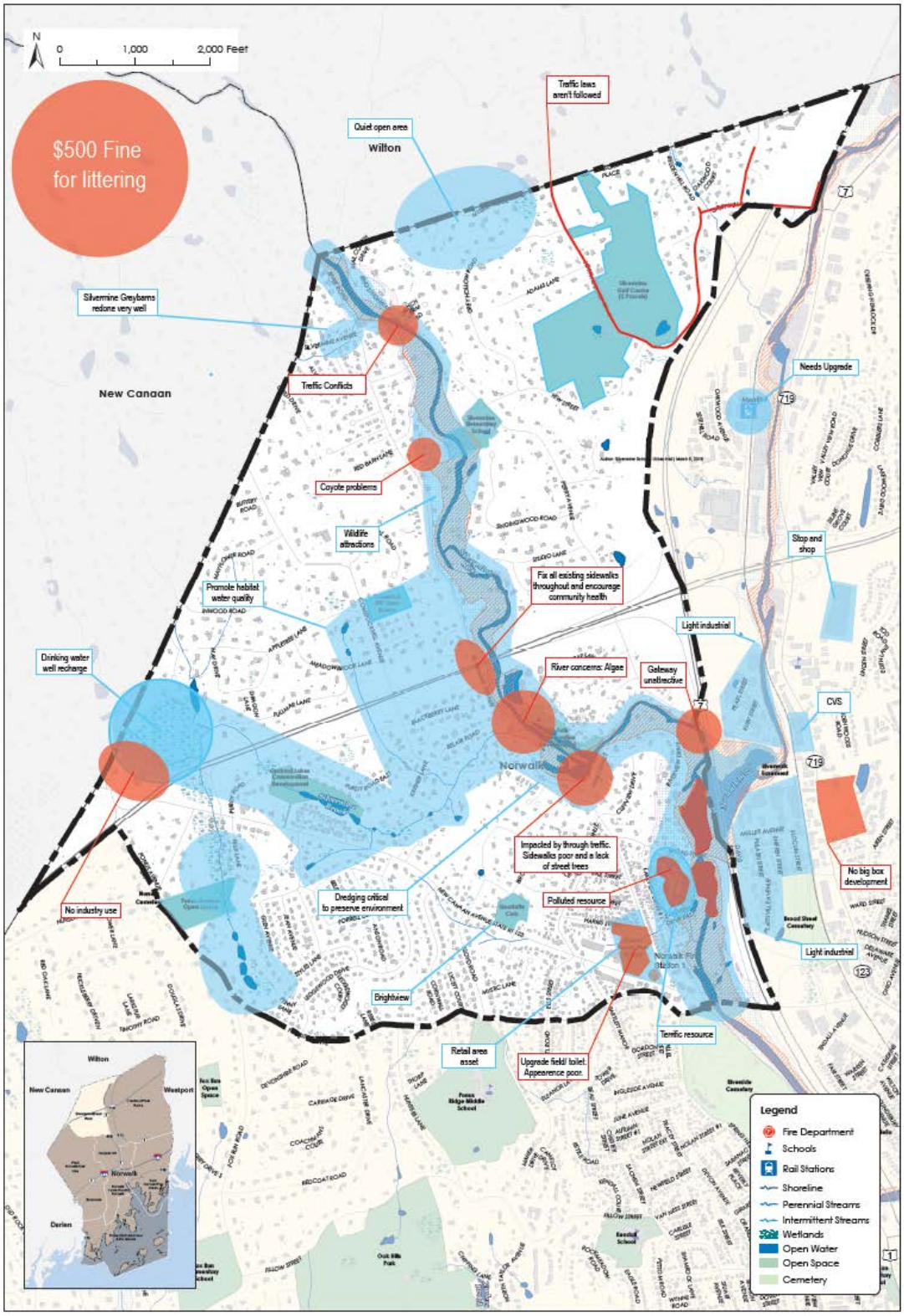
Population: 4,962 (5.6% city)
Households: 1,884 (5.5% city)
Housing units: 1,914 (5.3% city)
• 85% detached single-family
• 85% owner-occupied
• Median year built: 1957
 	
Economy:
• 1,800 jobs (4% of city jobs)
• New Canaan Ave commercial area
 	
Transportation:
• Merritt Pkwy/ Rt 15, Rt 7
• Few sidewalks, no bicycle lanes
• Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) from New Canaan Ave to Broad St (.4 mi)
• 73% of workers drive alone to work
 	
Character:
• Primarily suburban residential with rural aspects
• Wooded and hilly
• Silvermine River part of system of rivers, streams, and ponds
	Notable features:
	• Artist colony since early 20th century now institutionalized in the Silvermine Center for the Arts
	• National Register of Historic Places:
	  • Perry Avenue Bridge
	  • Silvermine Center Historic District
	  • Verneur Pratt Historic District
	• Enos Kellogg House
	• Broad River Park
	• Comstock Hill
	• Silvermine Golf Club
	
	Public infrastructure:
	• Fire Station 1
	• One public school
	• Comprised of Fourth and Fifth Taxing Districts
	• Water/sewer service south of Rt 15 and no water/sewer service north of Rt 15
	• Aquifer protection area in southeast

Assets • Silvermine River and other water bodies • Preservation of parks and open spaces • Grey Barn area • Arts community • Historic character • Sense of community • Tree-lined streets	Concerns • Cut through traffic • Pedestrian safety on roads without sidewalks or walking paths • Fast traffic • Parking • Environmental and zoning regulation • Impact on neighborhood from nearby development • Roadside littering

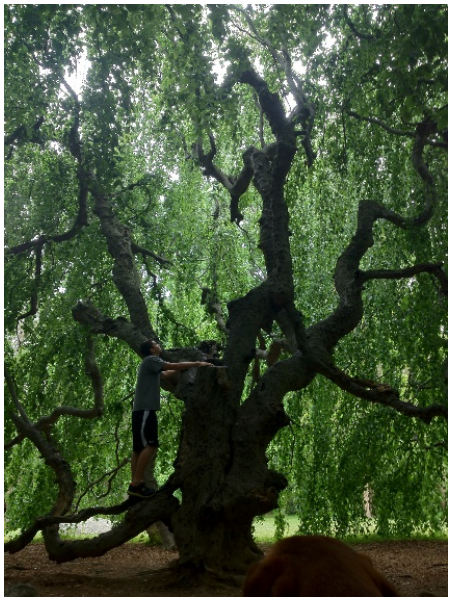


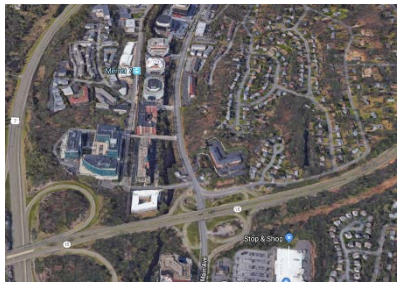
Silvermine Neighborhood Map

Neighborhood Meeting | Silvermine School - Urban Hall | March 5, 2018



CRANBURY/WEST ROCKS	
Population: 22,607 (25.6% city) Households: 9,025 (26.4% city) Housing units: 9,282 (25.9% city) • 51% detached single-family • 68% owner-occupied • Median year built: 1961 Economy: • 17,800 jobs (39% city) • Merritt 7/Main Ave employment cluster • Major commercial corridors along Main Avenue and Westport Avenue Transportation: • Merritt 7 rail station (Danbury Branch) • Merritt Pkwy/Rt 15, Rt 7, Westport Ave/Rt 1, Main Ave • Few sidewalks, no bicycle lanes • 77% of workers drive alone to work	Character: • Primarily residential • Significant open space at Cranbury Park, largest park in city • System of streams, ponds, and wetlands • Extensive tree canopy Public infrastructure: • Water/sewer in most areas except Cranbury • Aquifer protection area near Rt 7/15 • Four public schools • Comprised of Fourth, Fifth, and First Taxing Districts
Assets • Cranbury Park, Woods Pond • Natural areas and tree canopy • Local businesses like restaurants on Main Avenue • Public amenities • Senior center • Schools • Traditional New England architecture	Concerns • Traffic and parking • Need for more sidewalks • Desire to restrict big box retail on Main Avenue • Lack of a Fire Station • Roads may be too narrow for bike lanes • Lack of open space



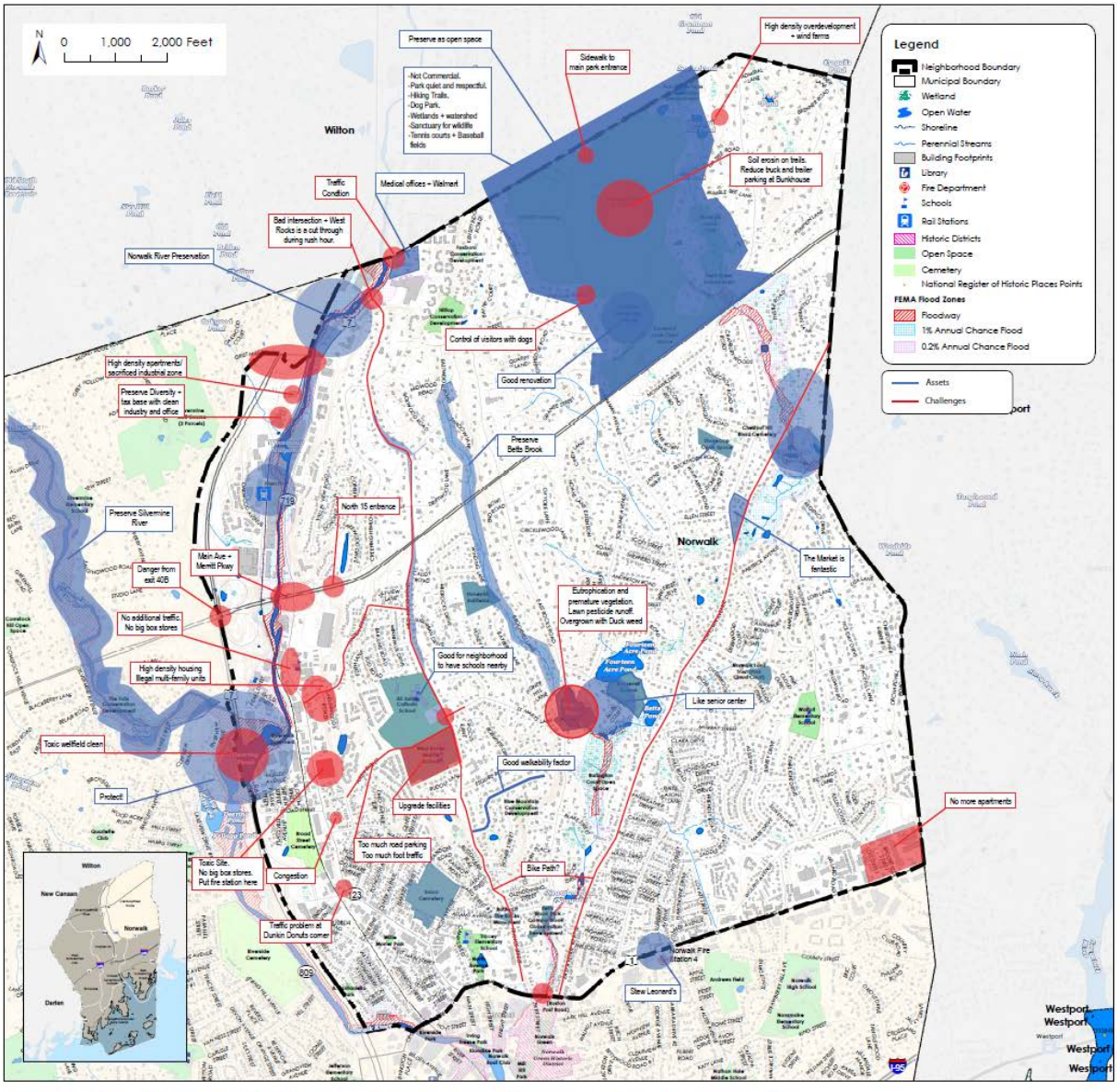


Cranbury-West Rocks Neighborhood Map

Neighborhood Meeting | West Rocks School Library | March 3, 2018

The Best of the Neighborhood / Favorite Places

Challenging Areas / Least Favorite Places



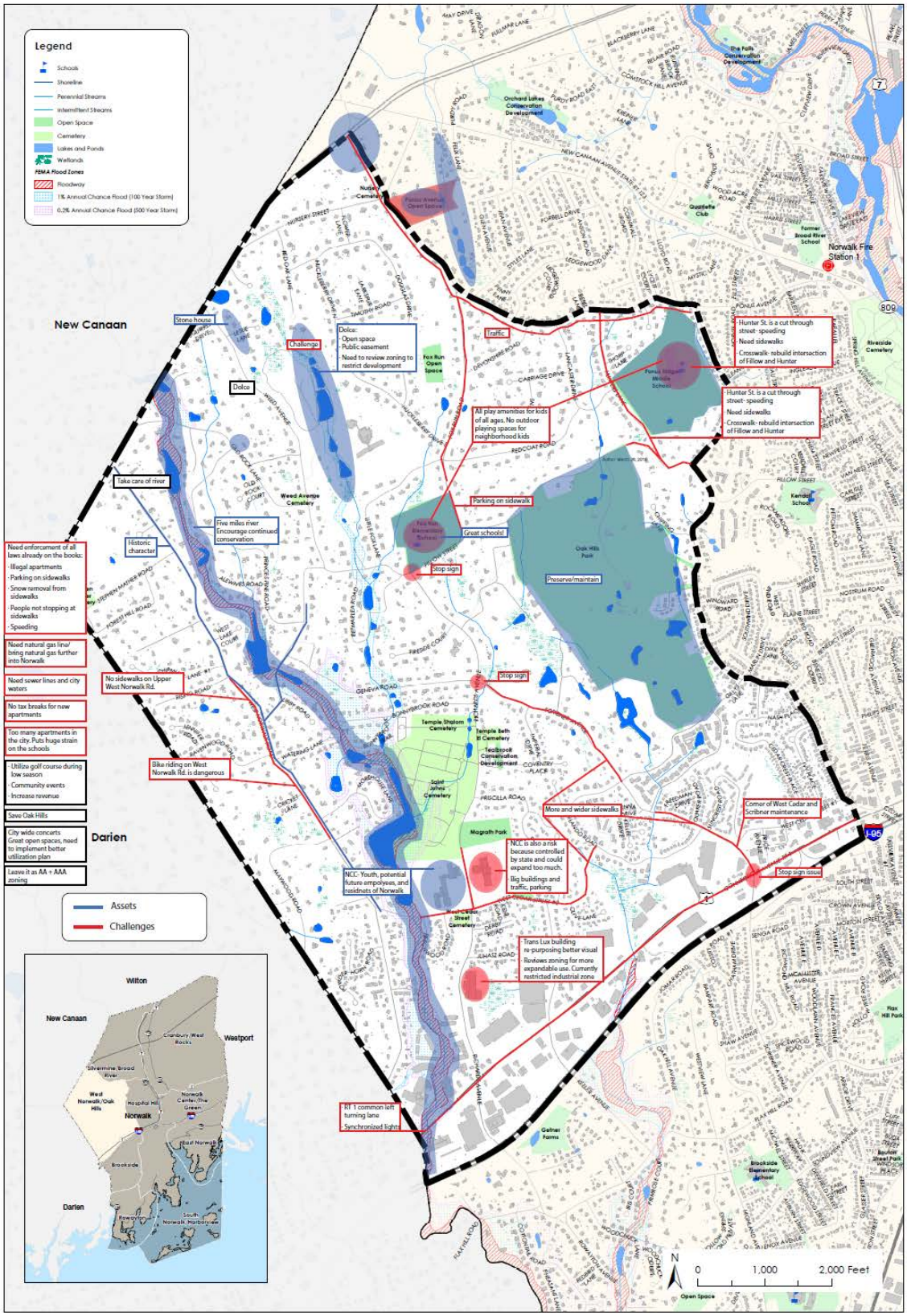
Notes on housing | transportation | bicycle and pedestrian connections | commercial areas | open spaces | etc

WEST NORWALK	
Population: 7,962 (9.0% city) Households: 2,881 (8.4% city) Housing units: 2,977 (8.3% city) • 63% detached single-family • 74% owner-occupied • Median year built: 1967 Economy: • 8,670 jobs (19% city) • Major commercial corridor on Route 1 / Connecticut Ave Transportation: • Route 1 & I-95 • West Norwalk Ave • 74% of workers drive alone to work • Few sidewalks, no bicycle lanes	Character: • Primarily residential • Major commercial corridor along Route 1 • Extensive tree canopy • Five Mile River & network of streams, ponds, and wetlands • Oak Hills Park • St John's Cemetery Public infrastructure: • Two public schools • Norwalk Community College • Comprised of Fourth and Fifth Taxing Districts • No water/sewer in center/western areas
Assets • Public trails at Dolce Norwalk, Oak Hills Park • Other parks • River access • Residential character of the neighborhood (AAA zoning) • Schools • Proximity to Route 1, Broad River, N. Main businesses	Concerns • Zoning issues • Future of large sites like Dolce and Translux • Need sidewalks and bike lanes in certain areas • Traffic/speeding (W. Norwalk Rd, Scribner Ave, Ponus Ave) • Some interest in extending public water and sewer • Clean up Five Mile River

West Norwalk Neighborhood Map

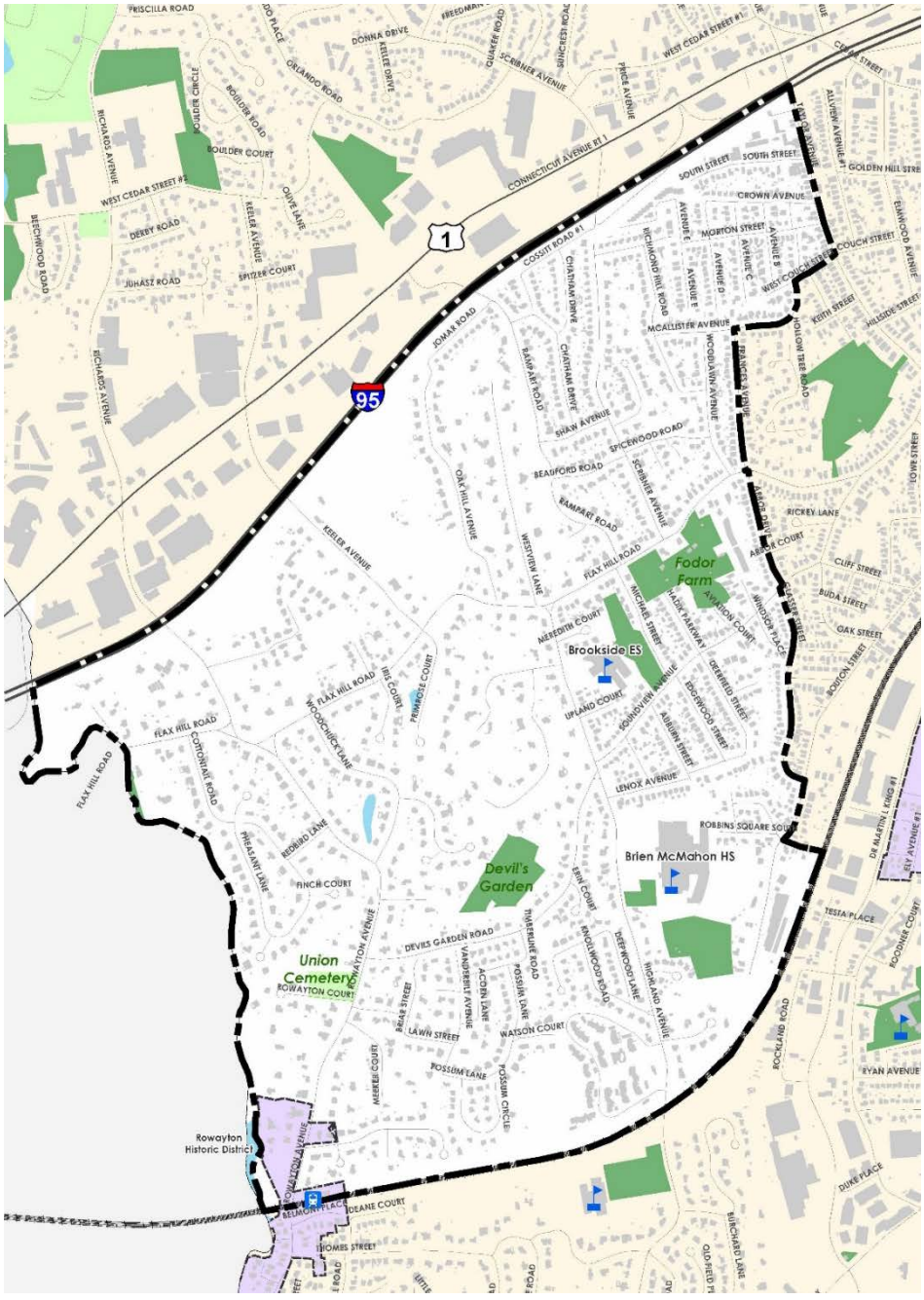
NORWALK Tomorrow

Neighborhood Meeting | March 27, 2018



Predominantly Suburban Residential with Major Corridors: Brookside/Flax Hill; Hospital Hill/Spring Hill

BROOKSIDE/FLAX HILL	
Population: 6,049 (7.2% city) Households: 2,105 (6.2% city) Housing units: 2,177 (6.1% city) • 62% detached single-family • 78% owner-occupied • Median year built: 1958 Economy: • 709 jobs (1.2% city) Transportation: • I-95 to north, Metro North station and tracks to south • Sidewalks/paths along most major roads, some neighborhood streets • Bicycle "sharrows" on Rowayton Ave • 67% of workers drive alone to work	Character: • Primarily residential • Transit corridors to the north (I-95) and south (Rail) • Fodor Farm • Hilly and wooded areas • Keelers Brook and Fivemile River (west boundary) • Utility corridor Public infrastructure: • Two public schools • Utility corridor • Water/sewer in most of neighborhood • Comprised of Fourth and Fifth Taxing Districts
Assets • Historic features • Graceful intersections and landscaped traffic islands • Fodor Farmhouse	Concerns • Desire for community meeting space at the Fodor Farmhouse • Traffic calming needing on Highland Avenue


Fodor Farm
Brookside ES
Devil's Garden
Brien McMahon HS
Union Cemetery
Rowayton Historic District
PRISCILLA ROAD
DONNA DRIVE
ORLANDO ROAD
BOULDER ROAD
BOULDER COURT
BOULDER CIRCLE
RICHARDS AVENUE
WEST CEDAR STREET #1
WEST CEDAR STREET #2
DERBY ROAD
KEELER AVENUE
OLIVE LANE
JUHASZ ROAD
SPITZER COURT
BEECHWOOD ROAD
CONNECTICUT AVENUE #1
SOUTH STREET
CROWN AVENUE
MORTON STREET
COUCH STREET
GOLDEN HILL STREET
EAMWOOD AVENUE
COSSITT ROAD #1
CHATHAM DRIVE
RICHMOND HILL ROAD
AVENUE E
AVENUE D
AVENUE C
AVENUE B
WEST CONCHO AVENUE
JOMAR ROAD
MCALLISTER AVENUE
KEITH STREET
HILLSIDE STREET
HOLLOW TREE ROAD
WOODLAWN AVENUE
FRANCES STREET
RAMPART ROAD
SHAW AVENUE
SPICEWOOD ROAD
BEAUFORD ROAD
SCRIBNER AVENUE
OAK HILL AVENUE
WESTVIEW LANE
FLAX HILL ROAD
KEELER AVENUE
RICKEY LANE
ABBOTT COURT
CLIFF STREET
BUDA STREET
OAK STREET
DOGWOOD STREET
MEREDITH COURT
INCHARE STREET
HALEY FARWAY
AVIATION COURT
WINDSOR PLACE
IRIS COURT
PRIMROSE COURT
WOODCHUCK LANE
UPLAND COURT
EDGEWOOD STREET
AUBURN STREET
LENOX AVENUE
ROBBINS SQUARE SOUTH
COTTONTAIL ROAD
REDBIRD LANE
PHEASANT LANE
FINCH COURT
ERIN COURT
TESTA PLACE
ROCKLAND ROAD
RYAN AVENUE
DE MARTINI LANE #1
ELY AVENUE #1
ROONEY COURT
DEVILS GARDEN ROAD
ROWAYTON AVENUE
ROWAYTON COURT
VANDERBILT AVENUE
ACORN LANE
POSSUM LANE
POSSUM CIRCLE
TIMBERLINE ROAD
ENGLEWOOD ROAD
DEERWOOD LANE
RICHLAND AVENUE
WATSON COURT
REAR STREET
LAWN STREET
MERRELL COURT
BELMONT PLACE
IDEANE COURT
HOMES STREET
DUKE PLACE
EURCHARD LANE
OLD FIELD PL
1
95

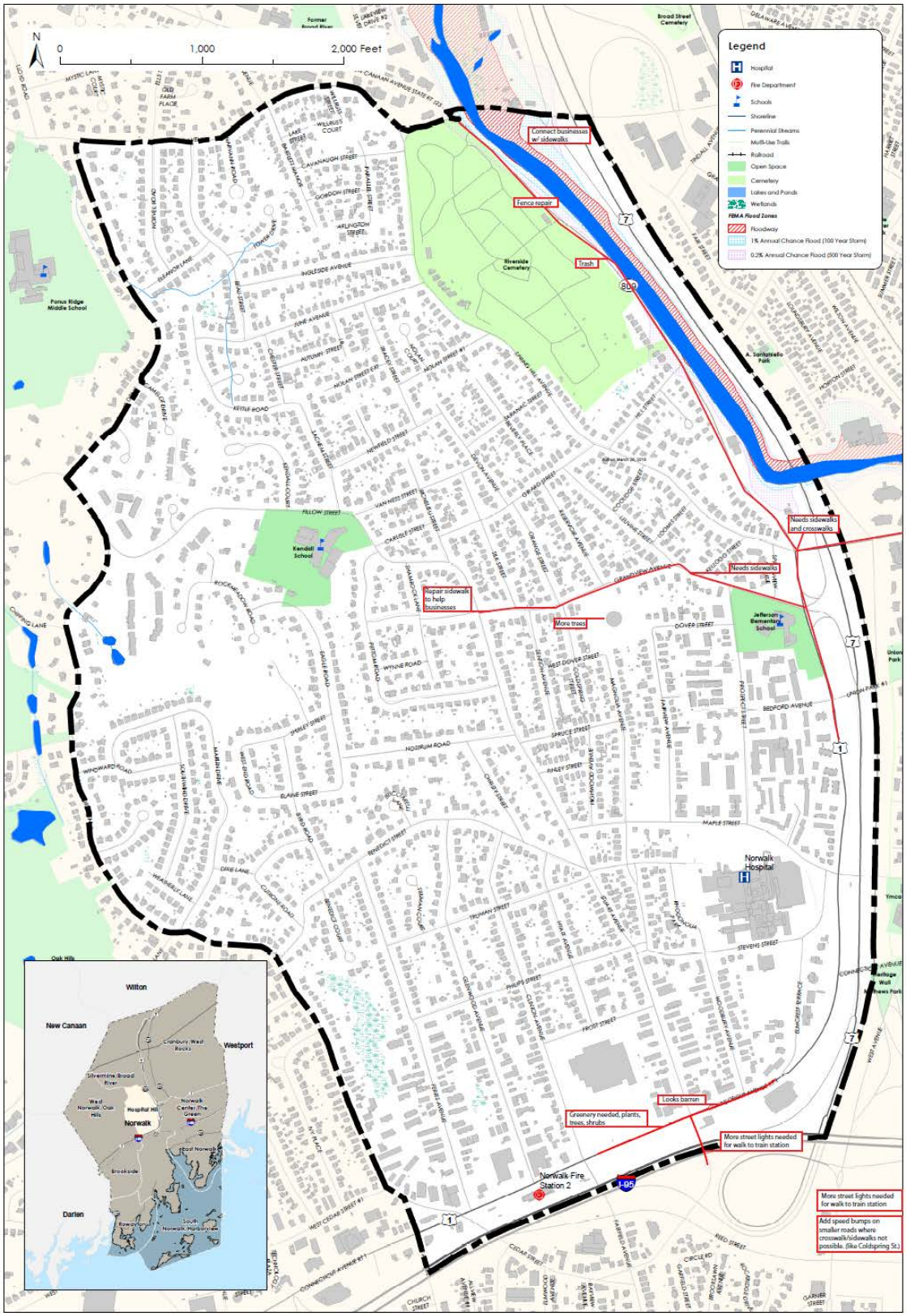
HOSPITAL HILL/SPRING HILL	
Population: 11,326 (12.8% city) Households: 4,297 (12.6% city) Housing units: 4,486 (12.5% city) • 43% detached single-family • 52% owner-occupied • Median year built: 1959 Economy: • 5,200 jobs (11% city) • Major employer: Norwalk Hospital (1,300 healthcare jobs) • Major commercial corridor: Connecticut Avenue Transportation: • I-95, Connecticut Ave/Rt 1, Rt 7 • 80% of workers drive alone to work • Few sidewalks, no bicycle lanes • Hills make some areas less inviting to walk or bike	Character: • Primarily residential, both single and multifamily • Commercial and multifamily along south and east boundaries • Major institutional use • Hilly with views • No public open space • No neighborhood association Public infrastructure: • Fire Station 2 • Two public schools • Water/sewer throughout area • Aquifer protection area to north • Comprised of First and Fourth Taxing Districts
Assets • Riverside Cemetery as open space • Connecticut Ave shopping • Access to emergency services	Concerns • Lack of community gathering space • Need for parks and open spaces • Noise from hospital, I-95 • Parking conflicts around schools at peak times

Hospital Hill Neighborhood Map

NORWALK Tomorrow

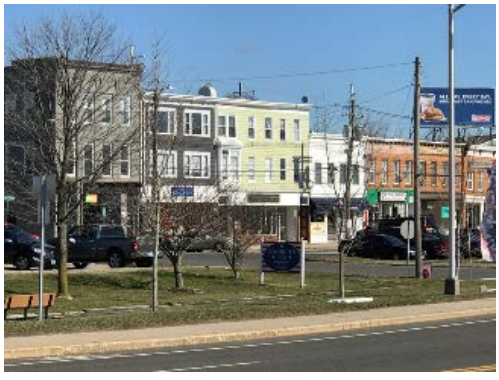
Neighborhood Meeting | March 26, 2018

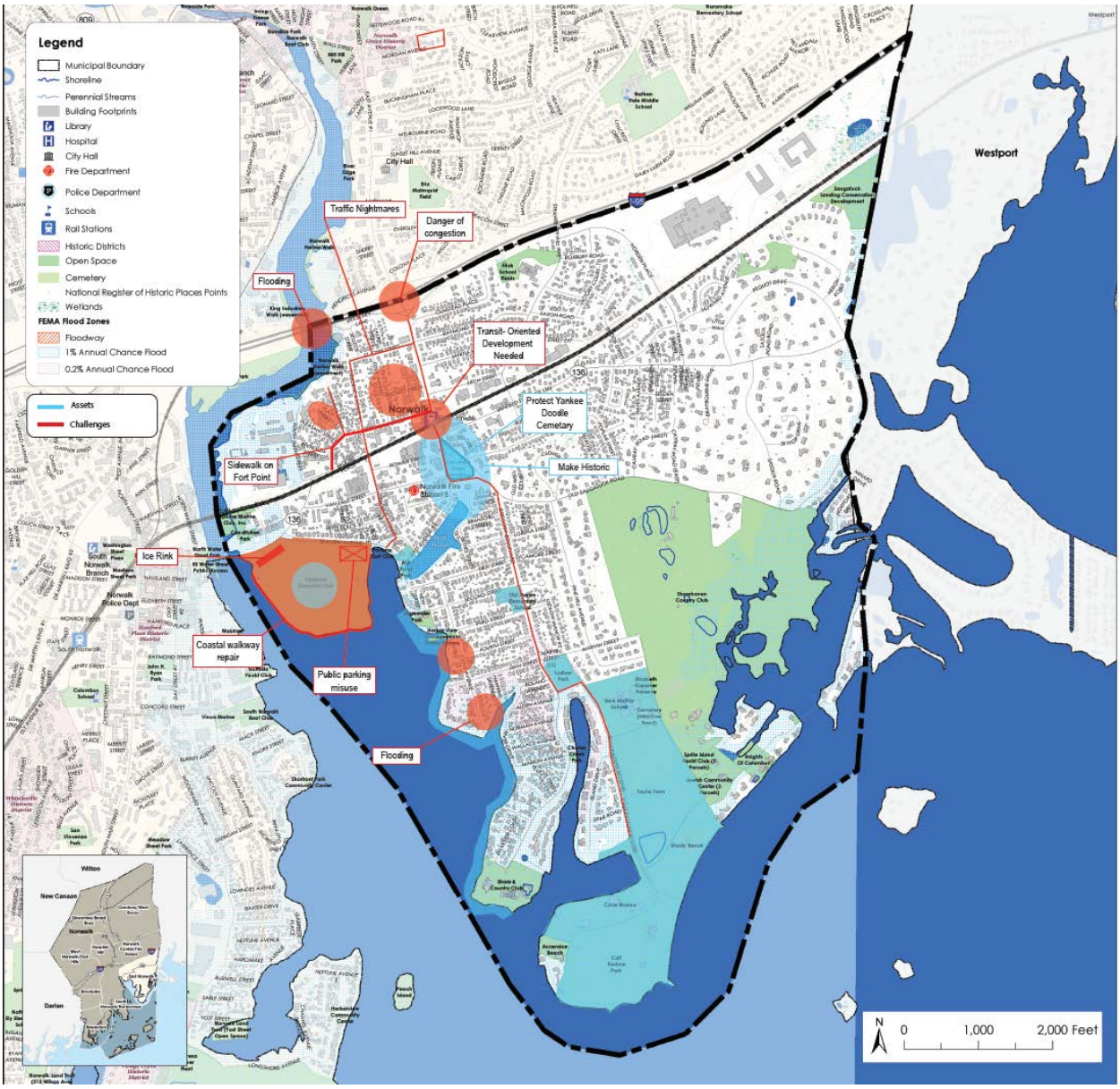
Assets
Challenges



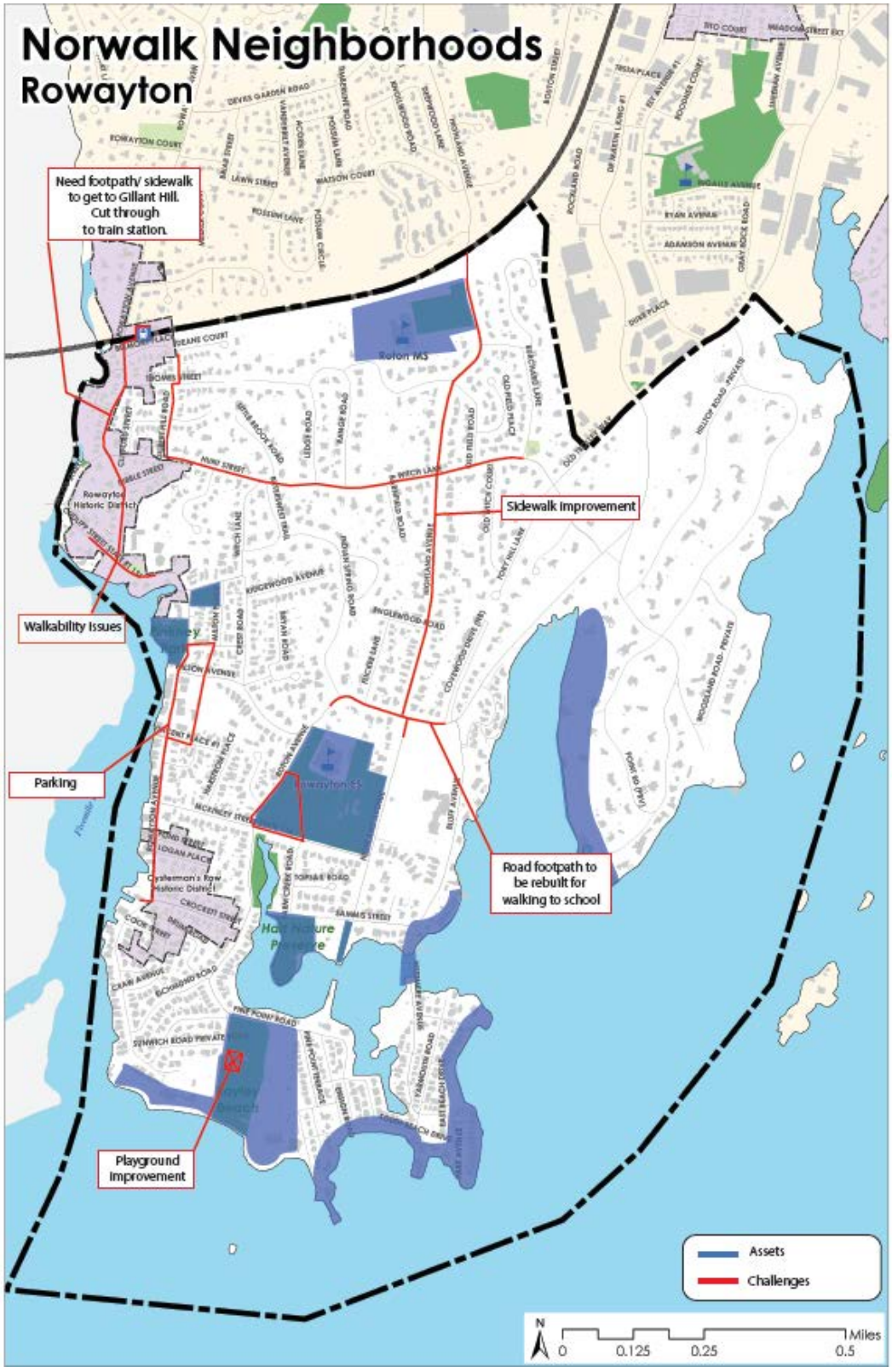
Predominantly Suburban with Villages And Train Stations: East Norwalk; Rowayton/Wilson Point

EAST NORWALK	
Population: 7,694 (8.7% city) Households: 3,122 (9.1% city) Housing units: 3,398 (9.5% city) • 48.3% detached single-family • 56.1% owner-occupied • Median year built: 1950 Economy: • 4,579 jobs (10% city) • Neighborhood business clusters • Norden Park Transportation: • I-95 to north • East Norwalk Metro-North station • Sidewalks on major roads, some neighborhood streets • Bike lanes on Calf Pasture Beach Rd, Fitch St • East Avenue traffic congestion at rail bridge	Character • Village commercial areas • Residential neighborhoods with different characters • Destination waterfront parks attract visitors from all over the city and beyond • Several large parks with beaches, playing fields • Coastline, marshes, ponds • Flood-prone areas • East Norwalk Historical Cemetery • Shorehaven Golf Club • East Norwalk Association Library Public infrastructure: • Fire station • One public school (Marvin Elementary) • Norwalk Water Pollution Control Authority • Electric utility • Mostly public water/sewer • Coastal Area Management zone • Comprised of Third Taxing District
Assets • Beaches and waterfront • Parks and open space • Sense of community, neighborhood feel • City Hall track • Local businesses – Cove and First, etc.	Concerns • Parking and traffic • Sidewalk and road conditions • East Norwalk station area, including parking issues • Rogers Square Shopping Center • Lack of a small grocery store • Zoning • Development prior to TOD Study • Litter on roadsides, parks • Flooding and sea level rise concerns




Legend
Municipal Boundary
Shoreline
Perennial Streams
Building Footprints
Library
Hospital
City Hall
Fire Department
Police Department
Schools
Rail Stations
Historic Districts
Open Space
Cemetery
National Register of Historic Places Points
Wetlands
FEMA Flood Zones
Floodway
1% Annual Chance Flood
0.2% Annual Chance Flood
Assets
Challenges
Traffic Nightmares
Danger of congestion
Flooding
Transit- Oriented Development Needed
Protect Yankee Doodle Cemetary
Make Historic
Sidewalk on Fort Point
Ice Rink
Coastal walkway repair
Public parking misuse
Flooding
Norwalk
Westport
City Hall
Norwalk Police Dept
Wilton
New Canaan
Norwalk
Darien
N
0
1,000
2,000 Feet

ROWAYTON/WILSON POINT	
Population: 3,374 (3.8% city) Households: 1,347 (3.9% city) Housing units: 1,488 (4.1% city) • 93% detached single-family • 70% owner-occupied • Median year built: 1957 Economy: • 1,213 jobs • Waterfront commercial Transportation: • Route 136 • Rowayton Metro-North Station • Walkable neighborhoods • Narrow sidewalks • Some on-street bike accommodations • 60% of workers drive alone to work	Character: • Primarily single-family residential • Public and private beach access • Public access to Long Island Sound • Low-lying, peninsulas • Tidal wetland systems • Waterfront Commercial • Ball parks • Dog park • Nature preserve Public infrastructure: • Fire Station 2 • Two public schools • Water/sewer throughout area • Comprised of Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Taxing Districts
Assets • Beaches and waterfront, especially downtown Rowayton • Bayley Beach • Pinkney Park • Farm Creek • Parks • Sidewalks • Bike routes	Concerns • Traffic and parking • More sidewalks needed • More safe bike routes needed • Zoning and density • Out of scale new housing • Preserve waterfront and public access • Flooding concerns • Lack of a neighborhood master plan


Norwalk Neighborhoods
Rowayton
Need footpath/ sidewalk to get to Gillant Hill. Cut through to train station.
Sidewalk Improvement
Walkability Issues
Parking
Road footpath to be rebuilt for walking to school
Playground Improvement
Assets
Challenges
N
0
0.125
0.25
0.5
Miles

Urban Mix: South Norwalk; The Green/Downtown

SOUTH NORWALK	
Population: 15,938 (18.0% city) Households: 6,279 (18.4% city) Housing units: 6,686 (18.7% city) • 18% detached single-family • 35% owner-occupied • Median year built: 1959 Economy: • 8,300 jobs (18% city) • Retail/dining on Washington/Main • Waterfront commercial uses • Industrial along MLK and Rt 136 • Services for education, employment, health & wellness Transportation: • South Norwalk Metro-North rail station • I-95, Rt 136, Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd • 63% of workers drive alone to work • Sidewalks in many neighborhoods • Some bike accommodations in center • Norwalk River Valley Trail from Washington St bridge to Oyster Shell Park	Character: • Dense single-family residential west of railroad & southern area, near water • Concentration of multifamily and mixed-use in center • Commercial and industrial along rail and waterways • Water-dependent uses • Residential/industrial conflicts • Low-lying floodplain and marsh areas to south and east • Hilly to north and west • Several neighborhood parks • Large vacant parcel at Manresa Island • Sound Islands: Shea, Hoyts, Peach, Grassy, Long Beach Public infrastructure: • Three public schools • Police Headquarters • Fire Station 5 • SoNo branch library • Water/sewer throughout, except in Village Creek neighborhood • Comprised of Second, Fourth, Fifth Taxing Districts
Assets • Parks and open space • Oyster Shell Park, Flax Hill Park • Historic character • Waterfront, Harbor Islands • Diversity • Arts and culture • Jobs • Access to train station	Concerns • Poor sidewalk conditions • Barriers to walkability and waterfront access • Traffic (including construction impacts) • Pace, density, and impact of new development • Bicycle safety • Flooding along Water Street • More job opportunities needed

Major Projects:

Walk Bridge Program
- Critical transit infrastructure along Northeast Corridor
- Preliminary design phase with phased construction anticipated to start 2019
- Reliability and resiliency to be improved

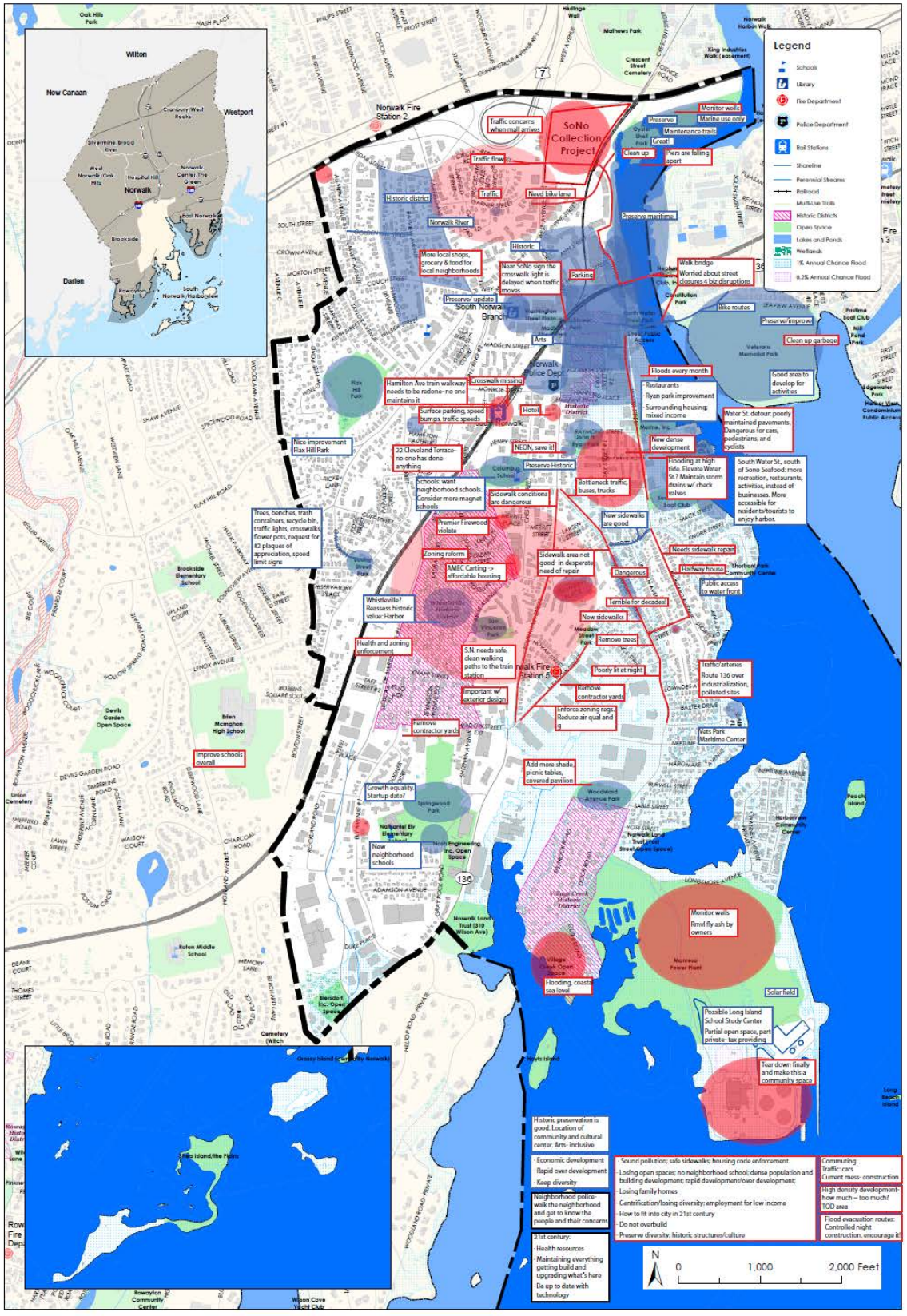
SoNo Collection
- Construction underway for regional shopping destination
- 700,000+ sq ft retail center with 87,000+ sq ft public realm
- October 2019 projected opening

Washington Village Choice Neighborhood
- Mixed-income redevelopment of flood-prone public housing
- 273 units mixed-income housing – first 80 units ready Spring 2018
- Ryan Park renovations
- Resiliency improvements: housing elevated about flood plain, dry egress route created for storm events

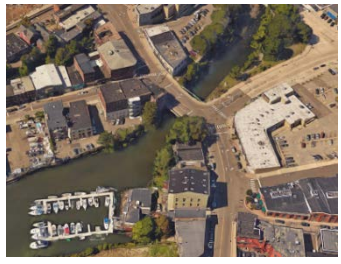
South Norwalk Neighborhood Map

NORWALK Tomorrow

Neighborhood Meeting | March 26, 2018



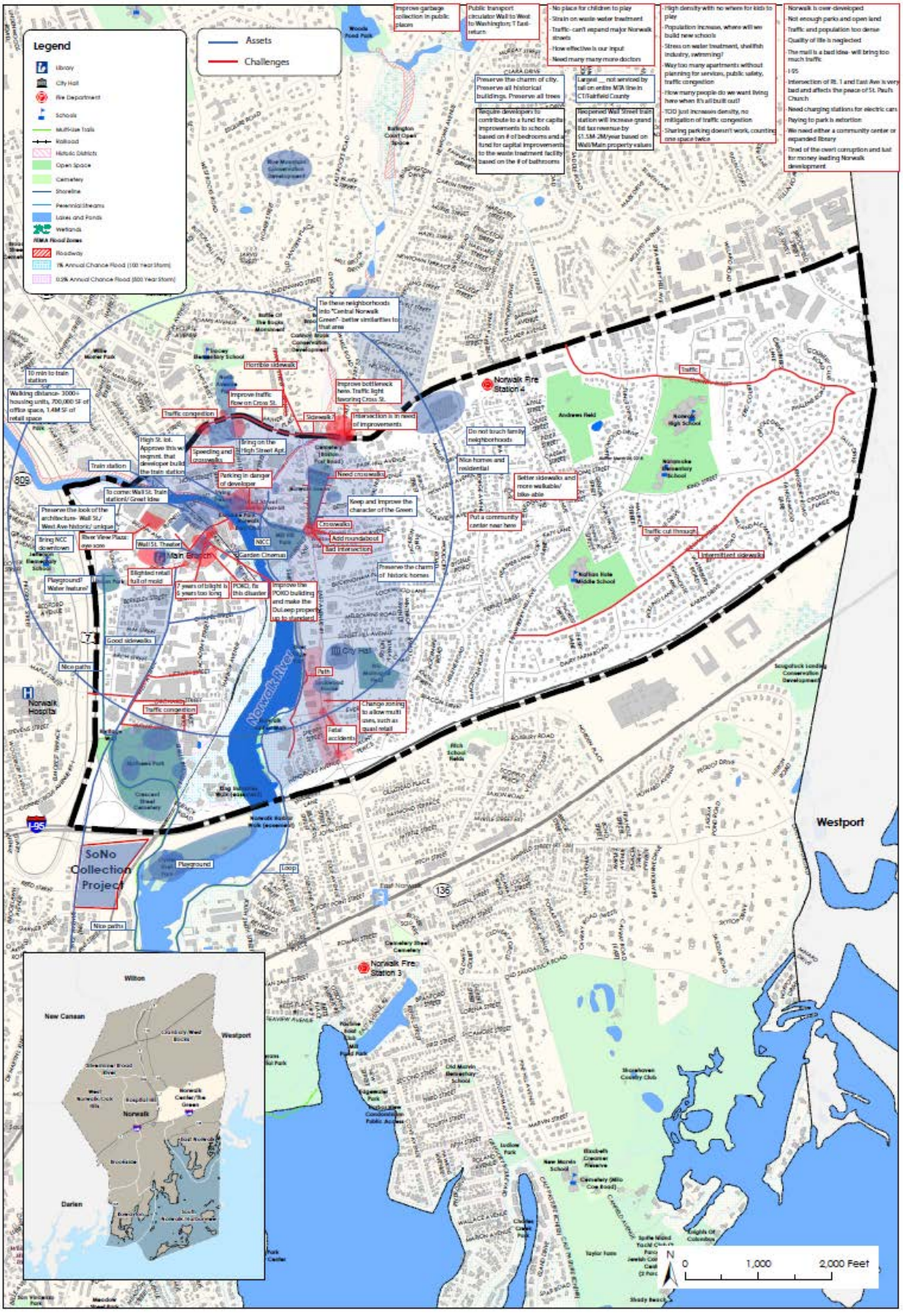
THE GREEN/DOWNTOWN/STRAWBERRY HILL	
Population: 7,789 (8.9% city) Households: 3,197 (9.4% city) Housing units: 3,392 (9.5% city) • 48% detached single-family • 60% owner-occupied • Median year built: 1963 Economy: • 9,950 jobs (22% city) • Public administration, retail, and health care Transportation: • I-95, Rt 7, Rt 1 • WHEELS transit hub • Debate about Wall Street station on Danbury branch • 79% of workers drive alone to work • NRVT and Harbor Loop trails • Sidewalks provided along main roadways • Bicycle accommodation on Walter Ave, Strawberry Hill Ave, County Street • Hills make some areas less inviting to walk or bike	Character: • Mixed-use to west and along main corridors • Primarily residential neighborhoods east of East Ave • Some industrial along the river • Relatively flat to west, hilly areas to east • Several parks and school ball fields • Norwalk River: working waterfront and Harbor Loop trail Public infrastructure: • City Hall • Library • Fire Station 4 • Three public schools • Water/sewer throughout area • Comprised of First, Second, and Fourth Taxing Districts
Assets • Norwalk Green • Historic character/charm • Parks and trails, including Freese Park and Harbor Trail • Wall Street theater • Library • Garden Cinema	Concerns • More/better sidewalks with trees and lighting, crosswalks, bike lanes • Parking issues • Blighted and vacant property • Traffic congestion • Wall Street station future • Stalled Wall Street development



The Green Neighborhood Map

NORWALK Tomorrow

Neighborhood Meeting | March 26, 2018



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APPENDIX C: BUILDOUT ANALYSIS

Citywide Plan

Prepared for:
City of Norwalk

Prepared by:
Phil Schaeffing and Larissa Brown
Stantec's Urban Places
226 Causeway Street 6th Floor Boston MA
02114-2155

July 9, 2018

BUILDOUT ANALYSIS

A buildout analysis is a diagnostic tool to understand a community's total development potential under existing zoning, without consideration of the likelihood or timing of development. The analysis provides the total number of additional housing units and the total amount of additional non-residential square footage if every opportunity for development were to be pursued to the maximum extent. In fact, communities typically do not reach full buildout and older cities like Norwalk often have limited opportunities for development under current regulations and constraints like wetlands and permanently protected open space. A buildout analysis helps city officials, staff, and residents understand how current land use regulations are related to future goals, and whether changes to zoning regulations are needed to better align the two (in particular, to land use and the allowable density and location of development). The Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) will provide recommendations for any changes.

This process is intended to provide a theoretical analysis of Norwalk's maximum possible development recognizing that other unknown constraints may exist. It is based on the status of land at the time of analysis as discernible by the land use and zoning data available from the City of Norwalk and other regulations that govern the development of the land. The analysis relies upon the zoning regulations in effect and considers environmental factors that limit the development potential of a site to determine the theoretical maximum amount of new growth that could occur if all vacant or underutilized land were to attain its full development potential.

The analysis does not factor in the capacity of infrastructure to accommodate possible development. The results do not provide a timeframe or predict when a certain amount of growth may occur. This buildout analysis only quantifies the maximum amount of development that could potentially occur under current development regulations if every land parcel was maximized.

Buildout Method and Findings

This analysis used two methods of considering buildout potential, summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below and described in more detail in the appendix.

- The first traditional method evaluates the capacity of ***vacant unconstrained land*** – existing land parcels not already developed or constrained by wetlands and permanent open space protections. Under current zoning regulations, the vacant land's development capacity is up to 5,600,000 square feet of new commercial and industrial development (including mixed-use) and 1,450 housing units (a 4% increase in housing units from 2014).

- The second method considers ***potential redevelopment*** of currently developed but underused non-residential land, as determined by applying a set of assumptions based on assessed property values. This land was divided into three subareas to better understand the potential of corridors and activity centers, industrial areas, and all other areas. Under existing zoning regulations, this land's redevelopment potential is up to 16.8 million square feet of new commercial and industrial (including mixed-use).

For each method, the gross results of the buildout analysis are shown in the second column of Tables 1 and 2 below. As part of the review process, City staff provided direction regarding types of parcels that are unlikely to be developed to their full potential for various reasons. Municipal and utility land uses,

commercial parking lots on their own parcel that serve another use, Homeowner Association (HOA) or condominium grounds, and a few other categories were identified. These subtotals were removed from the gross buildout to provide adjusted results in the last column.

It should be noted that cities, institutions, and utilities often sell land for development, to meet policy goals like more affordable housing, raise funds, or dispose of excess property. Over time, self-driving cars are expected to result in reduced parking demand and smaller parking spaces which will likely spur the redevelopment of surface parking lots. For example, the city-owned parking lot at SoNo Plaza could be redeveloped at some future point, adding new housing, commercial, and/or office and providing structured parking to meet demand at that time. It is currently zoned 'SNBD-SoNo Business District" which would allow for up to 2.5 million square feet of development on its 5.4 acres. That 2.5 million square feet is included in the gross buildout in Table 2 and removed in the adjusted results under the municipal land use category.

A. BUILDOUT OF VACANT, UNCONSTRAINED LAND

The gross buildout for vacant land represents about 450 acres of land. Since Norwalk is a coastal community, many vacant parcels are subject to flood hazard and/or Coastal Area Management (CAM) regulations. Approximately 15-20% of potential commercial and industrial gross buildout is within the 100-year or 500-year flood hazard zones. Approximately 65% of potential gross residential units are also within these flood hazard zones, although most of those are on Manresa Island. Approximately 60% of the non-residential gross buildout is subject to CAM regulations which impose additional development restrictions.

Table 1: Potential buildout on vacant unconstrained land with current zoning

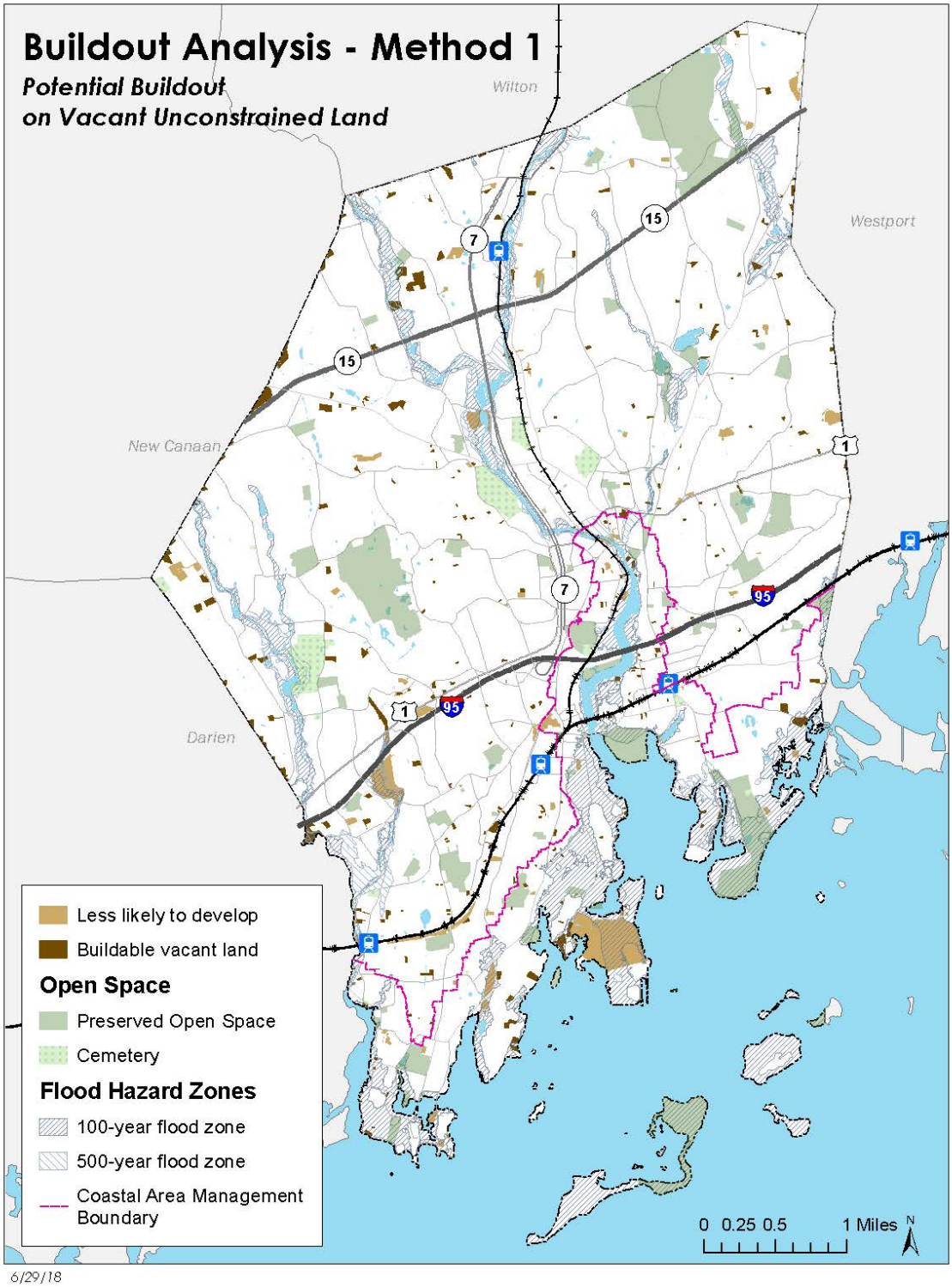
	Gross Buildout	Municipal Land Use	Utility Land Use	Parking Lots**	HOA Land	Other***	Adjusted Results
Residential (units)	**1,450***	200	720*	-	50	150	**330**
Commercial (sq ft)	**4,800,000**	2,900,000	65,000	955,000	-	120,000	**760,000**
Industrial (sq ft)	**850,000**	15,000	160,000	5,000	-	215,000	**455,000**
Total Non-Residential	**5,650,000**	2,915,000	225,000	960,000		335,000	**1,215,000**

** 630 units are possible on the northern area of Manresa Island (~95 acres) which is zoned Residential-B. Manresa Island is undergoing a separate reuse study about future development scenarios.*

*** Commercial parking lots identified by city staff (municipal parking counted under 'municipal land use')*

**** "Other" includes parcels with additional limitations or considerations identified by city staff, including ownership and environmental constraints not included in other data.*

Figure 1 – Vacant unconstrained parcels identified for potential buildout analysis



"Less likely to develop" identified by City staff and in columns 3-7 of Table 1 above.

B. NON-RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT BUILDOUT

The gross buildout for redevelopment represents about 310 acres of land. Similar to the vacant land analysis, many potential redevelopment parcels are subject to flood hazard and/or CAM regulations. Approximately 40% of potential commercial and industrial gross buildout is within the 100-year or 500-year flood hazard zones. Approximately 55% of the non-residential gross buildout is subject to CAM regulations which impose additional development restrictions.

Table 2: Potential redevelopment on underused non-residential land with current zoning

	Gross Buildout	Municipal Land Use	Utility Land Use	Parking Lots*	HOA Land	Other**	Adjusted Results
Commercial (sq ft)	**11,200,000**	2,950,000	425,000	955,000	n/a	1,200,000	**5,670,000**
Industrial (sq ft)	**5,600,000**	50,000	380,000	5,000	n/a	1,300,000	**3,865,000**
Total Non-Residential	**16,800,000**	3,000,000	805,000	960,000	n/a	2,500,000	**9,535,000**

*** Commercial parking lots identified by city staff (municipal parking counted under 'municipal land use')*

**** "Other" includes parcels with residential, government/institutional land uses*

C. POTENTIAL SUBDIVISION ANALYSIS

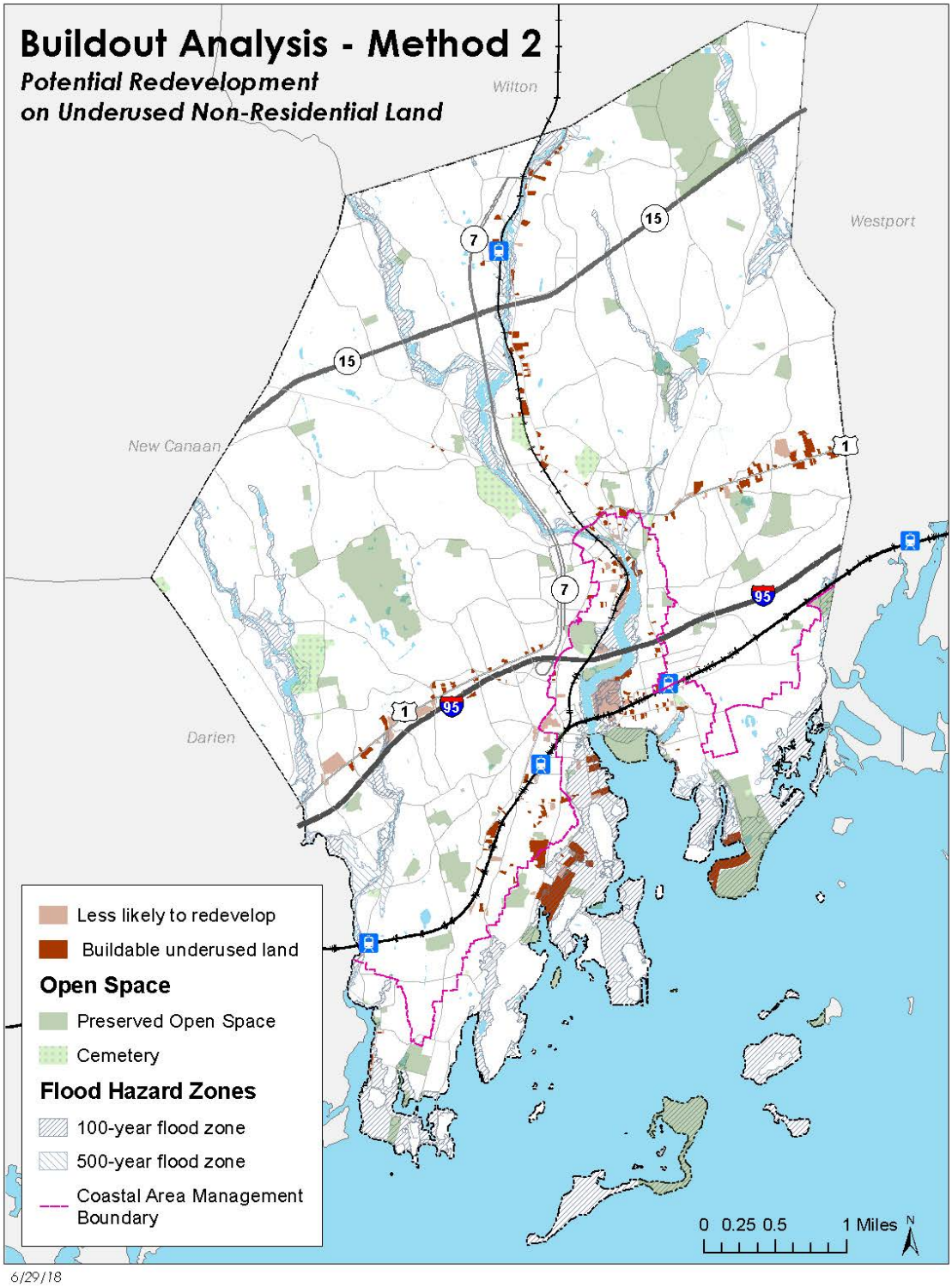
Another component of this analysis identified existing parcels that could potentially be sub-divided according to zoning. Each parcel's land area was compared to the minimum lot size per its zoning. If the parcel's land area is more than twice the minimum lot size, the parcel could potentially be subdivided into two or more lots if adequate street frontage and lot width are possible. Due to data limitations, this analysis does not consider minimum lot frontages, existing building placement, and other restrictions that could prohibit subdivision. The findings are shown in Table 3 below, but these potential new lots are not included in the potential buildout totals in Tables 1 and 2.

About 10% of existing residentially-zoned parcels (AAA-D) could potentially be subdivided into new parcels. Residential B-zone parcels, with a minimum lot area of 6,250 square feet, account for half of the potential new residential lots. Industrial-1 zone parcels, with a minimum lot area of only 5,000 square feet, create the unlikely potential for many more new parcels in that zone.

Table 3: Potential new lots

	Potential New Lots
Residential *(AAA to D)*	5,360
Commercial	1,980
Industrial	1,840
Total	9,180

Figure 2 – Parcels with redevelopment potential identified for buildout analysis



"Less likely to redevelop" identified by City staff and in columns 3-7 of Table 2 above.

1.0 APPENDIX: METHODOLOGY

1.1 METHOD 1: VACANT LAND

Vacant land was identified using the City of Norwalk's Land Use data. City staff provided assistance to identify HOA and condominium common space, parking lots associated with an existing use, and other parcels classified as vacant but unlikely to develop. Municipal and utility vacant land was also separately identified as unlikely to develop. The calculations only consider existing parcels and do not consider potential new lots from sub-dividable parcels (Table 3).

Development-constrained land including wetlands and preserved open space was subtracted from the vacant land area. Development regulations from the underlying zoning–dwelling units per acre for residential parcels, and floor area ratio (FAR) for commercial and industrial parcels–was applied to the resulting undeveloped and unconstrained parcels to calculate potential buildout. Potential buildout within existing flood hazard zones and the Coastal Area Management Boundary (which impose additional restrictions to development) were identified and are included in the results.

1.2 METHOD 2: LAND WITH REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

In older established cities like Norwalk, much of the development that takes place is redevelopment of an existing use to a higher value use. Often it includes a zoning variance or rezoning petition for a more intense designation. The buildout analysis does not attempt to predict where and how this may happen as real estate markets and development economics are the primary drivers of change, but approximations can be made to begin to understand the possible magnitude.

1.2.1 Underutilized land determination

For this method, land and building valuation data from the City of Norwalk Tax Assessor was used to identify potentially underutilized commercial and industrial zoned land. A proxy for underutilized land was developed by comparing the assessed building value to the total assessed value of the parcel. Parcels were identified as having redevelopment potential where this ratio is less than or equal to 33 percent, indicating that the land is the primary driver of the total value. Based on land use data, these parcels were filtered to remove land uses that are assumed to be incompatible with redevelopment: parks, cemeteries, and any existing residential land uses in non-residential zones. Wetlands and preserved open space (constrained land) were also removed from this selection. Potential buildout within existing flood hazard zones or the Coastal Area Management Boundary (which impose additional restrictions to development) were identified and are included in the results.

1.2.2 Priority redevelopment subareas

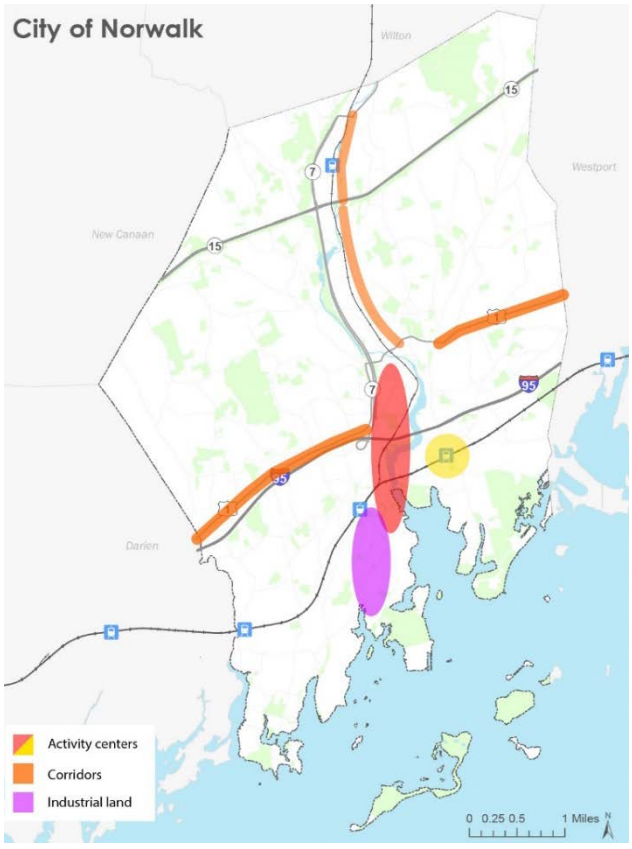
The underutilized land can be classified into three subareas based on perceived likelihood of redevelopment.

- **Activity centers and corridors:** This subarea has the highest probability for redevelopment and includes underused parcels in the Central Business District and South Norwalk areas (zoned CBDx, RPDx, WSDD, SSDD, or SNBD), parcels within a walkable half-mile radius of the East Avenue train station, and parcels within 200' of the Route 1 and Main Avenue/Main Street corridors. Proximity to existing activity centers and assets (CBD, SoNo, East Norwalk) and high-visibility locations along aging commercial corridors are factors likely to encourage private redevelopment into higher value uses than currently exist on some parcels.

- **Underused industrial land**: This subarea includes underused and industrially zoned parcels not included in the first subarea. Some industrial parcels may be repurposed for new industrial uses; others may be obsolete as industrial land and primed for new use, especially those with convenient transit access. The future of these areas is a policy consideration for the citywide plan, therefore making it useful to understand its development potential under current zoning. Much of the land in SoNo is within the CAM boundary and/or flood hazard zones, placing additional restrictions on development.

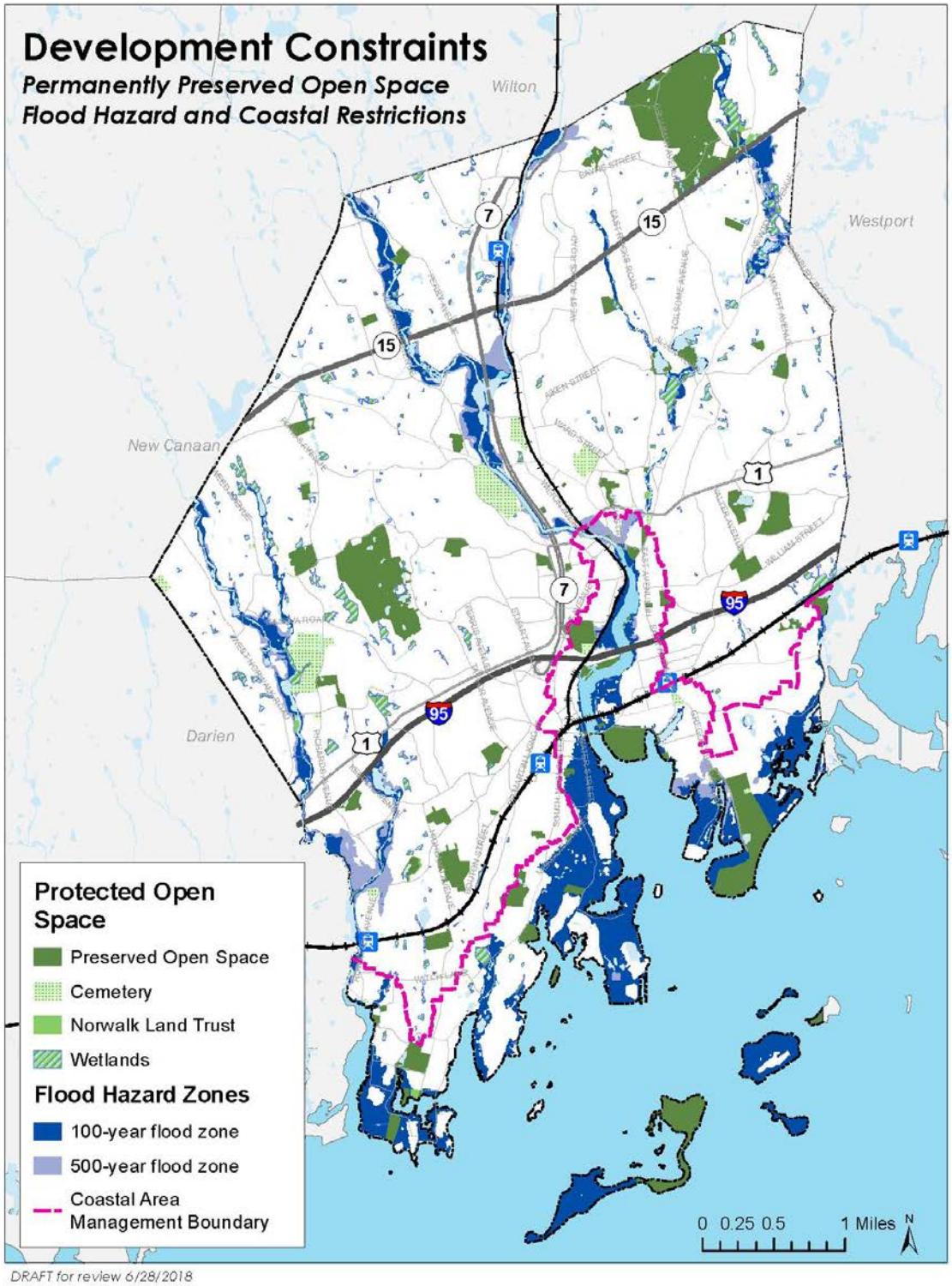
- **All other underused land**: This subarea includes the remaining underutilized parcels, typically smaller parcels within residential areas that are less likely to redevelop.

Figure 3 – Priority redevelopment subareas



It is important to note that the totals in Table 2 are highly speculative since they are determined by assumptions based on assessed value and calculated using existing zoning. The commercial corridors and obsolete industrial land would almost certainly require rezoning to allow for a contemporary mix of uses and updated development standards. As stated above, this analysis is meant to provide an initial working understanding of redevelopment potential to help inform policy decisions and future planning efforts.

Figure 4 – Development constraints (prohibited in protected open space + wetlands) and regulatory constraints (permitted in flood hazard zones and CAM with additional conditions)



2.0 APPENDIX: SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following GIS data layers were incorporated into the analysis:

- Zoning boundaries and regulations (latest amended version, April 2018)
- Land use classification (City of Norwalk, received fall 2017)
- Assessed property values (City of Norwalk Tax Assessor, received fall 2017)
- Parcel boundaries (City of Norwalk Open Data, 2015)
- Protected open space (City of Norwalk, no date)
- Wetland areas (City of Norwalk, no date)
- Flood zones (FEMA via City of Norwalk)
- Hydrography (WestCOG)

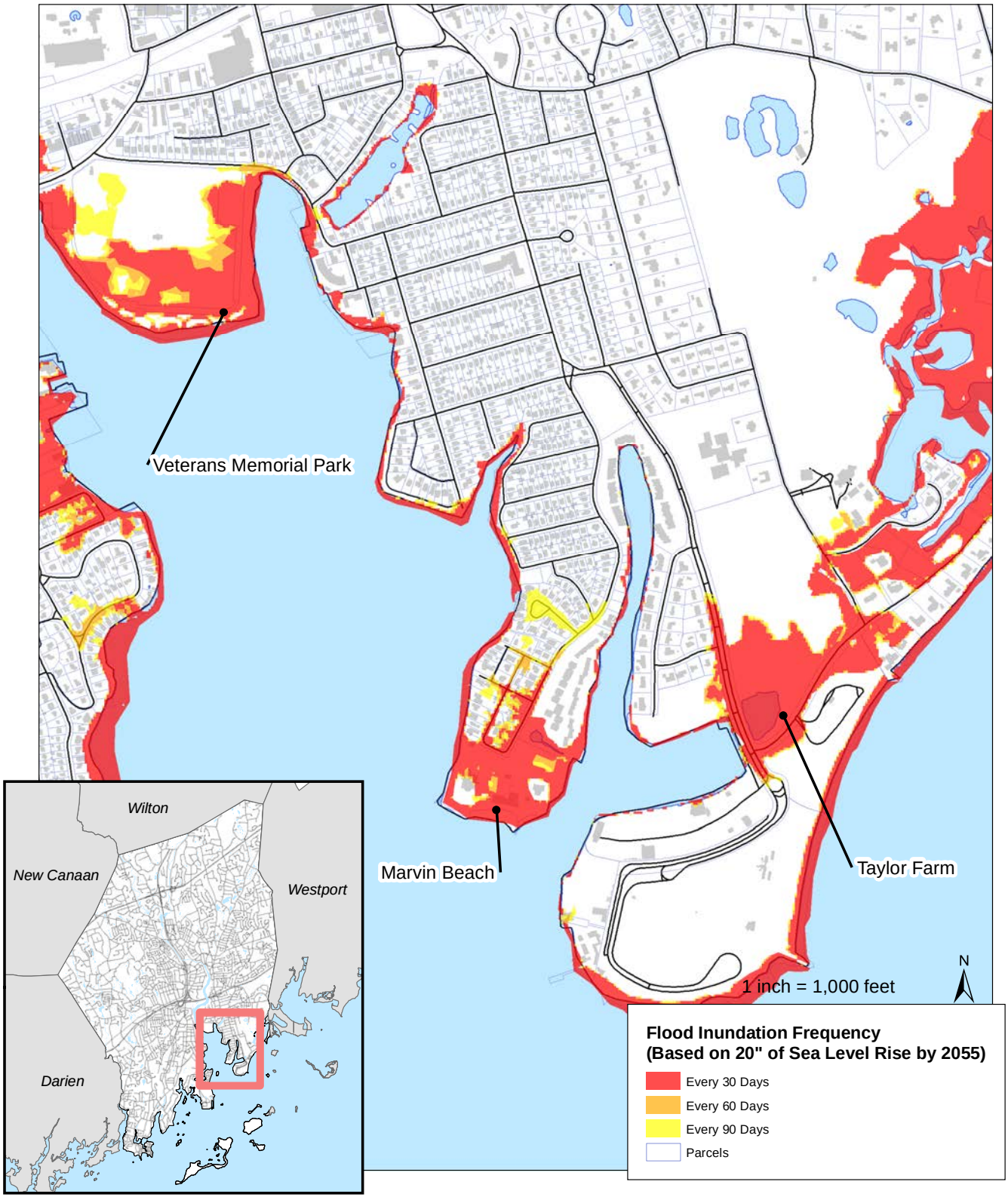
Abbreviations

- CBDD Central Business Design District
- FAR Floor area ratio
- FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency
- SoNo South Norwalk

ZONING	DESCRIPTION	ZONING	DESCRIPTION
IC	Island Conservation	CBDA	Central Business District A
AAA	Residence AAA	CBDB	Central Business District B
AA	Residence AA	CBDC	Central Business District C
A	Residence A	SNBD	SoNo Business District
B	Residence B	SSDD	SoNo Station Design District
C	Residence C	WSDD	Washington St Design District
D	Residence D	B1	Business-1
EVD	East Ave Village District	B2	Business-2
RVD	Rowayton Village District	NB	Neighborhood Business
SVD	Silvermine Tavern Village District	EO	Executive Office
GHVD	Golden Hill Village District	RD	Research & Development
RPDA	Reed Putnam Design District A	HZ	Hospital Zone
RPDB	Reed Putnam Design District B	MC	Marine Commercial
RPDC	Reed Putnam Design District C	I1	Industrial
RPDD	Reed Putnam Design District D	LI2	Light Industrial
RPDE	Reed Putnam Design District E	RI	Restricted Industrial
	Only residential permitted		*Industrial zones*

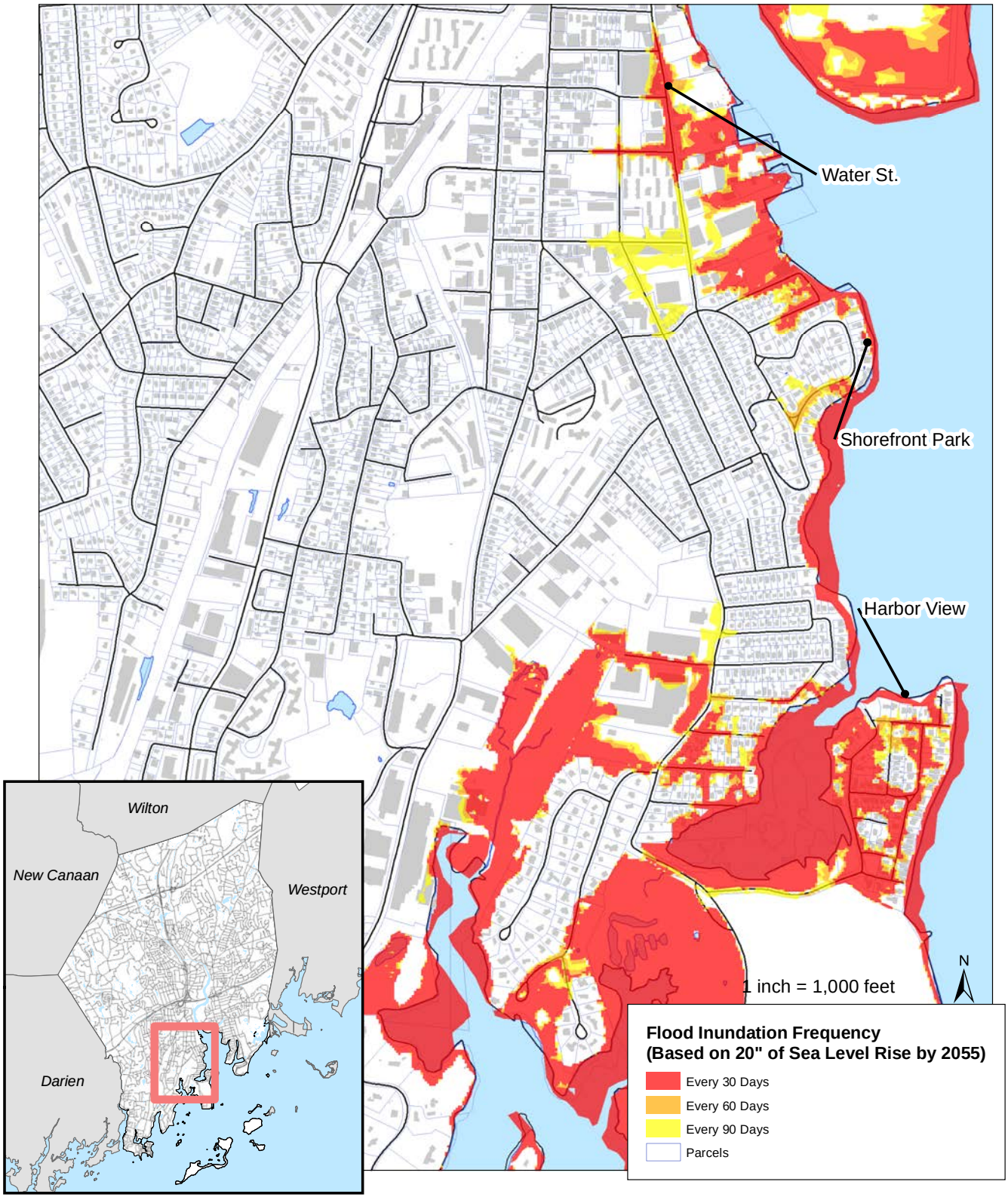
APPENDIX D: COASTAL RESILIENCE MAP ENLARGEMENTS: SEA LEVEL RISE IMPACTS

9.4-a Frequency of Future Flooding in East Norwalk



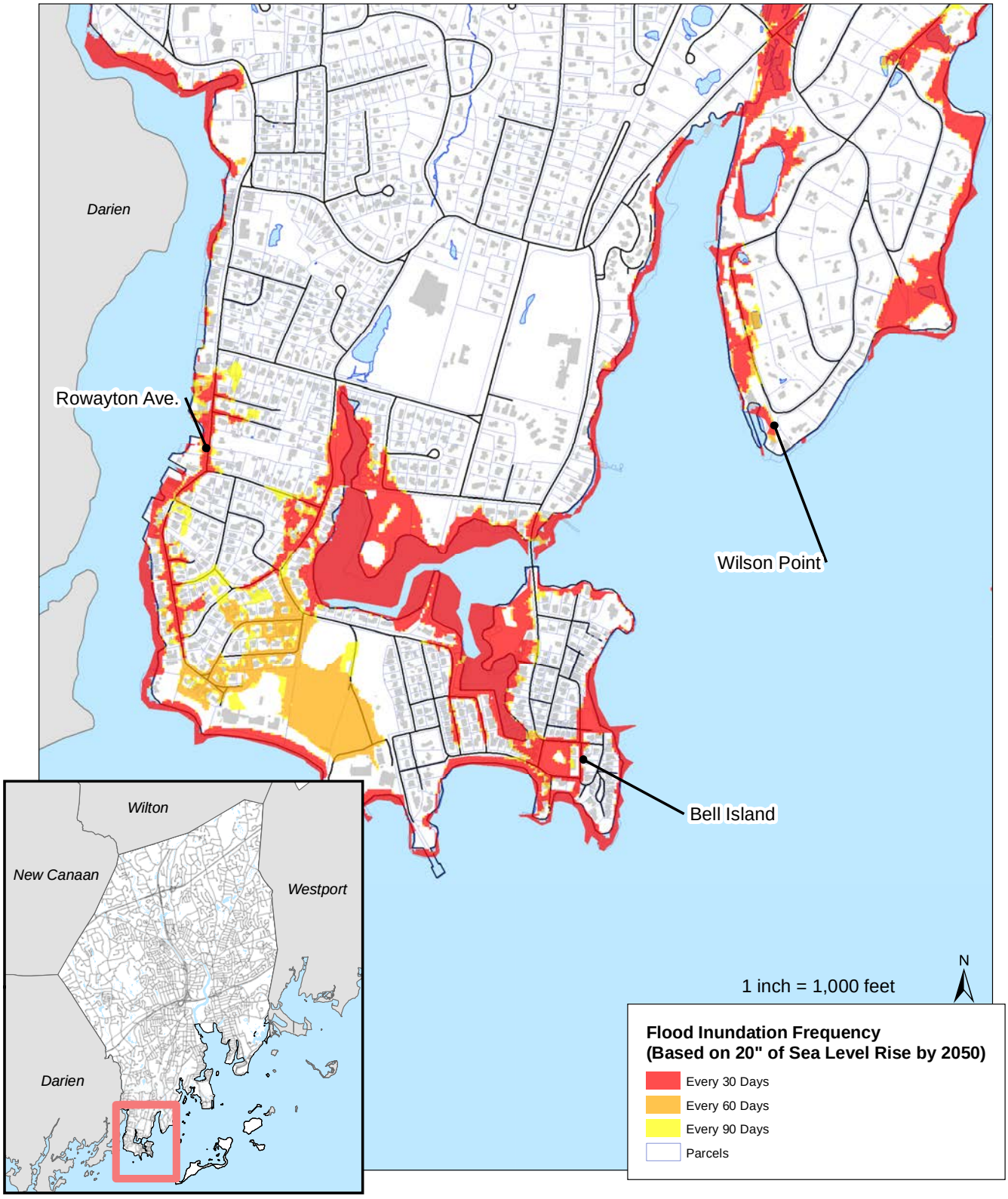
Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

9.4-b Frequency of Future Flooding in SoNo



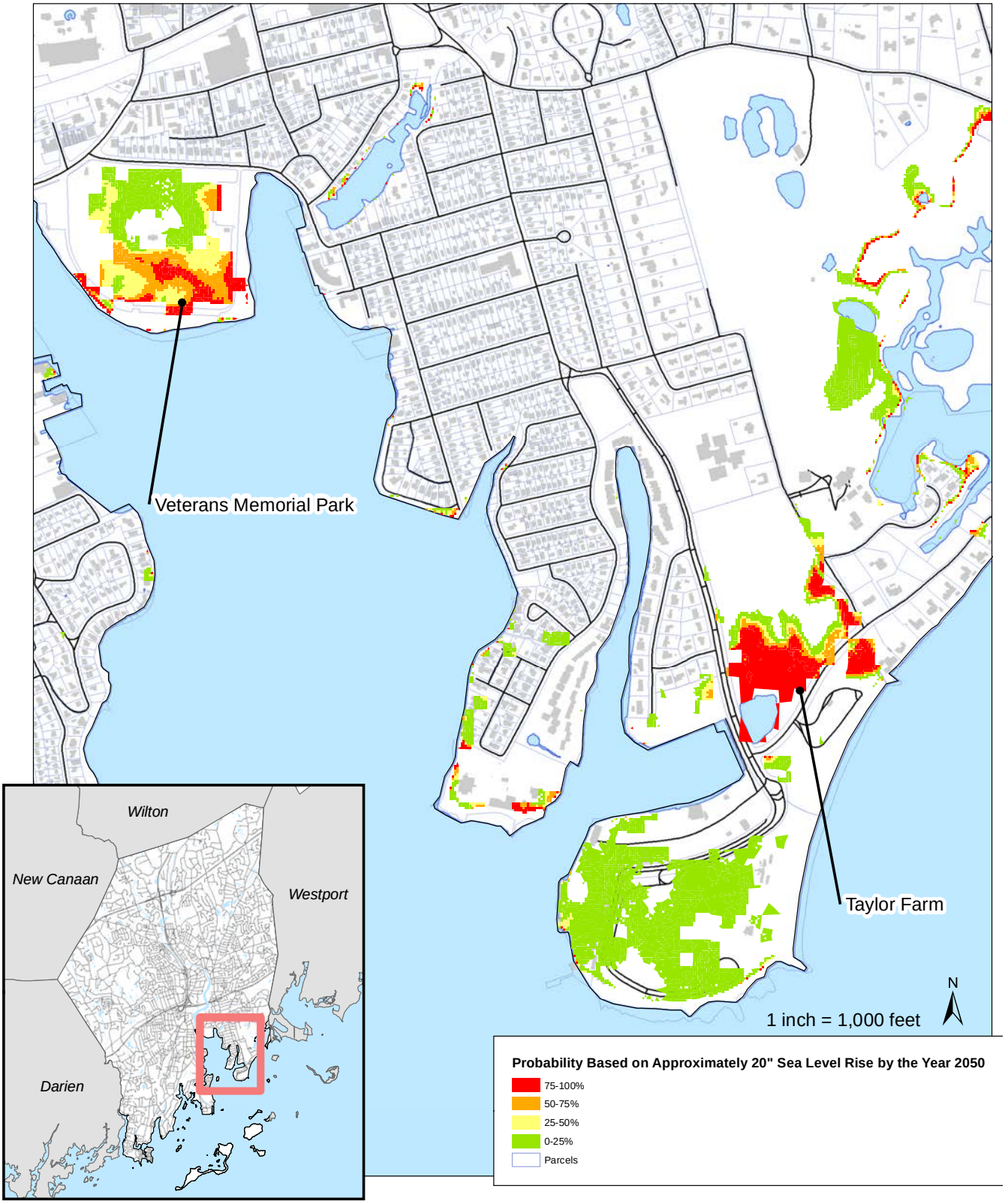
Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

9.4-c Frequency of Future Flooding in Rowayton



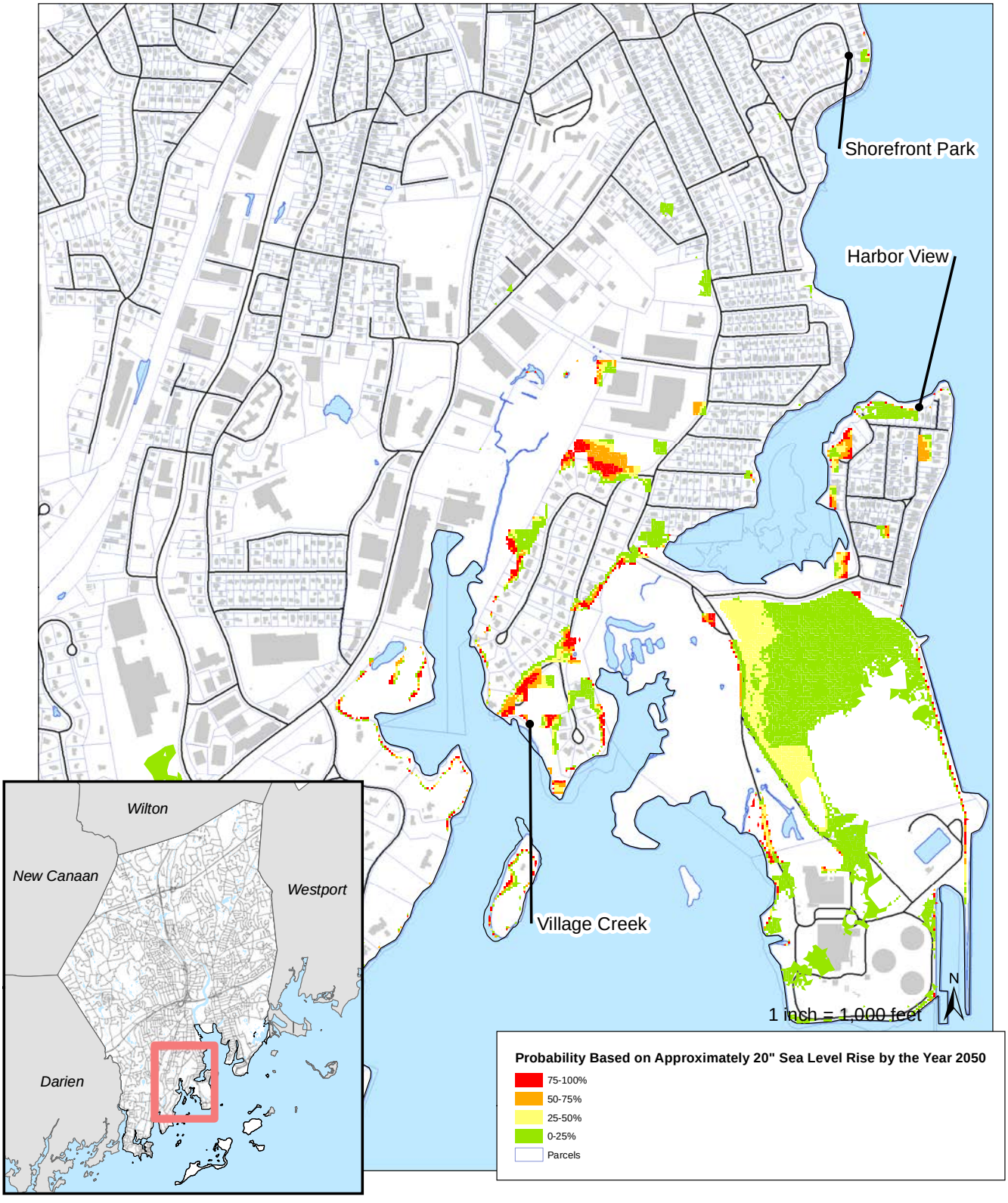
Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

9.5-a Likelihood that Land in East Norwalk becomes Coastal Marsh



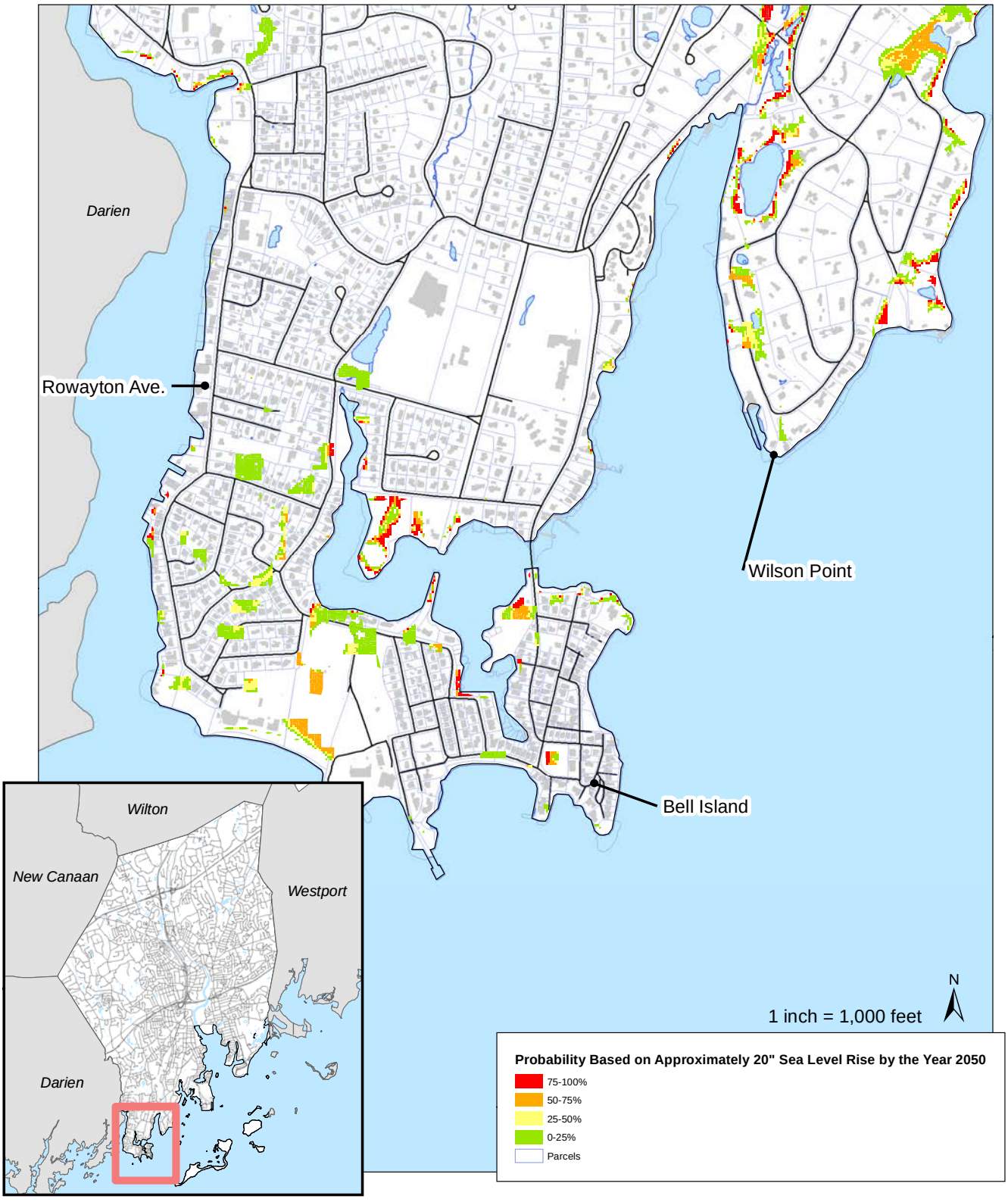
Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

9.5-b Likelihood that Land in SoNo becomes Coastal Marsh



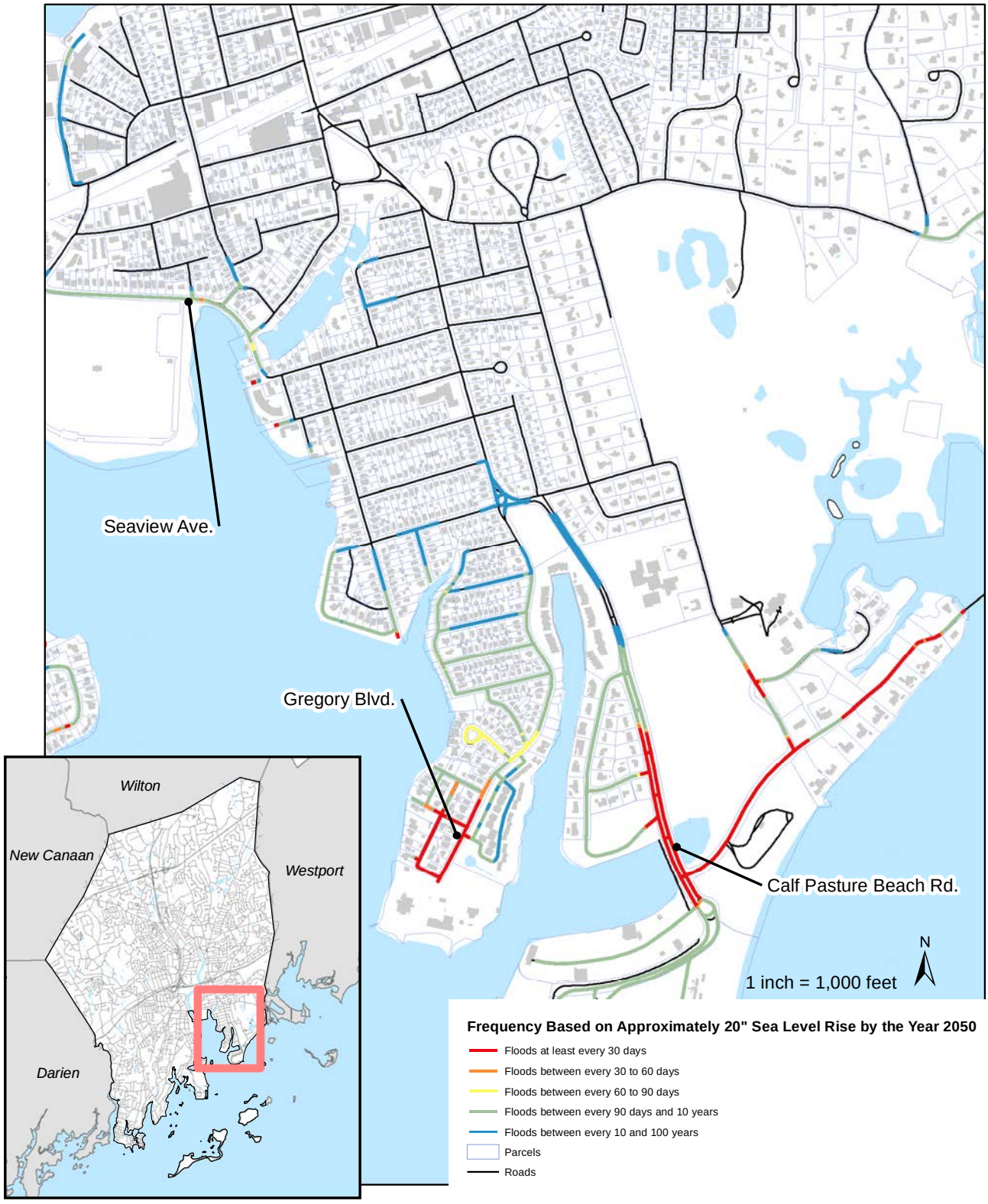
Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

9.5-c Likelihood that Land in Rowayton becomes Coastal Marsh



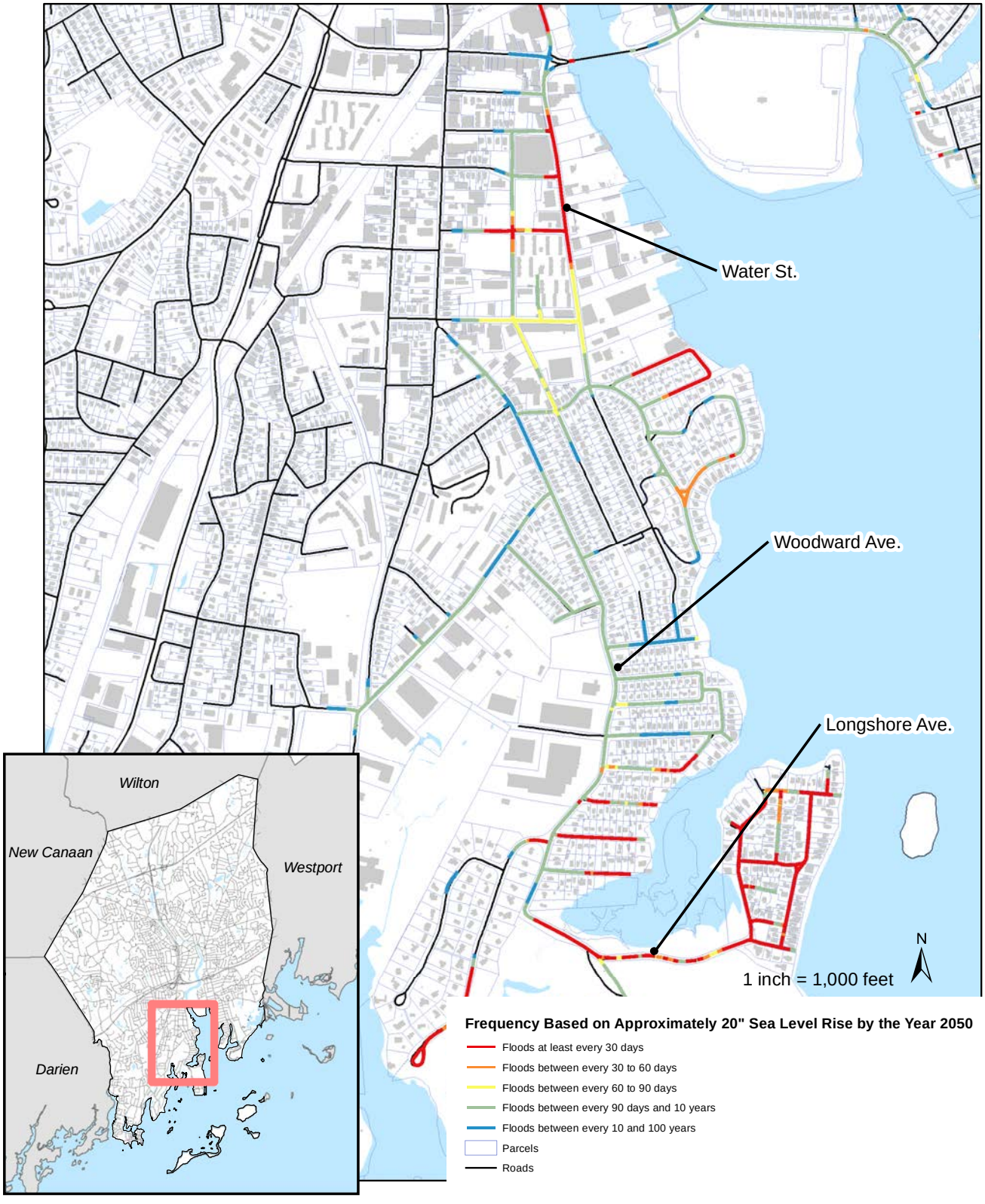
Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

9.6-a Road Flooding in East Norwalk



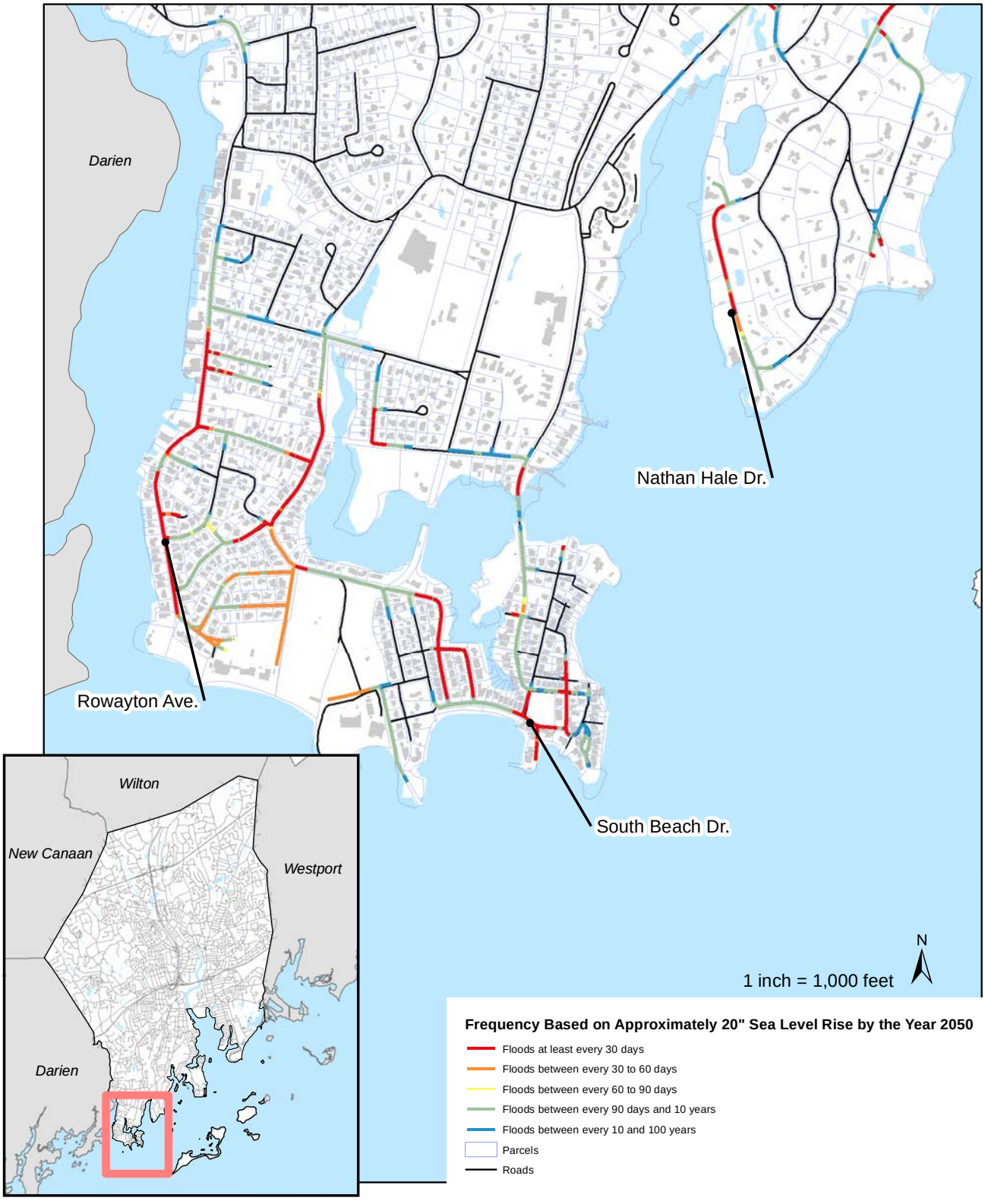
Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

9.6-b Road Flooding in SoNo



Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

9.6-c Road Flooding in East Norwalk



Data source: 2016 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) to Connecticut's Shoreline (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)
Based on Public Act No. 18-82 adopted by the State of Connecticut planning for approximately 20 inches of sea level rise by mid-century.

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