

Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment

December 2021

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Norwalk Transportation Master Plan (TMP).

Transportation affects all of us, regardless of where, how, and how often we travel. We take trips to work, to school, to shop, to see the doctor, and to connect with our family and friends. Norwalk's transportation system also supports the economic foundation of the city, delivering people, goods, and activity to businesses.

A holistic, long-term improvement plan will position Norwalk for innovative transportation solutions that are safe, economical, accessible, sustainable, livable, and suitable for the city's diverse communities. The TMP will guide transportation policy and investments over the next 10 to 20 years.

This TMP takes stock of our transportation network and our community today and looks ahead to identify how mobility improvements can make Norwalk an even more livable community for years to come.

About this Document

This is a living document and the first milestone in the TMP process. Material presented here reflects a variety of inputs and data sources. Information is summarized to provide an overview of existing conditions and an assessment of transportation needs throughout the City of Norwalk.

TMP recommendations will take shape with additional community feedback and be presented in subsequent drafts. The entire TMP effort will come together in an interactive, accessible format online to guide City initiatives and track progress of the plan in action.

Goals and Objectives

The creation and implementation of the TMP is guided by a series of core principles to ensure a transportation network that is:

- Safe
- Accessible
- Equitable
- Sustainable
- Cost-effective

The plan will include the following:

- Upgrades to existing roadways to improve capacity, efficiency and safety
- Vision Zero initiatives that prioritize equitable transportation options and traffic safety through design, engineering, policies, enforcement, community engagement, and education
- Traffic calming and management of truck traffic
- Shared mobility and micro-mobility options including electric vehicle on-demand shuttles, ride sharing, walking and biking
- Improved access to public transportation
- On-street residential and commercial parking and curb management

Our Vision

The Plan of Conservation and Development defines a vision for mobility in Norwalk:

“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.”



Plan Purpose

Having a well-planned and coordinated transportation network is vital to the economic health of Norwalk. A well-developed and achievable transportation plan will contribute to ensuring the City's viability and vitality for years to come.

This master plan will help City of Norwalk deliver transportation improvements that align with best practices, forward-thinking design, and community-based need. The plan will provide guidance on funding opportunities, project prioritization, and equitable allocation of resources.

The City of Norwalk has many near-term needs, so in addition to a long-range plan, this TMP will also provide the City with several local concept plans and near-term actions to advance critical opportunities and get things done. This plan focuses on strategy, action, and implementation.

Elements of the TMP

- Community engagement
- Existing conditions
- Goals and performance measures
- Technical assessments
- Sidewalk plans
- Conceptual corridor plans
- Comprehensive plan

Advancing the Work

Above all, the purpose of the TMP is to help Norwalk advance mobility projects by consolidating public support, leveraging the latest data to confirm issues, needs, and position the City for funding opportunities.

Past and ongoing planning outcomes will be confirmed, rejected, or enhanced based on the City's current vision and goals as they relate to transportation. The TMP will establish the performance metrics, priorities, and implementation approaches to guide decision-making on capital and infrastructure design and spending.

The TMP is designed as a living document, allowing for updates and evolution, as well as a public-facing record of City progress.



Related Plans

The Transportation Master Plan builds upon and complements other city and regional planning efforts. A significant volume of work has been completed, including valuable identification of community and City priorities for transportation and mobility. This TMP will complement, not duplicate, these efforts, validating and emphasizing priority elements along the way.

- [East Norwalk Neighborhood Transit-Oriented Development Plan \(2020\)](#)
- [Citywide Plan of Conservation and Development \(2019-2020\)](#)
- [Consolidated Plan \(2020-2024\)](#)
- [Parking Plan \(2020\)](#)
- [South Norwalk Transit-Oriented Development Plan \(2019\)](#)
- [Norwalk Pedestrian Plan \(2019\)](#)
- [Calf Pasture Beach Road – Road Safety Audit \(2016\)](#)
- [Pedestrian and Bikeway Transportation Plan \(2012\)](#)

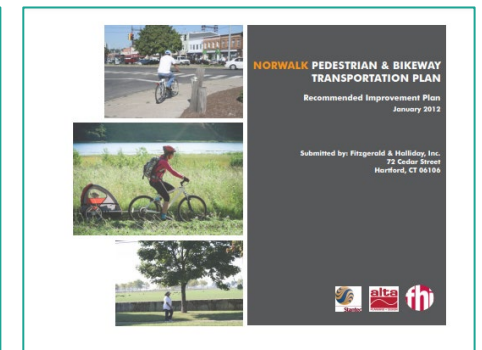
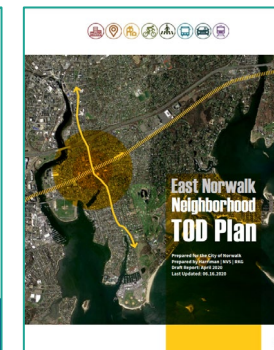
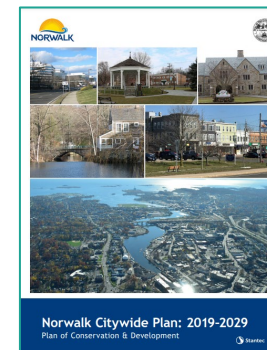
Norwalk's Plan of Conservation and Development notably highlights several areas of emphasis for mobility improvements:

- Integrating transportation and land use
- Expanding bicycle and pedestrian networks and safety
- Improving public transportation
- Promoting pedestrian-friendly development in urban areas
- Planning for transit-oriented development
- Preserving and enhancing the open space system

This holistic approach to multimodal mobility is a core theme of the TMP.

TMP Considerations

- A vision for walkable, multimodal city has been established in POCD and other plans.
- Land use connection emphasized in South and East Norwalk TOD plans/districts and POCD.
- Extensive bicycle and pedestrian improvements have been recommended but few have been implemented.
- The TMP will solidify the vision and goals and provide direction to convert ideas into reality.



2. Community Engagement

The Transportation Master Plan relies upon ongoing engagement with the many communities that make up Norwalk. Input from residents, community organizations, and businesses will ensure a forward-facing plan reflective of the city's needs.

The TMP begins with several engagement efforts:

- Conversations with City of Norwalk staff
- Interviews with local and regional stakeholders
- Technical Advisory Committee meetings
- Public surveys, mapping exercises

Each of these touch points is designed to complement the review of technical data and elevate significant, recurring issues.

The TMP is a community-driven plan, backed by thoughtful investigation, data analysis, and strategies to affect real change. Engagement will continue throughout the plan development and beyond.

The TMP relies on community members to voice their perspectives, engage in conversation, and take action to support and carry ideas forward.

Comment forms are available on the City's website:

<https://tomorrow.norwalkct.org/plan/transportation-master-plan/>



What We've Heard

Ideas, concerns, and opportunities presented by community members, stakeholders, and the TMP Technical Advisory Committee are the primary inputs steering this assessment of mobility needs. The TMP begins with real-life input and cross-references comments with available data to validate and refine the areas of interest.

Key themes expressed at the project's outset include:

Needs

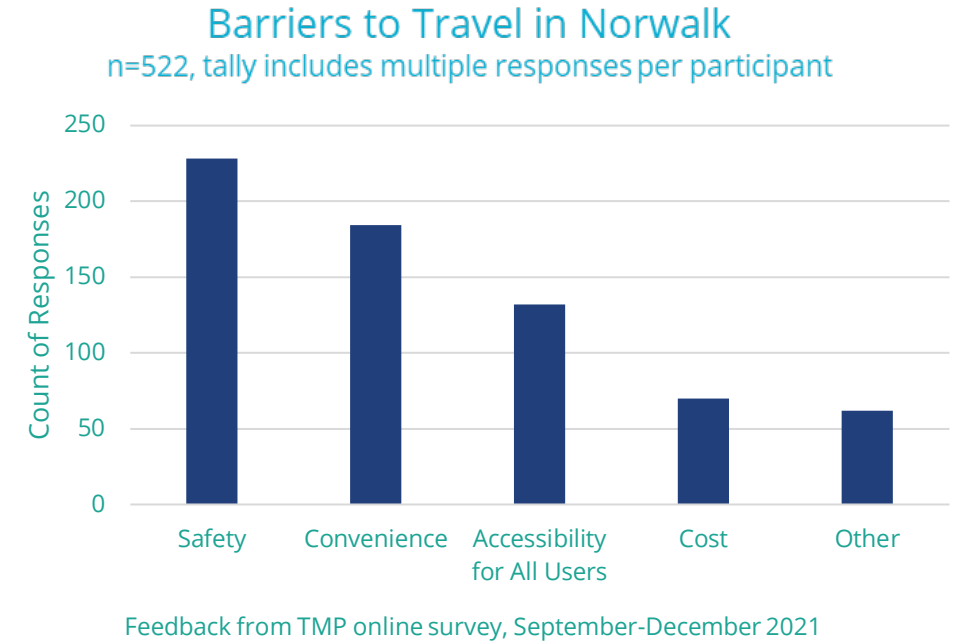
- Create better connections between Norwalk's neighborhoods and downtowns
- Connect different travel modes better (e.g., train to sidewalk, bus to bike)
- Improve sidewalk condition and close gaps in the sidewalk network
- Improve efficiency and convenience of the local bus network
- Complete the Norwalk River Valley Trail and other off-road connections for non-motorized travel (local and regional)

Concerns

- Safety improvements are needed for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Parking demand at regional attractions (e.g., Calf Pasture Beach) spills into local residential streets
- Truck traffic is impacting local neighborhoods
- Police enforcement is not a sufficient deterrent to aggressive driving

Opportunities

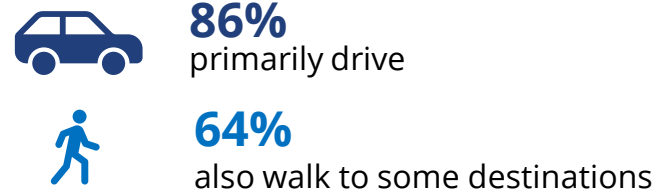
- Use technology to improve traffic signals, transit services, parking information, and other aspects of the local transportation network
- Design transportation facilities for the community Norwalk wants to be
- Adjust services and designs as needs evolve
- Increase residential development in the urban core and promote multimodal mobility options through walking, bicycling, and transit



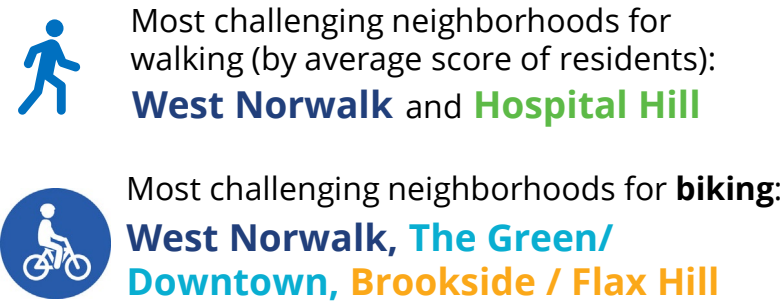
What We've Heard

An online survey and mapping tool was released in September 2021 to assess current travel patterns, barriers to mobility, and specific areas of concern. Survey links were distributed through City of Norwalk mailing lists and stakeholders and project partners. A total of 523 responses were received, with 374-389 respondents providing demographic information.

Primary Travel Mode



Ease of Travel by Mode



Survey respondents were least satisfied with **parking** in **East Norwalk** and **Hospital Hill**

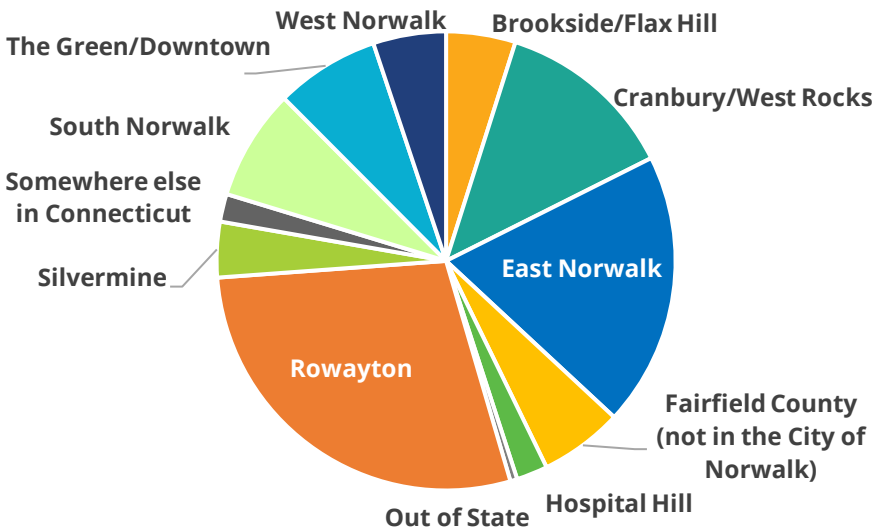
Residence

Most participants live in Norwalk (91%)
Although all neighborhoods were represented, the highest representation came from:

Rowayton (28%)

East Norwalk (19%)

Cranbury / West Rocks (13%)



Demographics

Income

Survey respondents were **somewhat wealthier** than the City's population as a whole.

49% of households earn **\$100K or more**

Gender

56% of respondents identify as female.

Age

Nearly half (47%) were **age 45-64**

Race and Ethnicity (Includes Multiple Responses)

Minority groups were underrepresented among survey participants, highlighting the importance of continued and targeted engagement.

7% Hispanic or Latino/a

3% Asian

2% Black or African American

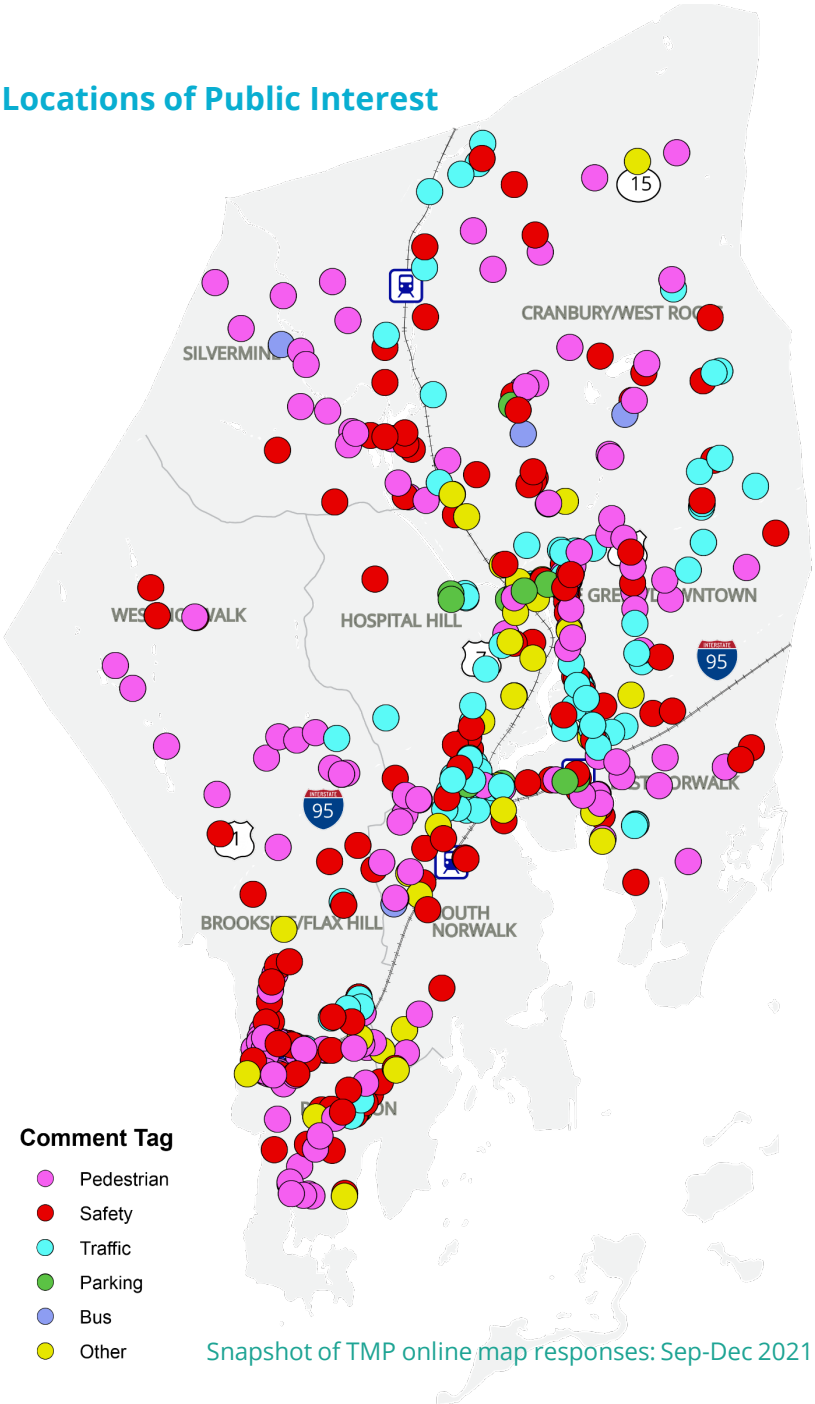
What We've Heard

An online mapping exercise conducted in September-October 2021 allowed residents and stakeholders to identify local issues and concerns, dropping pins on an interactive map and categorizing according to key themes. With more than 450 pins on the map, community members provided thoughtful insights on a variety of topics, emphasizing safety, pedestrian mobility, and traffic/parking concerns.

Snapshot of Public Comments

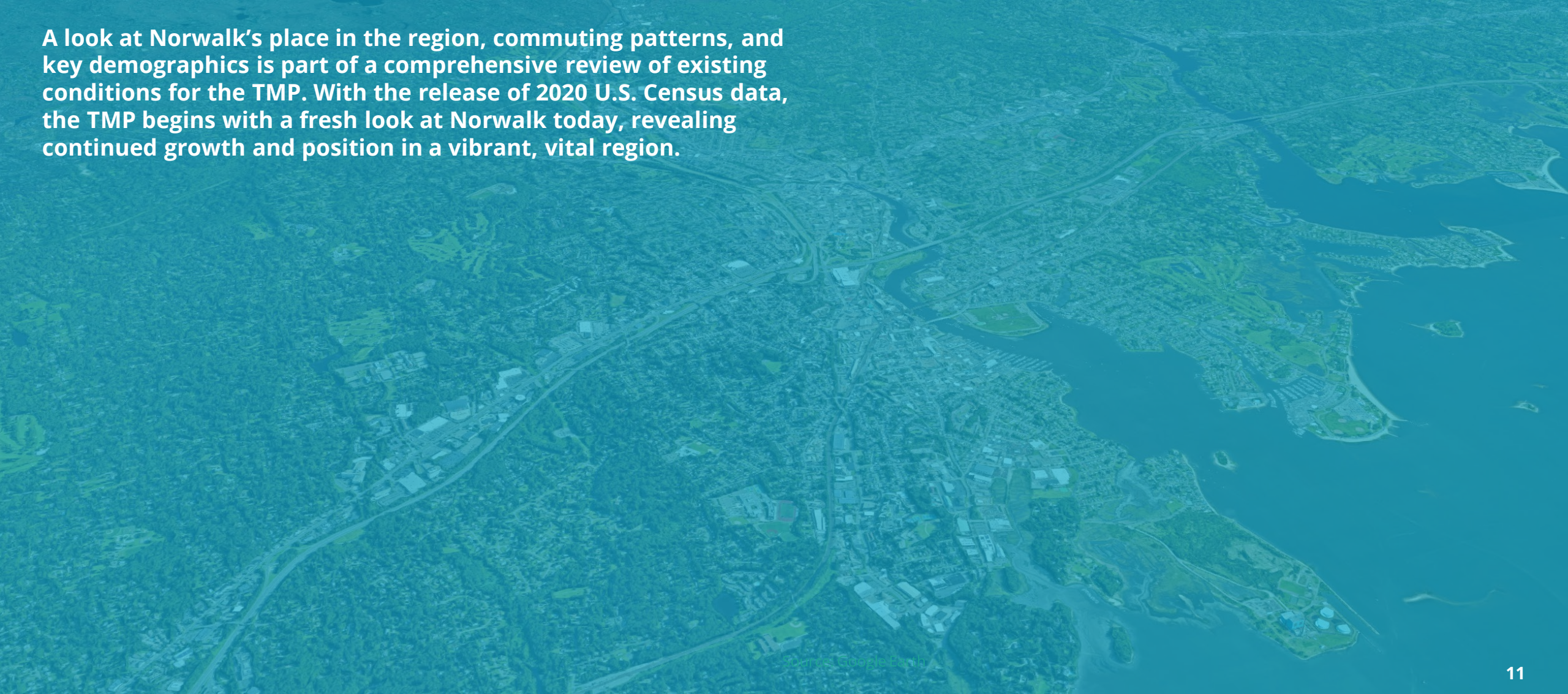
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Missing traffic lights and/or crosswalksSpeeding, aggressive driversDangerous conditions at school drop-offsPoor visibility at intersections
Walking and Bicycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of dedicated bicycle facilities on roadsFear of speeding car driversDifficult connections to and between commercial centersSidewalks missing and/or in poor condition
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoodsTruck traffic on residential streetsDelays associated with I-95, Merritt Parkway congestionDifficulty traveling east-west on local streets
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Insufficient parking for school drop-off, pick-up, and activitiesOverflow parking on residential streets from beach and other attractionsParking challenges affecting local businessesPricing and policies are not in-tune with demand
Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Desire for more direct bus options to commercial, employment centersDifficulty reaching bus stops due to missing sidewalks, busy streets

Locations of Public Interest



3. Where is Norwalk Today?

A look at Norwalk's place in the region, commuting patterns, and key demographics is part of a comprehensive review of existing conditions for the TMP. With the release of 2020 U.S. Census data, the TMP begins with a fresh look at Norwalk today, revealing continued growth and position in a vibrant, vital region.



Norwalk's Place in the Region

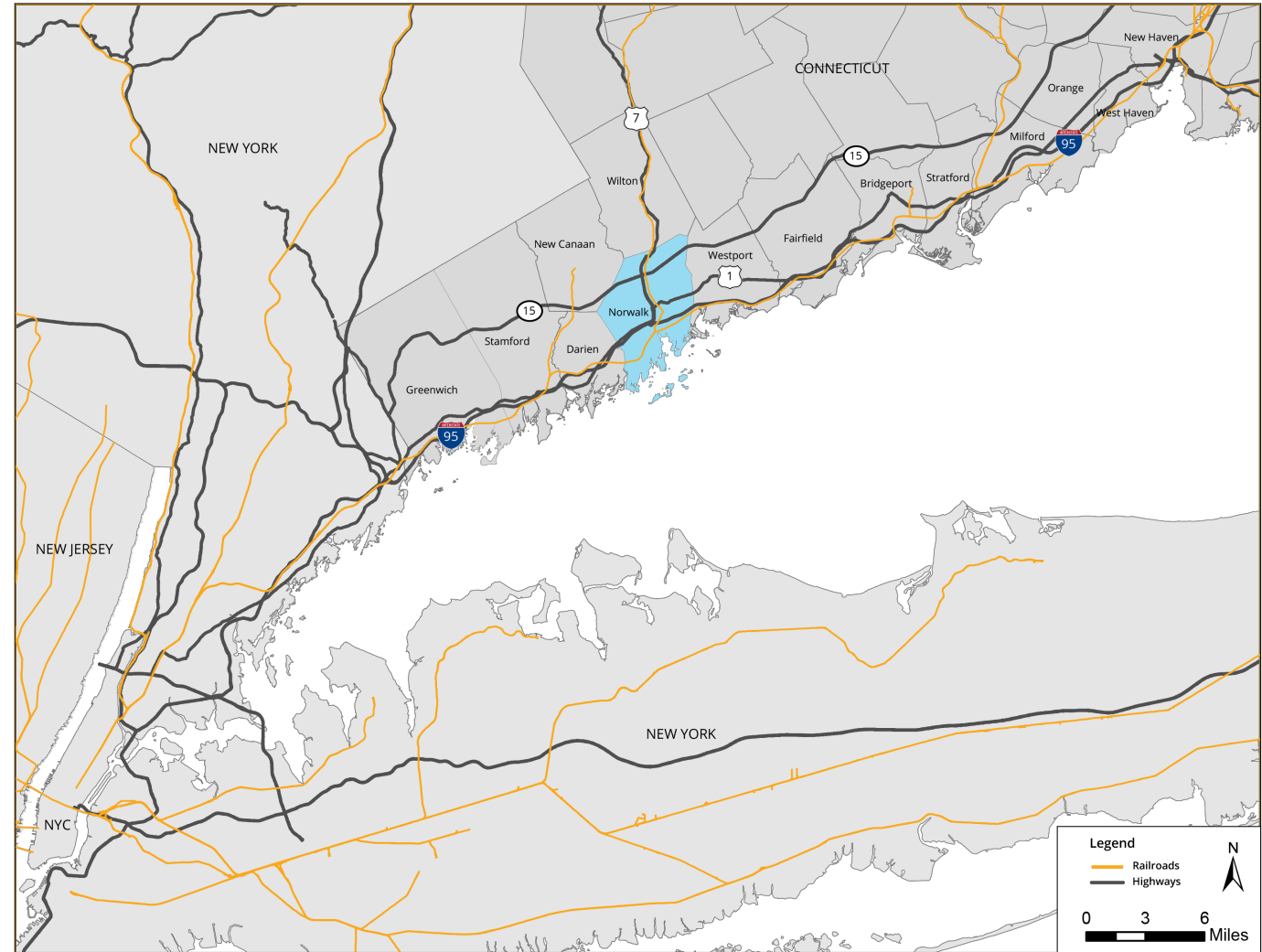
Norwalk sits within Fairfield County and the nation's largest metropolitan region, the New York Metropolitan Area, which also includes five of the seven largest cities in Connecticut. The Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk Metropolitan Statistical Area includes all of Fairfield County and has a population of nearly one million residents and more than 400,000 jobs.

In its Long-Range Transportation Plan 2015-2040, the Southwestern Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) emphasizes links between land use, transportation, and economic development. The plan highlights the value of higher-density, mixed use developments to reduce congestion, promote transit and multimodal travel, and support active transportation such as walking and bicycling.

Norwalk is situated on several significant regional transportation corridors, including I-95, the Merritt Parkway, U.S. Route 1, Route 7, and Metro-North's New Haven Line and Danbury Branch. For Norwalk to grow and remain competitive in the region, it needs to attract development and talent. An accessible, modern, and efficient transportation system is critical to the City's continued success.

The transportation network must also emphasize equity, supporting all residents and visitors, regardless of age, income, gender, race, or physical ability. For too many years, transportation has served as a barrier to historically disadvantaged populations.

This TMP offers a path toward a more just, equitable city, where everyone is afforded the opportunity to access everything Norwalk and the region have to offer. That means serving short, medium, and long-distance trips equally well, designing infrastructure, services, and amenities at the right scale to support each.



Evolution of Transportation

Norwalk has a long history of multimodal travel, from horses and maritime travel, through trolleys and buses on local streets and regional rail, to today's car-centric system. Norwalk's roads have evolved to prioritize vehicular traffic, and, like most communities, design changes have largely focused on accommodating peak hour demand and throughput.

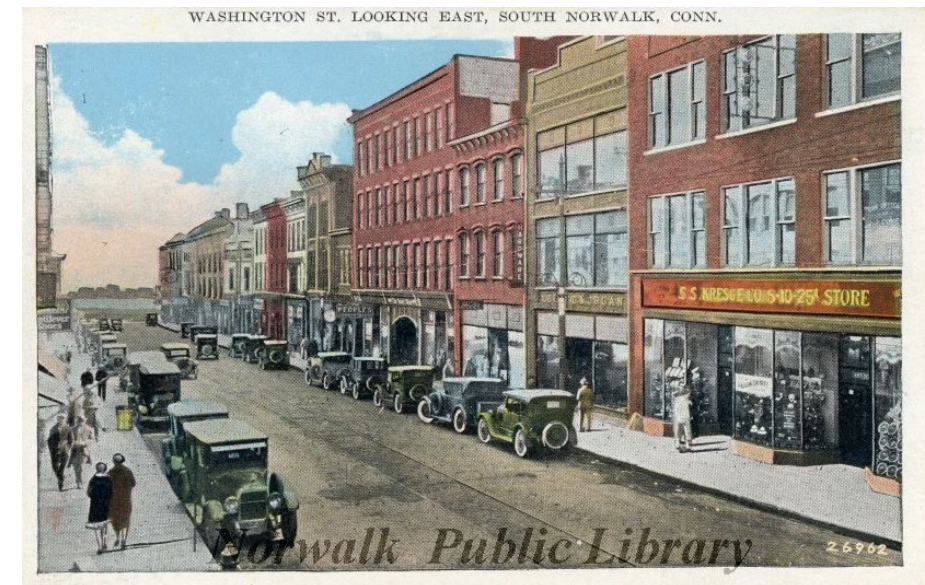
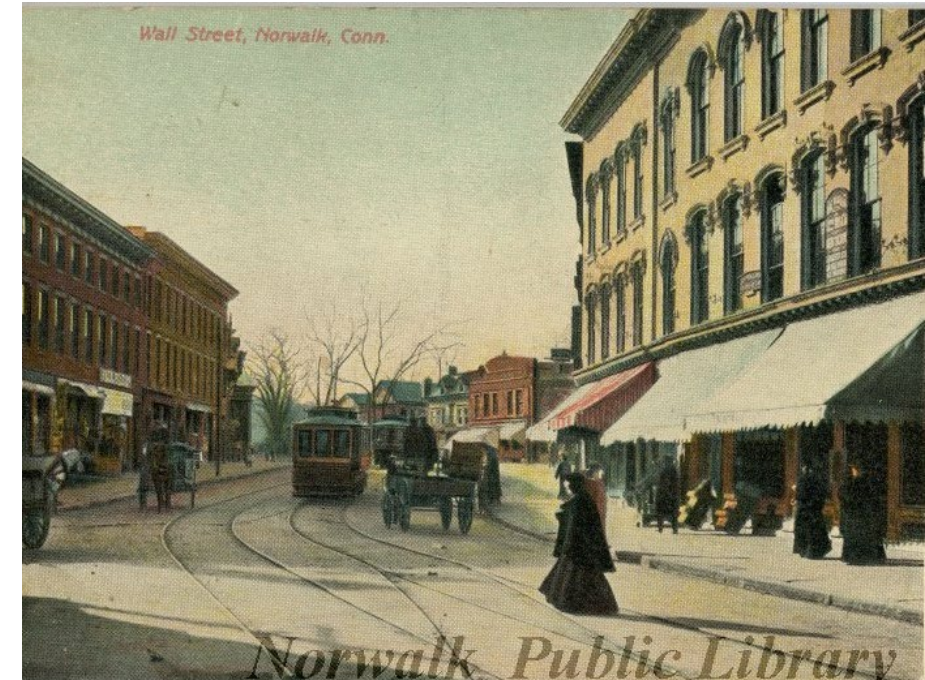
Norwalk's formation has led to a polycentric environment with multiple downtown nodes that are geographically close to one another but are not adequately connected by all modes of travel. The historic street network also does not facilitate trips across the city in a traditional grid.

Expanding roadways has proven counter-productive as a means to mitigate congestion, whereas technology and systems approaches such as signal modernization and coordination can optimize capacity within our roads' physical limits.

Parking and land use also play significant roles in the evolution of the City's network. As a small city, much of Norwalk's parking assets are surface lots, which consume valuable land, particularly in the urban core, and have negative effects on the safety, comfort, and continuity of sidewalks and pedestrian networks.

As a city with multiple centers, each of which has grown with its own identity, Norwalk can design a transportation network that better connects people to these centers and connects these centers to each other.

Today Norwalk relies on regional rail and highways, local and regional bus, and a road network dominated by automobile travel. On the horizon is the potential for semi- and fully-autonomous vehicles, micro- and shared mobility, and increasingly flexible, on-demand transit. This TMP will help Norwalk design its roads and infrastructure to create the most livable, dynamic future possible.

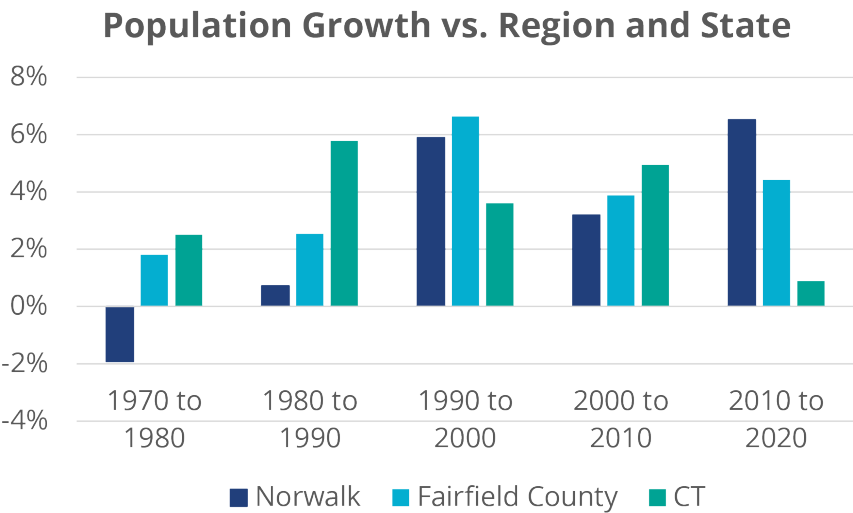
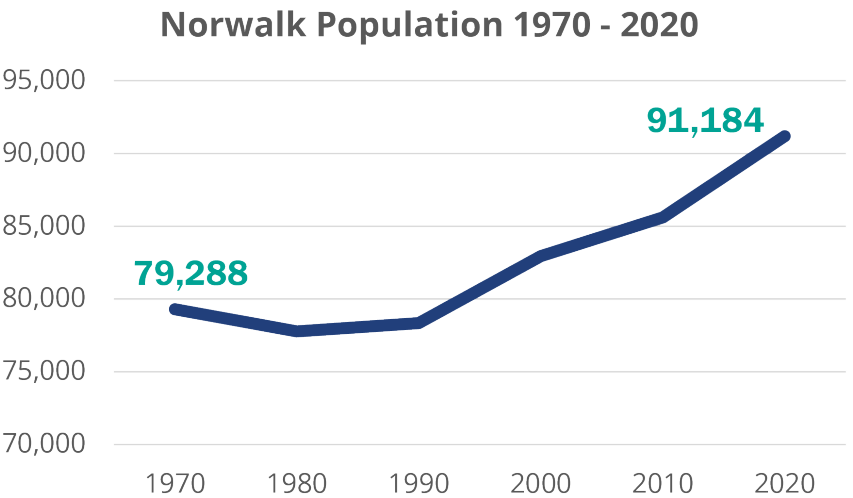


Population

Central to planning is understanding community composition. The TMP draws from the recently adopted Plan of Conservation and Development and other planning studies to consider population and employment demographics in the city. With the ongoing release of 2020 U.S. Census data, the TMP offers an opportunity to update key metrics including population growth and journey-to-work commute patterns.

Norwalk continues to grow. The city has gained nearly 12,000 residents since 1970 and the rate of growth has increased in the past ten years, outpacing both Fairfield County and the State of Connecticut.

Norwalk’s growth confirms its popularity among current and new residents and makes it a destination within the region, thanks to its diversity of neighborhoods, jobs, schools, and recreational opportunities. At the same time, rising population increases demand on Norwalk’s transportation system.

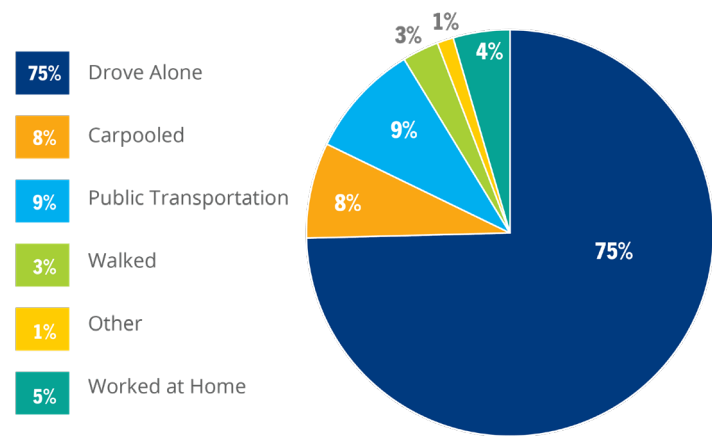


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Employment and Commuting

Travel Modes

Norwalk benefits from its location on the busy Northeast Corridor rail line, I-95, the Merritt Parkway, and Route 7. While commuting by car (driving alone) remains the predominant mode, public transportation, carpooling, walking, and other modes account for more than 20% of work trips.

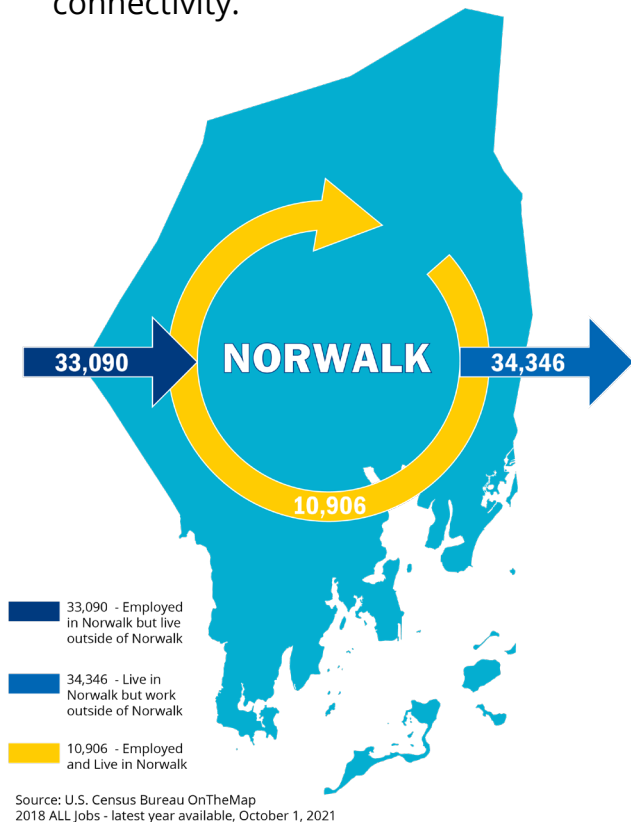


Commute Destinations

U.S. Census data from 2018 provides a snapshot of employment locations for Norwalk residents. The coastal corridor (I-95, U.S. Route 1, Metro-North rail) is critical to Norwalk’s place in the regional economy, along with Route 7 and Metro-North to Danbury.

Commute Flows

The number of commuters into and out of Norwalk is roughly equal, while nearly 11,000 residents live and work in the city. Nearly 45,000 work trips originate in Norwalk each weekday morning. These commute patterns highlight the importance of local and regional connectivity.



TMP Considerations

- The relative volumes of commute travel into, within and out of Norwalk require balanced transportation system to accommodate growing demand.
- A high proportion of internal city commute travel underscores the importance of land use decisions married to transportation policy to encourage short trips by means other than driving.
- Bottlenecks and capacity constraints should be addressed through localized fixes that emphasize technology and multimodal accommodation.
- An effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has been a softening of the traditional peak commuting hours, particularly in the morning. While uncertainty lingers over what may constitute a “new normal,” increased employer flexibility on telecommuting is likely to continue.

Economic Development

Norwalk has seen major development come online in recent years, including the SoNo Collection shopping center and an acceleration of residential construction in the urban core of SoNo, Wall Street, and locations in between. These developments bring opportunity to urbanized Norwalk, along with challenges to accommodate new trips and new mobility demands.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) and transit-ready development are cited in the Plan of Conservation and Development as key components of the city's growth and its ability to attract business and talent.

Residential development proximate to transit nodes, particularly mixed-use and multifamily, affords residents opportunities to reduce dependence on car trips, limit car ownership, and take advantage of transit service for a variety of trip types. TOD Districts have been established in South Norwalk and East Norwalk.

Continuing efforts are underway at Merritt 7 to update the traditional suburban office model to a more transit-ready hub, including the addition of approximately 1,000 apartments* nearby and connections to the Norwalk River Valley Trail. The Merritt 7 train station is undergoing reconstruction, targeted for completion in Fall 2022, including new facilities and amenities and full ADA accessibility.



Merritt 7. Source: Google Earth

TMP Considerations

- Continued private sector investment in the City of Norwalk requires high-quality infrastructure to keep the City competitive.
- City development approvals must look beyond traditional traffic impacts and consider opportunities to enhance true, multimodal site access.
- Progressive zoning policies to minimize parking requirements, including maximums rather than minimums.
- Reducing parking requirements in new developments will mitigate escalating costs of parking construction and maintenance, which discourage non-motorized traffic and lead to higher costs passed on to businesses and residents.
- Developer mitigation efforts and contributions to transportation improvements should also focus on multimodal solutions and de-emphasize auto trips. The SoNo Collection development's contribution to the WHEELS 2U microtransit program is an excellent example of this approach.

* Source: Norwalk Citywide Plan

4. Transportation Elements

Norwalk's residents and visitors travel in many ways and by many modes: car, bus, train, bicycle, taxi, etc. Regardless of our primary modes, we are all pedestrians for some portion of our journey. Norwalk strives to be a city of transportation choice, offering safe and efficient mobility options for users of all ages, abilities, and incomes.

The TMP will focus these value statements with a holistic approach to resource allocation, roadway and facility design, and policies to support an effective, equitable system.

This chapter provides an overview of key transportation options in the city, highlighting strengths, challenges, and opportunities to be explored further for different modes and means of travel.



Walking



Bicycling



Driving



Bus



Rail



Freight

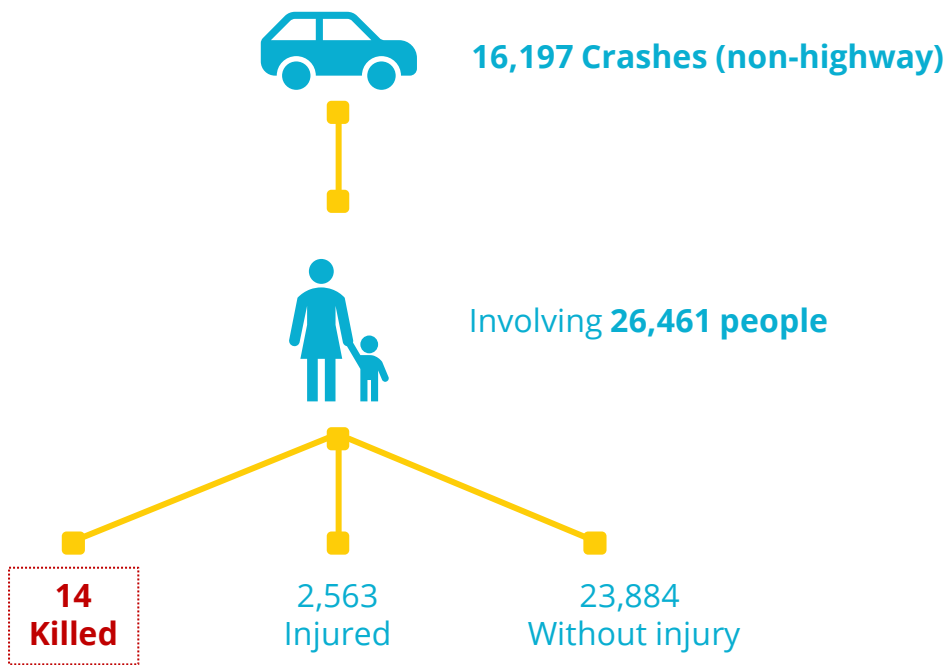


Safety

This TMP considers safety paramount and integral to every aspect of transportation, from policy, to service, to facility design. Among the core principles established at the outset of the TMP is promotion of, and continued adherence to, a Vision Zero philosophy. One death on our roads is too many, yet in the past five years, 14 people have lost their lives on local (non-highway) streets in Norwalk. More than 26,000 people have been involved in a crash in the past five years, nearly 10% suffering some sort of injury.

A central purpose of the TMP is to prioritize projects of greatest need, directing resources to the issues of greatest concern to the most community members.

Roadway Crashes (2015-2019)



FHI Studio analysis of CT Crash Data Repository (CTCDR), 2015-2019

The Importance of Vision Zero

The Vision Zero movement considers traffic safety as a public health issue, believing that traffic accidents, deaths, and injuries can be prevented through design, engineering, policies, enforcement, community engagement, and education. Vision Zero plans bring together a wide variety of stakeholders, with collaboration among local traffic planners and engineers, policymakers, and public health professionals to work on the many factors that go into making roadways safe including roadway design, speeds, behaviors, technology, and policies. The movement, which began in Sweden in 1997, has grown across Europe and in the United States. Cities that have implemented Vision Zero in the U.S. include New York City, Boston, Charlotte, North Carolina, Denver Colorado, Tempe Arizona, and Bellevue, Washington, among others.

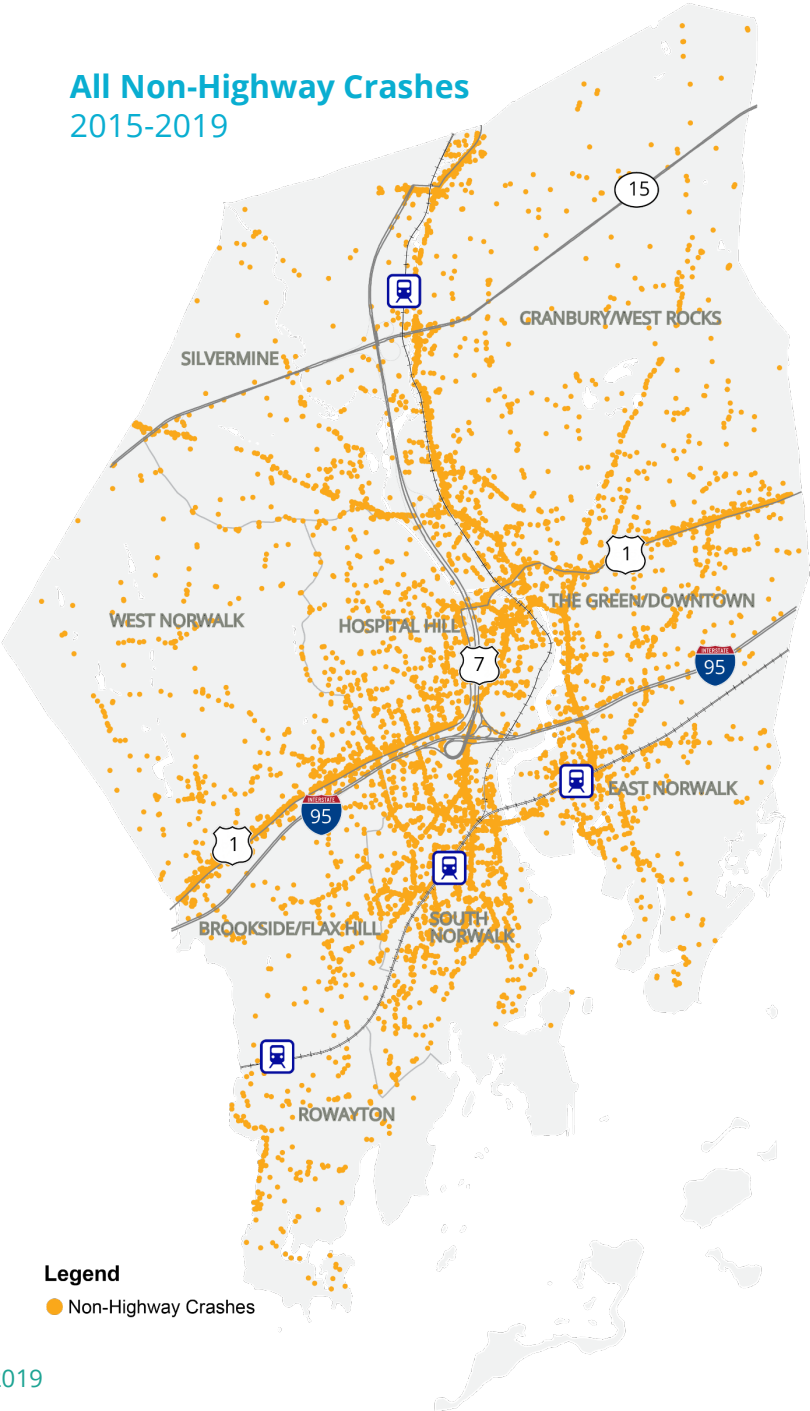
Norwalk’s Plan of Conservation and points to the adoption of both Vision Zero and Complete Streets initiatives. These complementary policies will be critical to establish equitable mobility for all users throughout city-operated roadways. Key city departments involved will include the Mayor’s office, Common Council, Transportation, Mobility, and Parking, Planning and Zoning, Public Health, the Bike-Walk Commission, as well as the Fire and Police Departments.

Safety

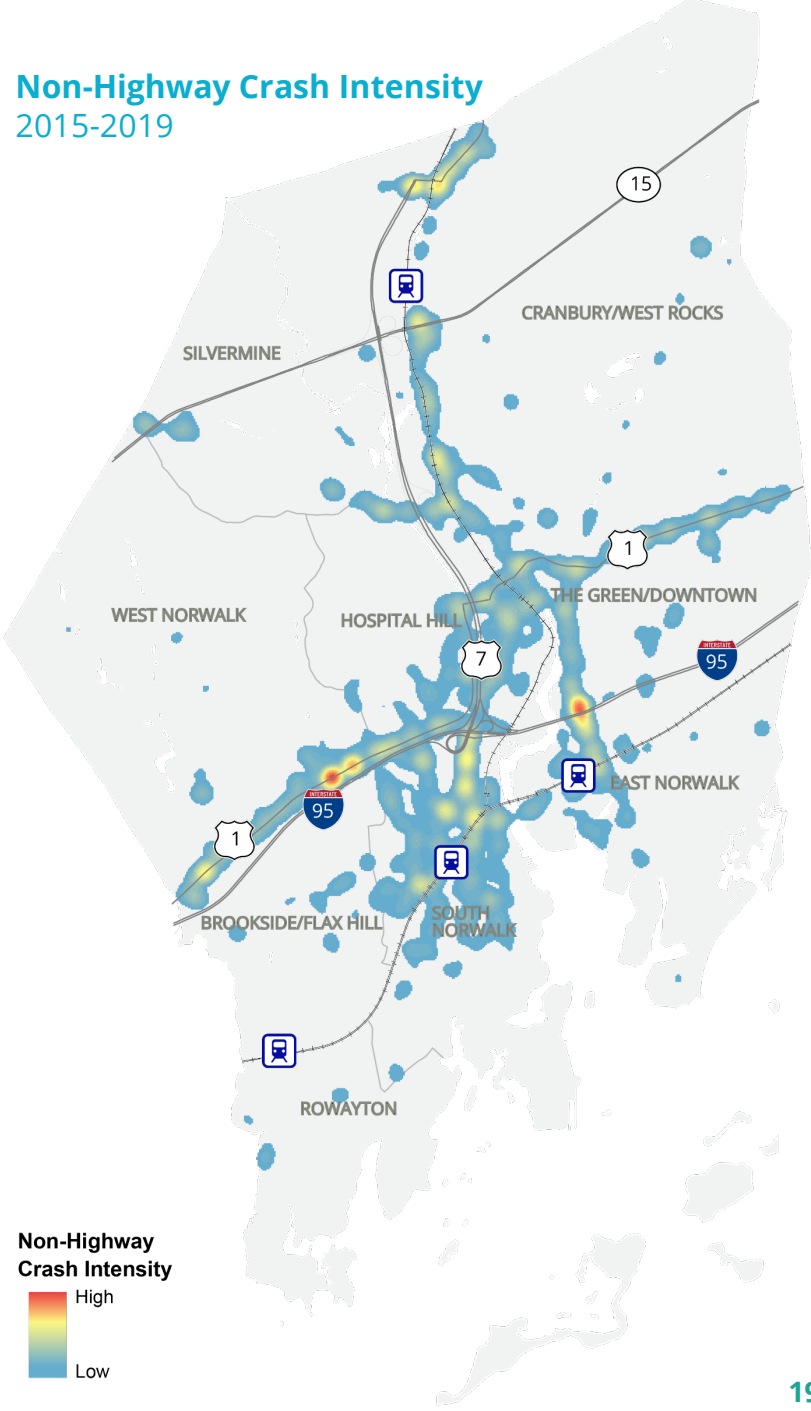
Analysis of roadway crashes from 2015-2019 along all city and state roadways except major highways (i.e., I-95, Route 15, and Route 7) revealed 16,197 crashes over five years.

Many of these crash locations correspond to Norwalk's activity centers and primary commercial corridors, such as SoNo, East Norwalk, Main Avenue, and U.S. Route 1. These locations are also the areas with the greatest pedestrian activity and the potential for increased walking trips in the future.

All Non-Highway Crashes
2015-2019



Non-Highway Crash Intensity
2015-2019



Safety

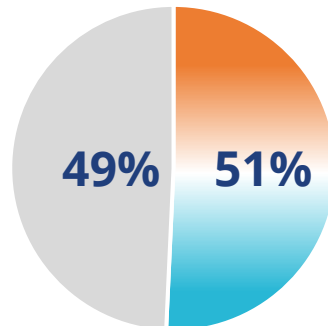
About half of all of Norwalk's crashes are concentrated along several corridors and intersections. These focus areas represent about 15 miles of Norwalk's 280-mile road network and 10 intersections in total.

Crash frequency and crash severity were analyzed for the focus areas, which may help in identifying potential priority improvement locations. Crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists are particularly concerning, as these are vulnerable road users without the physical protection afforded by automobiles.

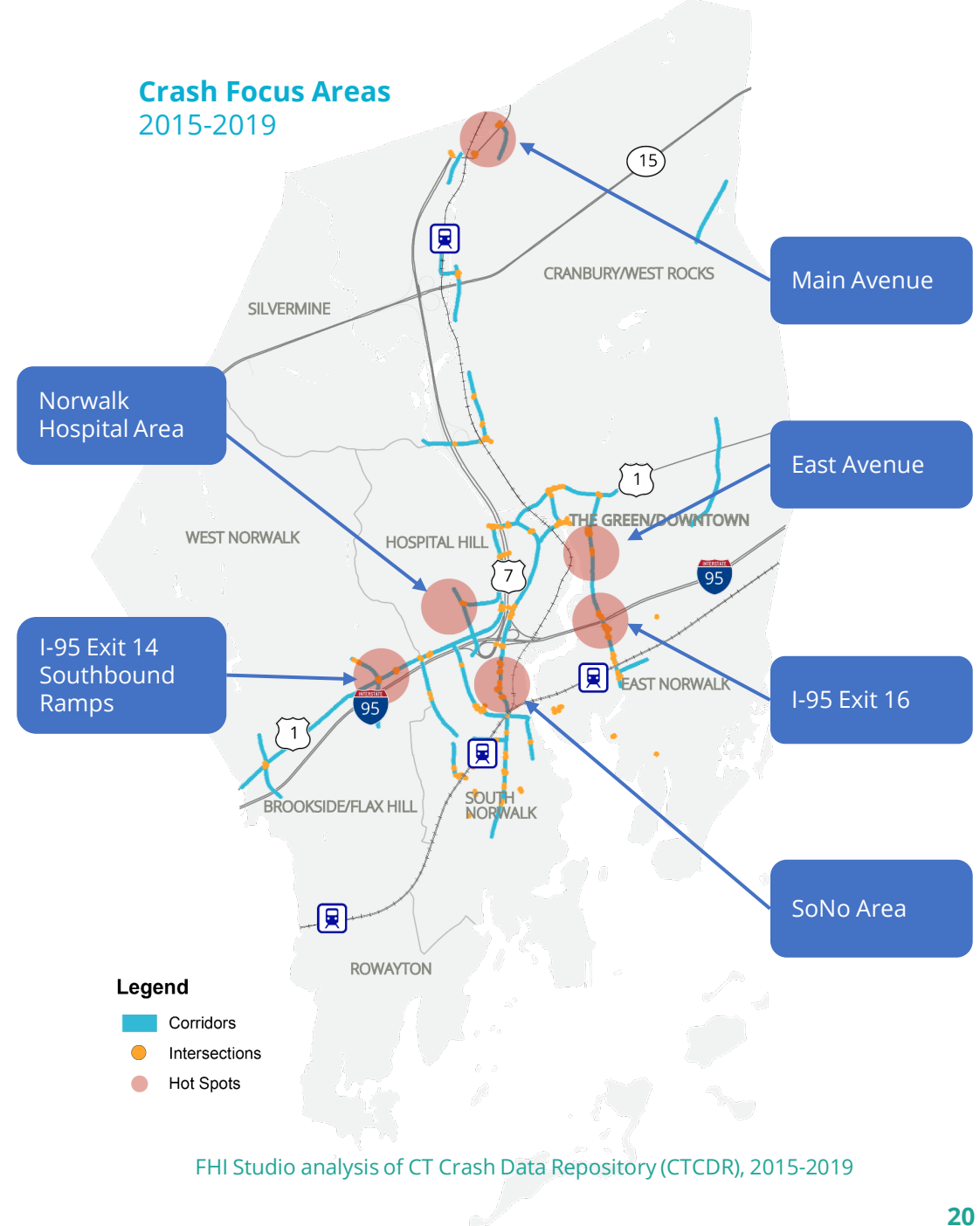


Stuart Avenue at Phillips Street. Source: Google

Crashes within Focus Areas
Crashes in Other Areas



Crash Focus Areas 2015-2019



FHI Studio analysis of CT Crash Data Repository (CTCDR), 2015-2019

Safety

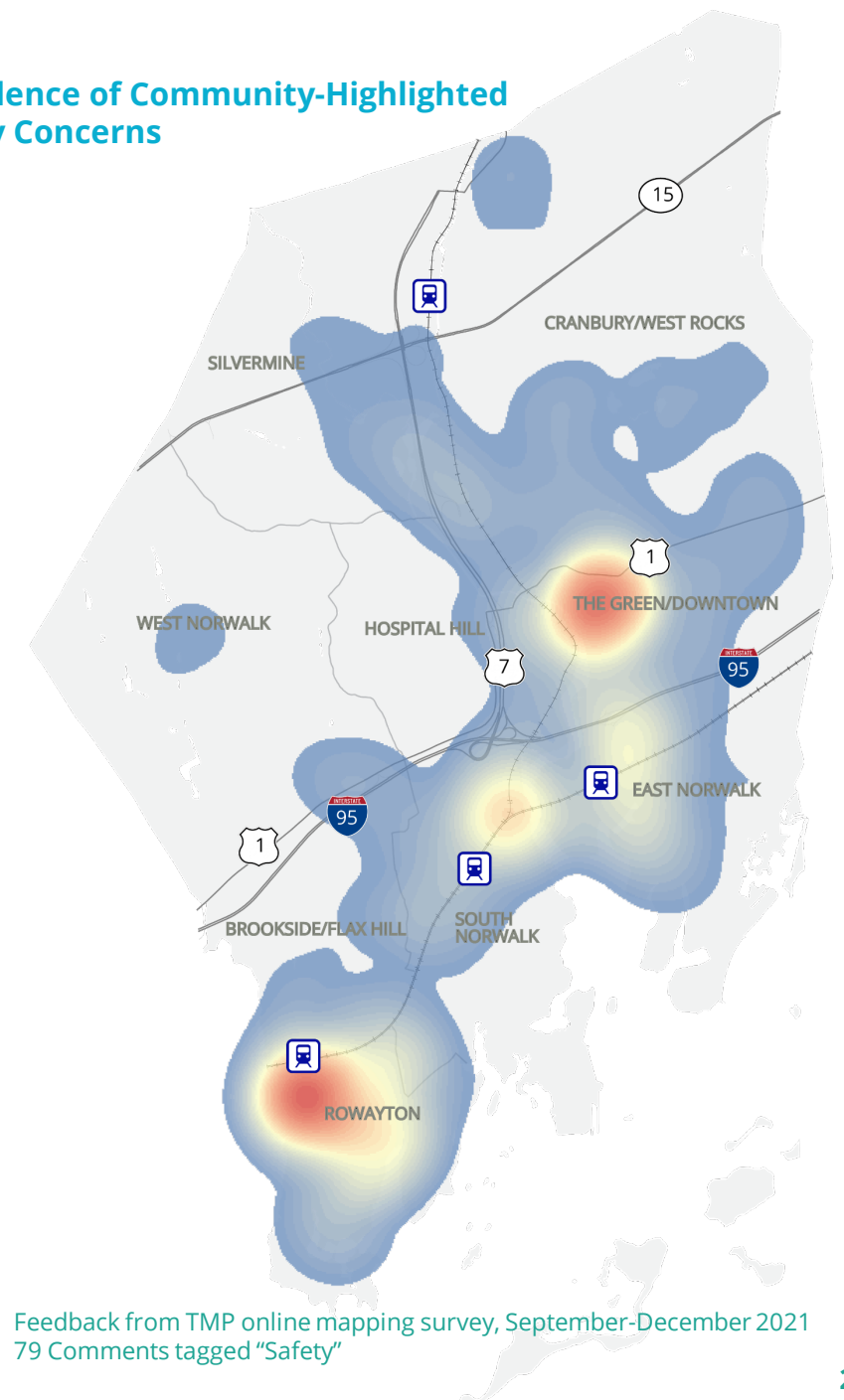
A wide array of design approaches and policies may be employed to calm and better organize vehicular traffic, reduce confusion and risk at intersections, and protect our community's most vulnerable roadway users. Importantly, some of these interventions can be implemented as quick-build projects and do not require significant capital expense. Near-term solutions can be tested and monitored to ensure effectiveness in unique local conditions, then refined for long-term installation.

- Complete Streets
- Traffic calming and reduced speed limits
- Travel lane and lane width reductions
- Sidewalk/curb extensions, shortening crosswalk distances
- Signalization (e.g., RRFBS), signage and traffic calming at unprotected crossings
- Daylighting intersections, removing parking/obstructions
- Traffic signal coordination and optimization



Intersection of 5th Street, Gregory Boulevard, and Marvin Street. Source: Google Earth

Prevalence of Community-Highlighted Safety Concerns



Feedback from TMP online mapping survey, September-December 2021
79 Comments tagged "Safety"

Walking

We are all pedestrians. Whether it's the walk to our cars, to the bus or train, or to our final destinations, we all rely on walking or mobility devices for some portion of our travel. For some, walking is a necessity, while for others it's a choice to be outdoors, be active, and be environmentally responsible.

Walking also presents challenges. Roadway and intersection safety, accessibility and pavement condition for those with mobility challenges, and other factors affect the ability to comfortably complete journeys. Sidewalks are generally prevalent in Norwalk's core, yet conditions vary significantly and are not always adequate for all users. Outside of the core, significant gaps exist in the pedestrian network and some facilities, when present, are rudimentary and do not meet accessibility standards.

Trails and Off-Road Connections

Work continues to complete and connect vital off-road trail facilities including the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) and the Harbor Loop. These multi-use facilities will provide important connections within the City as well as to neighboring communities, creating both local and regional assets. As more trail segments are completed and linked to local streets, the utility of the entire network continues to increase.

Community Programming

The [NorWALKER program](#) offers information and inspiration for community members to enjoy their surroundings on foot. The Health Department offers maps with walking routes from ½ to 3½ miles throughout the city. The program also organizes community walks to encourage physical activity and interaction.

TMP Sidewalk Plans

A core component of this TMP is a series of sidewalk implementation design plans to close important gaps in the existing sidewalk network. These plans will advance the engineering and design necessary to close sidewalk gaps and serve as a guide for future efforts to close other gaps. The TMP focuses on three locations:

- George Avenue (Tierney to U.S. Route 1)
- Linden Street (Main to West Rocks)
- Riverside Avenue (Belden to New Canaan)



George Avenue. Source: Stantec

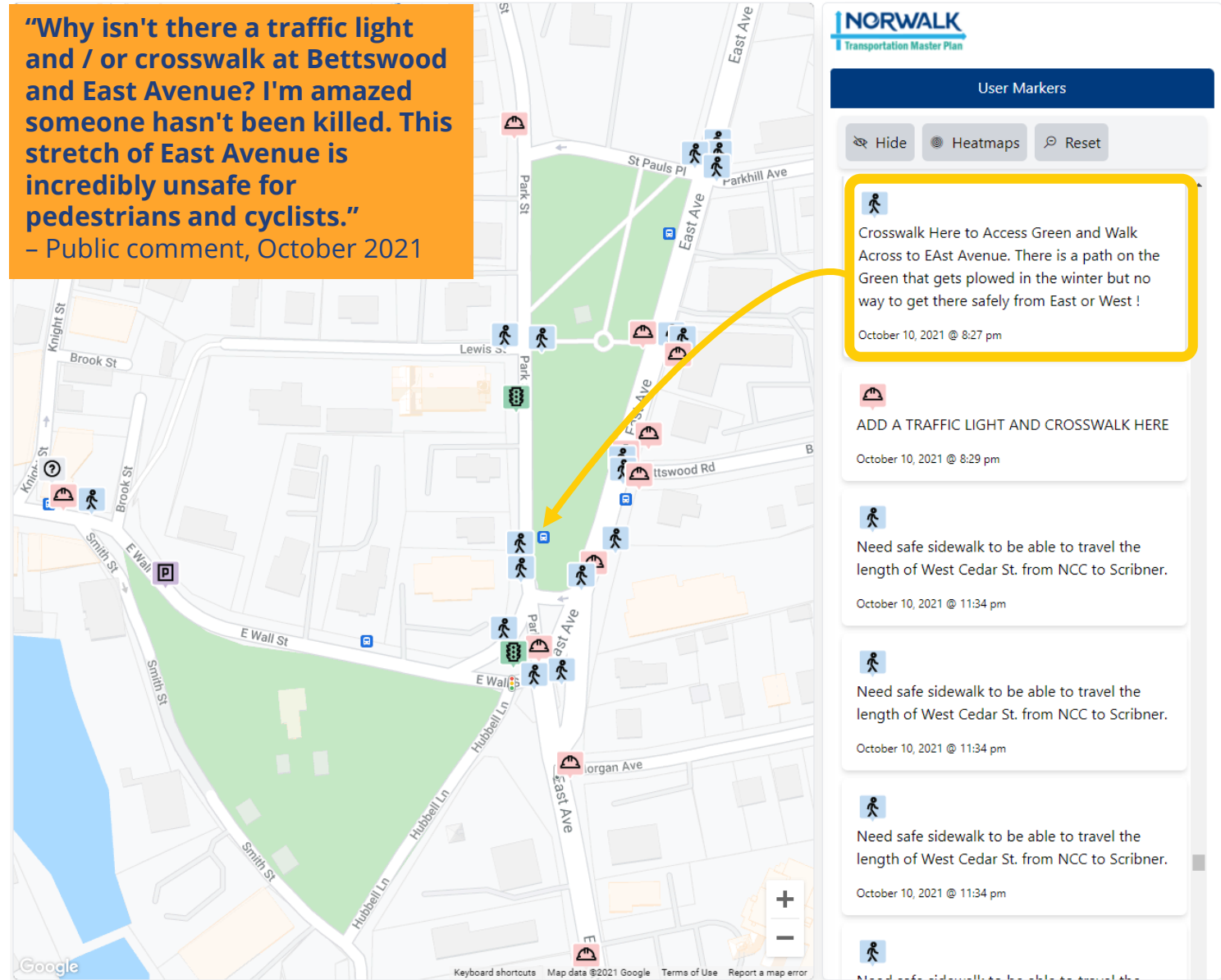
Walking

The Norwalk Green, a focal point for public events and gatherings, is among the most frequently cited areas of concern for pedestrian safety.

The area around the Norwalk Green is home to several faith-based organizations and community activity centers. The neighborhood itself has been changing, with increased residential development and density. The result is ever-increasing demand for safe walking trips.

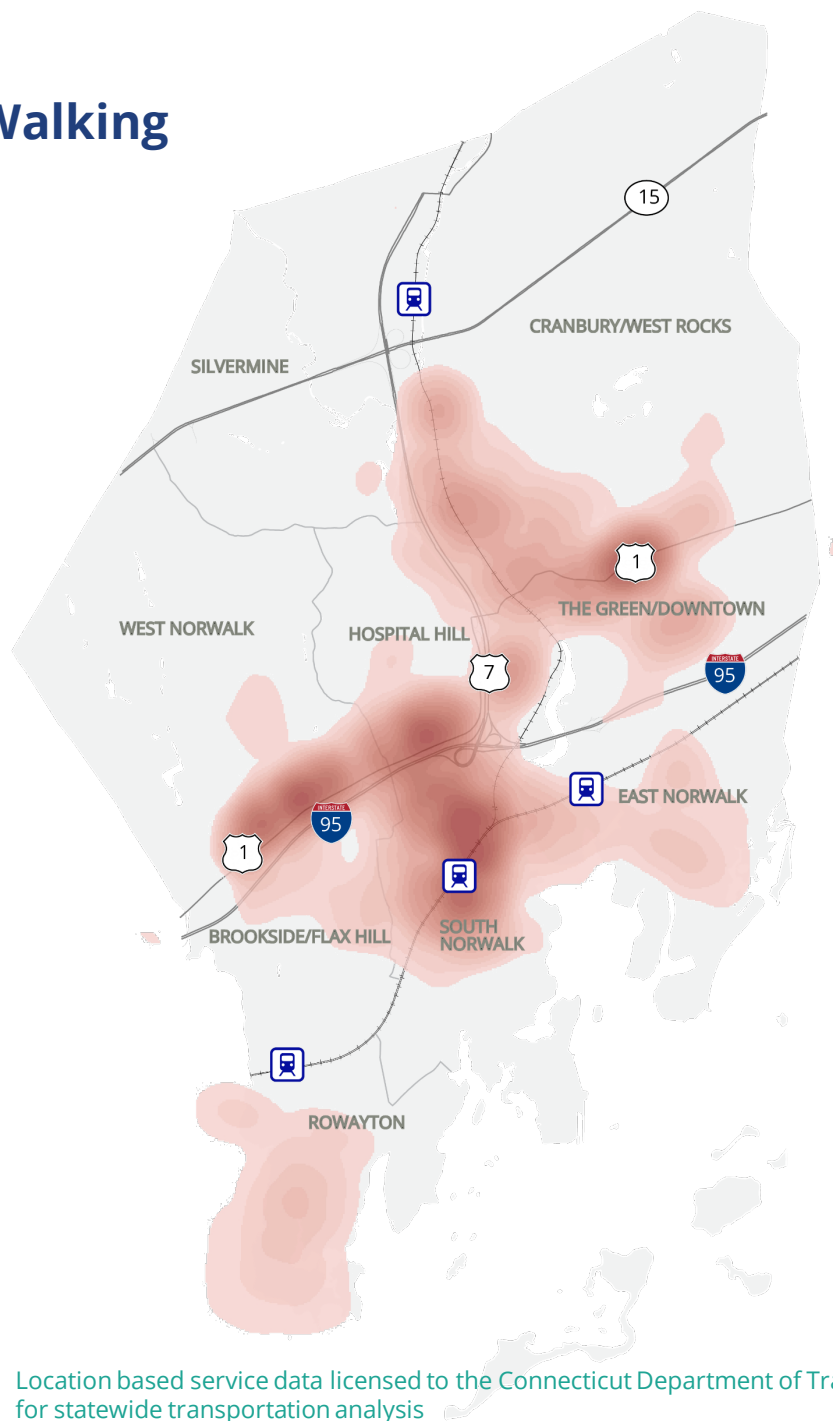
Driver behavior, including speeding and failure to yield to pedestrians, is a significant cause of safety concern. However, street design plays a role in the problem. East Avenue has become a corridor for fast, unimpeded car travel. East Avenue lacks signalized and striped pedestrian crossings, forcing walkers to make difficult, often unsafe decisions about when and how to cross to and from the Green.

The ability to safely and comfortably link activity nodes is a fundamental priority of the TMP. As a community-driven plan, the TMP must understand and respond to recurring community fears and frustrations around areas such as the Norwalk Green. Design approaches must prioritize safety for all roadway users over driver convenience.



Feedback from TMP online mapping survey, September-December 2021

Walking



Location based service data licensed to the Connecticut Department of Transportation for statewide transportation analysis

Why Drive for Short Trips?

The prevalence of short car trips (under 1 mile) shows strong correlation with Norwalk's multiple activity centers, including South Norwalk, East Norwalk, Rowayton, and the commercial corridors of U.S. Route 1 (Connecticut and Westport Avenues) and Main Street.

How do we convert these short car trips to walking or bicycling trips?

High-quality pedestrian connections also promote opportunities for "park once" travel, allowing residents and visitors to take advantage of parking in the commercial cores and combining several destinations by walking between multiple activities. Not everyone will want to, or be able to, shift from car to bicycle trips. Yet if conditions improve for those who can, we will further reduce auto congestion, improve mobility and support long-term resiliency in the City.

TMP Considerations

- Even when sidewalks exist, significant safety concerns exist when intersections and pedestrian interfaces with vehicular traffic do not effectively prioritize pedestrian safety.
- Zoning and site design play significant roles in the efficacy of sidewalk networks, including careful consideration of curb cuts, setbacks, and lighting, landscaping, and amenities.
- Trails like the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) and Harbor Loop can form non-motorized arteries for Norwalk, linking localized connections and facilitating residential and commercial connectivity.
- Norwalk's Bike/Walk Commission provides citizen and stakeholder oversight and guidance for continued improvement of the City's facilities for active transportation.

Bicycling

Bicycling as a travel mode offers exceptional opportunities and benefits for communities, replacing short car trips, promoting active, healthy transportation, and providing environmentally friendly mobility. Bicycles use considerably less road and parking space and the presence of safe, dedicated bicycle facilities in commercial areas repeatedly demonstrates higher return for local businesses through increased customer engagement and spending.

Safety, however, is a significant hurdle to routine, continued bicycling for many community members. Without dedicated bicycle infrastructure (e.g., physically protected bicycle lanes), sharing roadway space with automobiles is unpleasant and threatening. Aggressive driver behavior compounds safety concerns, as lack of infrastructure and education contribute to a sense of driver entitlement and consideration of bicyclists as unwanted obstacles on the road.

Benefits of Bicycling

Strong Communities

- Bicycle facilities cost significantly less than building roads and parking
- Travel by bicycle also costs less than travel by car
- Transportation choices expand equity, accessibility, and independence

Resiliency and Sustainability

- Bicycling can help reduce roadway congestion
- Roadway improvements for safe bicycling also make motorists safer
- Travel by bicycle is cleaner and does not generate CO2 emissions

Economic Development and Healthy Living

- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities generate positive impacts on local communities by enhancing shopping districts and boosting spending
- Physical activity improves health and reduces healthcare costs

The last comprehensive look at bicycle infrastructure was the [Pedestrian and Bikeway Transportation Plan \(2012\)](#). This plan categorized improvements based on three tiers of corridors.

- **Tier 1:** multiple pedestrian crashes, multiple bicycle crashes, missing sidewalks with ¼ mile of a school or transit center
- **Tier 2:** community generators such as retail, office, parks, schools, government
- **Tier 3:** residential corridors

The plan also recommended a suite of infrastructure and design guidelines to improve the safety, comfort, and equity of Norwalk's roadways. Tools include bicycle lanes, intersection treatments such as bike boxes and bike pockets, multi-use paths, bicycle racks, and wayfinding.



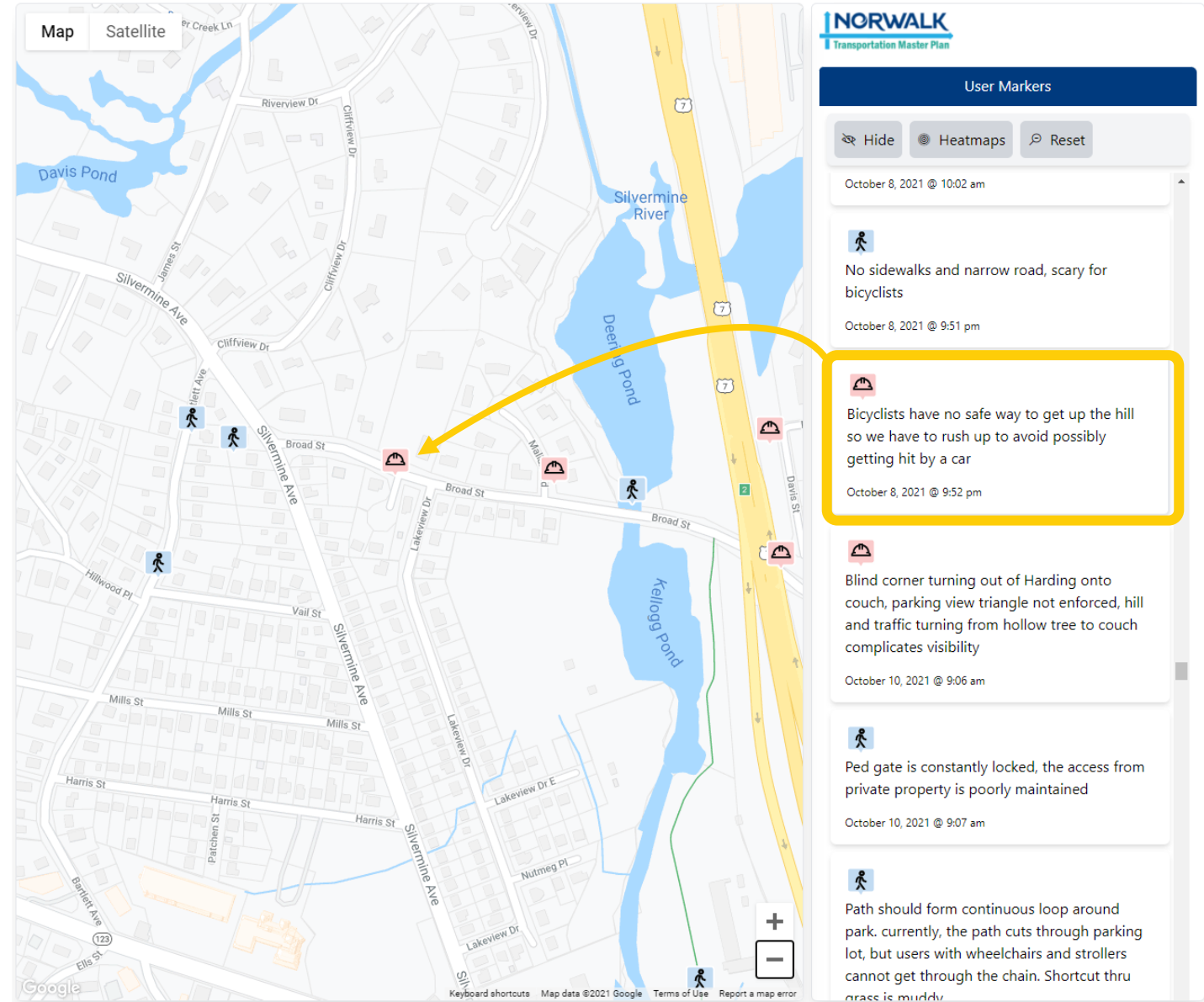
Bicycling

Community members and stakeholders provided considerable feedback on bicycling safety and specific infrastructure needs at the outset of this TMP. While some bicyclists will make their journeys, albeit with safety concerns, other would-be riders are unwilling to take the risk. A consistent concern is the lack of dedicated bicycle infrastructure on Norwalk's roads, a problem compounded by aggressive driver behavior and unchecked speeding.

The TMP will continue to advance concepts and design interventions that remain valid from prior efforts, emphasizing the urgency in a more hospitable and accessible network for all roadway users.

Areas of concern for safe bicycling include, but are not limited to:

- George Avenue
- Ponus Avenue
- East Avenue
- Silvermine Avenue at Merritt Parkway
- Reaching SoNo and Calf Pasture Beach



Feedback from TMP online mapping survey, September-October 2021

Bicycling

Much work remains to transform proposed bicycle routes into effective elements of the transportation network. The Norwalk Bike/Walk Commission continues to work as a governmental entity to advance safe, multimodal transportation in the city.

Goals of the Bike/Walk Commission include:

1. Promote Complete Streets programs and facilities for bicycles and pedestrians in the City of Norwalk
2. Review, promote, and update the City of Norwalk's Master Bicycle Plan
3. Review, promote, update and implement the City of Norwalk's Pedestrian Plan
4. Review and provide advice on transportation and other projects having an impact on walking and biking in the City of Norwalk from the earliest stage
5. Coordinate and promote public awareness campaigns, education, and events related to bicycle and pedestrian issues
6. Research funding opportunities to support the mission of the Commission

Efforts are underway to create a local bikeshare program, although a vendor/operator has not yet been selected. Other initiatives under study or consideration include a [trail alongside the Merritt Parkway](#) and completion of the Harbor Trail.

TMP Considerations

- Interest in bicycling more from community members but no facilities really exist.
- Think more creatively about bike infrastructure: street design, lower speeds, and other interventions can promote safe and comfortable bicycling with necessarily adding bike lanes.
- NRVt can serve as regional connection for bicycle trips, also connect Merritt 7 to Wall Street, SoNo
- Opportunity for Bike/Walk Commission to interface more directly with CTDOT
- Need for local activism – the Bike/Walk Commission is an advisory commission, not an advocacy group.
- New and additional perspectives are warranted to review changes to street design and space allocate, including more diverse representation within the Norwalk Traffic Authority.

Bus Service

Local and regional bus services are provided by Norwalk Transit District (NTD), CTtransit, and the regional Coastal Link bus (a joint operation between NTD, Greater Bridgeport Transit and Milford Transit District. NTD operates 11 WHEELS bus routes, along with shuttle services to Main Avenue, Connecticut Avenue, Merritt 7, and other employment centers.

System-wide NTD bus ridership totaled 1.1 million trips in 2020, although this reflects a pattern of declining patronage and a 37% drop in bus trips over the past five years. Many factors influence bus transit ridership, including the economy, service design, accessibility, available funding. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been significant on NTD ridership.

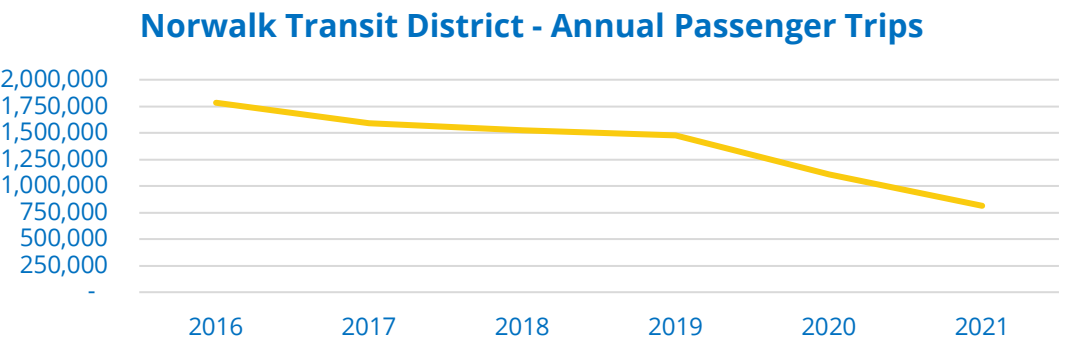
The NTD system is designed around a pulse point, or a point where bus routes arrive at a similar time to facilitate seamless transfers from one route to another. NTD’s network is a hub and spoke system built around the WHEELS Hub on Burnell Boulevard. This design may offer some efficiencies from an operational perspective but does not always serve the needs of customers in providing competitive start-to-finish trip times. Additionally, several NTD routes feature loops and one-way travel on certain streets as they extend from and return to the WHEELS Hub.

Public transportation plays a critical role in expanding access to employment, education, healthcare, and socialization. NTD and CTtransit buses also provide connectivity to Metro-North Railroad and neighboring communities and transit systems, including Stamford, Westport, Wilton, and beyond.

Safe, accessible, and comfortable pedestrian connections to bus stops are a vital component of the City’s network, ensuring all users can take advantage of public transportation.



Photo: Norwalk Transit District



Source: Norwalk Transit District

Complementary Services

Norwalk Transit District’s Dispatch-A-Ride and CTtransit’s Stamford Easy Access offer complementary Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service for qualified riders who cannot use the fixed route bus services. These services require advance trip reservations.

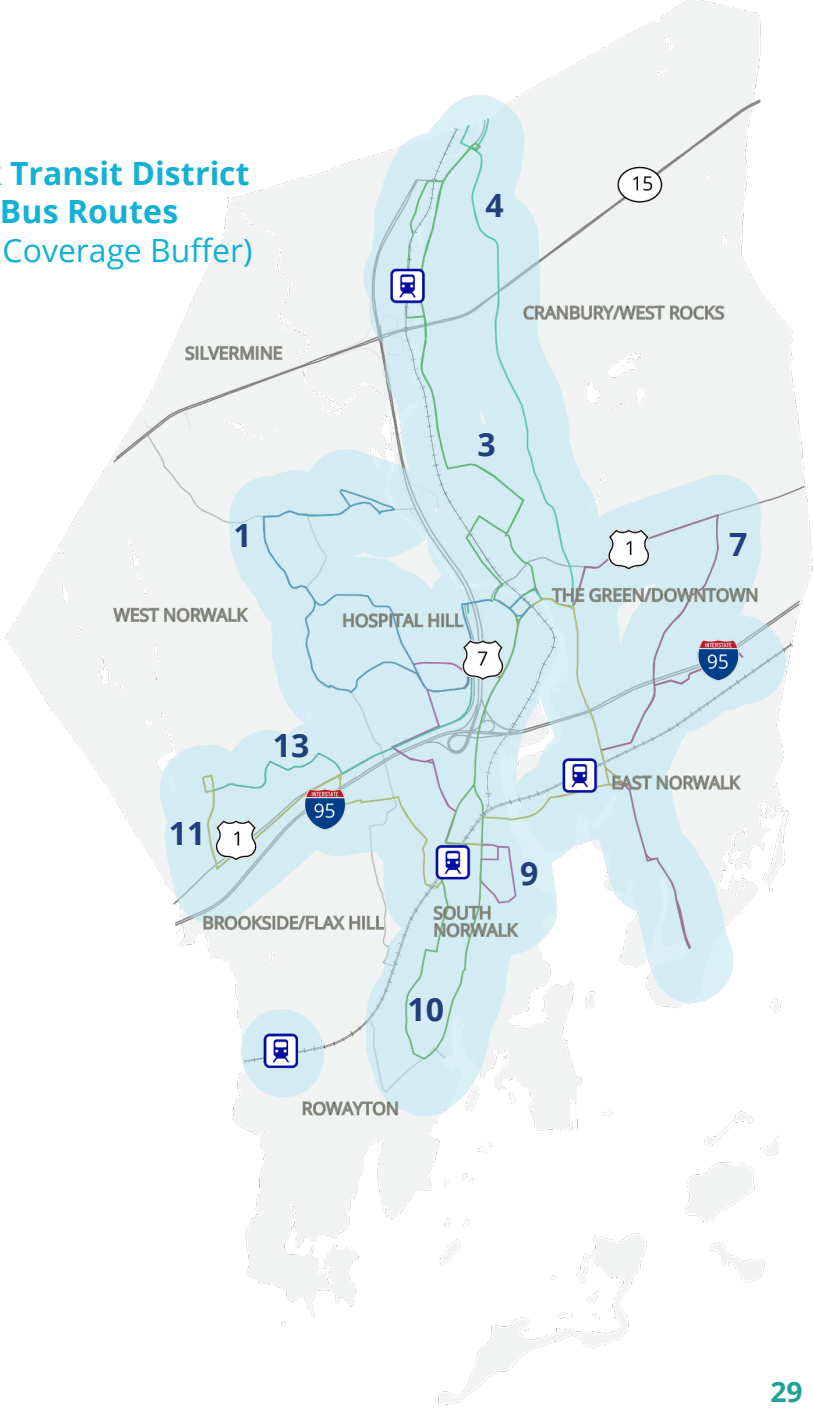
Bus Service

Norwalk Transit District’s core system (i.e., WHEELS bus routes) has reduced operating hours on several services, resulting in decreased ridership, imbalanced service levels on different routes, and a span of service that rarely extends past 7:00pm. Weekend service is limited and service sector jobs, shift work, and evening education opportunities are just a few of the opportunities missed when transit hours do not match travel needs. Declining service levels result in fewer mobility options for many riders, potentially impacting environmental justice populations the most. Ridership varies significantly by route. Among existing routes, the most heavily used are WHEELS 3, 10, and 13.

Route	Days and Hours* of Operation	Frequency	Annual Ridership**
WHEELS 1	Weekdays 6:20am to 5:35pm	40 minutes (no service 10:20am to 1:40pm)	8,759
WHEELS 3	Weekdays 5:40am to 7:35pm Saturdays 6:30am to 6:55	20 minutes 40 minutes	103,850
WHEELS 4	Weekdays 6:20am to 7:15pm	60 minutes	25,606
WHEELS 7	Weekdays 6:20am to 7:11pm Saturdays 6:20am to 7:11pm	60 minutes 60 minutes	34,923
WHEELS 9	Weekdays 6:20am to 7:15pm Saturdays 6:20am to 6:55pm	20 minutes 40 minutes	64,816
WHEELS 10	Weekdays 6:20am to 7:35pm Saturdays 7:00am to 6:55pm	20 minutes 40 minutes	161,736
WHEELS 11	Weekdays 6:20am to 8:15pm Saturdays 7:00am to 7:35pm	40 minutes 40 minutes	85,735
WHEELS 13	Weekdays 6:20am to 7:35pm Saturdays 7:00am to 6:55pm	20 minutes 40 minutes	100,617

* First departure and last arrival times at WHEELS Hub
** FY 2021 (July 2020-June 2021)

Norwalk Transit District
WHEELS Bus Routes
(1/4 Mile Coverage Buffer)



Rail Service

Metro-North Railroad provides commuter rail service in Norwalk on two lines: the New Haven Line mainline from Grand Central Terminal to New Haven, and the Danbury Branch from Norwalk to Danbury. Norwalk has four rail stations, including three on the New Haven Line (Rowayton, South Norwalk, East Norwalk) and one of the Danbury Branch (Merritt 7).

The South Norwalk station represents Norwalk's primary stop on the Metro-North system, with frequent service to New York and New Haven. Express service to Grand Central Terminal is available directly or by transferring in Stamford.

COVID-19 Impacts

Ridership on Metro-North trains dropped nearly 95% systemwide at the early peak of the pandemic. As of Fall 2021, riders have returned to the system, although still at roughly half of pre-pandemic levels. Service levels remain high. Nationally, commuter rail systems are re-evaluating their market base in light of the pandemic and shifting commute patterns to evaluate potential redistribution of service from traditional peak hours to more even distributed frequencies throughout the day. [The MTA provides updated, system-wide ridership levels online.](#)

Danbury Branch Opportunities

Community interest in a new branch line station at Wall Street will be evaluated from financial, operational, service, and economic development perspectives relative to existing rail service alternatives for Norwalk residents.

The Merritt 7 train station is undergoing reconstruction, targeted for completion in Fall 2022, including new facilities and amenities and full ADA accessibility. The platform enhancement will provide direct access to both sides of the station, obviating need for some shuttle services and allowing for a reevaluation of reverse direction rail service to better serve this employment center by non-auto trips.



TMP Considerations

- Rail service has traditionally supported commutes to New York City and has been a driver of Norwalk's growth.
- Transit-oriented development (TOD) opportunities in South Norwalk, East Norwalk require aggressive zoning policies and coordinated approaches to land use, first/last mile mobility, and parking to maximize potential.
- Improving access to rail by means other than automobile will address inequities in the transportation network and reduce peak roadway demand, particularly to/from the South Norwalk station.
- Danbury Branch service is slow and infrequent. Plans for capacity and/or infrastructure improvements should be weighed against potential to supported population and employment growth in Norwalk.

Freight

Trucks represent the entirety of freight in Norwalk and **over 90% of the freight that travels to, from, or through Connecticut does so by truck**. Significant regional transportation corridors such as I-95, Route 1, Route 7, Route 53, and Route 136 carry trucks into and out of Norwalk.

Freight is vital to the City's economy. Trucks serve local businesses, village centers, schools, and other facilities as well as support essential infrastructure such as supermarkets and pharmacies. The highest intensity of weekday truck trip ends are seen in the Wall Street area and within South Norwalk. The Route 1, Main Avenue, and East Avenue corridors also see significant weekday truck activity. The data also suggests that truck traffic is destined to activity centers, village centers, and residential neighborhoods outside of the urban core.

Trucks also deliver electronic commerce (E-commerce) to businesses and residents. E-commerce has grown at an average annual rate of 15% over the past decade and is expected to continue growing in response to demands from both businesses and residents. This trend is expected to continue and, by 2025, it is projected that the number of packages delivered will equal mail in overall volume. This will result in more trucks on the transportation network, increasing the potential for increased cut-through traffic on local roadways, increased air quality and noise impacts, and reduced safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Given the projected increases in truck demand, **this is an opportunity to rethink how trucks are managed** as it relates to the City's transportation network.

TMP Considerations

- Truck freight has and will continue to be vital to the City's economy.
- Truck accessible corridors cannot be barriers to safe, active transportation.
- Think about technology and how it can be used to manage truck traffic (time of day delivery, designated truck routes, enforcement) to benefit local businesses and maintain the quality of life for Norwalk residents.
- Road design is often influenced by truck turning radii. Ensure such design standards are right-sized for community and roadway character.
- Changes to one-way streets in SoNo can help avoid truck-related congestion near the railroad overpass.
- Policies may be created to incentivize or require smaller vehicles and non-motorized delivery options (e.g., cargo bikes) in communities of different scale.

Read: [*Bloomberg CityLab article on cargo bike potential*](#)

Freight

While freight is important to Norwalk's economy, truck traffic represents a significant concern in many neighborhoods. A heat map of truck activity and trip ends highlights several key nodes in the city, although truck traffic is not limited to these areas. Commercial nodes include South Norwalk, East Norwalk, and Downtown, along with busy corridors such as Connecticut Avenue and the confluence of Cross Street, North Avenue, and Main Street.

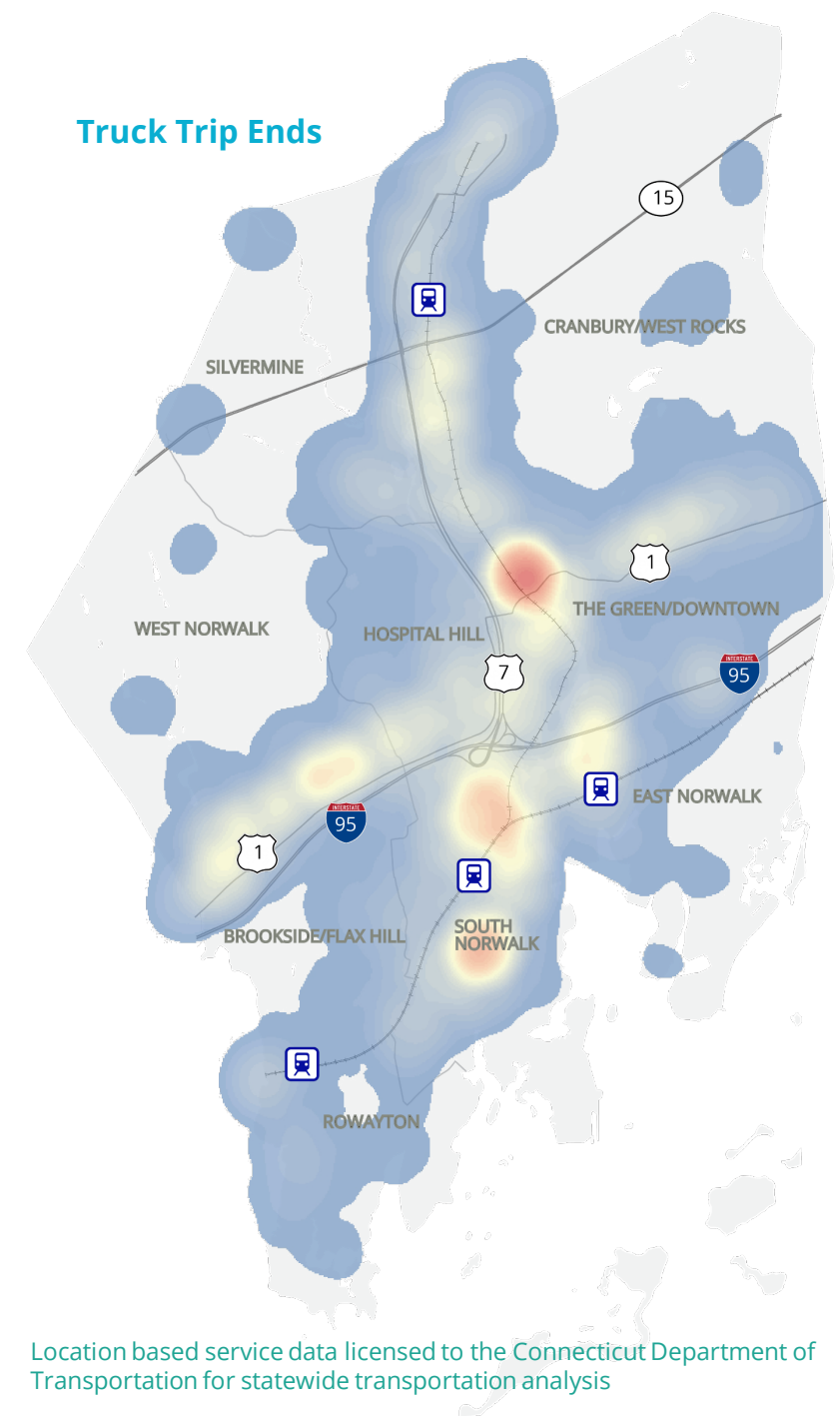
For example, South Norwalk is an industrial hub, far-removed from I-95, resulting in substantial truck traffic through neighborhoods. Identifying roads suitable for trucks, providing effective wayfinding and signage, and designing local streets to discourage cut-through traffic are approaches to mitigating the negative effects of this important transportation element.

Trucking Challenges

Community members and stakeholders identified cut-through issues in neighborhoods such as Rowayton. Tokeneke Road from the west and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive from the north are the primary access corridors for trucks from I-95 to South Norwalk's industrial center.



Truck Trip Ends



Location based service data licensed to the Connecticut Department of Transportation for statewide transportation analysis

Driving

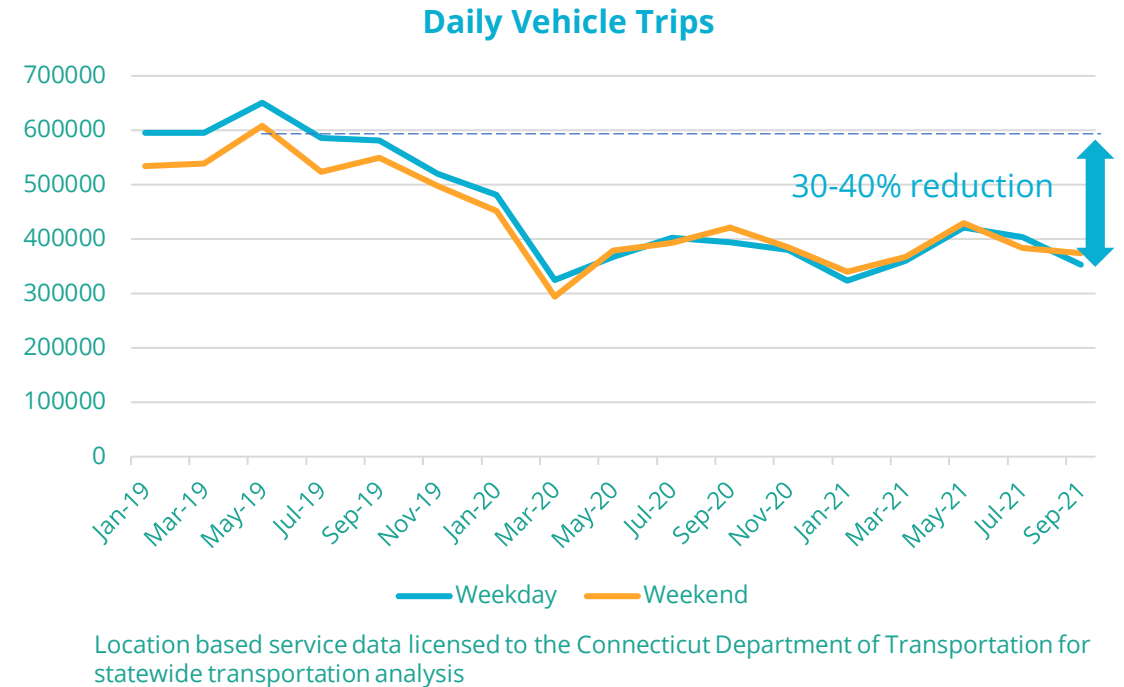
Driving and the use of personal automobile remains the primary mode of transportation for Norwalk residents and commuters. As the city's population and employment numbers grow, the demand on the local and regional road network intensify, resulting in congestion and frustration. Traffic spillover from the highways, or diversions due to incidents, also lead to cut-through traffic on residential streets that are not designed to carry significant volumes.

Demand for automobile use, combined with a street network with significant expansion limitations, presents a challenge for mobility providers tasked with keeping Norwalk moving. **'Who should Norwalk be planning for?'** is perhaps the question that has the greatest relevance to this TMP. Outdated metrics such as peak hour level-of-service (LOS) have long been the industry standard to describe driver frustration due to vehicular delay. This has contributed to the design of streets that primarily serve drivers, increase speeding and resulting crashes, and diminish the safety and comfort of virtually every other mode of travel. A more novel approach to planning requires an understanding of customer needs, both today and in the future.

COVID-19 Impacts

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided planners with some new insights that may prove valuable when thinking about the future of mobility. Restrictions on travel for non-essential personnel has demonstrated that employers can effectively function with work-at-home or hybrid work models. This has resulted in a significant drop in car trips from 2019 to today. The graph at right illustrates the total number of daily trips citywide over the period from January 2019 (pre-pandemic) to September 2021.

As the data suggests, driver behavior has been altered significantly over this period, and while some recovery and return to pre-pandemic patterns has occurred, there remains a pronounced decrease in car trips.



Opportunity:

Can Norwalk look for opportunities to repurpose some streets to better accommodate other modes and resist the temptation to plan for an eventual return of pre-pandemic traffic levels?

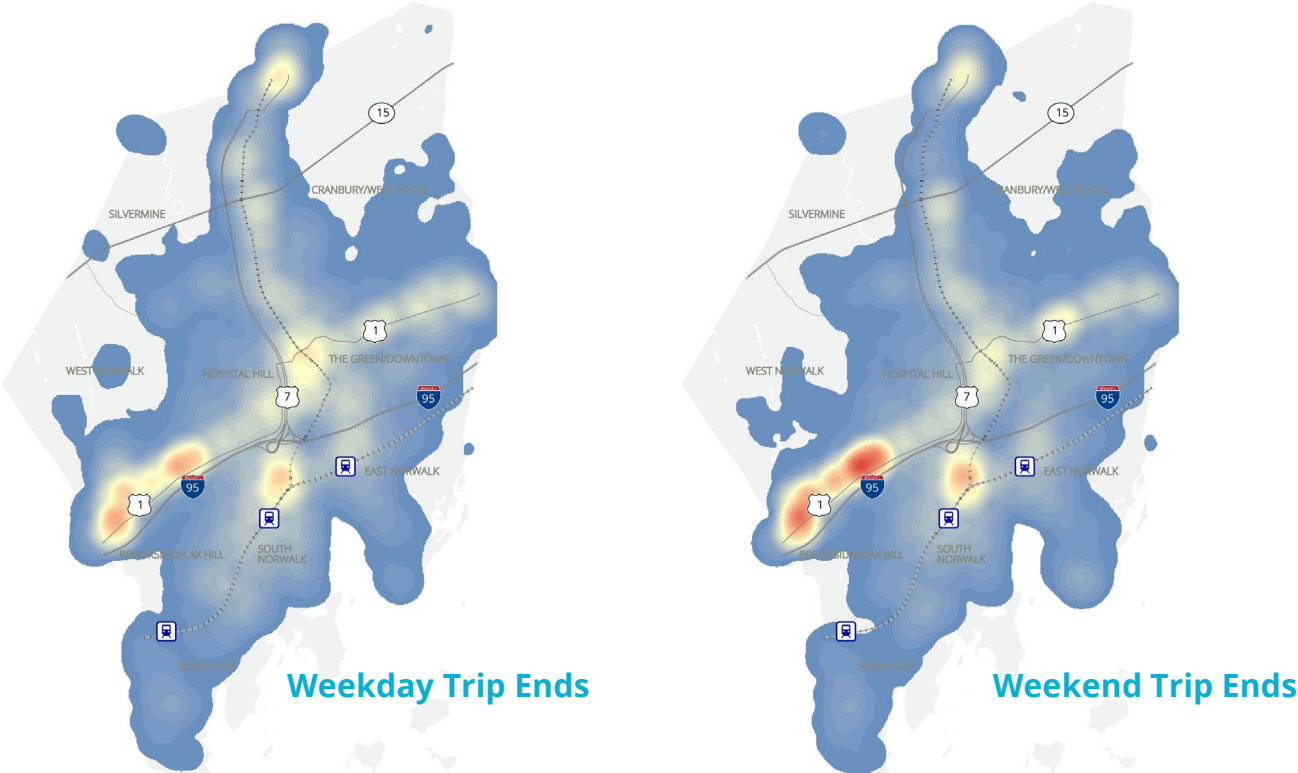
Total car trips have decreased significantly since the onset of the pandemic. This reduction in trips presents Norwalk with an exceptional opportunity to rethink street function now, be proactive, and take steps to maintain this level of car travel rather than promote a rebound.

Driving

Peak Period Demand

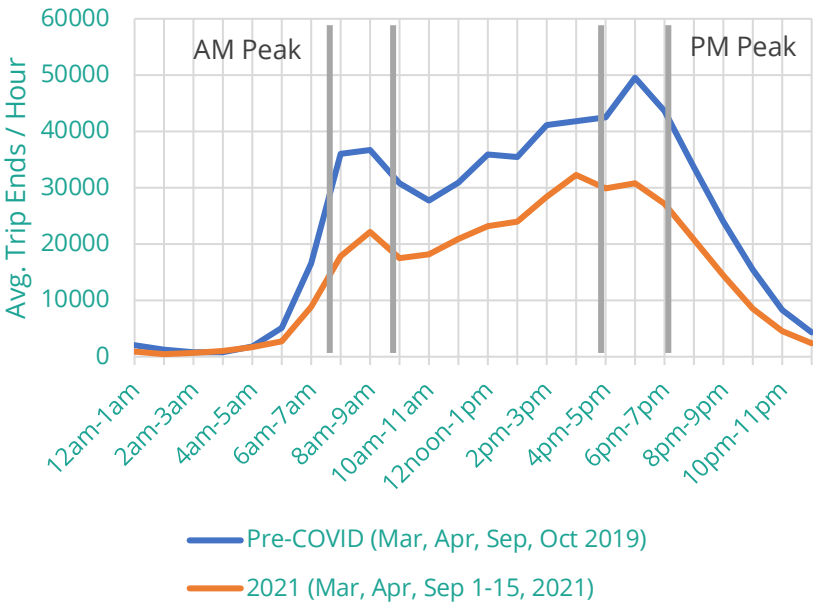
Just as overall traffic has appeared to decline since 2019, so has the influence of the peak period of the day. As the graphs at right indicate, the morning and afternoon commuter peaks have become less pronounced, while weekend trips still peak during the early afternoon, albeit at a lower level than in 2019.

Temporal and geographic trip distribution determines when and where the most trips occur. In the heat maps below, trips generally start and end in the greatest numbers along commercial corridors, with intense areas of activity concentrated in nodal centers such as West Norwalk, SoNo and along Main Avenue. Trip activity is similar on weekends but more pronounced in the commercial centers.

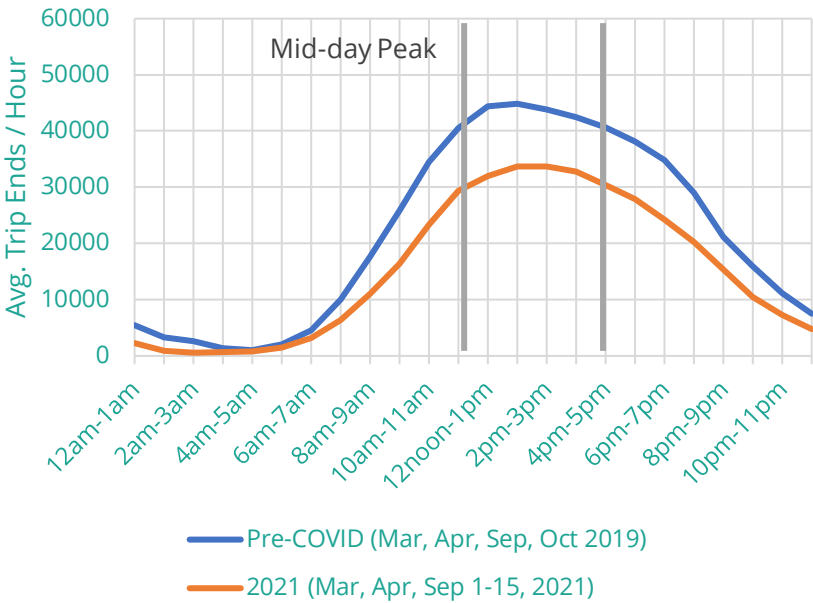


Location based service data licensed to the Connecticut Department of Transportation for statewide transportation analysis

Trip Ends in Norwalk by Hour (Weekday)



Trip Ends in Norwalk by Hour (Weekend)



Traffic data averaged over multiple consecutive months

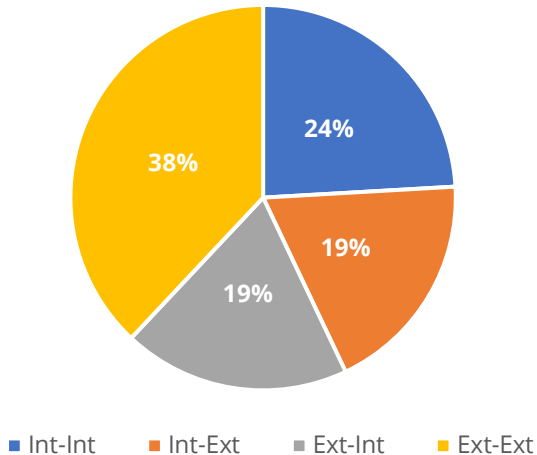
Driving

Through Traffic

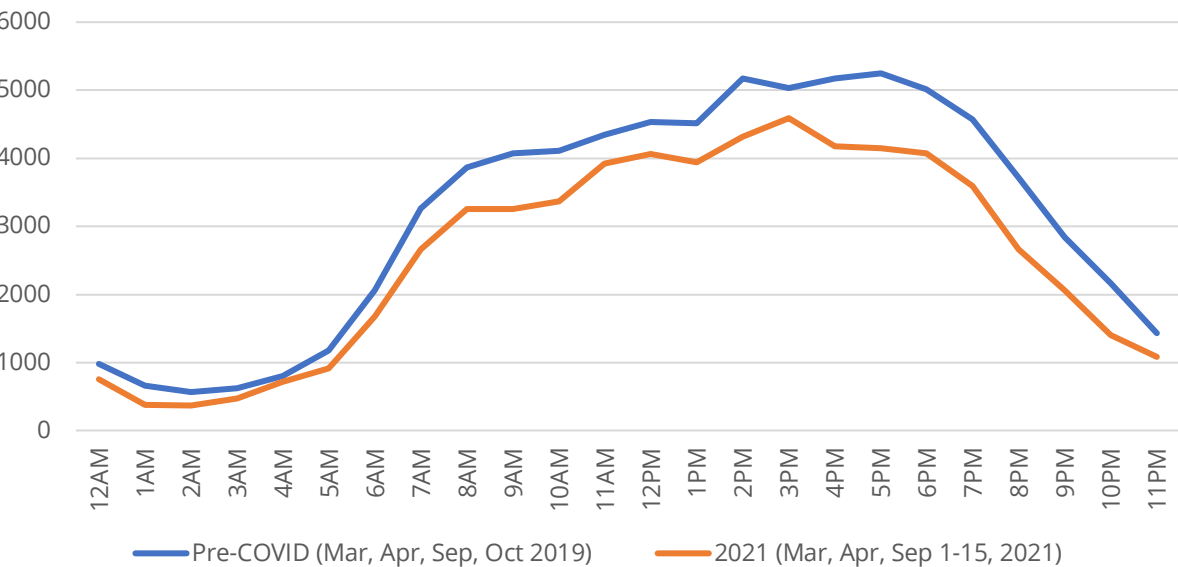
Norwalk has a significant proportion of local trips starting and ending within the city limits. However, intertown and interstate routes such as I-95, Route 15, Route 7 and Route 1 serve longer distance through travel in addition to providing local access. This is relevant to the TMP because these routes facilitate vehicular mobility into and out of the city, as well as within. These routes also account for the majority of the 38% of traffic that passes through Norwalk without stopping. Interstate 95, for example, is responsible for conveying 60-65% of through traffic. As regional demand for mobility recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, these major arteries will be the first to experience congestion which often spills over to the adjacent city road network.

The pie chart at right displays the overall composition of car demand, with 62% of the traffic having one or both trip ends in Norwalk. The remaining 38% is traffic that passes through the city. The graphs below present the daily traffic on I-95 at the Darien town line, both prior to the pandemic and during non-summer months in 2021.

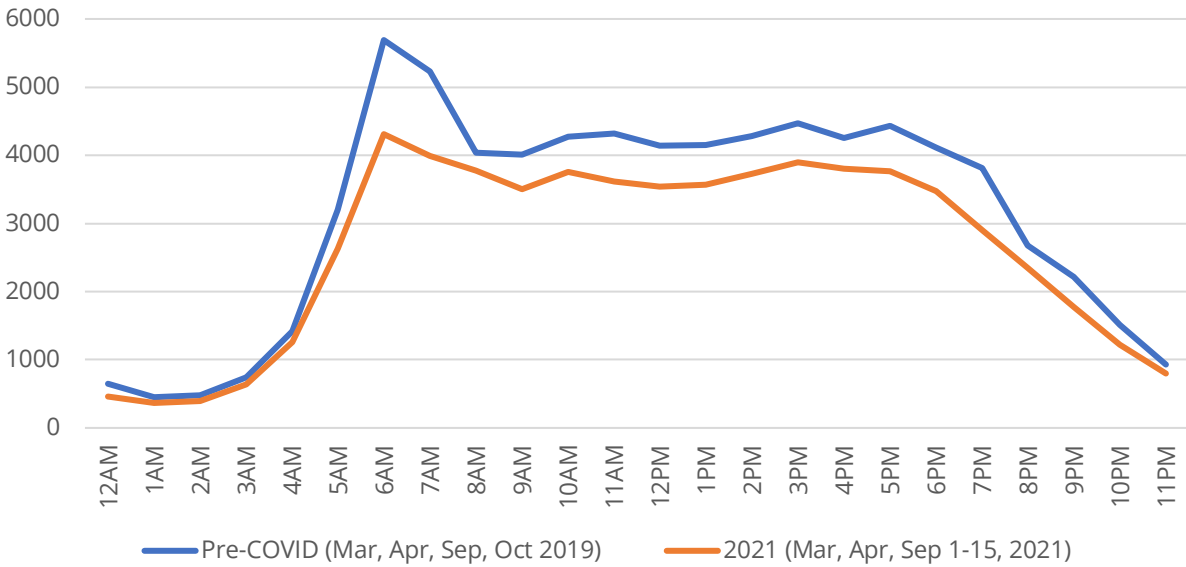
Vehicle Trip Composition



I-95 at Darien Town Line - Northbound



I-95 at Darien Town Line - Southbound



Driving

Where are People Going?

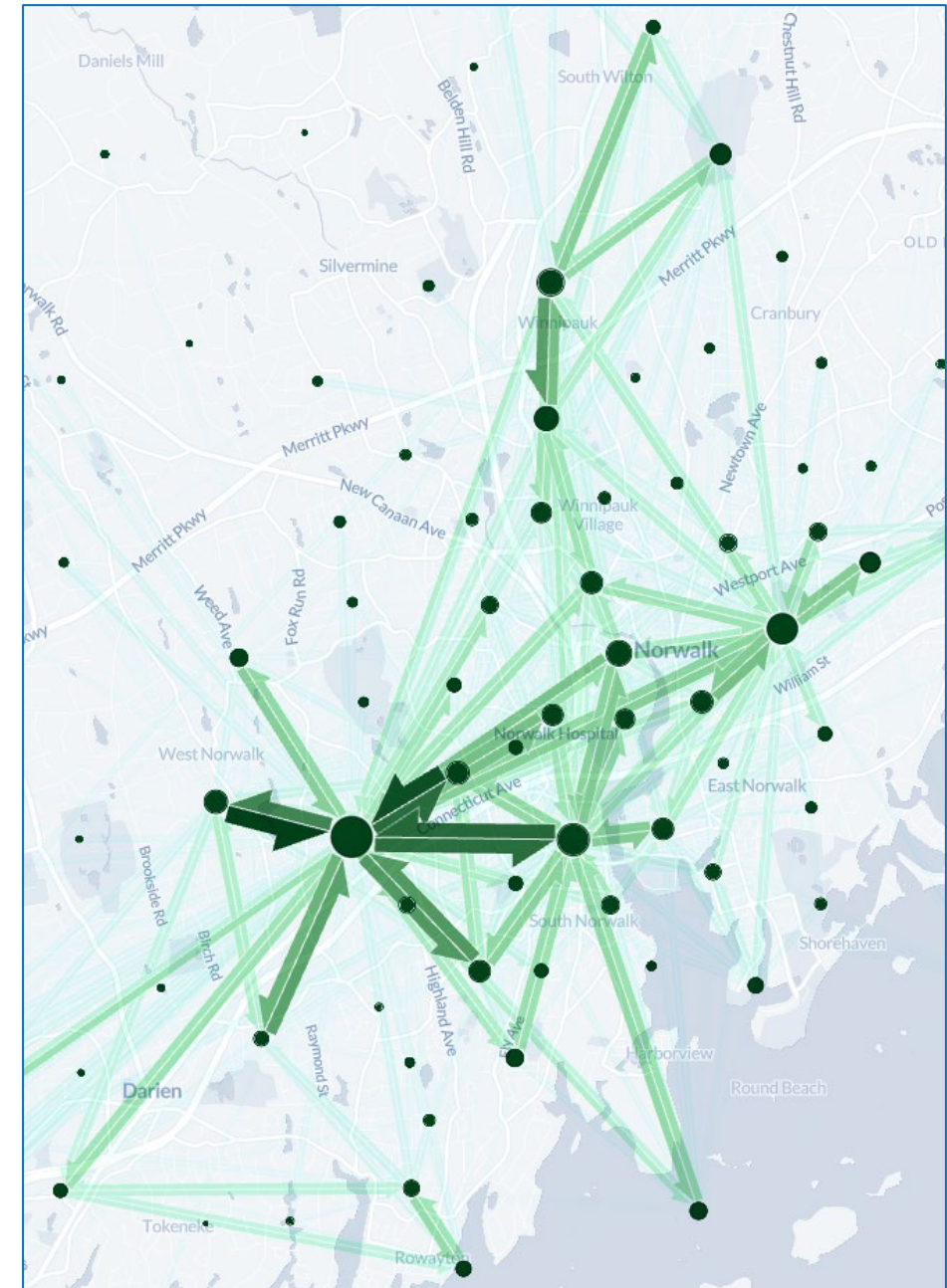
Automobile travel will remain the predominant mode of transport in Norwalk. Locations within the city that serve retail establishments tend to be major attractors for car trips. As illustrated in the graphic at right, the commercial strip along U.S. Route 1 (Connecticut Avenue) between Keeler Avenue and Scriber Avenue draws trips from SoNo and adjacent neighborhoods and is the top auto destination in the city.

Other significant nodes include SoNo, Wall Street, U.S. Route 1 between Dry Hill Road and Strawberry Hill Avenue, East Norwalk, and Main Avenue (Merritt 7 and destinations north and south of the Merritt Parkway). While car trips are expected to remain strong at these locations, opportunities may exist to offer additional transportation choices so that economic growth can continue without being constrained by roadway capacity.

Facilitating walking, bicycling, transit, and shared mobility, particularly for short trips, offers potential for reduced car congestion, cost savings for users and the City, and healthier lifestyles.

Top Activity Nodes

- U.S. Route 1 (Connecticut Avenue)
- SoNo
- Main Avenue
- Wall Street
- Norwalk Hospital



Location based service data licensed to the Connecticut Department of Transportation for statewide transportation analysis

Parking

Parking is an essential part of a community’s mobility system, and how it is managed directly influences travel patterns. However, management is often piecemeal as disparate entities including schools, institutions, and the private sector provide the majority of parking in most communities. In Norwalk, the Norwalk Parking Authority (NPA) is responsible for nearly 4,500 parking spaces within urban cores and at train stations, most of which are regulated by price. The consolidated set of services under the NPA means that parking can be managed in a coordinated manner to meet demand. In addition to on-street parking, the NPA manages 11 off-street facilities, including the recent additions at the Main Public Library and Liberty Square. Outside of urban cores, the private sector provides most parking. Parking provision is regulated through zoning, and parking management is up to each property owner.

Parking management tools such as pricing, time limits, and signage should encourage availability in key locations. In general, in areas with priced parking in Norwalk, on-street parking is more expensive than off-street, reflecting its value as front-door parking. Outside of urban cores, there are generally limited regulations, meaning that in dense residential neighborhoods the demand for curb parking can be very high, particularly when homes lack driveways. Special events, such as sports games and even school drop-off, can also put a strain on the transportation network.

In addition to hourly parking, the NPA and City administer some permit programs. The NPA sells monthly permits, and the City administers the [Parks Parking Pass](#) program. Aside from these, there is no on-street permit system, such as a residential permit system.

The NPA’s most recent [Operations Report](#), from March 2021, notes many of the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, transient activity remains low, and the NPA itself has reduced staffing levels and adjusted operations. Parking demand continues to be lower at the train stations but is generally returning.

Public Parking Prices in Norwalk			
Location	Parking Facility	Rates	Permits
South Norwalk	Webster Lot	\$1.00/hour 6pm-10pm - \$3 Flat	Monthly - \$70.00 Monthly (reserved) - \$90.00
	North Water Street Lot	\$1.50/hour	
	Maritime Garage	\$2.00/hour	Monthly - \$89.00
	Haviland Lot	\$1.50/hour	Monthly - \$75.00
	South Norwalk Train Station	\$12.00/day	Monthly - \$99.00
	On-Street	\$1.50/hour (2 hour limit)	
Wall Street	Main Street Lot (High Street Lot)	\$0.50/hour After 6pm - \$1/hour	Monthly - \$37.00
	Wall Street Lot (Mechanic Street Lot)	\$0.50/hour After 6pm - \$1/hour	Monthly - \$37.00
	Yankee Doodle Garage	\$0.50/hour After 6pm - \$1/hour	Monthly - \$25.00 Storage - \$76.00
	Norwalk Public Library	\$0.50/hour After 6pm - \$1/hour (Free to library patrons if validated)	
	On-Street	\$1.50/hour (2 hour to 3 hour limit)	
East Norwalk	East Norwalk Train Station (North and Southbound Lots)	Mon-Fri: Permits Only Sat-Sun: \$8.00/day	Monthly - \$70.00
	Liberty Square	\$0.50/hour	Monthly - \$25.00



There is high demand for on-street parking, even though ample off-street parking is available in nearby lots.



Parking is a common issue around schools, especially during pick-up, drop-off, and special events (sports games, concerts).

Parking

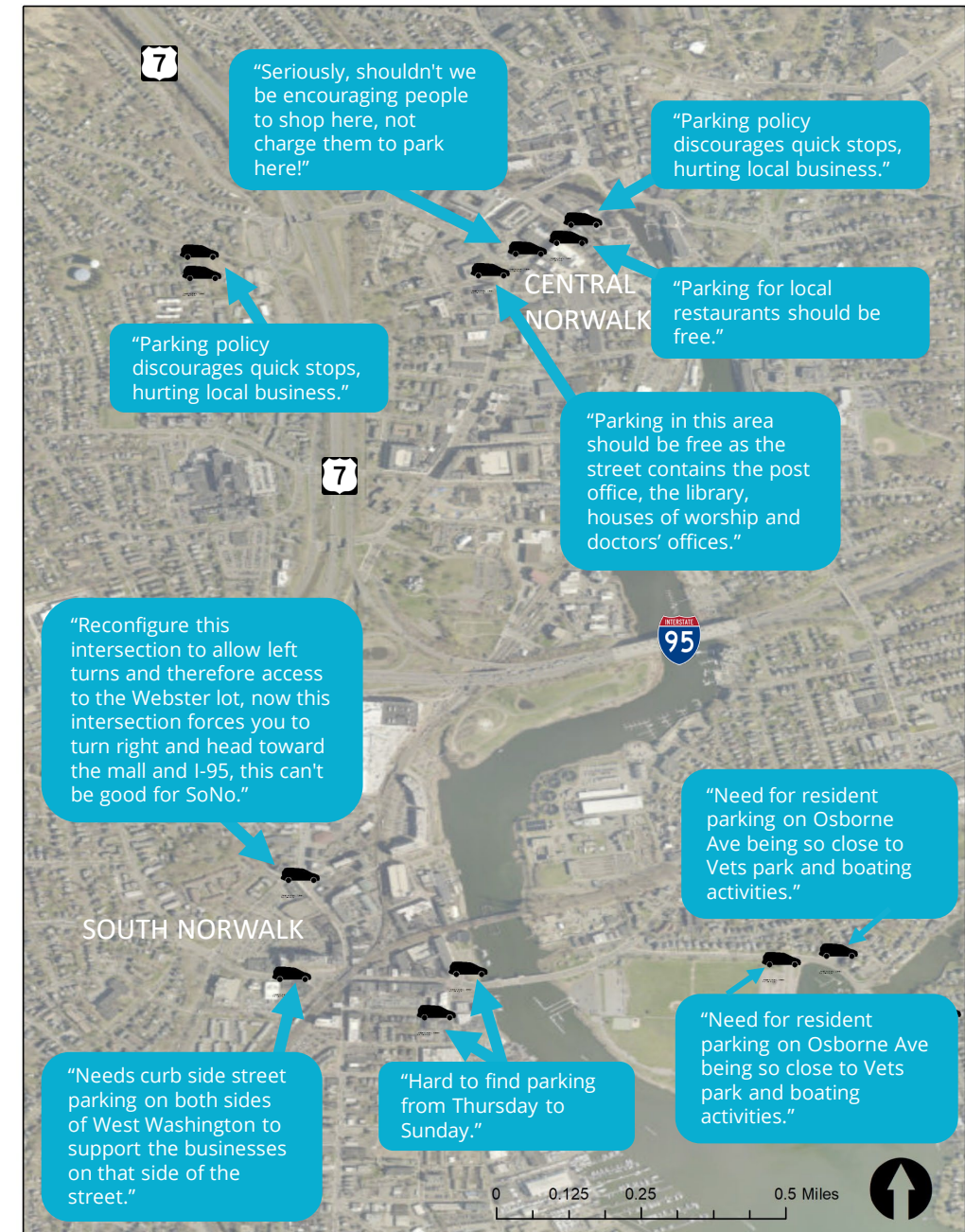
Norwalk completed a [Parking Study](#) in 2020 for the South Norwalk and Wall Street areas, surveying both public and private parking assets. Key findings from the study, including public perceptions are summarized below:

- Both public and private off-street facilities have capacity, even at peak times.
- It is difficult for people to find off-street public parking facilities, creating a perception that there is a need for more parking.
- On-street parking is the first choice for most visitors.
- The community felt that there is insufficient parking for school pick-up, drop-off and sports.
- There is a perception that business and commuter parking encroaches residential areas during the day while commercial vehicles park overnight leaving residents with a shortage of spaces.
- The community expressed privacy concerns regarding parking enforcement technology.

The September-October 2021 TMP online mapping survey produced comments similar to the findings outlined above. The TMP will address parking management issues city-wide.

TMP Considerations

- Having a central entity that operates parking is an asset to the community. This is an opportunity to adjust regulations and management practices, managing parking in a coordinated way.
- “Spillover parking” and concentrated demand in residential locations should be addressed by unlocking underutilized parking, parking management and implementing transportation demand management strategies.
- Parking patterns in urban core locations indicate that price may not match demand in some locations, creating a parking crunch and encouraging driving over other modes.
- Curb management policies and technologies can maximize the value and utility of our streets.



Feedback from TMP online mapping survey, September-October 2021

5. Needs Assessment

What does Norwalk need and how can the TMP affect change?

- Safe and continuous pedestrian facilities

Sidewalk plans

Land use and zoning support for active transportation

Safe pedestrian paths and street crossings to connect neighborhoods with destinations

- Protection for neighborhood streets

Signage, wayfinding, and traffic calming to discourage cut-through traffic

- Congestion relief

Signal optimization and timing to safely maximize roadway capacity without widening

- Safe bicycling infrastructure and network

Corridor plans to allocate sufficient street space for protected bicycle lanes

Intersection redesigns to minimize conflict and prioritize safety over throughput

- Transit service to meet evolving demand

Accessibility and amenities at bus stops

Mobility as a Service (MaaS) opportunities coordinated with other operators/modes

Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) for Norwalk Transit District

- Parking solutions for residents and businesses

Residential parking permits

Improved pedestrian connections from off-street parking to multiple activities

Policies and pricing to encourage turnover and facilitate access over long-term parking

Focus on Norwalk's Neighborhoods

Norwalk is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own strengths, needs, and opportunities. The TMP will consider the issues facing each neighborhood and identify strategies to meet overall city goals while respecting the character and community-driven priorities of each neighborhood.

Several inputs are assessed together to identify recurring concerns and opportunities at the neighborhood level.

Inputs

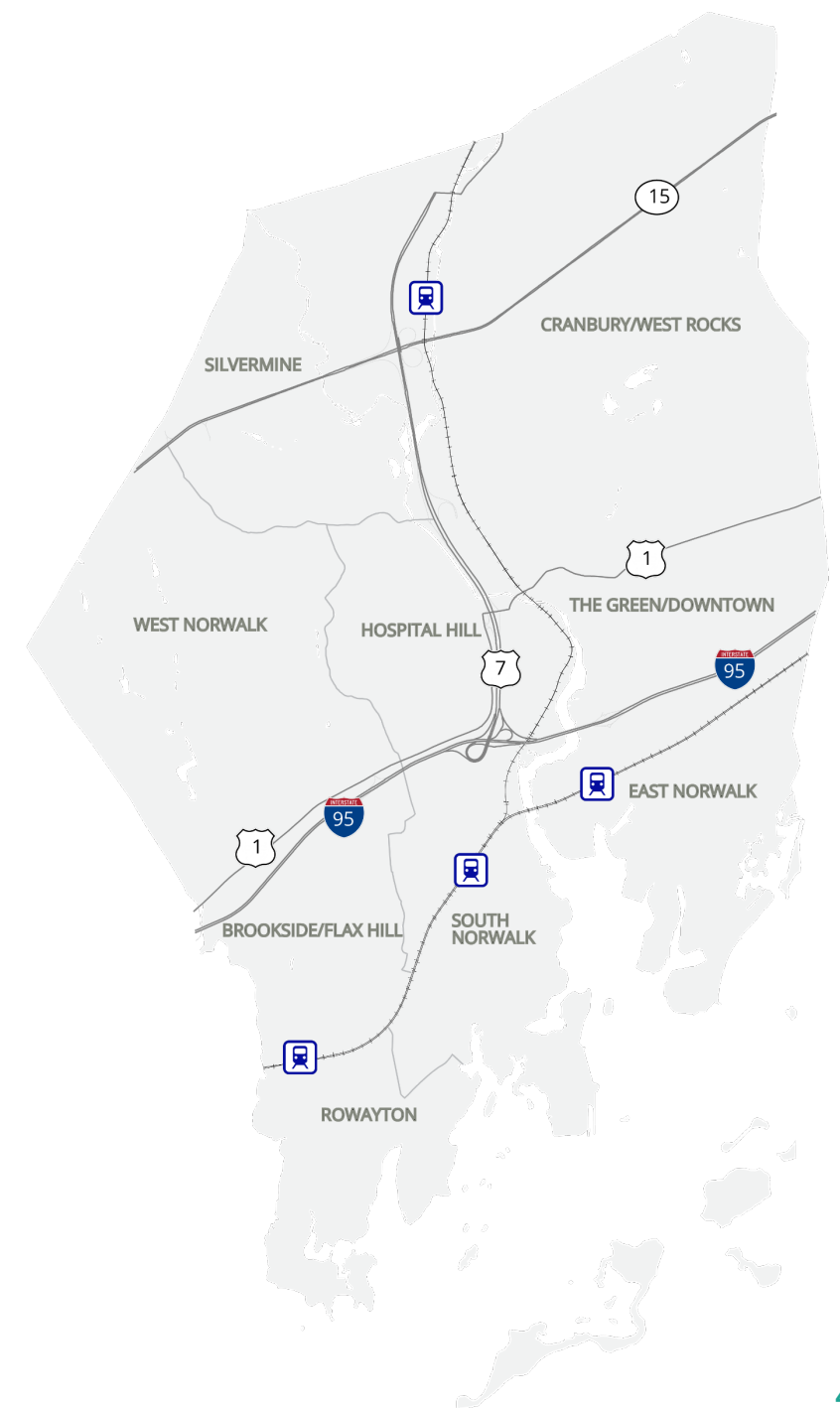
Community comments

Stakeholder feedback

Data (e.g., crashes, travel patterns)

Neighborhood Needs

This initial identification of needs positions the City to identify broad policy approaches and develop a roadmap of specific improvements through individual and complementary projects.



Neighborhood Focus: East Norwalk

East Avenue Corridor

- Mitigate congestion along East Avenue approaching the railroad underpass
- Calm traffic, improve signal timing, add pedestrian crossings
- Address safety and recurring crashes at I-95 exits

East Norwalk Railroad Station

- Address parking and walkability issues around station
- Improve station pick-up and drop-off access
- Continue to promote transit-oriented development opportunities

Calf Pasture Beach

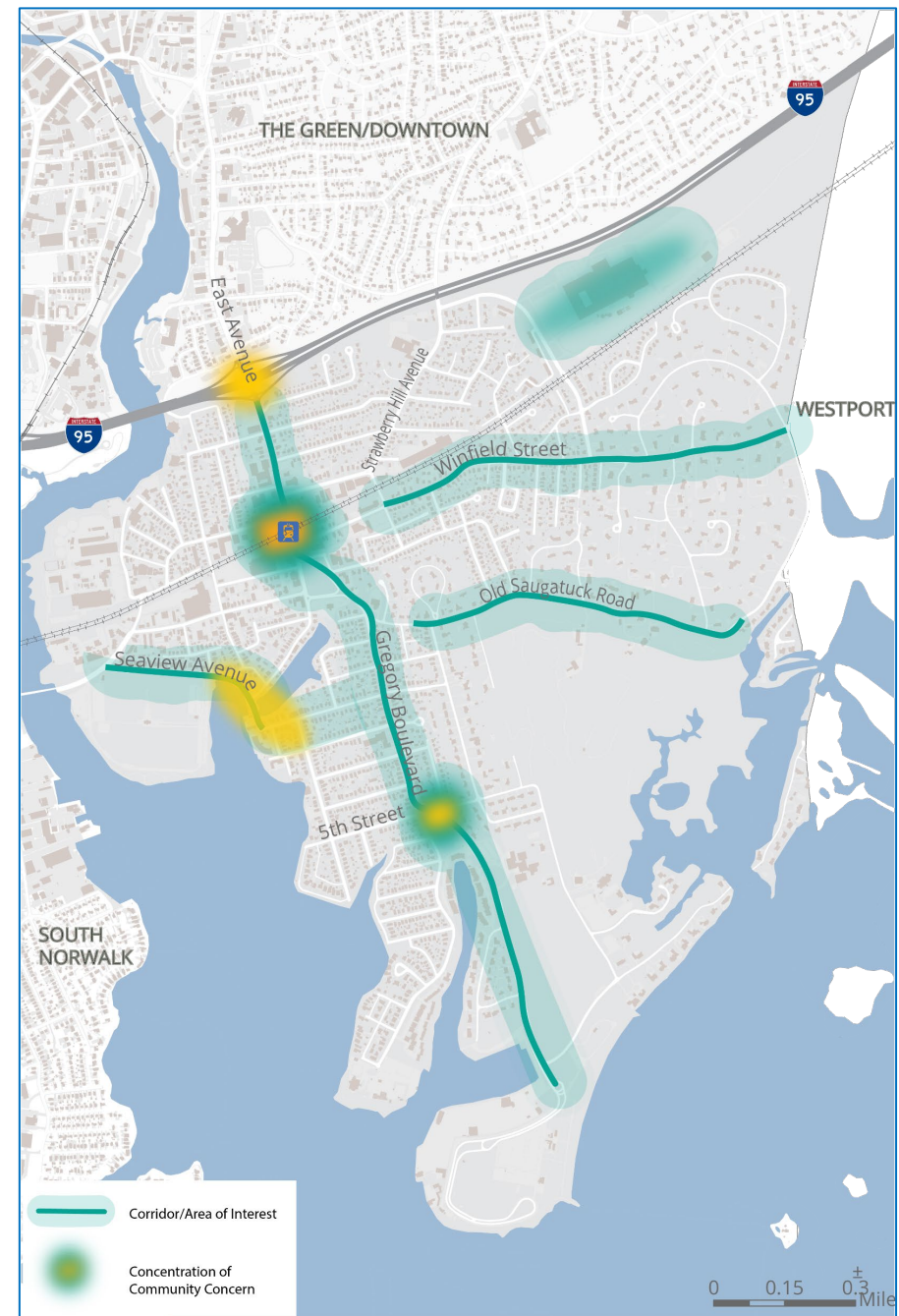
- Explore multi-use trail along Calf Pasture Beach Road to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians
- Manage seasonal beach parking along Calf Pasture Beach Road and in adjacent neighborhoods

Other Issues

- Sidewalk improvements on Winfield Street, Old Saugatuck Road, Gregory Boulevard, and others
- Complete Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) segment along Seaview Ave, connect to 5th & CPB Rd
- Safety and design improvements at 5th Street and Gregory Boulevard roundabout
- Add and improve sidewalks around East Norwalk Historical Cemetery
- Manage truck traffic to/from redevelopment of large Norden Place industrial parcel

Potential Strategies

- Enhanced pedestrian facilities and connections
- Traffic calming, street and intersection redesigns
- Traffic signal optimization
- Neighborhood parking permits



Neighborhood Focus: Rowayton

Rowayton Avenue Corridor

- Improve safety and visibility
- Mitigate truck traffic and speed
- Improve and expand sidewalks
- Explore creation of a Village District

Hunt Street / Witch Lane Corridor

- Improve geometric conditions and side street access
- Calm traffic, address speeding
- Improve and expand sidewalks
- Secure and preserve pedestrian connection to Gilbert Hill Road

Wilson Avenue Corridor

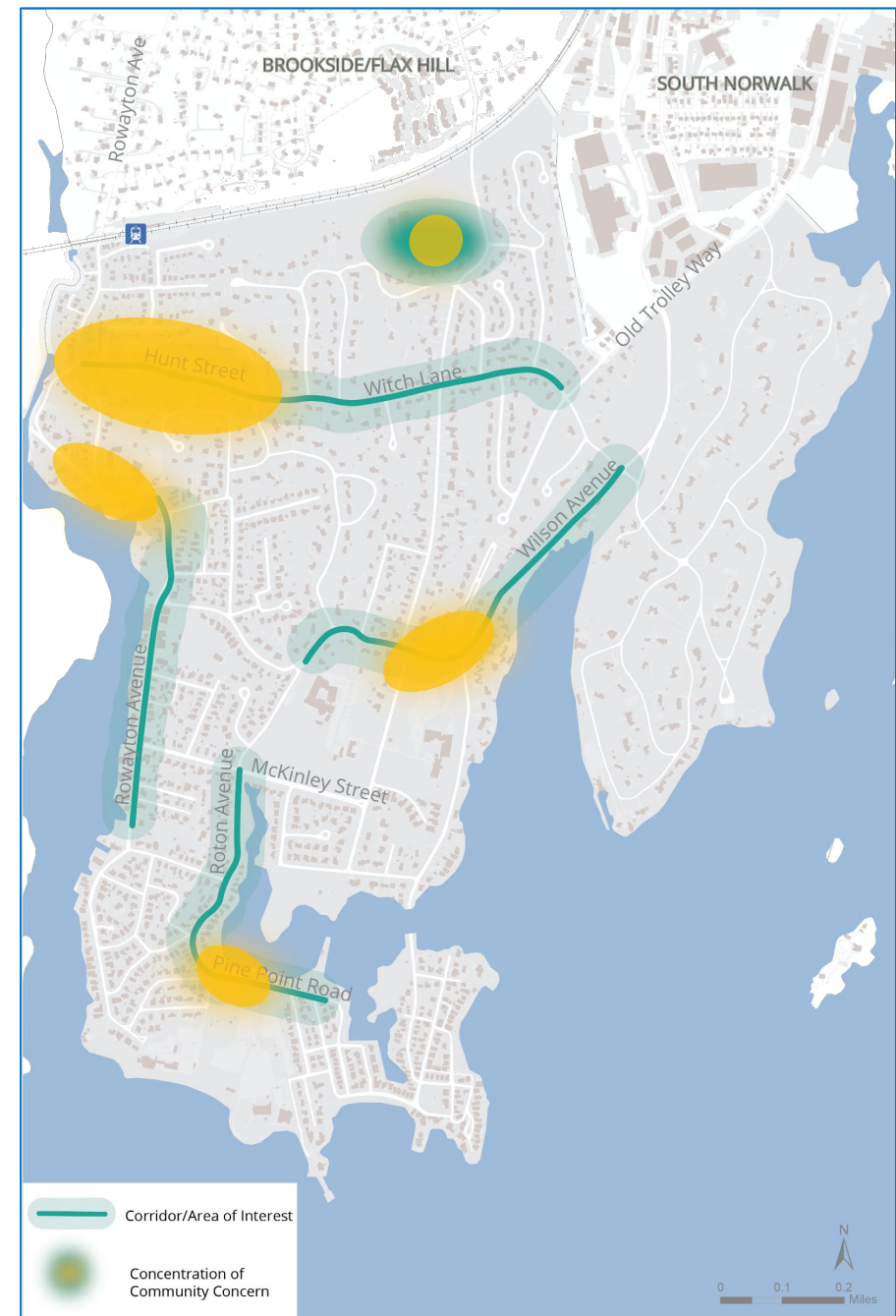
- Improve and expand sidewalks
- Mitigate truck traffic and speed

Other Issues

- Address congestion and pick-up/drop-off constraints at Roton Middle School
- Improve sidewalks and pedestrian safety on Roton Avenue and Pine Point Road
- Provide safer conditions for bicycling on narrow, busy roads

Strategies

- Traffic calming, street and intersection redesigns
- Truck and commercial traffic wayfinding
- Demand management and scheduling for school traffic



Neighborhood Focus: South Norwalk

SoNo Downtown

- Address restricted truck routing beneath South Main Street railroad bridge (low clearance)
- Create protections for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Lengthen crosswalk times for pedestrians and increase visibility
- Evaluate operation of Haviland and Elizabeth Street one-way pair for trucks and cars
- Further prioritize walking and bicycling on Washington Street east of Main Street

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive

- Calm traffic and improve safety and along the corridor
- Install safe bicycling infrastructure
- Increase pedestrian and transit accessibility between neighborhoods and MLK corridor
- Improve wayfinding to South Norwalk train station

North Main Street

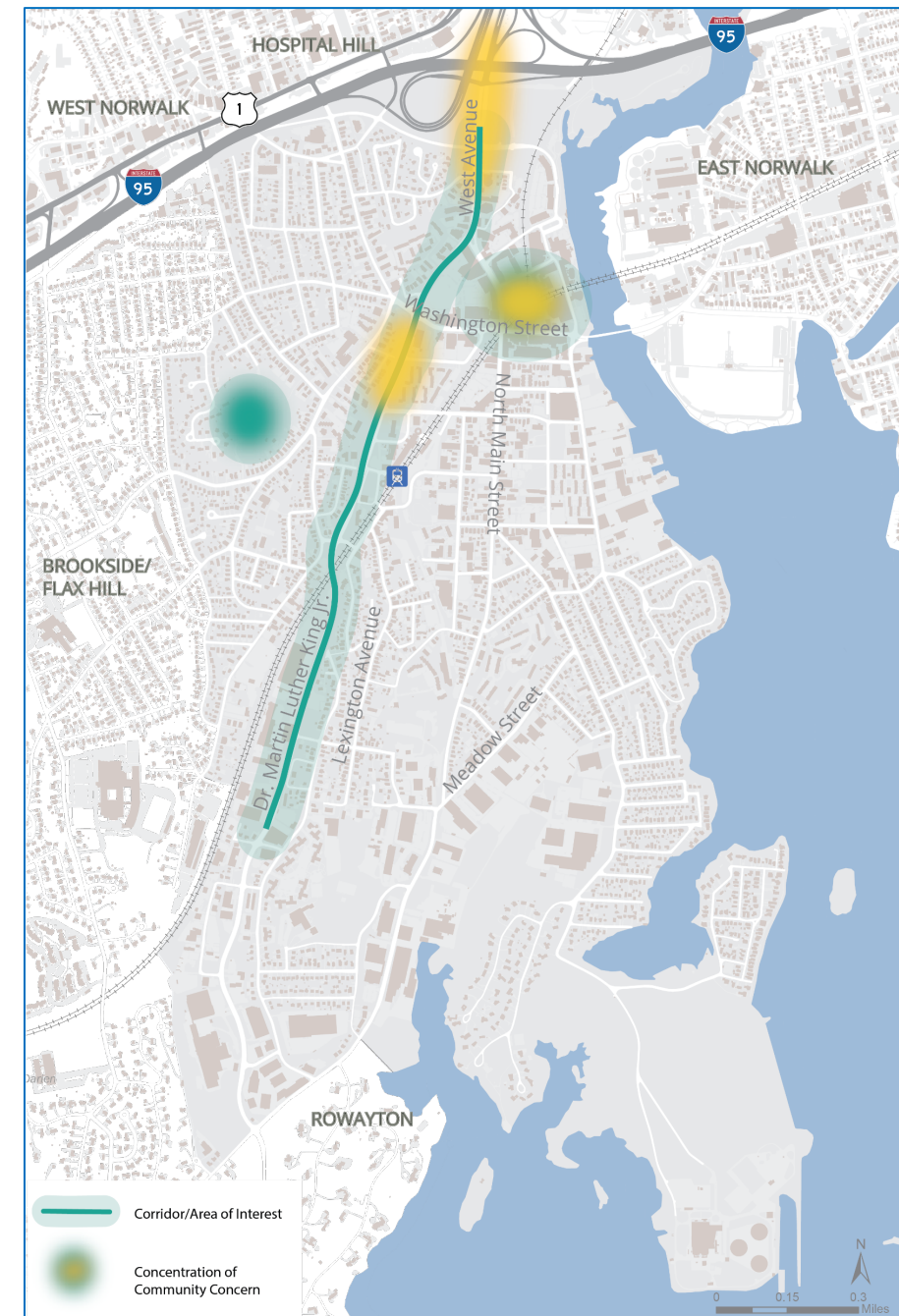
- Improve walking experience and crosswalk safety

Other Issues

- Address recurring crashes on Lexington Avenue, West Street, and North/South Main Street
- Improve access and conditions for pedestrians, keep motorized vehicles out of Flax Hill Park
- Improve parking and curb management
- Daylight intersections to improve visibility

Strategies

- Traffic calming, street and intersection redesigns
- Truck and commercial traffic wayfinding
- Traffic signal optimization
- Technology to optimize parking resources, information, and user experience



Neighborhood Focus: Brookside/Flax Hill

Highland Avenue

- Improve pedestrian and bicycling safety
- Improve crosswalks and safe access to schools
- Clarify and improve offset intersections at Flax Hill Road and Devils Garden Road

Rowayton Avenue

- Calm traffic and address drivers speeding
- Repair, expand, or install sidewalks
- Create safe bicycling infrastructure

Soundview Avenue

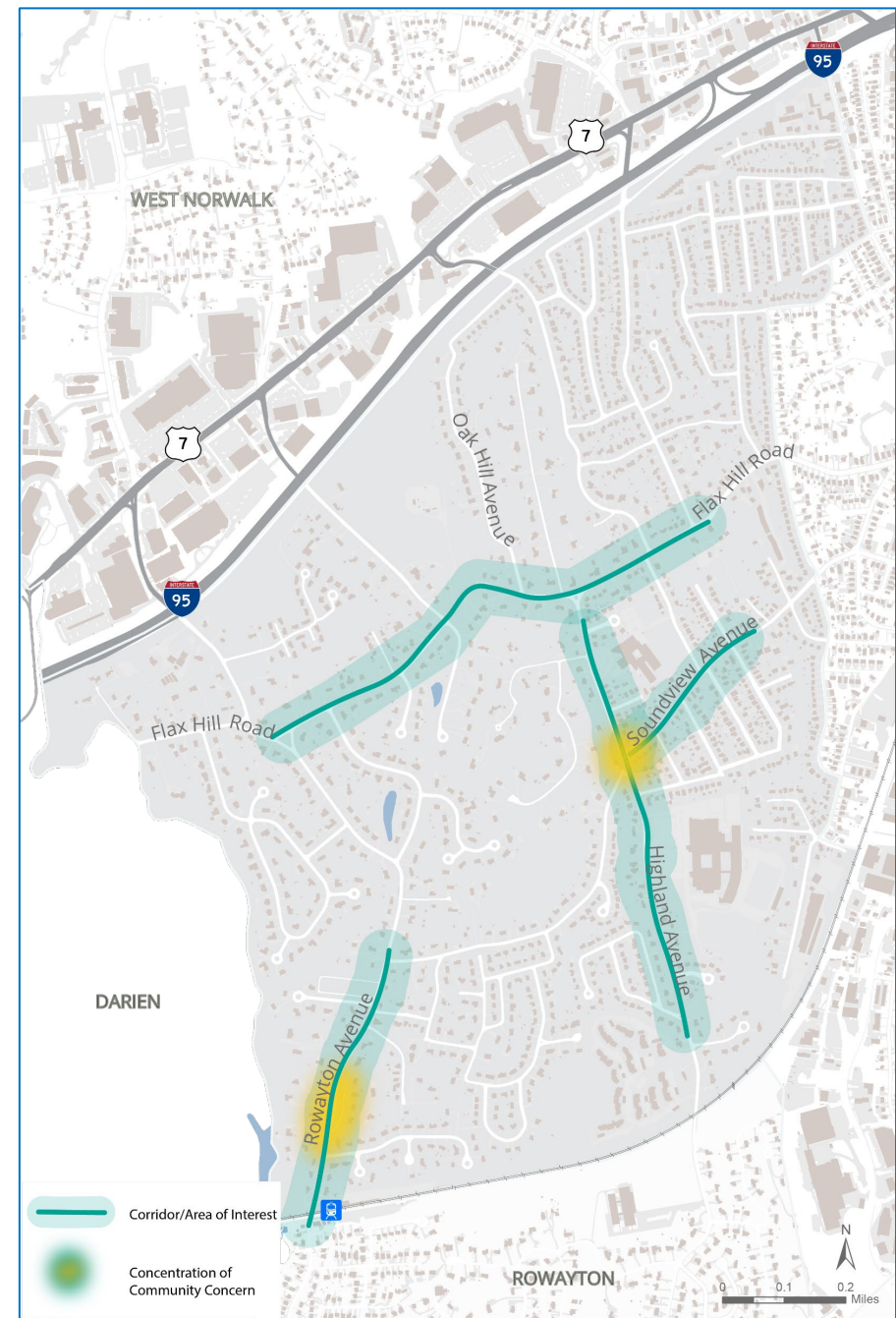
- Calm traffic and address drivers speeding
- Install or expand sidewalks

Flax Hill Road

- Calm traffic and address drivers speeding

Strategies

- Traffic calming, street and intersection redesigns
- Install or expand sidewalks



Neighborhood Focus: West Norwalk

Connecticut Avenue

- Evaluate access management strategies to consolidate curb cuts
- Enhance pedestrian sidewalks, crosswalks, and access to bus stops

Richards Avenue

- Install and expand sidewalks
- Calm traffic and address speeding

West Cedar Street

- Improve sidewalks for safe walking between Norwalk Community College and Scribner Avenue
- Calm traffic and address speeding

West Norwalk Road

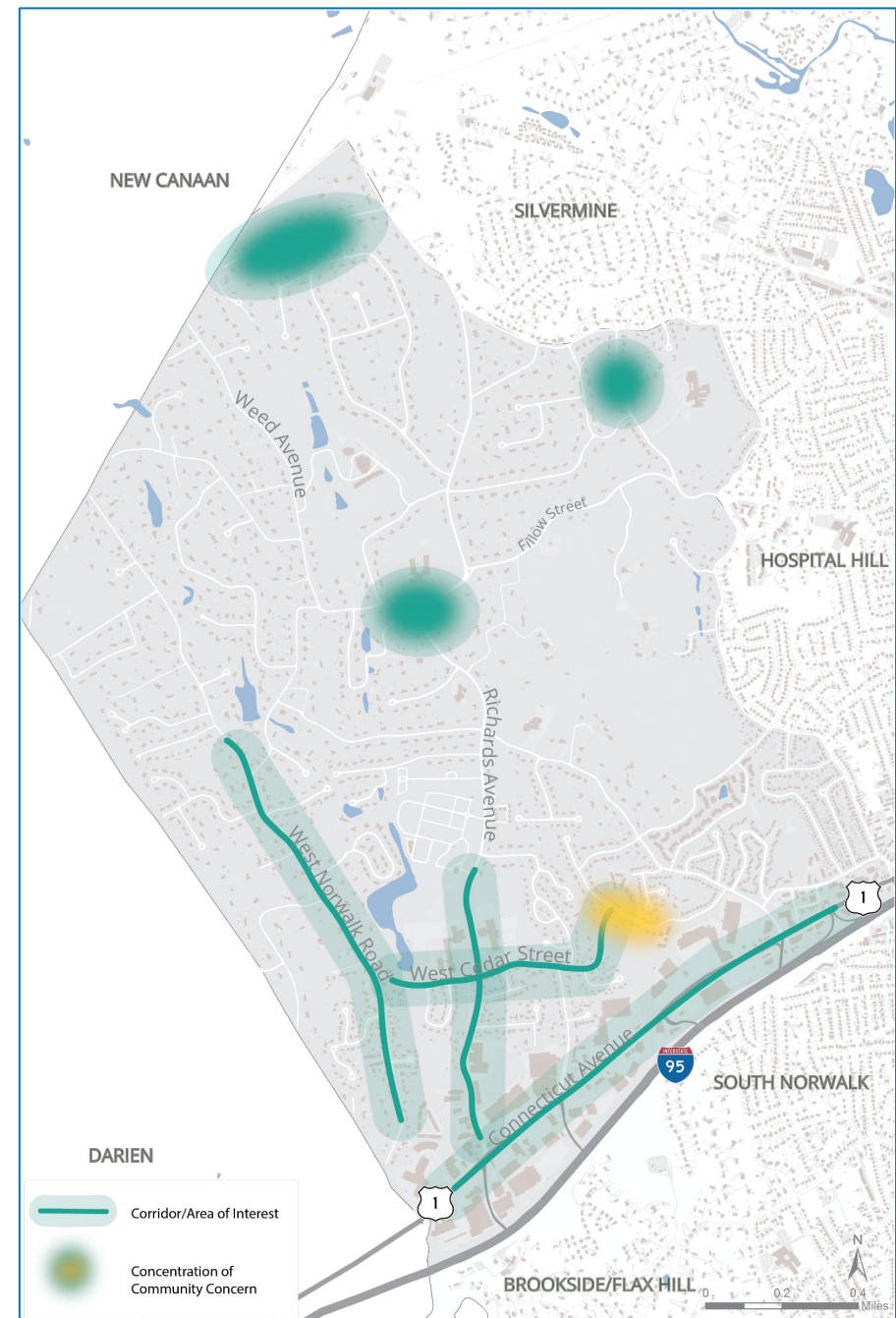
- Install and expand sidewalks
- Calm traffic and address speeding

Other Issues

- Mitigate Merritt Parkway traffic detours through neighborhoods
- Improve walking conditions around schools
- Calm traffic and address speeding on Fillow Street and Ponus Avenue

Strategies

- Traffic calming, street and intersection redesigns
- Install or expand sidewalks
- Promote walking, bicycling, and transit as alternatives to short car trips
- Access management strategies in commercial zones



Neighborhood Focus: Hospital Hill

Stuart Avenue

- Improve five-legged intersection at Magnolia Avenue and Phillips Street, site of recurring crashes
- Explore opportunities for creative with public space improvements

Riverside Avenue

- Create access points to the Norwalk River Valley Trail
- Implement sidewalk plan (conducted concurrently with this TMP) from Belden to New Canaan Avenues

Fellow Street

- Calm traffic and address speeding at Kendall Elementary School
- Improve school drop-off and pick-up operations

Grandview Avenue

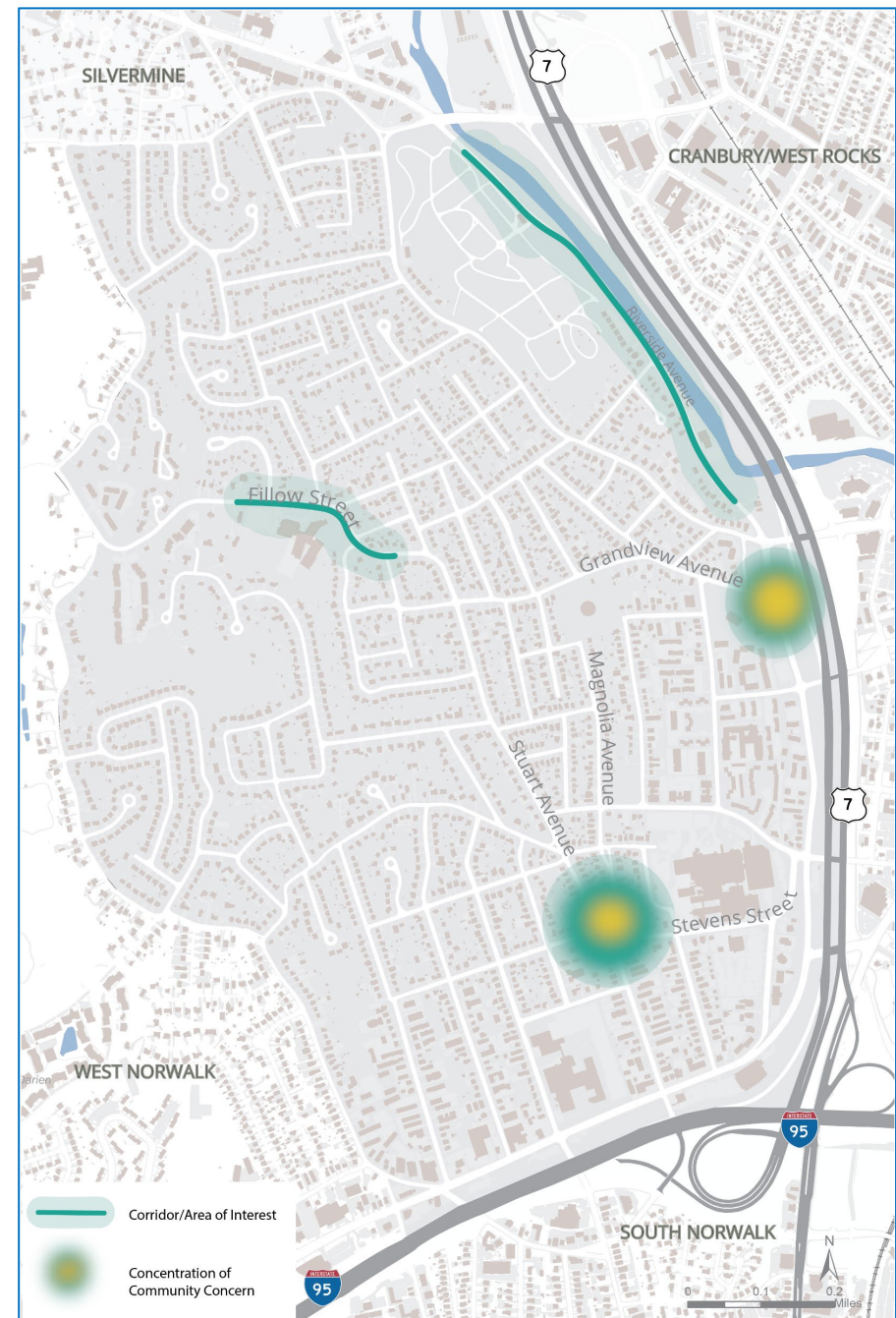
- Evaluate signal timing at Van Buren Avenue to address red light-running toward Route 7 access
- Calm traffic and address speeding

Other Issues

- Daylight intersections, restrict parking at intersections to improve visibility (e.g., Prospect Street)

Strategies

- Signal timing and optimization
- Traffic calming, street and intersection redesigns
- Demand management and scheduling for school traffic



Neighborhood Focus: Silvermine

New Canaan Avenue / Route 123

- Install and expand sidewalks

Silvermine Avenue

- Install and expand sidewalks

Broad Street

- Install sidewalks to connect to the Norwalk River Valley Trail
- Calm traffic and address driver speeding
- Improve bicycle safety

Comstock Road

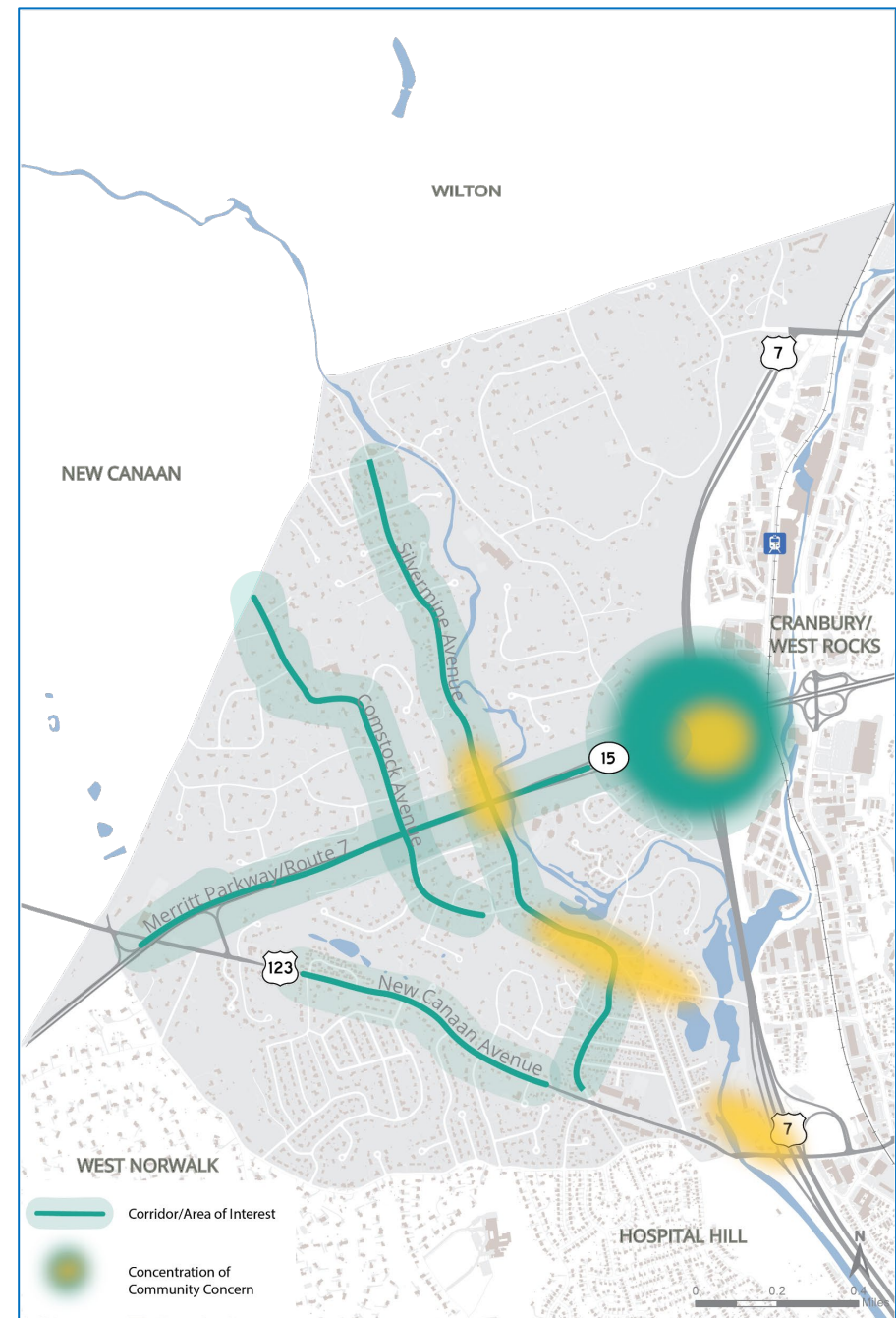
- Install and expand sidewalks

Merritt Parkway / Route 7

- Explore potential for a trail along the Merritt Parkway
- Evaluate operations following the CTDOT Route 7 interchange project

Strategies

- Traffic calming, street and intersection redesigns
- Install or expand sidewalks
- Coordination with Connecticut DOT on current and future highway projects



Neighborhood Focus: Cranbury/West Rocks

Main Avenue / Route 123

- Consider Village District around Main Avenue and Route 123 commercial area
- Improve safety and multimodal access along Main Avenue

Newtown Avenue / Route 53

- Install and expand sidewalks

North Avenue / Westport Avenue / Route 1

- Sidewalk improvements and pedestrian safety measures

West Rocks Road

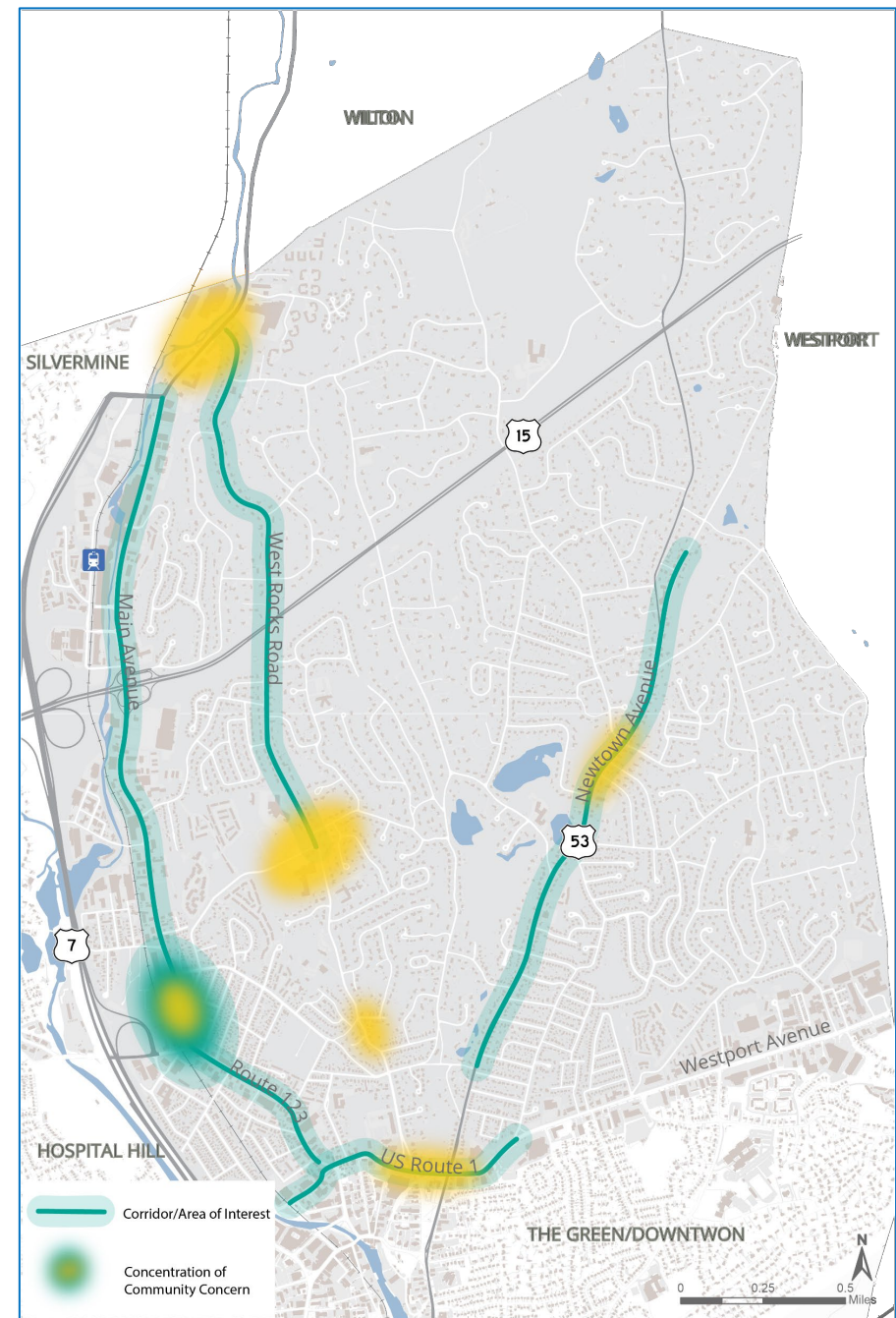
- Calm traffic and address driver speeding
- Install and expand sidewalks
- Improve school drop-off/pick-up operations

Other Issues

- Explore direct transit connections to SoNo, East Norwalk train station, and other destinations
- Sidewalk installation and expansion to improve access to schools
- Traffic calming and enforcement of reckless driving around schools

Strategies

- Traffic calming, street and intersection redesigns
- Install or expand sidewalks
- Coordination with Connecticut DOT on current and future state road projects



Neighborhood Focus: The Green/Downtown

Wall Street

- Improve Wall Street area for all travel modes
- Provide a signalized crosswalk at or near Knight Street
- Improve safety and multimodal access along Main Avenue
- Explore multimodal access and parking policy strategies to support businesses

East Avenue

- Address pedestrian safety and recurring crashes
- Create safe, signalized pedestrian crossings to the Norwalk Green
- Explore functional improvements to recently installed crosswalk at Parkhill Avenue
- Improve intersection with East Wall Street for pedestrians

West Avenue

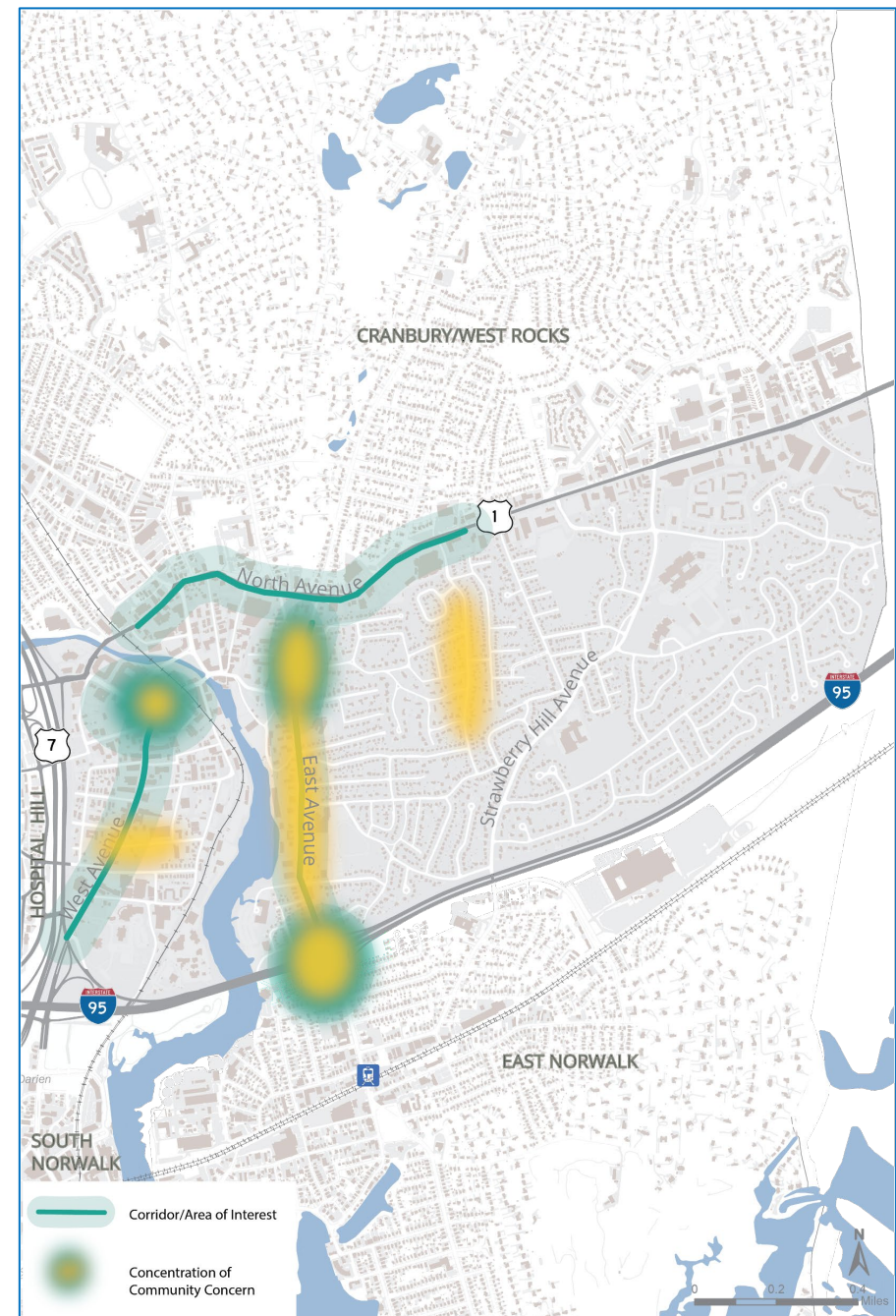
- Improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian conditions
- Provide safe bicycling infrastructure
- Optimize traffic signals to improve operations

Other Issues

- Provide access to Norwalk River Valley Trail
- Create a river trail east of Commerce Street
- Improve safety and operations for all modes on Westport Avenue / Route 1

Strategies

- Traffic calming, street and intersection redesigns
- Install or expand sidewalks
- Coordination with Connecticut DOT on current and future state road projects



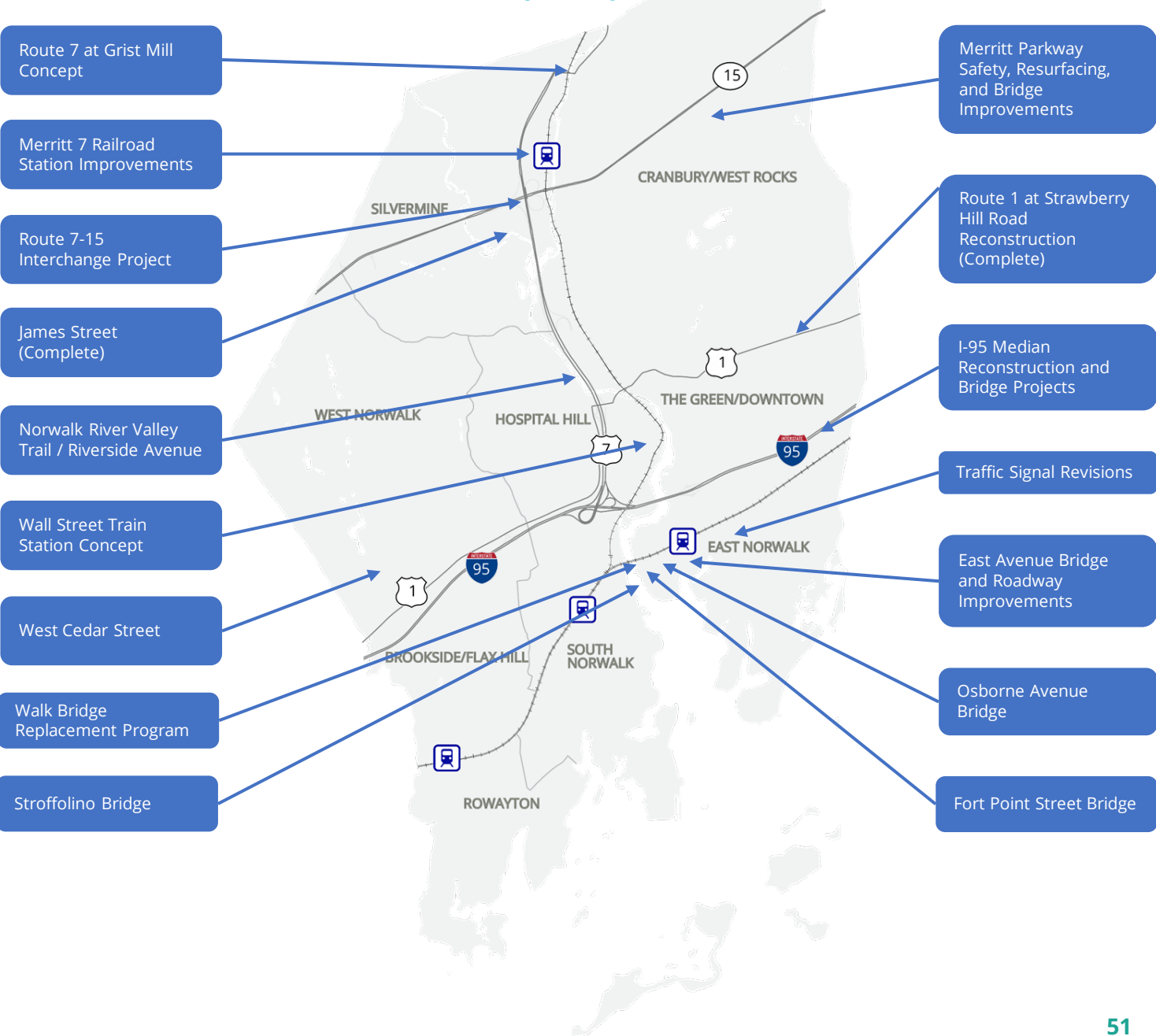
What's Being Done?

The Connecticut Department of Transportation and Norwalk are studying, planning, or proceeding with many projects in the city. These efforts demonstrate a commitment to ongoing improvements to address safety, state of good repair, facility enhancements, and operational improvements to the transportation network.

The TMP process offers an opportunity to evaluate ongoing work and set priorities for the near-term and the future based on demonstrated needs and community input. Funding and implementation strategies will inform future project selection and prioritization to ensure continued progress.



Current Connecticut DOT and DOT Municipal Projects in Norwalk



6. Next Steps

This needs assessment considers a variety of inputs from throughout the community in the context of key data points to highlight areas of common concern. Focal areas are highlighted for further evaluation and the identification of specific near-term projects and longer-term strategies for improved safety, accessibility, and mobility.

Next steps for the Transportation Master Plan include:

- Continued community engagement
- Review and update of existing performance metrics
- Project prioritization
- Identification of locations concept plans